

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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- A. Mission Statement:** The Phoenix Academy Charter School (PACS) will specialize in educating students with limited English proficiency who are at risk for academic failure. The Phoenix Academy Charter School will utilize an English only instructional model emphasizing language immersion for students whose native language is Spanish. It is the primary goal of PACS to ensure that all students achieve proficiency in and mastery of New York State Performance Standards. In the process, however, The Phoenix Academy Charter School will ensure both an awareness and understanding of students' background and cultural histories contributing to their families' immigration to the United States.
- B. Goals:** The general objectives of the Phoenix Academy Charter School are: a) to improve the academic performance of English language learners, b) to improve both oral narrative and reading skills to develop a strong foundation for cultural and linguistic integration, c) to develop cross-cultural communication competence in the students at the Phoenix Academy Charter School d) to engage students and families within the learning process as educational partners, and e) to enhance students' self-esteem as actualized learners, f) to serve as a laboratory school for other programs serving students with limited English proficiency.

To meet these objectives, students will have the ability to: a. perform at or above grade level, b. show a significant academic advancement in subject core areas and/or c. perform at a higher level than students within the local public school districts.

- C. English Language Learners:** The Phoenix Academy Charter School will serve students K-2 (its first year), who are English language learners and whose first language is Spanish. The model of instruction is based on Vygotsky's (1978) framework that incorporates students' culture history, language and learning patterns. Within this framework are embedded five standards of effective pedagogy which are based on multiple studies at The Center for Research on Educations, Diversity and Excellence (University of California, Santa Cruz). These five standards are:

- 1- Joint Productive Activity
- 2- Language and Literacy Development
- 3- Contextualization: Making meaning
- 4- Teaching Complex Thinking

This model reflects the rich and complex nature of teaching and learning which is effective for all students. In addition, it gives all English language learners the opportunity to learn academic content simultaneously while learning English.

D. Unique Characteristics of PACS:

1. Educational Partnership and Alliance

The School for Language and Communication Development (SLCD) will serve as a mentoring partner for the Phoenix Academy Charter School. SLCD has a 25-year educational track record as an institution serving

students with severe developmental disabilities, particularly along the autism spectrum continuum. SLCD has three program sites: Glen Cove (preschool and elementary), Woodside (middle school), and Richmond Hill (certified/registered high school). SLCD's middle and high school curriculum courses have been reviewed and approved by the New York City Department of Education's Office of Accountability. (High school courses are aligned with New York State Learning Standards). SLCD will provide the charter school with instructional supervision, staff development and training, curriculum instruction and program monitoring. SLCD will also be responsible for human resources and financial planning.

The alliance between the two schools will allow both programs to share and enhance their instructional resources. We believe that the schools serving divergently different student populations will be strengthened by means of this educational partnership. We also believe that the philosophical underpinnings of both programs are the same concerning the importance of language learning and immersion for academic success and student achievement.

2. A Shared Philosophy- The Language Learning Continuum

We believe that there is a continuum of language learners from children who are developmentally disabled to those who are gifted and talented. These children present unique characteristics related to the language acquisition process requiring different educational and programmatic models. Our experiences at SLCD with children who have severe developmental disabilities highlight the need for differentiated instructional models. Whereas typical children may learn efficiently in large groups with minimal accommodations, students with disabilities require a high degree of individualized instruction, program modifications and instructional supports to learn effectively. Students with limited English proficiency who fall along this continuum of learners also require a modified instructional model to succeed academically.

3. Educational Mentoring and Institutional Support

The alliance between the two schools will allow members of the SLCD supervisory staff to provide professional development and training on language development, reading acquisition as well as the learning needs of students with disabilities to the charter school staff. Research has indicated that students with limited English proficiency are not only at risk academically but may also be classified as developmentally disabled based on their lack of English language skills. SLCD will provide instructional training and support for administrators and teachers at the Phoenix Academy School to appropriately identify these two separate populations and facilitate instruction to both.

4. The Educational Alliance as a Laboratory Model

The identification of effective collaborative linkages which enhance academic learning for students at the PACS might encourage other charter schools to create such educational partnerships. In addition, the Phoenix Academy Charter School as one of the few charter schools designed to specifically serve English Language Learners will function as a laboratory and resource for other charter schools educating students with limited English proficiency. Beginning in year three, PACS will

provide training seminars for administrators and teachers in other charter schools to facilitate instruction for students with limited English proficiency and developmental disabilities. Seminars will be presented on a regular basis. Seminars will focus on curriculum development, teacher training, RTI methodology, and student assessment. The Phoenix Academy Charter School in conjunction with the School for Language and Communication Development would also be willing to create a consortium of charter school administrators which would meet to discuss educational issues, professional development and fundraising strategies to enhance the functioning of charter schools in New York City.

II. STUDENT POPULATION

A. Student Enrollment:

Year	Academic Year	Grades	Total Enrollment	Total Classrooms	Total Facilities*
1	2011-2012	K-2	192	8	15360
2	2012-2013	K-3	240	10	19200
3	2013-2014	K-4	312	13	24960
4	2014-2015	K-5	384	16	30720
5	2015-2016	K-6	456	19	36480
*80 sq. ft. per student					

B. Target Population: Data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau (2000) and the New York City Planning Committee (2005) indicate that approximately 52% of the population within this Queens community come from Latin America and approximately 60% of the families speak Spanish.

1. Within New York State teachers are challenged to provide ELL students with the academic skills they need to be successful. Hispanic Americans are a heterogeneous group and include Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Central and South Americans, and persons from Spain. Although these Hispanic students share the same language they vary in their customs, traditions and history. Some students are recent immigrants to the United States and some students have been living in the United States for longer periods. However, in spite of this variability there is one common thread that unites all these students: they want to learn and they are capable of success when given appropriate educational support.

