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

A. Mission Statement and Objectives

At CASA L, educators, families and community members will provide a communal yet rigorous academic environment to support our students' ability to become academically proficient, intellectually curious, civic minded & leadership driven.

CASA L will develop a school program that involves the following core principles:

- a) A belief that all students can learn and achieve as a result of effective teaching, collaborative & systemic interactions;
- b) A culture climate that clearly defines and models high expectations while providing systematic positive reinforcement;
- c) Universal access to rigorous, standards-based curriculum and research-based instruction available to each and every child, coupled with targeted interventions for those who have additional needs as evidenced through data;
- d) A collaborative problem-solving process and comprehensive assessment system that uses data to determine and allows for evidence-based interventions at the early stages of need, informs instruction, accelerates student progress and monitors the progress of each student toward goals;
- e) A system that involves families early, consistently & meaningfully to ensure student success;
- f) Strong leadership that visualizes, plans, implements, and refines systemic practices that lead to continuous improvement and increased learning.

B. Key Design Elements

CASA L Key Design Elements include:

- a) Rigorous Academics with Intensive Focus on Core Subjects. CASA L will focus intensively on a reading program that builds fluency, phonics, decoding and comprehension, which gives students opportunities to demonstrate those skills in a separate writing and speaking class from our internally developed curriculum. We will create math confidence and competence through direct instruction of basic skills, and repeated assessment of those skills;
- b) Smaller school size within a Seamless elementary & middle school. CASA L plans to provide a small school size with 300 students at the ES level and 150 at the middle school level for nine years of seamless education in an optimal environment. We will maintain a class size of 25 students or fewer across the years with co-teaching model with subject matter and special needs learning specialist reducing the staffing ratio to approximately 12:1;
- c) Responsive academic program. CASA L will address academic, social, cognitive and physical developmental needs of each child at each grade level each year, by intentionally increasing the level of independence, autonomy and academic accountability. We support this by training our staff on instructional methods that are responsive to student academic, social and emotional development;
- d) 21st Century Blended/Hybrid learning environment that meets students in their digital ecosystem. CASA L will implement various styles of learning including traditional methods, blended, experiential, project-based and digital. Students will use digital literacy strategically to find & evaluate information, connect and collaborate with others, produce original content, and use the Internet and technology tools to achieve many academic, professional, and personal goals;
- e) An effective Core Programming & Response to Intervention (RTI) framework that includes

multi-tiered prevention strategies, universal screening, progress monitoring, and data based decisions. This framework informs our core, supplemental and intervention programs, is the practice of providing high quality instruction and interventions matched to student needs, monitoring progress frequently and applying data to important instructional decisions.

- f) **Frequent Assessment and Data-Driven Instruction.** We will use a variety of assessment methods and instruments to generate data that determines how our academic program can best meet the needs of students.
- g) **Comprehensive and Intensive Student Support System.** Students will develop a supportive relationship with an academic advisor who assists with student academic and social growth.

C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

Enrollment. The main objective of the enrollment plan is to provide CASA L a viable K-8 program that is organizationally viable and serves the students and our community in Bushwick. CASA L believes it is important to set positive and high expectations for children at the earliest of ages so that it can meet our goal of producing students meeting and exceeding proficiency standards in all core subject areas. CASA L believes strongly in the important roles school and class size play in meeting the individual needs of students. Charter schools must ultimately balance the need from an educational quality perspective for small classroom size with the economic reality of economies of scale—spreading fixed costs among a larger number of students. CASA L believes it can balance both educational quality and fiscal viability with its enrollment plan.

	Year 1 (2017-18)		Year 2 (2018-19)		Year 3 (2019-20)		Year 4 (2020-21)		Year 5 (2021-22)	
Grade	Sections	Students								
K	2	50	2	50	2	50	2	50	2	50
1	2	50	2	50	2	50	2	50	2	50
2	2	50	2	50	2	50	2	50	2	50
3			2	50	2	50	2	50	2	50
4					2	50	2	50	2	50
5					2	50	2	50	2	50
6							2	50	2	50
7									2	50
total	6	150	8	200	12	300	14	350	16	400

Recruitment & At-Risk/Special Populations. As part of the outreach plan, the planning team will issue Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on local radio stations and Spanish language channels; organize free, public information sessions, and approach local newspapers, in both English and Spanish, to arrange interviews about the school. The school will build a website and utilize social media (Facebook), as well as traditional means to reach the public including organizations, programs, advocacy groups and door to door canvassing in low income housing, welfare agencies, children’s services, homeless shelter to target Economically Disadvantaged students.

CASA L will show a good faith effort to meet or exceed state SWD, ELL & FRL/Economically Disadvantaged enrollment and retention targets that are set by the Board of Regents or the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York and anticipates being in line or exceeding state targets. CASA L enrollment targets as calculated by using the NYSED enrollment/retention calculator are as follows: ELL: 20.3% enrollment / 93.1% retention; SWD: 16.2% enrollment / 91.7% retention; Economically Disadvantaged: 93.6% enrollment / 90.9% retention. CASA L will conduct outreach to encourage students to apply.

When conducting outreach, a school will ensure that outreach will proactively reach out to areas

more likely to have SWD & ELL students. School informational meetings will be held in locations that are accessible by public transportation. CASA L will have school-related materials available in the languages most commonly spoken in the community. This will ensure that the parents of ELL students, who themselves may be Limited English Proficient (LEP), and LEP parents of non-ELL students can understand the programs offered by the school and the process for applying. CASA L will meet with and give marketing materials to personnel at NYCDOE Family Welcome Centers, the Committee for Special Education 5, CB-4 & CSD-32 CBOs serving SWD, ELL students & those living under the poverty line (Economically Disadvantaged students) in the neighborhood and vicinity, as well as local organizations like the COALITION FOR LATINO FAMILY SERVICE Community Organization, serving non-English speakers and immigrants and special needs organizations, such as United We Stand (UWS) - a community organization for families of Student w. Disabilities (SWD), providing opportunities for information networking, training and support, educational and developmental needs of their children. UWS is directed and staffed by parents who have children with a disability. To reach families who are traditionally less informed about educational choice options, the planning team will contact local child welfare services, organizations that provide services for new immigrants, English language schools, homeless shelters, foster care centers, and organizations that provide basic community, support & educational services to families.

CASA L will oversee the recruitment process and enlist support from parents and advocates who may have access to non-English speaking communities for assistance with outreach. CASA L's plan also included and offer an array of on-site family services, such as a wellness /nutrition program, ESL, special needs awareness programs, homework help, civic programs and other enrichment programs to connect our families access to community resources. We believe that offering these services also serve as a recruiting tool for the school as community members see what the school has to offer. The planning team will also meet with the Superintendent of Community Education Council 32 (CEC-32), and will work with the Committee on Special Education 5 (CSE 5) located at 1665 St. Marks place in Brooklyn, to discuss plans for the school and determine how best to add value to the Community's education portfolio and develop feeder school relationships with pre-k programs such as Bushwick Head Start, St. Barbara Head Start, John Coker Day Care, Round Table DCC, New Life Head Start, Horace E. Grenne DCC, Bethesda DCC;

Admissions. CASA L will ensure compliance with all applicable anti-discrimination laws governing public schools, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and § 2854(2) of the New York Education Law, governing admission to a charter school. CASA L's core application process will run from January – April and then accept on a rolling basis. CASA L will advertise open registration and will encourage parents, caregivers and students who need or want assistance to meet with faculty to review and complete the required enrollment papers. Before January, the school will advertise open registration. All applications must be received by April 1 to be included in the lottery. If the number of applications received exceeds the number of available seats, an individual unaffiliated with the school will conduct a random lottery selection process. Applicants, who are not selected through the lottery, will have their name placed on a waitlist. Homeless youth, or youth who may be unaccompanied, may submit an enrollment application. Within two weeks of the admission lottery, admitted students will receive an enrollment packet. The school will conduct additional outreach to ensure that sufficient numbers of special population students are aware of the lottery and participate. CASA L defines "at-risk" students as those who are or have ever been enrolled in the child welfare system, are homeless, have a disability, are ELL, or are attending a school where over

50% of students perform below grade level on the state ELA or Math exam. If a lottery is necessary, admission preference will be granted to applicants in the following order, and will utilize the NYSED weighted lottery generator:

- First preference will be given to returning students,
- Second preference will be given to siblings of students already enrolled. For definition purposes, “siblings” are two or more children that are related either by birth, the same father or mother, by legal adoption or guardianship.
- Third preference will be given to students who fall within the school’s definition for risk of academic failure.
- Fourth preference will be given to students who reside in CSD-32.
- Remaining slots will be available to non at-risk applicants residing outside of CSD-32.

CASA L assures that it will not require parents to attend meetings or other information workshop, or to sign agreements or contracts regarding parental responsibilities as a condition of enrolling a child in the School.

Retention: CASA L approach will implement a clear framework to educate SWD, ELL & Economically Disadvantaged students in a structured way that sets educational goals for them, establishes policies and a culture for all faculty and staff, and ensure there are sufficient resources to meet program needs effectively. CASA L Personal Learning Plans will provide highly customized programming for each student. The program and curriculum structures allow the faculty to customize the pace of learning and accommodate different learning styles, providing extra support and thus preventing failure. Moreover, many students struggling with traditional academics often have extraordinary talent and skills. CASA L will focus and build on those talents and strengths to achieve academic success for all students. The advisor for each student will serve as the primary point of contact for retention by collaboratively designing and implementing the Personal Learning Plan with and for said student, tapping subject matter and learning specialists as required. Finally, CASA L will focus on advisory and mentorship framework helps students mitigate the challenges and will allow for greater accountability and deeper learning.

English Language Learners (ELLs). CASA L will integrate literacy via structured immersion across the curriculum drawing from the best practices and successful researched based strategies of NYCDOE & NYC Charter Center Special ELL Collaborative, which has effectively supported English language learner across content areas. Instruction will follow a tiered RTI model with CASA L curriculum being delivered to all students, targeted supplemental interventions being provided to students experiencing difficulty, and intensive interventions being extended to students with learning difficulties. During these Instructional teams will monitor student progress using data collected from assessments to develop and/or revise individualized learning goals, adjust instructional groups, and recommend additional interventions for students who are not experiencing progress. CASA L’s experiential & project-based approach provides both cooperative learning and individualized support to boost academic achievement for ELLs. In instances when there are students who speak the same language and one is more proficient, they may be paired or grouped so that we can leverage peer support. CASA L will employ bilingual staff that will include Specialized Learning Coaches/Coordinators to provide targeted support to general education teachers to implement successful ELL practices & strategies including home language support and sheltered content instruction.