Why then is the ELL population under such scrutiny, and why do some do well and others do not? There is a need for research that evaluates language support programs in order to identify and understand which ones successfully result in long term academic achievement. Approximately 4.6 million ELLs were served in the U.S., K-12 educational system in 2000-2001 (Kindler, 2002). It is estimated that by the year 2030 language minority students will

comprise 40% of the school age population in the United States (Thomas & Collier, 2002). Furthermore, federal legislation, such as No Child Left Behind (2001) and the Education Sciences Reform Act (2002) demands scientifically based research that speaks to effective instruction for ELLs.

2. Any New York City student can legally qualify for admission without charge to PACS. Students applying to PACS will not be denied placement based on disability, race, ethnicity, gender and/or religion. Admission will be based on the result of a lottery process.

The Phoenix Academy Charter School will enroll students in kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade during its first year of operation. After this first year, students will be accepted for enrollment only in kindergarten. Students who turn five years of age by December 1st will be eligible for kindergarten enrollment. PACS will offer food services in compliance with all of the other requirements specified by the National School Program. PACS will hire an independent food service provider to prepare the food and deliver it appropriately.

Assuming that the Phoenix Academy Charter School is approved, applications will be made available by mail, on the Internet and at several locations that will be announced.

- C. **Vision:** Our vision is to provide the families of Queens with an educational choice for their children. We see scholars actively participating in class by raising their hands, answering questions, asking thoughtful questions, pondering and making connections. We see our scholars immersed in reading throughout the day. We see our teachers teaching, in content-rich classrooms, directly delivering strong lessons and assessing students frequently and rigorously to ensure that they are learning what is being taught. We see school leaders meeting with parents and the community, ensuring that families and the community at large are familiar with the success of each of our scholars. We also hear a variety of sounds, ranging from attentive silence in portions of classroom instruction to joyful laughter during enrichment, to the pleasant sounds of a highly respectful environment. The Phoenix Charter School environment will be inviting, exciting and challenging.

We know the challenges ELL students will bring to The Phoenix Academy Charter School and we know what our end goal is for each and every one of them. For us, The Phoenix Academy Charter School scholars must become strong readers, writers and mathematicians, with a firm grasp on the foundational skills and knowledge that will be used for the rest of their lives. Scholars must be able to read fluently and with comprehension. They must be able to write in many genres using correct spelling and grammar, with good penmanship, and they must speak clearly, logically, and compellingly. They must be able to formulate and solve problems using all of the mathematical operations, including the basics of geometry. They must recognize and understand the significance of key portions of major historical texts. They must be able to perform experiments using the scientific method in science. For us, it is critical that The Phoenix Academy Charter School prepares scholars with a solid education in the earliest years preparing them for rigorous academic challenges.

- D. Special Education Methods and Strategies:** In accordance with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEIA) and in compliance with Child Find requirements, The Phoenix Academy Charter School has procedures to identify, locate and evaluate students with disabilities.

Upon enrollment, and with the support of families and sending school districts, The Phoenix Academy will:

- secure all records of income students, including all Individual Education Programs (IEPs);
- work with the relevant Committees on Special Education as students on pre-existing IEPs transition to The Phoenix Academy;
- work as needed with the relevant CSEs to suggest modification to any pre-existing IEPs;
- cooperate with the relevant CSEs to ensure that all services identified on the IEP are provided;
- use The Phoenix Academy special education staff to provide specialized instruction but may contract out other services (i.e., occupational therapy, physical therapy) to the local sending district or a well-qualified third party.

For students enrolling, not with an IEP, and for whom the school suspects of having a disability, The Phoenix Academy:

- will implement classroom strategies to address academic difficulties;
- will institute a Response to Intervention (RTI) process for the student
- if Response to Intervention Tiers are unsuccessful, The Phoenix Academy Special Education Coordinator will: (a) notify the family in writing that the child is being referred to the sending district's CSE and provide a copy of the referral and all safeguarded notices as set forth in 34 CFR 300.504 to the family and (b) refer the student to the appropriate district's CSE which then has the responsibility of conducting an initial evaluation and determining with appropriate Phoenix Academy representation, Special Education (SPED) eligibility;
- The Phoenix Academy Special Education Coordinator will work with the CSE to help write a new IEP for any new student identified as eligible for SPED services;
- will cooperate with the CSE to ensure that all services identified on the IEP are provided;
- will use The Phoenix Academy special education staff to provide specialized instruction outside of the classroom and within the mainstream classroom, but may contract out other services (i.e., occupational therapy, physical therapy) to the local sending district or a qualified third party.

In support of students receiving Special Education services and to ensure that The Phoenix Academy works closely with the CSE, the school ensures that:

- the School's Special Education Coordinator will attend all CSE meetings;

- school staff, including regular and special education teachers working with a student on an IEP, will attend CSE meetings to assist in the development and amendment of the IEP;
- school staff responsible for educating students will receive copies of IEPs of all students in their classrooms and will receive training and support on their responsibility regarding the successful implementation of all classroom modifications. In addition, training and support will include (a) the referral process and CSE; (b) development of the IEP; (c) review of academic progress towards stated IEP goals, and IEP revisions, when necessary; (d) all reporting requirements; and (e) disciplining of students with disabilities.