Students with Disabilities. CASA L personalized model provides all students with personalized learning plans. CASA L will use a rigorous Response To Intervention (RTI) model and all students have access to differentiated supports including assistive technology, Learning Coaches, targeted support and supplemental services and tutoring. In addition to these supports, students with disabilities will receive services from certified special education instructors. We will recruit certified special education teachers and other professionals who believe that all students can achieve and provide specialized instruction and accommodations to identified students within a full inclusion setting. CASA L will also work closely with the Committee on Special Education and advocacy groups like United We Stand and Advocates for Children to ensure the student is receiving all needs supports and services to thrive within our school model.

Economically Disadvantaged Students (Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Lunch): CASA L will provide community, college, civic and workplace learning opportunities that will dramatically increase students' exposure to college and career trajectories & rigor. This will support both retention and transition issues by fueling students' aspirations. CASA L will focus on working on school culture with all of our students to practice community, inclusion, growth mindset and minimize the feelings of frustration and hopelessness that often culminate in students dropping out. As a culturally responsive school, we will acknowledge the lived realities of our students and work to cultivate a community of academic strivers. We provide referrals to services as needed including housing, etc. Learning Coaches, supervised by a social worker, will develop close connections to students and their families to be able to connect them with local services as needed. Facilitating connections to after-school programs will be another way of providing support to low-income students and families. Finally, by ensuring that teachers are well supported to work with a range of students through meaningful professional development and dedicated collaboration time, we increase the likelihood that all of our students will stay connected through relationships with skilled, committed, and enthusiastic faculty & staff.

Student transfer and/or withdrawal procedures. CASA L is a public school of choice, both for application and withdrawal. At any time, a parent or guardian may wish to transfer their child to a different school. A parent or guardian wishing to withdraw his/her child from CASA L will be asked to complete a request for student withdrawal form. CASA L personnel will offer to meet with the family and discuss their reasons for withdrawing from CASA L, as well as to seek solutions to any problems that arise from these discussions. If the parents or guardians still wish to transfer their child to another school, the CASA L staff will make every reasonable effort to help the student find a school that better serves the family's desires. CASA L will ensure the timely transfer of any necessary school records to the student's new school.

CASA L will backfill any student vacancies off the waitlist up to February of each school year.

D. Community to be Served

Bushwick is a working- and middle-class neighborhood in the northern part of the New York City borough of Brooklyn. The neighborhood, formerly Brooklyn's 18th Ward, is now part of Brooklyn Community Board 4. It is policed by the NYPD's 83rd Precinct and is represented in the New York City Council as part of Districts 34 and 37. Bushwick shares a border with Ridgewood, Queens, to the northeast, and is bound by the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Williamsburg to the northwest; East New York and the cemeteries of Highland Park to the southeast; Brownsville to the south; and

Bedford-Stuyvesant to the southwest. It is served by ZIP codes 11206, 11207, 11221, and 11237. The inequities of education are still prevalent today. Bushwick's population in 2007 was 129,980. 38.9% of that population was foreign born. Though an ethnic neighborhood, Bushwick's population is, for a New York City neighborhood, relatively heterogeneous, scoring a 0.5 on the Furman Center's racial diversity index, making it the city's 35th most diverse neighborhood in 2007. Most residents are Latinos from the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico and from the Dominican Republic, but more recent years have seen an increase in native-born Americans as well as other Latino groups, particularly immigrants from Mexico and El Salvador. In 2008 the neighborhood's median household income was \$28,802. 32% of the population falls under the poverty line, making Bushwick the 7th most impoverished neighborhood in New York City. Over 75% of children in the neighborhood are born in poverty. Bushwick's diverse housing stock includes six-family apartment buildings and two- and three-family townhouses. The median age of the housing stock is 76 years. Over 91% of housing units are within a quarter mile of a park, and over 97% of housing units are within half a mile of a subway. Median rent in 2007 was \$795, the 40th-highest in the city. About one in six rental units is subsidized, and greater than one in three units is rent regulated. 4% of renters live in severely overcrowded conditions. Vacant land fills 4.1% of Bushwick, rating it the 21st most vacant neighborhood in the city. In 2007, the neighborhood had an 18.7% homeownership rate, though roughly 1 in 20 owners of 1–4 unit buildings received a notice of foreclosure.

Per Charter School Law, CASA L students will reflect the community of Bushwick and Community School District 32 (CSD-32). CSD-32 is located in Northern Brooklyn. According to the most recent NYSED Data, CSD-32 student population is predominately African-American and Latino (19% and 77% respectively); has 87% of students receiving free/reduced lunch; 20% are identified as Student w. Disabilities (SWD) and 20% are English Language Learners (ELL).

According to the NYSED Report Card, in 2015, proficiency rates for students in grade 3-8 who scored at level 3 or 4 was as follows:

NYSED 2015 Proficiency Data	CSD-32 3-8 aggregate Proficiency - Lvl 3 & 4	SWD Proficiency - Lvl 3 & 4	ELL Proficiency - Lvl 3 & 4	Economically Disadvantaged Proficiency - Lvl 3 & 4
ELA	19%	4%	2%	18%
Math	21%	7%	5%	20%

E. Public Outreach

CASA L envisions a dynamic relationship with the community in which the school, the district, community based organizations, families, elected officials and other community members work together to create a community of learning which will ensure that students achieve academic success and that their families further their own education, in order to improve the quality of life for all. CASA L believes the school can be used as another tool in the portfolio of community support services, adding value and contributing to the public good for an underserved community. The board and school will commit to maintaining close ties within the community - especially with organizations that serve the children of Bushwick.

Parents: CASA L has engaged the parent and family constituency of Bushwick (CSD-32) to gauge interest in a new public school option. CASA L has conducted local community outreach through info sessions conducted at various locations near the proposed school location. The events took place in 2015-2016 and resulted in over 230 parent interest signatures for CASA L.

Given the important role families can play in contributing to academic progress, the CASA L intends

to increase their commitment to the school and its methods by involving them in school activities in several ways.

Info Sessions: To date CASA L has conducted 4 informational events and has a series of future info sessions scheduled for execution in April and May of 2016. Initial CASA L info sessions were conducted on Sept 5, 2015, Nov 25, 2015 where 113 surveys were collected. The information in these surveys will inform our proposal. Please reference these parent petitions in & survey results in sample outreach attachment. Ongoing sessions are scheduled throughout the application process.

Survey Results: The 1st set of surveys gave us the following insights: 80% of families are interested in CASA L for their child; 42% of families surveyed DID NOT SPEAK English at home; 95% of students talk about the attending a post secondary institution after high school; 41% of families would take an active role in the development of the school; 60% of parents felt their child's performance was average or below; 48% need core academic support in core ela and math; 42% of students enjoy hands on work as opposed to "book work"; 32% of students enjoy classes that utilize technology; 41% of students need more challenging work, are bored or disengaged, frustrated, not doing well. In the 2nd set of surveys, key takeaways for families included a desire for: a progressive school model; character education; a STEM based curriculum; afterschool programming and physical activities. This information coupled with further discussions and planning with community stakeholders, will deeply inform the school program and ancillary supports that will be developed for our students.

As mentioned before, the student population of CB-4/CSD-32 target population of the Bushwick includes a high level of at-risk students with a very wide range of specific individual needs including a high number of children living in poverty, a high number of English language learners and a high number of students with disabilities and other special needs. According to Eric Jensen (*Teaching With Poverty in Mind*), people living in poverty are exposed to many more acute stressors than their more affluent counterparts. These stressors can have negative effects on children such as social and emotional deficits and a lack of basic cognitive skills.¹ Children living in poverty need to acquire the social skills necessary for them to learn and the intellectual skills necessary to perform well academically. CASA L's mission aligns with these general needs and recognizes the importance of cultivating social skills as well as the intellectual skills of critical thinking and problem solving that are essential to the successful pursuit of learning and high academic achievement. The intense differentiation and individualization of instruction that characterizes the CASA L's approach is particularly appropriate, since it is designed to assimilate and adapt to the specific needs of each individual in any group of students.

CASA L will develop several means of communication with its parents and guardians, which include: (1) Parent meetings that are held at the beginning and end of each of CASA L's two semesters. Teachers and administrators will meet to discuss programs, overall progress, future plans, etc.; (2) Individual parent/guardian meetings with teachers at 4 times per year. These meetings will be scheduled to occur during each mid-semester (approx. Nov. and April) following the distribution of progress reports to the parents and guardians of CASA L students and will focus on each student's academic and communal progress; (3) Progress reports sent to the parents/guardians of each

¹ Jensen, E. (2009). *Teaching with poverty in mind*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

student bi-weekly; (4) report cards sent to parents/guardians 4 times yearly, twice each semester; (5) development and maintenance of a CASA L website that is designed specifically to promote continuous parental involvement with the school and the promotion of email communication and the school's website as effective means of communication; (6) Facilitate the development and continued operation of an CASA L Family School Association (FSA); (7) Standard procedure for staff to contact parents about student behaviors (either positive or negative). Contact can be made by phone, email or face to face meetings; (8) Development and maintenance of a school climate that is friendly and inviting to parents; (9) implement a program of workshops for families in order to assist them in diverse areas such as helping with homework help, intellectual stimulation, nutrition, financial literacy, networking, writing workshops, life skills workshops, parenting support practices, events & festivals; (10) recruit and hire bilingual staff; and (11) Ensure all outreach activities be conducted in English, Spanish and any other language warranted.

Community Partners & Support: The planning team has recently engaged and met many stakeholders, including: parents, Community Board 4 representatives, Community based organizations, feeder organizations, health centers, special need providers, advocates, block associations, faith-based institutions and elected officials. We articulate our vision and have requested meetings to discuss potential areas of need, support and collaboration. Key stakeholders include but are not limited to: Nadine Whitted, District Manager of Community Board 4 (CB-4), Chairperson Julie Dent & Ms. Virgie Jones of the CB-4 Youth & Education Committee; NYCDOE Family Welcome Center, Community Based organizations such as Ridgewood-Bushwick Youth Center, Bushwick Homes for Children, Salvation Army, Brooklyn Justice Council, Coalition for Latino Family Services. For a full list of organizations please see sample outreach attachments that includes a draft of the letter sent out. CASA L has also been in dialogue with and has received the Support of the following Elected Officials, Community Based organizations, institutions and groups. Included in this LOI are samples of this support, which includes US Congressman Hakeem Jeffries, NYS Senator Martin Dilan, NYC Councilman Raphael Espinal, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, Good Samaritan Gates Child Development Center, Bushwick United Development Fund Early Learn, Brooklyn Community Parents Head Start Program, Friends of Crown Heights Educational Center, Concourse House Day Care, Child Care Smarts, Pilgrim Church & St. Paul Community BC.

F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact

Programmatic Impact: CASA L will open with 150 students and our anticipated full enrollment of 450 in 2023 would only constitute about 3% of the district enrollment. There are currently 8 District K-5 schools, 2 District K-8 schools, 3 Charter K-8 Schools (all operated by CMOs).

We believe CASA L will have positive programmatic impact on the schools in CSD-32.

- CASA L addresses the recorded public demand for more options demonstrated as by the waitlists of other charter schools currently existing in the district– 32 students waiting for each available seat in CSD-32 -.
- CASA L provides relief to the district and other schools by taking it's equitable share of students with special needs.
- CASA L provides relief and allows the district class size reduction and smaller learning communities initiatives - CASA L creates additional seats capacity.
- CASA L expands on learning community's diversity of school settings, approaches, and models - CASA L expands the community's portfolio of options for families, as well as charter diversity by being the first non-cmo school in CSD-32.

- CASA L has the potential to positively impact local schools by modeling programs and sharing effective practices. As we intend to work with the same types of students as other schools in the area, our success will hopefully draw other educators to learn from our methods and explore opportunities to collaborate in areas such as professional development, parent involvement, extra-curricular activities, and community building.

Fiscal Impact: CASA L will have minimal fiscal impact on NYCDOE public schools. For purposes of this analysis, CASA L expects that the NYCDOE will have to transfer \$13,877 annually for each child enrolled during the 2017-18 school year. This figure, along with the “District Budget” figure, is based on assumptions provided in guidance from the NYSED & NYCDOE. Based on this guidance, CASA L expects a 0% annual increase in both the per-pupil allocations and the district budget. The number of such students in the first year (2017-18) will be 150 and the financial impact on the NYCDOE will be \$2,081,550 or 0.008% of the total NYCDOE budget of \$27,200,000. In subsequent years, the financial impact remains minimal. Over the course of its first five years of operation, *CASA L’s enrollment will reach 400 students*. As documented in the chart below, CASA L will have little to no financial impact – a fraction of a percentage point - on the NYC over the course of the charter term.

Fiscal Impact on Non-Public Schools

CASA L is not anticipated to have a great effect on these institutions as the CASA L expects that many of its students will come from low-income families that would not have had the means to pay for high tuition private schools. While there may be an impact on small, low-tuition parochial and private schools, it is expected to be minimal. CASA L will most likely appeal to families of students in the existing public schools, since such a high percentage of them are not meeting state standards and would benefit from the programs offered at CASA L. For families who had previously made their choice to send their children to low-tuition parochial or private schools, the option to withdraw their children from those schools in favor of high performing free public charter schools would reduce enrollment of these nonpublic schools.

II. Educational Plan

A. Curriculum and Instruction

CASA L instructional methods and philosophy: CASA L intends to set high standards for its students, staff, and families. By creating an environment that promotes academic and civic achievements, CASA L will motivate its students to be lifetime learner by giving its students the tools to succeed in today’s world.

As CASA L will open as a K-2, we anticipate working with a large number of at risk students, based on socio-economic levels and academic performance. In order for students to achieve, CASA L has devoted more time on task than other public schools. A longer school day and longer school year with the possible inclusion of monthly Saturday classes (dependent on available funding) will ensure that all of our students succeed. Core subjects of English Language Arts and Math will be 90 minutes and Science will be 60 minutes every day for K-2; grades 3-5 will have 90 minutes of Science. Core subjects will be balanced by, gym, art, music, and theatre. In addition, time for tutoring and remediation has been set-aside in the weekly schedule

CASA L will set high standards for its students, staff, and families. By creating an environment that promotes academic and civic achievements, CASA L gives its students the tools to succeed in today’s world. In order to serve our students well, CASA L will use a Common Core aligned curriculum as

the framework for most subjects, including core subjects as well as art and music. Students will also be exposed to Latin throughout their tenure at CASA L. The school's curriculum will be enhanced by CASA L's emphasis on civic & community engagement. We have set high expectations on civic responsibility. Each year students will dedicate at least 25 hours towards community service learning projects that reinforce community, academic, financial, economic and social frameworks. We will continue to build partnerships with local and regional organizations to expose our students to the larger world around them.

Instructional Decision Making: The Executive Director, Director of Instruction, Curriculum & Assessment Coordinator, classroom teachers, and members of the student support division will be involved in the instructional decision-making process. The teacher will administer the classroom assessment. Within a week, the data from the assessment will be "crunched" and a data meeting will be held with the teacher, Accountability and Assessment Coordinator and *DI*. During the data meeting, the results will be analyzed and discussed to determine which academic standards need to be re-taught at the individual level, the small-group level, or the whole class level. The teacher, Accountability and Assessment Coordinator and Director of Instruction will discuss the implications for instruction and make a re-teaching plan. This may include piloting new materials, or re-allocating the amount of time spent teaching a specific standard, or reviewing difficult concepts. Students who repeatedly struggle with concepts, as measured by the assessments, will be provided with additional services through the Accountability and Assessment Coordinator. S/he – in conjunction with instructional leadership – will determine the types of remedial support best suited to the students' needs. Achievement data of the students receiving the additional support will be closely monitored to determine the extent to which they will require the additional skill strengthening study time with the learning support team.

Response to Intervention: At the heart of CASA L's mission to meet the needs of all learners is an effective Response to Intervention (RTI) framework. This framework **involves or includes** our morning tutoring and an intervention program that supports the curriculum model that is practiced in CASA L's classrooms. RTI is the practice of providing high quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important instructional decisions. (Batsche et al., 2005). RTI is a process by which individual classroom Learning Coaches and collective school systems meet student needs. The RTI framework includes multi-tiered prevention strategies, universal screening, progress monitoring, and data-based decision-making. Many mistakenly believe that RTI is a special education initiative when in fact it is a general education initiative.

CASA L has adopted and is heightening its capacity of modeling the core principles of RTI which involve the following elements:

- A **belief** that all students can learn and achieve as a result of effective teaching and collaborative, systemic interactions.
- A **culture and climate** that clearly defines, models, and teaches behavioral expectations while providing systematic positive reinforcement.
- Universal access to rigorous, standards-based **curriculum** and research-based **instruction** available to each and every child coupled with targeted and intensive **interventions** for those who have additional needs as evidenced through data.
- A comprehensive **assessment** system that allows CASA L to intervene at the early stages of need,

inform instruction, and monitor the ongoing progress of student learning.

- A collaborative **problem-solving** process that uses data to determine and select evidence-based interventions that accelerate student progress toward targeted goals.
- A system that involves **parents and families** early, consistently, and in meaningful ways to ensure student success.
- Strong building **leadership** that visualizes, plans, implements, and refines systemic practices that lead to continuous improvement and increased student learning.

CASA L continues to build the infrastructure and systems behind the practice that fosters a seamless flow of the information, feedback, and resources needed to practice RTI effectively and train leaders and staff to understand and implement it with efficacy. We are paying particular attention to:

- Increasing the capacity of knowledge management/assessment system that provides both universal screening as well as progress monitoring information;
- Developing a clearly defined and tiered array of increasingly intensive interventions;
- Further developing and articulating our CC standards-based curriculum implemented & research-based instructional strategies with fidelity; and a problem-solving mechanism to monitor and match student needs

At Risk Students: The CASA L approach to meeting the needs of students at-risk of academic failure is a combination of high academic expectations, standards-based instruction, extended time to teach math and ELA, and ongoing and regular assessments to measure student achievement of the standards, and re-allocating resources based on the data yielded by the assessments. Our Assessment manager monitors student data on standardized assessments and in-house data collection tools. Because the New York state exams begin in third grade, the school has K–2 students take the appropriate literacy assessments and use appropriate reading programs to monitor these younger students’ reading progress.

Throughout their *K-8* career at CASA L students’ reading comprehension and accuracy are assessed frequently. In math and ELA, students are assessed at all grade levels through math interim assessments that are aligned to the New York State math standards. The data from all of these assessments provides teachers and administration with regular ways to identify students who are performing below grade level. Remedial instruction at CASA L is provided through a range of methods and strategies. CASA L’s teachers work with students in small, flexible groups to provide re-teaching of specific standards, based on the data on the assessments. In addition, students may be provided with extended math and literacy instruction through a range of research-based remediation programs.

Upon entry to CASA L classrooms, one should see the following instructional practices and cultural norms:

Instructional Practice

1. Students sitting in collaborative groups, working on learning activities;
2. Students participating in learning centers, differentiated for specific student levels;
3. Learning Coaches providing clear learning goals, posted and referred to during instruction;
4. Learning Coaches acknowledging correct answers and understanding of concepts;
5. Learning Coaches chunking new information into “digestible bites” in order to increase student understanding;

6. Learning Coaches creating opportunities for students to share what they have learned and demonstrate understanding;
7. Learning Coaches providing opportunities for students to practice the new strategies they have been taught;
8. Students reviewing errors and practicing strategies to correct misinformation;
9. Students using resources and receiving guidance so as to execute new and re-taught tasks;
10. Learning Coaches using academic games to encourage and to re-engage students during lessons;
11. Learning Coaches maintaining a healthy pace to maintain student engagement during instructional episodes;
12. Learning Coaches maintaining enthusiasm and encouraging participating in specific subject matter;
13. Learning Coaches providing opportunities for students and encouraging them to discuss information during collaborations;
14. Learning Coaches being aware of students and able to pre-empt situations that may cause disruptions;
15. Both Learning Coaches and students demonstrating respect of one another.