The CSE will evaluate and develop student IEPs, with the assistance of parents and the school. The student's teachers (special education and general education) will attend CSE meetings to help develop, review, or revise a student's IEP. The Phoenix Academy believes it is important for school personnel working with children having disabilities to be involved with the CSE. Accordingly, the school will provide substitute coverage to allow teachers, as necessary, to attend CSE meetings. All professionals that teach or counsel the student will be provided with his or her IEP and the necessary support and guidance to implement all required instruction and services.

III. SCHOOL DESIGN

- A. Program Description:** The Phoenix Academy Charter School has settled on a model that reflects the rich and complex nature of teaching and learning and has been shown to be effective for all students. This model is also a flexible and practical model that gives all English language learners the opportunity to learn academic content simultaneously while learning English. This model further addresses both content and language development in the general education classroom. Furthermore, this model known as "the Six Principles" model (McIntyre, et al, 2009) extends the curriculum the teachers are required to teach to include the lives of their students which research shows assists in students' academic understanding.
- B. Instructional Model:** Language learning is a natural phenomenon that occurs without intervention. It was once thought that the brain consisted of particular areas that were designed for processing only very specific kinds of information. However, it is now known that the brain is more malleable than previously thought and the specialized functions of specific regions of the brain are not fixed at birth but shaped by experience and learning.

With this understanding the Phoenix Academy Charter School has searched for an instructional model that is grounded in theory and research and speaks to effective teaching for English Language Learners (ELLs). This socio-cultural theory model is based on the Vygotskian (Vygotsky, 1978) teaching-learning framework that includes students' culture, history, language, and learning patterns. The "Six Principles" model also incorporates the social context into its pedagogy. Five standards of effective pedagogy are based on multiple studies at the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) (Mcintyre, et ai, 2009) and family involvement is considered key to the academic success of any student.

The CREDE standards for pedagogy include: (1) Joint productive Activity (teachers and students work together on products); (2) Language Learning

across the curriculum (teachers help students apply literacy strategies and language strategies in all areas of the curriculum; (3) Contextualization (teachers connect instruction to students' experiences) (4) Rigorous Curriculum (teachers design instruction to consistently advance understanding to more complex levels); (5) Instructional Conversation (teachers provide instruction in small groups and utilize interactive conversational dialogues as a tool for learning); (6) Family Involvement (connecting prior experience, knowledge and culture with academic content).Tharp and Dalton (2007) list characteristics of instruction which are in alignment with the culturally responsive instruction within the "Six Principles". This instruction is characterized by connecting instruction to the linguistic and social context backgrounds of the children while maintaining a rigorous curriculum and high expectations for achievement. This pedagogical shift is different from traditional teaching and has changed U.S. classrooms in response to more diverse populations.

- C. Evidence of Success:** The Phoenix Charter School is committed to delivering the highest quality education to its scholars. Our decision to adopt the "Six Principles" educational philosophy is based on the following over-riding factors: (1) ELL students do not generally live in an educationally enriching environment; (2) all children can learn;(3) children learn best when challenged by high standards; (4) English proficiency is an attainable goal for all students;(5) bilingual proficiency is desirable for all students; (6) language and cultural diversity can be assets for teaching and learning;(7) teaching and learning must accommodate individuals;(8) schools can mitigate risk factors by teaching social and learning skills; and (9) solutions to risk factors must be grounded in a valid general theory of developmental, teaching, and schooling processes.

Even in extended day schools, students spend about a quarter of their waking time in school. Thus, scholars that lack an educationally focused home life are severely hampered in academic achievement, regardless of their school's success. For example, one study finds that the rate of improvement in student achievement during the school year was similar regardless of a students' socioeconomic status (SES). However, during summer recess when children spend more time at home, high-SES students' test scores continued to rise while low-SES students' test scores dropped significantly. The language differences for ELLs becomes a further barrier to learning.

The CREDE project, "Improving Classroom Instruction and Student Learning for Resilient English Language Learners" was conducted on approximately 1000 fourth and fifth grade students from 21 classrooms in three elementary schools identified as having large proportions of ELLs (80%) as well as having students from high poverty families (90% free or reduced lunches). Teachers were asked to identify ELL students that were at risk for failure due to low socioeconomic status, living with a single guardian and poor language ability. From this pool of students, the teacher selected up to three "resilient" and three "non-resilient" students in their classes. "Resilient" students were high achieving on both standardized achievement tests and daily school work, were very motivated and had excellent attendance. The "non-resilient" students were low achieving on both

standardized achievement tests and daily school work, were not motivated and had poor attendance. The research data were collected by Classroom Observations, Classroom Learning Environment and Student Interview Results. Through the observations, the instruction context or culture of instruction that permeated nearly every classroom, every school, and every year was the teacher directed instructional model where teachers actively lead and control all of the activities in the classroom, while students passively respond to instruction by merely watching or listening. Instructional activities such as small group work and independent work were seldom observed. Furthermore, they found that the intellectual level of the curriculum was low and that the culture of the classroom focused on "getting work done" rather than on more authentic or culturally relevant learning situations. The curriculum focused on low levels of learning and there was an emphasis on "drill and repetition" in order to prepare students to answer questions on the state-mandated assessment tests. These instructional practices constitute a basic skills mastery orientation or "pedagogy of poverty" approach that has pervasive negative effects on student motivation and learning (Haberman, 1991 ;Padron & Waxman, 1999).