Cultural Norms

1. Students and Learning Coaches demonstrating respectful talk and students working together with minimal disagreements;
2. Learning Coach maintaining close proximity to students within the classroom;
3. Learning Coaches exhibiting warmth and care for students;
4. Pride in classroom work evidenced through displays both in and out of the classrooms;
5. An expectation that all students will participate and Learning Coaches not allowing students to “opt out” during a lesson or during independent work periods;
6. All routines are obvious and are smooth functioning;
7. Transitions are quick, quiet, and orderly;
8. Students are well aware of expectations;
9. The classroom environment operates in a fair and equitable manner;
10. Classroom rules are consistently followed and consequences are fairly distributed;
11. The school maintains a safe and orderly environment;
12. Furniture is set up in a way to support collaboration and learning activities;
13. Technology is used often and appropriately;
14. Classrooms are clean and orderly.

Differentiation of Instruction

1. Small group work that occurs after whole group work;
2. Learning Centers that work on specific skills for practice or remediation;
3. Use of supplemental materials, such as *Waterford Learning Systems*, *Achieve 3000* & *Khan Academy* which personalize learning and specifically meet the instructional needs of individual students;
4. Lunchtime and after-school tutoring which works with specific students on necessary skills.

Instructional Decision Making

The Directors of Instruction (DI) lead the instructional decision-making process under the guidance

and approval of the Executive Director. Typically, the teachers administer the classroom assessment. Regularly, the data from the assessment will be “crunched” and a data meeting will be held with the teacher, Accountability and Assessment Coordinator and DIs.

During data meetings, the results are analyzed and discussed to determine which academic standards need to be re-taught at the individual level, the small-group level, or the whole class level. The teacher, the Assessment Coordinator and Directors of Instruction will discuss the implications for instruction and make a re-teaching plan. This may include piloting new materials, or re-allocating the amount of time spent teaching a specific standard, or reviewing difficult concepts. Students who repeatedly struggle with concepts, as measured by the assessments, will be provided with additional services through the Assessment Manager. S/he, in conjunction with instructional leadership, identifies the types of remedial support best suited to the students’ needs. Achievement data of the students receiving the additional support will be closely monitored to determine the extent to which they will require the additional time with the learning support team.

VII.1. Curriculum. CASA L will utilize a Common Core aligned program at each grade level. Literacy will be taught for approximately 90 minutes each day in the elementary grades. The specific components of CASA L’s instructional approach include: large group read-aloud; small-group guided reading; individual independent reading; large-group writing instruction; individual independent writing; vocabulary work; decoding and phonemic awareness. At the middle school level, students improve their ability to write and communicate effectively and engage the world of non-fiction and literature. Mathematics is taught for approximately 90 minutes each day in the elementary grades. The specific components of the framework include a daily morning math routine, the introduction of new math material, problem-solving, spiral review, and fact fluency. At the middle school level, students focus on integrated mathematical concepts, problem solving and application to the real world. In Social Studies, the New York State standards are taught at each grade level, under the umbrella of different grade-level themes. CASA L’s instructional approach to the teaching of Social Studies is to create a strong and clear link to literacy. Curriculum maps are created for each unit; vocabulary words that relate to the content are identified and taught, and a wide variety of print resources are utilized, such as fiction and non-fiction texts and articles. At the elementary and intermediate levels, students conduct research using the internet and write non-fiction reports on Social Studies units and themes. In Science, the New York State standards are taught at each grade level and broken down into specific content strands. In addition to the content strands, scientific thinking is integrated in order for our students to have on-going learning experiences that emphasize the skills of observing, predicting, forming hypotheses, gathering evidence, and testing hypotheses. Science, like Social Studies, is connected to CASA L’s literacy goals. A wide variety of fiction and non-fiction print resources are utilized.

In order to serve our students, CASA L will utilize the Core Knowledge program as the framework for most subjects, including core subjects as well as art and music. Core Knowledge is based on the premise that a grade-by-grade core of common learning is necessary to ensure a sound and fair elementary education. Started by Professor E. D. Hirsch, Jr., author of *Cultural Literacy* and *The Schools We Need*, and based on a large body of research in cognitive psychology, Core Knowledge is founded on the belief that for the sake of academic excellence, greater fairness, and higher literacy, early schooling should provide a solid, specific, shared core curriculum in order to help children establish strong foundations of knowledge. Currently, hundreds of schools and thousands of

dedicated educators are participating in this school reform movement throughout the United States. Core Knowledge has been shown to be effective with at risk children and has been adopted by a number of charter schools in New York, including some of the most successful – the Carl Ichan Charter Schools in the Bronx. In their most recent ELA assessments the schools had over 90% of students performing at Level 3 and above. In addition, Hellenic Classical Charter School in Brooklyn, another Core Knowledge school, has also out performed its district of location, District 15.

The Core Knowledge website cites its findings on how the curriculum has been successful with urban populations (“An Overview of Research of Core Knowledge,” January 2004, http://coreknowledge.org/CK/about/research/eval12_2002.htm#I.A.%20Oklahoma) In the summer of 2000 administrators in Oklahoma City completed a series of carefully controlled, independent studies on the effects of Core Knowledge in public schools in their district. Oklahoma City Public Schools (OCPS) is an urban district with 67 elementary schools. The ethnic make-up of the district is 39% African-American, 36% European-American, 18% Hispanic, 5% Asian American and 2% Native American. At the time when the studies were done, about half of the district’s elementary schools were using the Core Knowledge curriculum. Since the two groups of students were so precisely matched at the beginning of the school year, one would expect them to post virtually identical average scores at the end of the school year. In fact, however, the students who had spent the year in Core Knowledge classrooms outscored the control students in seven of the eight categories on the ITBS. The Core Knowledge students posted significantly higher scores in reading comprehension (58.1 vs. 55.1), vocabulary (59.8 vs. 55.3), science (58.7 vs. 55.8), math concepts (61.4 vs. 59.2), and social studies (58.3 vs. 53.4). The greatest gains — in reading comprehension, vocabulary, and social studies — were computed to be statistically “highly significant.” In a national study done on the Core Knowledge program, the National test score data from 22 Core Knowledge schools across 13 states were analyzed to identify trends in student performance. Over the six-year review period, the Core Knowledge schools performed well above the national average, with their collective performance increasingly higher than the norm. This performance advantage was evident across the six content areas. The same trend was evident across schools of different sizes, different socio-economic composition, and different ethnic composition. Based on these findings, there appears to be a strong relationship between student performance and the Core Knowledge curriculum.²

The Core Knowledge Program emphasized accumulating knowledge at an early age and building on it. This knowledge lays the foundation for critical thinking. The Core Knowledge Framework will be supplemented with Scott Foreman Reading (for K-5) and Math.

Students will also be exposed to Latin starting in grade 3. Latin strengthens basic English skills in vocabulary and reading comprehension; focuses on grammar which leads to improved English writing and communication; increases cultural awareness and makes cultural connections; encourages critical thinking and comparative analysis; and introduces students to a rich source of mythology, literature and history.

Mastery of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics is a prerequisite for students to move forward in more advanced treatments of these subjects. Regularly, CASA L evaluates the effectiveness of its curriculum, selects appropriate curriculum resources and tools to meet student

² http://coreknowledge.org/CK/about/research/CK_National_Study_2004.pdf

needs. When additional or different curriculum resources are needed for teachers, the Directors of Instruction will identify suitable resources and curriculum to support the learning of all students. CASA L will adapt to the evolving needs of students, which has been brought to light through the implementation of the Common Core standards in New York State and make appropriate adjustments and changes as necessary to more effectively prepare students to be successful in grades K-8 and in their high school careers. CASA L believes that a more grounded and structured approach to mathematics—where concepts are presented in a logical fashion and complicated concepts are not introduced until children have been given the fundamental tools to master them—will allow students to perform math at an extremely high level. CASA L recognizes that the study of math involves incremental steps that build upon each other allowing for the development of a solid base. It is CASA L's intention that its students will be able to progress to pre-algebra by the time they reach middle school because of the solid foundations in arithmetic skills and concepts that they developed and mastered in the elementary school years. With the resulting strong foundations in algebraic skills and ideas, the doors to subsequent meaningful mathematics courses in high school, college and beyond along with possible careers as engineers, scientists and mathematicians will be wide open.

Reading: The school will implement an effective reading instruction program which will be consistent with the Common Core and are aligned with NYS Assessments. One example currently in use is the Scott Foresman Reading Street which is a comprehensive reading program for K-5 that is built on solid research and prioritizes the five core areas of reading instruction for every grade: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Text Comprehension. Reading Street provides a rich variety of genres that include a balance of fiction and nonfiction. Content-area connections support science and social studies instruction every week. With a greater emphasis on informational text, Reading Street prepares students for the kinds of selections they will encounter on state assessments. Reading Street is designed to help teachers build readers through motivating and engaging literature, scientifically research-based instruction, and a wealth of reliable teaching tools. The program has a strong emphasis on ongoing progress-monitoring and an explicit plan to help with managing small groups of students. In addition, *Reading Street* prioritizes skill instruction at each grade level, so teachers can be assured they will focus on the right skill, at the right time, and for every student.

Reading Street instruction is systematic, explicit, and highly focused for all ability levels. This structure allows for Differentiated Instruction to take place within the classroom. Each unit gives a clear road map to differentiate instruction for On-Level, Strategic Intervention, and Advanced reader Group Time throughout each lesson provides scaffolded instruction for all readers. Built-in lessons for Strategic Intervention and Advanced learners supplement core instruction every day. Weekly Leveled Readers and Leveled Practice help every student practice and apply comprehension skills and vocabulary in appropriate texts. .

Mathematics : The teaching of mathematics carries equal weight to the teaching of reading and writing. In order to compete in almost every aspect of life, CASA L children will have to exhibit confidence and proficiency in mathematical skills. The competencies that arise from mastery of mathematics—aptitude in problem-solving; facility with numbers; clear communication; logic and reasoning, argument and proof; mental discipline; and strategic and analytical thinking—are skills that deepen one's ability and effectiveness in areas beyond the math discipline. CASA L believes that mathematics is a subject that has relevance unto itself. If CASA L aspires to create truly well-

rounded educated students, it must ensure that its students become adept at algebra and be financially savvy. CASA L must enable its students to master math-specific knowledge at the early grades in order for them to develop the higher-level skills in problem solving. Allowing students to excel in mathematics opens the doors for them to become engineers, architects, financiers, scientists, doctors, mathematicians, entrepreneurs and all professions which involve, at the core, mathematics. To this end, CASA L will implement effective curriculum to serve its students in Mathematics. One example currently in use is Pearson Scott Foresman enVisionMath for Grades K-5. The curriculum is aligned with the New York State Mathematics Core Curriculum and Learning Standards and is based around scientific research on how children learn mathematics as well as on classroom evidence that validates proven reliability. Scott Foresman teaches for deep conceptual understanding using research-based best practices. It engages and interests all students with leveled activities for ongoing differentiated instruction. Topic-specific considerations for ELL, special education, at-risk, and advanced students enable the teacher to differentiate for the diverse learners in every classroom.

B. Special Student Populations and Related Services

Special Education Population: CASA L is committed to educating our students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, with their non-disabled peers to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) prepared by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the students' school district of residence and all applicable federal laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The School shall not discriminate in admission and enrollment practices on the basis of a student having or being suspected of having a disability. All special education programs and services at CASA L shall be provided in accordance with Education Law § 2853(4)(a) and applicable federal laws and regulations and in accordance with the IEP recommended by the CSE of the students' school district of residence.

Approximately 18% of our students have disabilities and this number grows every year, which is generally consistent with that of the surrounding school districts, CASA L makes efforts in its student recruitment process to ensure that the School will attract comparable or greater enrollment of students with disabilities as compared to CSD-32. CASA L's recruitment efforts towards this special population of students and their families may include: (1) print advertisements that include specific information about CASA L's Special Education program and that, where appropriate, describe the qualifications of CASA L's Special Education teachers, (2) special open-house information sessions held in the community geared towards parents of Special Education students, and (3) one-on-one meetings between CASA L's Academic Leadership and/or CASA L's Special Education staff with any parents of Special Education students who express interest in learning more about how CASA L can meet the particular needs of their child.

CASA L is committed to educating each student including those students with IEPs and 504 plans, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the classroom s/he would otherwise attend. Thus, the School will maintain a full inclusion model regarding the education of special education students. Full inclusion involves bringing the necessary support services to the student regardless of handicapping condition or severity, (rather than moving the student to the services) and requires only that the student will benefit from being in the class (rather than having to keep up with the other students). According to this model, special education students will be removed from the classroom only when appropriate services cannot be provided in the regular classroom setting.

Special education students in CASA L, when appropriate, will receive their adapted curriculum work, and other therapies such as speech-language therapy and occupational therapy, within a regular education classroom. Special educators and therapists will come to the regular education classroom, when appropriate, to provide services to small groups of regular and special education students. A special education teacher, paraprofessional or aide may sit with them to help implement the goals of their IEPs. "Full inclusion" maintains that the social interactions with regular education students are vitally important and that special services can be provided most effectively in the context of the regular classroom. For special education students, this setting provides the opportunity to model the behaviors and actions of others. For general education students, this setting fosters an appreciation and respect for the fact that everyone has unique characteristics and abilities, and helps them develop feelings of empowerment and self-control.

CASA L employs an inclusion model, including Collaborative Team teaching and SETSS services. Special education inclusion signifies the participation of special education students in regular education classrooms and provision of support services to these students. The main objective of inclusion education at CASA L is that all students regardless of their strengths and their weaknesses in any area, become part of the CASA L school community. As a member of the school community, every student develops a feeling of belonging with other students, teachers, and support staff. An advantage of special education inclusion at CASA L is that both disabled and non-disabled students are brought together in an environment of togetherness. Children learn to accept individual differences in inclusion education and this would lead to the development of new friendly relationships. Inclusion education also enables active participation of all parents in their child's education.

CASA L will employ several full-time special education teachers to staff our special education program, in addition to a Special Needs Manager. Our low student/special education teacher ratio will benefit special education students by ensuring that sufficient time and attention will be provided for each student. In addition, it enables the special education teacher to spend considerable time working with general education teachers in planning, professional development and ensuring that appropriate accommodations are made for special education students.

The special education teachers work collaboratively with the general studies in order to address the needs of students with disabilities. The special education and general education teachers work together to implement different teaching strategies and modify assignments to accommodate individual special education students. Adaptations and accommodations made within the class will be provided for individual students, and in some circumstances, for the entire class.

CASA L employs Special Education teachers and a Special Needs/RTI Coordinator to coordinate and supervise the School's Special Education program. S/he ensures compliance with all IEP requirements and regulations, manages the review and referral process and ensure provision of services as mandated on student IEPs. CASA L recognizes that there might be limitations to provide all required services to all students with disabilities. CASA L will always defer to the regional CSE to provide students with support services that are not available at CASA L or to place students where best supports can be accessed.

According to Education Law § 2853(4)(a), CASA L has the option of providing the special education programs directly or by contract, or arranging to have such services provided by the school district

of residence. If CASA L requests that the school district of residence provide a self-contained class or resource room, CASA L and the school district of residence will meet such obligation by placing the student in a self-contained class or resource room operated by the school district at a location other than the charter school, if that is appropriate to the needs of the student. However, if a self-contained class or resource room on the site of the charter school is determined by the CSE to be the appropriate placement for the student and CASA L requests that the school district provide such services, the self-contained class or resource room will be provided by the school district of residence. In this situation, CASA L and the CSE will work with the parents to develop an IEP that meets the student's needs and design a program that is integrated into the school's educational programs and makes use of school and school district resources.

CASA L will be serviced by the CSE 5. Services provided to CASA L include annual reviews, processing of referral submissions from the School; observations and evaluations of students referred to the CSE, assistance with providers of specialized services that are not available at CASA L, manifestation hearings - CASA L maintains close communication with its regional CSE and can request appropriate placement through the CSE for a student whose needs cannot be met at CASA L.

Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment will occur only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily, in accordance with the IEP prepared by the CSE of the students' district of residence.

Students with disabilities are also expected to participate in, and receive credit for, nonacademic, extracurricular and ancillary programs and activities with all other students to the extent allowed by the IEP prepared by the CSE of the students' district of residence. Students with disabilities will receive all notices concerning school-sponsored programs, activities and services.

CASA L will ensure that the special education programs and services as indicated on each student's IEP will be provided directly to the student during school hours. The CASA L special education staff will provide consultation and support to classroom teachers, work in the general education classrooms with special education students individually and in small groups, provide resource room services and serve as special education consultants to the overall school community. CASA L classroom teachers will be knowledgeable about the needs of students with disabilities; informed of their responsibilities for particular students; receive the support they require to implement a student's program; and implement any modifications or accommodations in their classes in accordance with the students' IEPs. Teachers will receive on-going training regarding the education of special needs students including during the pre-opening professional development prior to the opening of school each year.

If CASA L is unable to directly provide services to the extent necessary, CASA L will contract with appropriately certified or licensed individuals to provide services under its direction. The services to be provided may include, but are not limited to: speech language pathology and audiologist services; psychological services; physical and occupational therapy; recreation, including therapeutic recreation; early rehabilitation counseling; orientation and mobility services; diagnostic and/or evaluative medical services and student and/or parent counseling.

Referral to the CSE: Consistent with NYS Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, it is the policy of CASA L that all reasonable efforts be made to provide appropriate interventions to

maintain students in general education through the Response to Intervention process. It is further mandated that should a referral become necessary, the referral must include a description of the interventions attempted. Therefore, it is essential that careful consideration be given to all possible alternatives and that opportunities be provided for appropriate implementation.

A student suspected of having a disability will become the focus of the School's Child Study Team (CST) consisting of an administrator, teachers, support staff and special education teacher. The CASA L CST provides a school-based mechanism to enable school personnel to meet the needs of individual children within the school who are having difficulty in the educational setting. The team is child-centered and facilitates a process that results in the implementation of accommodations, services, and interventions that will enable the child to be successful in school. The options to be considered exist along a wide continuum of support, ranging from mild accommodations to extensive intervention and may be available within the school, the district of residence or located elsewhere in the community. The CST has the responsibility to: Review any problems (academic/developmental, behavioral, social/emotional) interfering with the child's performance in school; think of solutions; Make recommendations to meet the child's needs; and Monitor/review results of the recommendations.

The CST will review the student's behavior and academic performance, interview the student's teacher(s), and consult with the student's parents and offer recommendations. A referral to the CSE should be considered following a structured Response to Intervention process when it is clearly demonstrated and documented that interventions, curriculum modifications, prevention strategies, and remedial services are insufficient to address the student's needs.

Consideration will be given to: (1) changing the physical environment (e.g., seat near teacher, seat near model student, seat near chalkboard, use of visual barriers to reduce distraction, establish boundaries or travel patterns with tape, etc.); (2) changing the instructional group; (3) contacting the parent to suggest techniques for working with the child at home; (4) contacting the parent to discuss health concerns (e.g., hearing, vision, medical); (5) using alternative curriculum materials and/ or teaching methods; (6) using curriculum adaptations (e.g., rephrase or rewrite directions); (7) questions to ensure understanding, presentation of concepts in small segments of time, use of physical manipulatives, use of integrated sensory approaches to address different learning styles, etc.); (8) providing opportunities for peer/cross age tutoring; and (9) implementing behavior management techniques (e.g., menu of alternative tasks, limiting choices to reduce frustration, utilizing kinesthetic reminders, providing opportunities for success, scheduling private "teacher talk" times, etc.).

Consideration will be given to interventions, such as: (1) having the CST review the student's needs and offer recommendations and strategies for interventions and services; (2) providing opportunities for the student to meet with a social worker or Educationally Related Support Services provider; (3) consulting with members of the Child Study Team for recommended strategies, interventions, and community resources; (4) offering opportunities for the student to participate in a supplemental program within the School; (5) changing the student's classroom; and (6) changing the school to allow the student to attend an alternative program.

Consideration will be given to community interventions, such as connecting the student and family with an outside agency for special services unavailable in the school (e.g., psychiatric care, family

building activities, family counseling, medical interventions, tutorial programs, etc.).