The CREDE project used the results from this research to develop an instructional program called the "Pedagogy to Improve Resiliency Program" (PIRP) to enable teachers to change their classroom practices and foster the educational resiliency of ELLs. This program incorporates generic instructional components, such as reciprocal teaching and culturally relevant instruction, along with CREDE's Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy (Tharp 1997). PIRP focuses on providing teachers with knowledge of several resiliency building strategies, such as (a) offering opportunities to develop close relationships with students, (b) increasing students' sense of mastery in their lives, (c) building social competencies as well as academic skills, (d) reducing stress in children's lives, and (e) generating school and community resources to support the children's needs (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1994). It was based on this research and many other research projects that the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence conducted that the Phoenix Academy Charter School chose their Five Standards for Effective Teaching and Learning strategies as the basis for their educational program.

Teachers are concerned about covering content and curriculum, and they often ignore students' language development which is critical for academic success. For second language learners, regardless of the program they are in, there are some features necessary for language development. Teachers should: (1) understand the language needs of students; (2) explicitly plan to meet those needs; (3) deliver instruction; and (4) assess students' comprehension. All lessons that are planned for instruction should reflect all of the CREDE Standards. These include: (1) planning and incorporating language development objectives into content lessons; (2) structuring lessons so that expectations for students are explicit; (3) providing opportunities for students to use academic language in meaningful ways; (4) using visuals to increase comprehension; (5) posting key terms for students reference; (6) providing opportunities for students to work together in completing academic tasks; (7) promoting interactive discussions among students and teacher; (8)

maintaining cognitive challenge; and (9) connecting the lessons to students' own experience.

- D. Curriculum:** Bilingual language acquisition occurs in two ways: simultaneous bilingualism and sequential bilingualism. Generally in simultaneous bilingualism the child will acquire two languages at the same time before age 3. In sequential bilingualism which can also occur before the age of 3 years, the child draws on the knowledge and experience of the first language to acquire the second language. The children attending the Phoenix Academy Charter School are sequential bilingual learners who already have knowledge of the Spanish linguistic system, its structures and its rules. They will use this knowledge to learn their second language. There is a common sequence of acquisition for second language learners. Some aspects of the second language are learned when there is a perceived need by the learner and some aspects can be learned in no particular sequence. Of importance is the notion that the rate of acquisition and the level of proficiency achieved in second language learning depends upon the individual student. The first language knowledge will support the acquisition of the second language. The extent of this support depends upon the proficiency of the first language as well as the child's age. Cummins (1984) developed a model of bilingual language acquisition that proposes that a second language develops in a simple matrix style. Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) develop along a continuum from context embedded to Context Reduced.

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) also develops along a continuum beginning with cognitively undemanding tasks and ending in cognitively demanding tasks. Thus, careful assessment and planning is critical to supporting the development of a second language (Cline & Frederickson, 1996). Considering this acquisition model, it is believed that on average it takes learners two years to achieve a functional, social use of a second language and approximately five to seven years to achieve a level of academic proficiency.

The Phoenix Academy Charter School curriculum and scope and sequence, framed within the Five Standards for Effective Teaching and Learning, will be fully aligned with New York State standards. Prior to the opening of Phoenix Academy all standards developed will have been cross-walked with the State standards. A detailed scope and sequence chart will guide all lesson planning, daily instructions, and frequent assessments. During the summer when the staff is hired, an intensive week of orientation and training will aid in their understanding of the Five Standards for Effective Teaching and Learning and the curricular scope and sequence in all CORE subjects. Throughout the year, classroom visits by the Principal and Language and Learning Specialists will help teachers effectively deliver the curriculum.

Since our curricular approach is a critical part of our educational program, further elaboration is helpful here: Language facilitation will be whole - language based, rich in grammar and then strengthened through a vocabulary enriched environment with guided reading instruction both individually as well as in carefully constructed groups incorporating cultural based themes.

Reading will be phonics based, including phonemic awareness activities. The reading program that our school will utilize will be the Orton Gillingham method of teaching decoding and spelling of words. Fast Forward technology for students with auditory processing issues will be a focus of fundraising. Math will be taught with attention to the key steps of skill and knowledge needed to progress to the next level. Explicitly the goal is for each student to be fully prepared for pre-algebra and have an introduction to geometry by the fifth grade. A strong foundation in math numeracy is essential for success in later grades. Science will be almost entirely hands on, and students will learn through experiments and natural observation. History will be taught chronologically and across cultures. The history of the different Hispanic events and the events of the United States will be taught in unison. Art, music and physical education will be encouraged and plied within all of the core subjects. Art and music activities will be centered on cultural themes. Physical education will include dance which will also have a cultural theme.

1. Instructional Methods and Philosophy: A Culture of Success

We know that drawing from the Five Standards of Teaching and Learning pedagogy will give our students an enormous advantage, but by itself this is not sufficient to fully ensure the success of our students. We also know that our entire school design must be structured towards ensuring the key goals outlined earlier in the Executive Summary and as expressed in the following questions: (1) How can our ELL students learn to read well? (2) How can we help our ELL scholars to become proficient in English while maintaining their primary language? (3) How can students learn to behave well, take joy in learning, and always know that hard work is what leads to success? The Phoenix Academy believes that the defining characteristics of a successful school are its high level of academic achievement. Academic achievement, however, can only occur through a pervasive and reinforced culture of success. Academic studies and the experience of the best-performing urban charter schools consistently demonstrate that students achieve higher degrees of proficiency and mastery of subject matter in a disciplined environment with school-wide behavioral expectations. The Phoenix Academy has developed a culture of success by establishing and maintaining those expectations for student behavior, weaving a strict Code of Conduct into daily routines, developing common classroom practices, and explicitly teaching and reinforcing virtuous behavior such as sharing, compassion, and respect.

2. Culture of Academic Achievement

All Phoenix Academy Charter School families and scholars will be informed from the first meeting that Phoenix Academy is a place of academic achievement. Since we will instill success in life as the goal for all students, learning must be maximized from the very first moment scholars enter the school building. The leadership will operate on the belief that "school is hard work, and great principals demand that their scholars work hard." (Carter,2001). The reward of hard work is academic achievement, and a scholar's success will be celebrated throughout the school by posting exemplary scholar work in the classrooms and hallways, announcing scholar achievements at morning meetings and recognizing strong classroom learning during afternoon announcements. Friday

meetings will be of particular significance as they provide time for all members of the school community, staff, scholars and families, to recognize student success, honor examples of virtuous behavior, and enjoy scholar performance.

3. Primary Focus on Literacy

Academic achievement is not possible if students cannot read well. In order to move successfully into upper grades, a student must be able to read at a proficient or advanced grade level starting in Kindergarten. The Phoenix Academy Charter School will focus on students' reading through: (1) three hour long daily blocks of reading and writing; (2) a balance approach to literacy instruction; (3) one period a day of language instruction; (4) one period a day on phonemic awareness and phonics instruction incorporating the syllabication rules and spelling generalizations.

4. Extended Time on Literacy and Mathematics

Students will be arriving early for one-on-one or small group support with their teacher and have their breakfast with their teachers in a quiet setting. The tutorial period at the end of the day will either reinforce a relevant lesson of the previous day or connect it with a planned lesson for the day ahead. After breakfast students move into strong direct instruction in the core subjects all morning. In the afternoons, there is the completion of instruction in the core subjects, followed by explicit instruction in the school's values as well as more hands-on activities in a number of enrichment areas. The last portion of the day will be used for detention for students whose behavior warrants it, or athletics and/or Homework Help, providing a quiet environment to do homework for students who might not have such opportunities at home.

5. Extended School Day and Year

With a primary focus on literacy, and with an extended day, Phoenix Academy Charter School scholars have a greater opportunity to succeed in the earliest grades. We believe that extended school days and year are also critical to the academic success of Phoenix Academy's scholars. The Phoenix Academy Charter School will begin 9/6/11 and end 8/17/12. This equates to 210 school days, compared to the traditional 180 day New York City school year. The regular school day will run from 8:00 to 4:00pm, providing on average seven hours of core instructional time. This figure does not include the hour-long after-school tutoring, homework support and enrichment period at the end of each day.

6. Common Classroom Practices

Educators dedicated to strong student outcomes understand that time is critical with the most challenged students, but what teachers and students do with that time is equally important. Therefore, we will minimize disruption to and distractions from learning with classrooms that are tightly structured to maximize student learning. Clear and uniform policies on classroom practices and procedures will be posted in every classroom. All classroom instruction will be standard driven, with standards based aims and classroom agendas clearly displayed. Each class will begin with an "Anchor Activity" that focuses on review of the prior day's work. All classes will require daily homework that extends learning beyond the classroom. Each classroom will practice not only differentiation within the instructional periods but also practice a differentiated classroom environment. Within

the differentiated classroom and differentiated classroom environment the teacher will employ the Response to Intervention Three Tier Model for addressing interventions.

7. Small Class Size

All of this extended time in school means that after their families, the most critical adults in our scholars' lives will be their teachers and staff of the school. We remain committed to the success of each student, and we know that small class sizes, when woven with other elements of the school, can provide just that. Such small groupings will enable school leaders, teachers, and all support staff to develop caring and strong educational ties to each of our students. At a class size of 24, every scholar at Phoenix Academy will have very close relationships with the three teachers within the class. One teacher will be a person who is dually certified in General/Special Education. The second teacher will be certified as a teacher, but with ESL extension and will speak Spanish. The third teacher will be a Speech Language Pathologist. Students will have a connection to the entire Phoenix Academy Charter School which will support the academic and behavioral goals of the school and will instill a sense of our commitment to core values which include respect, productivity, and compassion.

8. Mandatory Tutoring, Enrichment Support, and Homework

Even though The Phoenix Academy Charter School staff expects that with the level of support that is being offered to each student, there will be some students who may struggle. Identification of those students will be made promptly in the beginning of the school year through our Universal Screening. The school day has critical supports systematically integrated into the school's design and structure to support these struggling scholars. Consequently, the Phoenix Academy will be providing mandatory tutoring during the school day within the educational program. Enrichment activities will also be offered to those scholars who are not struggling but who would benefit from an enrichment program. This will be delivered during their mandatory tutorial session.

Homework is also key to a scholar's success. Homework involves parent or guardian participation, and strengthens the vital relationship between the Phoenix Academy Charter School and a scholar's home life. Scholars are expected to complete meaningful and targeted homework nightly, allowing them to move forward academically each day.

E. FACTORS DETERMINING SUCCESS:

1. Key Predictors of Academic Success:

- Cognitively complex academic instruction through the second language (English) for longer parts of the school day.
- Use of current approaches to teaching the academic curriculum through active discovery.
- Changes in the socio-cultural context of schooling, e.g. learning English in a supporting and affirming educational environment.

2. Key Instructional Factors:

- Teaching learning strategies in English needed to develop thinking skill and problem solving activities
- Implementing approaches that emphasize prior knowledge

- Maintaining respect for home language and culture
- F. Analysis of Research on Bilingual Education:**
- The design of programs for English language learners should be responsive to the needs and strengths of local communities, student populations, and available resources. Effective programs share crucial features: (1) understanding students' language knowledge and needs; (2) planning and delivering instruction that meets those needs; and (3) assessing whether students comprehend the instruction.
 - For good student achievement effective teaching methods must be employed by well-prepared teachers. Effective approaches include students and teachers working together in active, engaged and supported learning across the curriculum. This facilitates language development through dialogue by means of instruction which is student based. Educational instruction must focus on students' strengths as experiences which connect home, community and school environment.
- G. 10 Stage Model for Assessment of CLD Children:**

1. Develop Cultural and Linguistic Hypotheses (Pre-referral procedures): Eliminate all potential reasons for learning difficulties, particularly those related to culture or the process of second language acquisition. Utilize ecological and ecosystems approaches to frame the child's school performance within the context of any cultural, linguistic, or other external factor that may be affecting the learning process.