If there is no improvement in the student's academic or non-academic areas of concern then an official meeting will be called with the family and a referral may be developed. The referral is made in writing to the Chairperson of the CSE using the Initial Referral Form to the CSE of the NYCDOE for an individual evaluation and determination of eligibility for special education programs and services.

Regulations of the NYS Commissioner of Education outline procedures for initiating a referral for a student suspected of having a disability and further identify responsibilities for school personnel with respect to such a referral. In accordance with Part 200.4 of the Regulations: *A student suspected of having a disability shall be referred in writing to the chairperson of the district's CSE or to the building administrator of the school which the student attends or is eligible to attend for an individual evaluation and determination of eligibility for special education programs and services...If a referral is received by the building administrator, it shall be forwarded to the committee chair immediately upon its receipt by the building administrator.*

A referral may also be made by: a student's parent or person in parental relationship, a professional staff member of the school, a physician, a judicial officer, a representative of a public agency, or a student over 18 years of age. The Regulation identifies specific requirements for referrals initiated by professional staff members, directing that such a referral must: (1) state the reasons for the referral and include any test results, records, or reports upon which the referral is based; (2) describe attempts to remediate the student's performance prior to referral, including any supplementary aids or support services or the reasons why no such attempts were made; and (3) describe the extent of parental contact or involvement prior to the referral.

The various components described above are integral elements of a referral made by school staff members. In consideration of their importance in Regulation and policy, a referral that does not include all required items will be considered incomplete and will be returned to the sender for completion by the CSE. The evaluation process will not begin until the referral is completed with all required components and resubmitted to the CSE. Therefore, professional staff members are encouraged to carefully consider all components of the referral in order to avoid any delay in processing.

In addition, CASA L requires that specific information regarding vision and hearing screenings must be attached to a referral made to the CSE, including: (1) a copy of the student's health record, which should include the results of a primary vision and hearing screening conducted within the last year and/or (2) a copy of the results of secondary vision and hearing screening for all students who failed a primary screening.

CASA L is responsible for arranging annual hearing and vision screenings for all students. An initial referral for evaluation will include the student's hearing and vision screenings in addition to his or her physical examination report. It is the responsibility of CASA L to attach a copy of the student's health record that includes primary vision/hearing screenings; possible secondary vision/hearing screenings for students who failed the primary screening; and/or physical examinations obtained. CASA L will contact the Department of Health to gather current medical information on students within the school.

The *Initial Referral Form To The Committee On Special Education* reminds professional staff

members of these required components and the requirements for a referral to be considered complete. The referral also provides more opportunity to consider and describe interventions attempted prior to referral. The wide variety of interventions identified on the referral form serves two purposes: to offer intervention strategies and options that may not have been considered prior to referral and to substantiate those that have been attempted. This revised referral form reinforces the responsibility of school personnel to consider appropriate alternatives in general education before proceeding with a referral.

Initial evaluations, re-evaluations, and revisions of IEPs, and the procedures relating thereto, are the responsibility of the local educational agency—the school district of a student’s residence (*see* 34 CFR §§300.22, 300.312 and 300.340 *et al*). CASA L will implement the IEP developed by the CSE of the student’s district of residence for each student with a disability, and will cooperate with the student’s district of residence to ensure that all services as recommended in that IEP are provided to the student.

CASA L will provide substitute coverage for teachers as necessary to ensure they are able to attend CSE meetings. As required by the IDEA, the student’s regular education teacher will be involved in the development and implementation of a student’s IEP, provided that the student is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment. CASA L will ensure that the teacher is knowledgeable about the student’s needs and will help implement any modifications or accommodation as determined by the CSE of the student’s district of residence. While CASA L may send the mandated procedural safeguards notice to parents, it is the responsibility of the CSE of the student’s district of residence to do so. Every CASA L teacher of a student with a disability will be provided a copy of the student’s IEP. Training will be provided by the special education staff of CASA L for teachers, as needed, to ensure that teachers fully understand the IEP of each special education student and its instructional implications. With support from the special education staff, general teachers will be able to establish modifications in the general education classrooms based on the students’ IEPs.

Quarterly progress reports regarding the progress of each student and his or her IEP, as well as copies of all report cards, will be provided to the parents of each special education student and to his/her district of residence. The NYCDOE Charter Office is welcome at any time to monitor the School’s implementation of its special education program. The CASA L special education staff will interact with the students’ district(s) of residence in a number of ways, including seeing that referrals are made for students suspected of having a disability; fulfilling reporting requirements of the resident district; ensuring that all appropriate school staff participate in meetings of the resident district CSE; and establishing a reporting structure in accordance with applicable law whereby the district of the student’s residence is provided progress on the degree to which the services on the IEP are being provided. CASA L Executive Director or his/her designee will communicate directly with the Chairperson of the district’s CSE.

New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA): Schools across the United States are required to assess all students according to federal statute and State regulations. Assessment results tell educators how students are progressing and signal where changes may need to be made in curriculum and/or instruction at the district, school and classroom levels. Teachers should assess students in all areas (academic, social, etc.) on an on-going basis as part of the instruction cycle.

CASA L utilizes the New York State Alternate Assessment which is a datafolio-style assessment measuring the achievement of students with severe cognitive disabilities toward meeting the NYS learning standards at alternate achievement levels. All students, including those with severe cognitive disabilities are required by federal law to have access to the general education curriculum. NYSED has aligned alternate grade level indicators (AGLIs) with the core curriculum in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science and social studies for the administration of NYSAA. The content area subject matter assessed by NYSAA is clearly related to the grade level content. While the content is reduced in scope and complexity, students with severe cognitive disabilities are held to high expectations in order to achieve the NYS Learning Standards. Alternate Grade Level Indicators afford students the opportunity to experience a richer learning experience.

The NCLB Act and NYSAA are in part designed to raise expectations for students' academic achievement. Students with severe cognitive disabilities, when given the appropriate instruction and access to the general education curriculum, have demonstrated progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding in academic content areas that were not initially anticipated by school personnel or parents. For example, the 2005-06 NYSAA Teacher's Survey indicated that 57 % of teachers who had administered NYSAA had increased their expectations for student's learning. Higher expectations require that students with severe cognitive disabilities must have access to the general education curriculum and be provided with specialized instruction, and participate in national, state, and local assessment programs. The general sequence of events for administering NYSAA follows:

Summary of NYSAA: Each student's CSE determines how a student: (1) Participates in the New York State Testing Program. The CSE uses SED guidelines regarding eligibility and participation criteria to guide their decision-making; (2) For each content area assessed, the student's instructional team, headed by the Lead Special Education Teacher (LSET) provides academic instruction, so that the student can achieve proficiency on two different AGLIs in each content area assessed. Two AGLIs are required for each content area assessed (ELA, mathematics, science and social studies); (3) Parents meet with the LSET to discuss how NYSAA is administered and which specific AGLIs will be used to assess their child. Parents also complete the Parent/Family/Guardian Survey; (4) For each AGLI, the student is required to perform one assessment task connected to the AGLI on three different dates; (5) Members of the student's instructional team conduct assessment tasks and document and rate student performance. This process includes collecting evidence on the last two dates of student performance; (6) The LSET assembles a datafolio containing the evidence of student performance and the ratings of the student's level of accuracy and level of independence; (7) The complete datafolio is submitted to the building administrator for shipping to the scoring center; (8) The NYSAA datafolios are scored at regional NYSAA scoring institutes; and (9) Student reports are created and are made available to schools, teachers and parents. Students eligible for NYSAA, as determined by their CSE, must be assessed on grade appropriate content consistent with the student's chronological age based on a chart provided each year by the NYSED. Content of the student's assessment is based on the student's chronological age, not on the grade in which the student is enrolled.

English Language Learner Population: CASA L serves any and all LEP/ELL students by providing supportive instruction so that they achieve proficiency in the English language as quickly as possible. CASA L shall comply with all applicable laws including Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964

(as amended) and the Federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974.

CASA L's process for identifying LEP/ELL students and the method by which CASA L will determine which of its students may need assistance is as follows: (1) If English is the only language spoken in the home as indicated on the Home Language Questionnaire (HLQ), then the screening process need not continue; (2) If the home language is other than English or the student's native language is other than English, then appropriate school staff should informally interview the student and the parent/guardian in English, or when necessary in their native language; (3) If the student speaks a language other than English and speaks little or no English, then the school should administer the Language Assessment Battery-Revised (LAB-R). A student who scores below the designated proficient level is Limited English Proficient (LEP), thus eligible for ESL services. The LAB-R is administered only once to each incoming student; (4) Classroom teachers may recommend students for English language instruction based on classroom observations and consultation with the Executive Director, or his/her designee; and (5) After placement into ESL services, student achievement or progress in the English language is measured annually (usually in April and May) with the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). The scores on the NYSESLAT indicate the proficiency level the student has achieved each year, and whether or not the student's level of English proficiency is high enough to exit ESL services.

Plan for Educating LEP/ELL Students: All students that are English Language Learners will be expected to become proficient in the English language at a rapid pace. CASA L believes that a structured English immersion program will be most helpful to ELL students in improving their abilities to master the language. Students of limited English proficiency will receive the same academic content as those students who are native English speakers. All instruction will be in English. However, the level of English used for instruction—both oral and written—will be modified appropriately for each ELL student. All teachers will receive professional development on communicating with students designated as ELL and in techniques for detecting whether a student has English language deficiencies. Within the CASA L's extended day schedule, there is ample time that can be used for additional intensive English language instruction.

CASA L provides all necessary staff and specialized curricular materials to enable ELL students to achieve proficiency and attain the high standards established for all students in the School. The School directly provides or make referrals to appropriate support services that may be needed by ELL students in order to achieve and maintain a satisfactory level of academic performance. Such services include individual counseling, group counseling, home visits, and parental counseling. CASA L is prepared to address the needs of students who are struggling with the structured English immersion program by providing, if it is determined to be the best course of action, pull-out instruction and/or assignment to a certified aide, teacher or qualified consultant under contract who speaks that child's non-English language. CASA L has at least one full-time teacher who speaks Spanish, the most common foreign language spoken by our parents. Parents of ELL students will be kept abreast of their child's progress in English language acquisition, preferably in the language that the parents best understand.

Research on Immersion: Research has shown that immersion is increasingly considered more effective at teaching English to students, compared to bilingual education, as indicated by the following:

- The New York City Board of Education documented the success of its immersion programs versus traditional bilingual education classes. Its own research shows that immersion works best for young students: "...nearly 44% of Kindergarteners in immersion classes move into the mainstream after one year, nearly 61% do so within two years and a whopping 84% do so within three. In contrast, traditional bilingual programs have a far lower success rate..." (New York Daily News, September 24, 2000).
- John Hood, President of the John Locke Foundation, a North Carolina based think tank, wrote in the Business Journal of Raleigh/Durham in an article entitled *Immersion v. Bilingual Education* (December 26, 1997), "A review of 300 studies of bilingual education by federal researchers found only 72 that were methodologically sound. Of those studies, 83 percent comparing bilingual education to immersion found that kids learned to read better through immersion. Not a single study found the reverse."
- Bill Honig, the former California State Superintendent of Public Instruction and Director of the Center for Systemic Social School Reform at San Francisco State University advocates this systematic, explicit instruction in an organized comprehensive English reading program in his book, *Teaching Our Children to Read* (Corwin Press, Inc., 2001): "For teachers, students and their families, the results of many past bilingual programs have been disappointing. Often in these programs, the English literacy component was weak, and many students failed even to become proficient readers in their primary language. All students need systematic, explicit instruction in an organized, comprehensive English reading program."
- Cara Morlan of the Independence Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan Colorado think-tank, wrote in her article *Structured Immersion, An Alternative to Traditional Bilingual Education* (Independence Institute, *Issues Backgrounders 2000-4*, July 26, 2000): "In California, children enter school speaking one of 140 different languages, yet only Spanish-speaking students are put into traditional bilingual education programs. These students are then the immigrant group that does the worst in school, has the highest dropout rate, the lowest test scores and the lowest college admissions." Ms. Morlan found that only 5% of these students were being found to gain proficiency in English each year.

Exit Criteria: The proficiency of an identified ELL student in the English language is measured at least annually to determine whether continued special services are warranted. CASA L will evaluate each student's performance in academic content areas to measure the student's progress in core subjects. The School also uses the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) to assess ELL students, as required by the State Education Department to implement the federal No Child Left Behind Act, in lieu of administering the state English Language Arts assessment. The scores on the NYSESLAT indicate the proficiency level—either Beginning, Intermediate, or Advanced—the student has achieved each year, and whether the student's level of English is high enough to exit the program. If an ELL student fails to show appropriate progress in these academic areas, modifications to the instructional program may be made. Any student classified and receiving educational services as an ELL student who subsequently tests high enough to exit the program will be deemed to be no longer in need of ELL services. No student will be exited from the ELL program unless they can read, write, and comprehend English well enough to participate meaningfully in the School's programs.

To measure the progress in English acquisitions of LEP/ELL students, CASA L will analyze annual NYSESLAT results. Scores on the NYSESLAT indicate the proficiency level students have achieved

each year, and whether or not a student’s level of English proficiency is high enough to exit ESL services. Any student classified and receiving educational services as a LEP/ELL student who subsequently tests above the established cut-off point will be deemed to be no longer in need of LEP/ELL services.

Accountability and Evaluation of the ELL Program: In order to ensure that the ELL program is achieving the desired results (students are making progress in the acquisition of the English language and making progress academically), an annual evaluation will occur. In order to determine if any programmatic modification are necessary, the School will evaluate the progress of its ELL students on standardized assessments and non-standardized assessments against that of the non-ELL students. The School also will track students longitudinally throughout their matriculation to determine if there is significant variation in the academic achievement of students who were once classified ELL and non-ELL students as measured by standardized assessments and non-standardized assessments. The school will track how many students are declassified as ELL and the number of instructional years it takes for this declassification to occur.

Assurances: Students at CASA L with limited proficiency in English will achieve proficiency in the English language as quickly as possible through the use of the School’s services and teaching methods. CASA L ensures that ELL students will not be excluded from curricular and extra curricular activities based on an inability to speak and understand the language of instruction, and also that ELL students will not be assigned to special education because of their lack of English proficiency. Parents whose English proficiency is limited will receive notices and information from the School in their native language to encourage participation in the School by all members of CASA L community. Parental outreach may also be conducted through home visit by a school official and an interpreter.

C. Achievement Goals

#	Indicator	Measure	Meets Level
1. Student Progress Over Time (Growth)			
1a.	Aggregate growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, CASA L will demonstrate progress, throughout the course of the school’s charter term, towards exceeding Statewide proficiency on the New York State Mathematics examinations, for 3-8th graders who have been enrolled at the School on BEDS day for at least two consecutive years. Each year, CASA L will show progress, throughout the course of the school’s charter term, towards exceeding Statewide proficiency on the New York State Mathematics examinations, for 3-8th graders who have been enrolled at the School on BEDS day for at least two consecutive years. 	
1b.	Subgroup growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, CASA L will demonstrate progress, throughout the course of the school’s charter term, towards exceeding Statewide proficiency on the New York State Mathematics examinations, for each subgroup of 3-8th graders who have been enrolled at the School on BEDS day for at least two consecutive years. Each year, CASA L will show progress, throughout the course of the school’s charter term, towards exceeding Statewide proficiency on the New York State Mathematics examinations, for subgroup of 3-8th graders who have been enrolled at the School on BEDS day for at least two consecutive years. 	
1c.	Performance Index:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, CASA L’s Aggregate Performance Index on the NYS ELA 	

	Aggregate growth to proficiency	<p>examinations will meet its Adequate Yearly Progress for the school set forth in the State’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, CASA L’s Aggregate Performance Index on the NYS Mathematics examinations will meet is Adequate Yearly Progress for the school set forth in the State’s NCLB (NCLB) accountability framework.
1d.	Performance Index: Subgroup growth to proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, CASA L’s Aggregate Performance Index on the NYS ELA examinations will meet its Adequate Yearly Progress for subgroups set forth in the State’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability framework. Each year, CASA L’s Aggregate Performance Index on the NYS Mathematics examinations will meet is Adequate Yearly Progress for subgroups set forth in the State’s NCLB (NCLB) accountability framework.
2. Student Achievement (Attainment)		
2a.	Aggregate Proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, each CASA L subgroup of students will reduce by one-quarter, the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year’s NYS ELA exam and the NYS Average of students at or above Level 3 on the current year’s NYS ELA exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75% at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort will demonstrate growth from the previous year. Each year, each CASA L subgroup of students will reduce by one-quarter, the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year’s NYS Mathematics exam and the NYS Average of students at or above Level 3 on the current year’s NYS Mathematics exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75% at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort will demonstrate growth from the previous year.
2b.	Subgroup Proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, each CASA L grade level cohort will reduce by one-quarter the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year’s NYS mathematics exam and 75% at or above Level 3 on the current year’s NYS mathematics exam for each subgroup. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75% at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort will demonstrate growth from the previous year. Each year, each CASA L grade-level cohort of students will reduce by one-quarter, the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year’s NYS ELA exam and 75% at or above Level 3 on the current year’s NYS ELA exam for each subgroup. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75% at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort will demonstrate growth from the previous year.
2c.	Similar Schools Comparison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, the percent of CASA L students performing at or above Level 3 on the NYS Math exam in each tested grade will, in the majority of grades, exceed the average performance of students tested in the same grades of NYCDOE’s Similar Schools. Each year, the percent of CASA L students performing at or above Level 3 on the NYS ELA exam in each tested grade will, in the majority of grades, exceed the average performance of students tested in the same grades of NYCDOE’s Similar Schools.
2d.	District Comparison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, the percent of CASA L students performing at or above Level 3 on the NYS Math exam in each tested grade will, in the majority of grades, exceed the average performance of students tested in the same grades of Brooklyn’s CSD16. The measure will be made by comparing the performance captured on

		<p>the NYS Report Card for CSD16, on datanysed.gov</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, the percent of CASA L students performing at or above Level 3 on the NYS ELA exam in each tested grade will, in the majority of grades, exceed the average performance of students tested in the same grades of Brooklyn’s CSD16. The measure will be made by comparing the performance captured on the NYS School Report Card for CSD16, on datanysed.gov
2e.	Subgroup Comparison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, the percent of CASA L students performing at or above Level 3 on the NYS Math exam for subgroups in each tested grade will, in the majority of grades, exceed the average performance of students tested in the same grades of Brooklyn’s CSD16. The measure will be made by comparing the performance captured on the NYS Report Card for CSD16, on datanysed.gov Each year, the percent of CASA L students performing at or above Level 3 on the NYS ELA exam for subgroups in each tested grade will, in the majority of grades, exceed the average performance of students tested in the same grades of Brooklyn’s CSD16. The measure will be made by comparing the performance captured on the NYS School Report Card for CSD16, on datanysed.gov
3. State and Federal Accountability System		
3.	State Accountability Designation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, CASA L will be deemed “In Good Standing” on its New York State School Report Card for AYP.
5. Charter-Specific Student Performance Goals		
a.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, 90% of grade 3-8 students who were enrolled at the school on BEDS day for two consecutive years will demonstrate growth on the Spring administration of the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment exams.
b.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year, 75% of grade 3-8 students who were enrolled at the school on BEDS day for two consecutive years will perform at or above grade level on the Spring administration of the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment exams.

Responsive Educational Program and Environment
Expectation: A quality educational program enables all students to achieve academically and socially.

Adherence to Contract Terms

- Per the 2010 amendment to the Charter Schools Act, the school shall demonstrate good faith efforts to attract, retain, and meet or exceeded enrollment and retention targets as prescribed by the Board of Regents through the State Education of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program.
- Each year, the school will comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations and contract terms including, but not limited to, the New York Charter Schools Act, the New York Freedom of Information Law, the New York Open Meetings Law, the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Student Engagement

- Each year, the School will have an average daily student attendance rate of at least 95%, with the exception of Long Term Absence (LTA) students.

- Each year, 95% of all students who were enrolled during the school year will return the following September, with the exception of students who have transferred to out-of-city, out-of-state, private or parochial schools.