2. Assess Language Development and Proficiency:
 Knowledge of a child's language proficiency and language dominance forms the basis of any assessment and guides the appropriate collection of information and data. Language proficiency in both languages must be assessed and determined. In order to understand why a child is having learning difficulties, it is necessary to determine language abilities in both the native (L 1) and secondary (L2) languages. The development of Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) guides appropriate assessment and interpretation of results. Important factors to consider: Level of Acculturation, Native Language, Language of Instruction, Parental Education

3. Assess Cultural and Linguistic Differences:
 The more a child's or a parent's culture differs from the dominant culture in which they live, the greater the chances are that learning will be adversely affected. Likewise, the more a child's or parent's language differs from the dominant language in which they live, the greater are the chances that learning will be adversely affected.

The following factors are to be viewed as starter hypotheses that suggest whether or not and to what extent each one may or may not have contributed to a child's observed academic difficulties.

4. Assess Environmental and Community Factors:
 In order for a child to benefit from instruction, the language of instruction must be fully comprehensible to the child, the instruction must draw upon the child's existing cultural and linguistic foundations, the child must be able to identify and relate to the content of the curriculum, and the child must be made to feel that his or her personal language and culture are assets, not liabilities. Failure to accommodate these needs leads to the creation of a learning environment that can significantly inhibit academic achievement.

5. Evaluate and Revise:

It is imperative to ensure that all potential factors that might be related to the child's learning difficulties have been thoroughly evaluated and ruled out as the "primary" cause of the observed learning problems.

6. Determine Need for Language Assessments (Post-referral procedures):

Educators recognize that evaluators need to consider the child's primary language ability in addition to his ability in English. The interpretive validity of assessment data rests on the proper identification and understanding of the child's entire linguistic history as well as other factors influencing the development of both languages.

7. Modify and Adapt Traditional Practices:

Modify and adapt traditional tools and practices as necessary and in a systematic way, recognizing that such modification and adaptations automatically impugn the validity of any scores obtained. There are few standardized tests that can be validly and reliably administered to students who are culturally or linguistically diverse primarily because of issues related to acculturation and language proficiency. However, it is important to remember that if properly adapted and interpreted, standardized tests can provide valuable qualitative information about functioning that is often extremely useful in instructional planning.

8. Utilize Non-Discriminatory Practices:

Non-standardized, alternative assessment strategies are often crucial to providing information that assists in determining the presence or absence of a disability for any child. Moreover, authentic measures have the advantage of providing information that readily translates into interventions and modifications. Therefore, whether or not any standardized testing is done, appropriate assessment of children of diverse cultures should include authentic and alternative forms of assessment.

9. Formal Assessment:

- Primary Language Abilities:

- a. Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey (WMLS 1993,2001):This measure is based in part on Cummins (1984) theoretical model of language proficiency that includes the concept of BICS and CALP. Scores are provided in oral language, reading/writing and broad language domains.

- b. Bilingual Verbal Abilities Test (BVAT): This measure was developed to assess students in their primary language and a secondary language. The test is comprised of three subtests: verbal analogies, oral vocabulary and picture vocabulary. A student is first tested in English and then tested in his/her other language or any items that were missed.

- c. Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT): The assessor directs the student to look at a picture or a specific feature within a picture. The student then names what the assessor is pointing to in the picture.

- English Language Abilities:

- a. IDEA Oral Proficiency Test (IPT-O)(1991): This measure was developed to identify an ELL's level of oral language proficiency

- b. Basic Inventory of Natural Language (BINL) (1983) This measure is used to assess language dominance and proficiency levels in English as well as reading and language arts

c. Listen Up Skills Assessment (1995) This measure is used to assess a student's ability to follow a series of directions, comprehend oral stores and lessons, and interpret oral information.

10. Informal language Assessment:

- Observations

BOLD-Bilingual Oral language Development Scale (Mattes & Omak 1991): BOLD requires that the evaluator note whether the IEP student has adequately performed 20 important communications behaviors that are needed for a student to be an effective communicator.

- Questionnaires

Bilingual language Proficiency Questionnaire (Mattes & Santiago, 1985): Developed specifically for use in assessing children's development of English and Spanish and their use of each language in their home environment

- Teaching Rating Scale

Student Oral language Observation Matrix (SOIOM): examines the five components of language: comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar.

- Storytelling

Students are told a culturally relevant story and then asked to retell the story to the evaluator.

- Cloze Techniques

This technique consists of a text passage that has every nth word deleted. Students are required to provide a word for every deleted word in the passage.

- Language Samples

These samples are analyzed for the presence of both structured mistakes and pragmatic features (Mattes & Omark, 1991)

11. Authentic and Alternative Forms of Assessment:

- Curriculum Based Assessment (CBA)-is an authentic, informal measure of academic skills based on a student's performance on class curriculum.
- Portfolio Assessment is a developmental documentation of skills learning and academic progress which provides a body of student work; it is essentially a portfolio that can be used to appraise student performance over time. The portfolio assessment ranges from portfolios that demonstrate the student's best work to an "expanded student record" that holds a full representation of the student's work from math equations to essays on literature.
- Dynamic Assessment assesses learning potential, cognitive strengths and weaknesses, and learning style and instructional needs. It is an interactive approach to conducting diagnosis focusing on the ability of the learner to respond to intervention.

12. Evaluate All Data Within The Cultural Linguistic Context: With respect to standardized testing, consider the following:

- Evaluate cultural and linguistic differences
- Evaluate inhibiting factors
- Evaluate non-discriminatory data
- Evaluate opportunity for learning

13. Link Assessment To Intervention:

Assessment should not be limited to identification; rather it should be extended to inform appropriate instructional interventions modifications and program development. It is necessary to utilize collected data to guide instructional interventions, modifications and

program development. Furthermore, instructional goals and objectives need to be culturally and linguistically appropriate.

- Linguistically appropriate goals and objectives have the following characteristics:
 - a. Appropriate for the cognitive level of the student
 - b. Appropriate for the linguistic level of the student
 - c. Match the developmental level of the student's primary (L 1) or secondary (L2) language
 - d. Match the student's general education transition criteria and re-designation policy (from LEP to FEP)
- Culturally appropriate goals and objectives have the following characteristics:
 - a. Access the student's prior knowledge and experiences
 - b. Incorporate culturally relevant materials and experiences
 - c. Affirm the student's cultural heritage

14. Curriculum and Teacher Development:

The five standards for effective teaching; joint productive activity, language and literacy development, contextualizing teaching and learning, complex thinking, and instructional conversation (Dalton, 1998) has been applied to professional development activities. Even though children and adults learn differently, the principles that describe effective teaching and learning for students in classrooms do not differ from those for adults in general and teachers in particular. The current research emphasizes: ebbing knowledge and skill acquisition within a framework of teacher growth and development, collaborative programs, and interactive research within a community of learners. (Sprinthall, Reamin & Thies-Srinthall, 1996).

The following five standards in socio-cultural theory are shown to support the learning process within professional development:

- a) Facilitate learning and development through joint productive activity among leaders and participants. Learning takes place when novices and experts work together to solve a common problem or produce a common product (Rogoff, 1991 ;Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). In this model, the roles of student and teacher are flexible. Collaboration within the educational structure, teacher and student, will jointly solve a common problem.
- b) Promote learners' expertise in culturally relevant discourse. Language and discourse are a critical part of the professional development process. Language helps frame problems in new and important ways. Within the professional development the teacher establishes a common community of discourse with the students. (Cummins, 1984)
- c) Contextualize teaching, learning, and joint productive activity through the experiences and skills of participants. Another premise of sociocultural theory is that teaching and learning must be contextualized or situated in meaningful activities connected to everyday life (Forman, Minick,& Stone). The professional development will be flexible to allow for local differences and diversity. The Phoenix Academy will have its own individual circumstances that will be addressed through collaborative work.

d) Challenge participants toward more complex solutions in addressing problems. The professional development activities will be sustained with problem-solving opportunities rather than short-term exercises designed to address issues. During the professional development hours, the teams will be able to seek responsive assistance either internally or from more experienced others.

e) Engage participants through dialogue, especially the Instructional conversation. The conversational aspects of the IC provide the hook that facilitates the connection of formal schooled knowledge to practical knowledge. It is the connecting stream of classroom culture and knowledge with more formal knowledge and theory around collaborative problem-solving, that is, joint productive activity (Sprinthall , Reiman, Thies-Sprinthall,1996).

H. Applicant Members of the Board of Trustees:

Founding Board Members - The Phoenix Academy Charter Schools founding Board consists of professionals who have been involved in education and business for many years. Their broad based professional experiences indicate their ability to manage a Charter School, engage parents and work with community leaders to fulfill the mission of the school.

1. Ellenmorris Tiegerman, Ph.D.

Dr. Tiegerman has several educational degrees in speech language pathology, special education and social work. She is the Founder and Executive Director for the School for Language and Communication Development which was established in 1985 and presently serves 450 students with severe developmental disabilities. Dr. Tiegerman served as a Professor at Adelphi University in the Departments of Psychology and Communication Disorders. She has co-authored five text books which are used in universities throughout the United States. Dr. Tiegerman was appointed to serve on the New York State Early Intervention Coordinating Counsel and the New York State 21st Century School's Commission by the New York Legislature. She is one of the lead applicants for the Phoenix Academy Charter School.

Address: 29 Cedar Drive
Great Neck Estates
Great Neck, NY 11021
Telephone: (516) 773-1021

2. Paul Rosen

Mr. Rosen is the President and Co-Owner of David G. Rosen, Inc. which is one of the top producers of contract sales in the United States within the furniture industry. Mr. Rosen has served as a Board member at SLCD since 1990 and assumed responsibility as Chairman of the Board of Directors in 2008. Mr. Rosen's daughter attended SLCD for many years and is now a creative artist living in California. Mr. Rosen has been involved in all aspects of fund raising and development and has been a critical decision maker in the expansion of SLCD over the past several years.

Address: 25 So. Service Road
Jericho, NY 11753
Telephone: (631) 368-1703

3. Bryan Tseng

Mr. Tseng presently works as a management consultant at Diamond Management and Technology Consultants. He has served on the Board of

Directors of SLCD for the past 2 years as a member of various standing committees. He has been involved in fundraising and development projects and has worked closely to facilitate the development of the vocational training program in SLCD's high school program.

Address: 50 W. 34th Street
Apt 11C7
New York, NY, 10001

Telephone: (626) 318-5414

4. Scott Liewehr

Mr. Liewehr is the Developer and Owner of Onesta which is an information technology firm. Mr. Liewehr has extensive experience in developing professional services through software programs and markets. He has served on SLCD's Board of Directors for the past two years on various standing committees and now serves as the chairperson of the Development Committee.

Address: 12 Irons Place
New Hyde Park, NY 11040

Telephone: (917) 509-4054

5. Sher Sparano

Ms. Sparano is the President of Benefits Advisory Service Corporation which develops health insurance programs for businesses. She has been involved as an Executive for Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield in all of its component services: customer service, underwriting, claims, manage care and marketing. Ms. Sparano has been involved for the past seven years as a member as SLCD's Board of Directors and now serves as its Vice Chairman.

Address: 70-20 108th St. #51
Forest Hills, NY 11375

Telephone: (917) 837-8777

6. Ana L. Bishop

Ms. Bishop has extensive management experience at the cooperate level in both public and private sectors. She was involved as a consultant in educational technology in cooperate management, communication and marketing. She was involved in long range planning for the integration of technology into school curriculum, deployment of professional development projects with in schools and market development in the area of English-as-a-second-language, bilingual education and foreign languages. Ms. Bishop speaks several languages as well. Finally, she held administrative and management positions in the New York City Department of Education from December 2003-2005.

Address: 385 South End Avenue
New York, NY 10280

Telephone: (917) 686-6784

7. Nancy Eng, Ph.D.

Dr. Eng is an Associate Professor at Hunter College in the Department of Communications Sciences and Disorders. Dr. Eng has an extensive research background in bilingual development and assessment. Her research has been published in the most distinguished journals in the field of speech language pathology. Dr. Eng speaks several languages and has a private practice in New York City serving Asian families whose children present with speech and language disorders.

Address: 425 E. 25th Street
New York, NY 10010

Telephone: (212) 481-4139

I. Lead Applicants and Key Personnel:

1. Dr. Ellenmorris Tiegerman:

See above.

2. Dr. Concetta Russo

Dr. Russo has extensive experience in special education with a specialty in learning disabilities and reading. She served for over 20 years as the Chairperson for the Committee on Special Education for the Massapequa School District. In 2007 she was a consultant for the Jersey City Public School District on the development of RTI Models in elementary and secondary education. Most recently she has served as a professor in the Department of Special Education at Seton Hall and has just accepted an academic position at St. Johns University. Dr. Russo has lectured extensively as a consultant for Scientific Learning Corporation. She has been involved with the development of SLCD's high school program since 2005. Dr. Russo developed and published a specialized reading program entitled Recipe for Reading and co-authored a text book on Response To Intervention (RTI) with Dr. Tiegerman and Dr. Radziewicz which is now being used by school districts.

3. Dr. Christine Radziewicz

Dr. Radziewicz is the Director of the School for Language and Communication Development. She has extensive experience and training in speech language pathology, special education and deaf education. She served as a clinical Professor and Director of the Speech and Hearing Center at Adelphi University. She has co-authored several text books on developmental disabilities and disorders which are presently being used at universities throughout the United States.

4. Susanne Lonigro

Ms. Lonigro is a certified public accountant who has worked extensively in the area of business management. She is presently the Finance Director at the School for Language and Communication Development and is responsible for all financial projects, annual reports and budgets.

5. Helena LaForgia

Mrs. LaForgia has extensive experience as a Business Manager and is presently the Business Manager at the School for Language and Communication Development. She is responsible for all business operations and facilities at SLCD.

J. Specific Attributes in Board Members and Key Staff

The founding Board members have extensive business, financial and corporate experience. The Board will seek to identify additional members who have experience in community development in Queens. These individuals should have the following characteristics:

1. Experience with community organizations.
2. An understanding of multicultural issues within Queens.
3. Networking ties to corporations and foundations.
4. An understanding of the school's mission.
5. Organizational and leadership skills.

To identify such Board members, several recruiting networks will be utilized: Queens County Economic Development Corporation, St. John's University and Queens College. We will also work closely with Councilwoman Julissa Ferreras's and Senator Jose Peralta's offices to develop a close and

collaborative relationship with organizations identified through their offices. Since SLCD has successfully used BoardNet USA to identify prospective Board members, we will continue to do so for the charter school.

K. Board Training

The Board of Directors has received Board training from Cause Effective Inc. and New York State Board Training Consortium (SBTC). Courses attended:

1. Board's Role in Working with Staff Leadership
2. Developing a Fiscally Accountable Nonprofit Board
3. Doing the Right Thing: Board Members as Ethical Leaders and Decision Makers
4. Duties and Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards
5. Fund Development for Nonprofit Boards
6. Human Resource Issues for Nonprofit Boards
7. Nonprofit Accounting Basics for Board Members
8. Nonprofit Board Member Responsibilities for Governance of Medicaid-Supported Programs
9. Recruiting, Developing & Retaining a Motivated Board of Directors
10. Strategic Planning: Setting the Course for a Successful Future
11. Understanding Your Legal Obligations as a Nonprofit Board Member

L. Community Support

The Phoenix Academy Charter School will specialize in serving students with limited English proficiency. Data provided by the New York City Department of Education indicate that this population has increased dramatically in Queens over the past several years with students presenting low test scores citywide. We believe that the collaborative relationship between SLCD, PACS and community leaders such as Councilwoman Julissa Ferreras and Senator Jose Peralta can increase achievements for English language learners. The PACS will work to develop these relationships to achieve community support. In addition, extensive parent programming will be developed to ensure that parents become educational partners. As parents increase their facilitative knowledge of their children's education there will be an increase in the generalization process from school to home.