Responsible School Leadership, Governance and Management

Expectation: Leadership furthers the school’s mission, program and goals and is strategic to ensure adequacy, alignment and coherence of actions.

- The Executive Director will present a Dashboard of school performance in regards to student performance, attendance, enrollment and financials at each meeting of the Board of Trustees.
- Annually, the Board will meet its obligations outlined in the Board Bylaws in regards to attendance, activity of subcommittees and financial oversight of the school.

Financial Sustainability and Internal Controls

Expectation: The school is a well-run organization and capable of achieving long-term success.

Enrollment Stability

- Annually, student enrollment at CASA L will be within 15% of full enrollment, as defined in the School’s contract.

Financial Compliance

- Each year, the School will undergo an independent financial audit that will result in an unqualified opinion and no major findings.³

Financial Viability

- Each year, CASA L will operate on a balanced budget⁴ and maintain a stable cash flow.

Strong Culture and Supportive Relationships

Expectation: There is high social trust among the school community and culture of excellence.

Parent Satisfaction

- Each year, parents will express satisfaction with the school’s program as determined by the parent section of the NYCDOE Learning Environment Survey in which the school will receive scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement, and Safety and Respect. The participation rate of the survey will exceed 50%

Staff Satisfaction:

- Each year, teachers will express satisfaction with school leadership and professional development opportunities as determined by the teacher section of the NYCDOE Learning Environment Survey in which the school will receive scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement, and Safety and

³ The NYCDOE will determine a finding to be “major” if it indicates a deliberate act of wrongdoing, reckless conduct or causes a loss of confidence in the abilities or integrity of the school or seriously jeopardizes the continued operation of the school.

⁴ A budget will be considered “balanced” if revenues equal or exceed expenditures.

Respect. The participation rate of the survey will exceed 70%.

- Each year, 80% of teachers who accept offers of renewed employment at the end of the previous school year will return to teach at CASA L.

Student Satisfaction:

- Each year, CASA L middle school students who take the survey will express satisfaction with the School as determined by the student section of the NYCDOE Learning Environment Survey in which the school will receive scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement, and Safety and Respect.

D. Assessment System

Assessment Accountability: CASA L uses assessment data often and regularly to assess student progress against the academic goals and to make programmatic adjustments and changes. Each term, teachers meet with instructional leadership to review the assessment data. The teachers' role in this process is to identify which standards they need to re-teach, and to provide differentiated, individualized instruction for specific students, based on the data. The role of the Directors of Instruction in this process is to: 1) ensure that assessments are given on schedule; 2) expeditiously manage the data-crunching process so that teachers have timely results; 3) facilitate a data meeting with the teachers within a week after the assessment is given and provide guidance as to which standards need to be prioritized; 4) re-allocate resources in the area of money, time and personnel to ensure that students are given proper levels of instructional support, based on the results of the assessments and 5) monitor lesson plans and lesson execution to ensure that prioritized learning objectives are being effectively re-taught.

Use of Ongoing Assessments: Ongoing assessment is a driving force in the school. Virtually every month we implement standardized assessments, including in-school assessments. Appropriate assessments enable lessons to be tailored to a child's needs and the development of effective curriculum and instructional practices that support the needs of all learners. With grade level goals and individual class goals, teachers are made aware of the improvement that each child needs to make. Thanks to the small size of classes, it is possible to provide remedial work for children in need of improvement and also make sure the student is learning the grade level materials.

Students will learn to read at grade level, and work to exceed their grade level literacy goals. Assessment data will enable us to determine if they have reached grade level, including writing exercises in each grade. In grades 3 and up, we place an emphasis on the written test. Children must explain their answers. They are required to write frequently in class and as part of their homework. We will also use assessment data to know which students are working beyond grade level so as to provide enrichment work. Within a grade, the teachers collaboratively will create weekly assessments for all subject areas. These will enable the school to assess progress. Each grade has its own weekly, monthly and annual achievement goals. There will also be achievement goals for each child.

Assessment Name	Grades	Description
Unit Assessments	K to 5	Curricular Unit Assessments, based on the scope and sequence of CASA L curriculum.
Six Week Assessments	K to 5	Grade specific assessments based on NYS exit standards for each year. Also serve as predictors for performance on the NYS ELA and Math tests for 3-5, Sci for 4 th and Soc Studies for 5 th .
NYS ELA, Math Assessments	3 to 5	NYS administered statewide exam. Given 1x per year.
NYS Sci Assessments	4	NYS administered statewide exam. Given 1x per year.
NYS Soc Studies Assessments	5	NYS administered statewide exam. Given 1x per year.
Fountas & Pinnell or similar	K to 3	Beginning reader skill specific individual test, administered two times per year.
Waterford or similar	K-2	Weekly assessments of early childhood literacy skills
ITBS or similar	K to 5	nationally normed exam taken twice a year, fall Fall and Spring, with national norms.

Rationale for Assessments

School assessments are valuable but do not serve to measure our students with national norms. Teacher assessments serve to measure the students against the other children in the grade. In the Iowa tests, for example, the child is measured against children across the country. As our school's future will be determined by its achievement on state tests, using published assessments that have reliably been proved to help with state test results is important. A school's program needs both types of assessment – one augments the other. CASA L uses all these measures to ensure we are working with each student based on their individual need. By having various measure of comparison, we can target our approach.

Specifics of teacher-made assessments include unit tests in each grade. Teachers on the same grade teach the same unit. Therefore, the teachers will develop a test for the grade to assess the effectiveness of their program. The teacher-generated test is to assess the effectiveness of the classroom instruction comparing each child in the class to other children in the class. The teacher can then create a plan to address a particular child's needs.

The use of standardized tests is a critical instrument to assess students' learning and teacher effectiveness. We use internal assessments aligned with the NY Assessments. We use these tests for pre- and post-testing for students to determine an individual student's weaknesses and to determine if the individualized program created for him/her has been effective. We can also use it to see if a particular teacher's program has been effective for the entire class.

E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

Promotional Criteria: All CASA L students are held to specific promotion criteria in the areas of attendance; comprehensive classroom assessments that include work samples, anecdotes, teacher assessments and observations; and benchmark assessments. CASA L reserves the right to make a decision for promotion when standardized test scores do not match previous student achievement as seen through these classroom assessments, or under special circumstances. Students failing to meet any of the grade level or school expectations as defined by the criteria in the chart below are noted as *Promotion in Doubt* during the winter at which time families are notified in writing of possible retention. If students do not demonstrate improvement by the end of the school year they are identified for retention for the following school year. Below is the framework for student promotion at the school.

Grade Level	Attendance	Teacher Recommendation	Benchmark Testing
K	95%	<i>At grade level performance</i>	<i>Six-Week Assessments, end-of-unit tests, etc, teachers created tests</i>
1	95%	<i>At grade level performance</i>	<i>Six-Week Assessments, end-of-unit tests, etc, teachers created tests Level</i>
2	95%	<i>At grade level performance</i>	<i>Six-Week Assessments, end-of-unit tests, etc, teachers created tests Level</i>
3	95%	<i>At grade level performance</i>	<i>ELA and Math level 2 and above</i>
4	95%	<i>At grade level performance</i>	<i>ELA, Math &Sci. Level 2 and above</i>
5	95%	<i>At grade level performance</i>	<i>ELA and Math; Level 2 and above</i>
6	95%	<i>At grade level performance</i>	<i>ELA and Math; Level 2 and above</i>
7	95%	<i>At grade level performance</i>	<i>ELA and Math; Level 2 and above</i>
8	95%	<i>At grade level performance</i>	<i>ELA and Math; Level 2 and above</i>

Students with IEPs:

- A student with an IEP may be promoted based on attendance (80% or above); score a Level 2 on NYS exams; meet their IEP goals.
- In cases where the child does not meet the two or more of the criteria for promotion, an academic portfolio may be presented to determine whether the child will be promoted to the next grade.
- In some cases with children who have IEPs, promotional criteria percentages may be adjusted in the IEP to reflect the child’s abilities in both ELA and Math performance.

F. School Schedule and Calendar

Attachment 3c: Proposed First Year Calendar

Students’ Schedule

CASA L’s Charter School’s extended day program for all students will run daily on a schedule appropriate for our student’s educational needs, currently 8:00 AM–4:30 PM with an early dismissals periodically for staff professional development. The daily schedules below show current schedule, which is consistent with our commitment to an effective extended day program. CASA L ensures that students meet the state mandates for number of hours of instruction per week in applicable subjects through its schedule. When appropriate, CASA L offers half-day Saturday classes for tutoring and enrichment; Students that may need additional time and attention will be asked to attend on Saturdays. Classes may take the form of remediation in small groups or individual tutoring; state assessment preparation; and/or additional Latin instruction, depending on the needs of our students and available funding.

Teachers’ Schedule

As with the student schedules, the teachers’ daily schedules that follow delineate the daily required

amount of time CASA L teachers will be in the classroom or involved with other school duties versus when they will be engaged in planning/prep time individually or collectively, both with and without the Curriculum Dean and subject coaches. The specific afternoon time blocks may vary for individual teachers depending on scheduling of the Visual Art, Music and Physical Education subjects for their students. There is extensive planning time incorporated into each school day for teachers to work independently and collaboratively with their colleagues. The Curriculum team and coaches will work with their respective teachers, individually and in groups, on such activities as developing and updating pacing calendars, mapping curricula, development and coordination of service learning projects, reviewing lesson observations and analyzing student test results. In addition, early student dismissal on selected days are set aside for profession development training for all staff members.

A monthly schedule will be set up in advance for teachers in order to share responsibility for participating in communal breakfast and lunch periods as supervisors of the children (they eat their own lunch with the children during this time). On those days where teachers are not assigned communal breakfast or lunch duty, they are expected to use that time as individual and/or common planning time. During lunch period, they are allotted 45 minutes for their lunch but may elect to use some of this time for individual and common planning time with their colleagues.

School Calendar

CASA L's school year consists of at least 185-190 days. CASA L will have an extended year and extended day model to maximize instructional hours and create a high performing school with high achieving students. CASA L sets a calendar consistent with the needs of its students. When appropriate it may mirror the NYCDOE calendar in regards to most school holidays with school out of session on Labor Day, Yom Kippur, Columbus Day Observed, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving, Winter Recess (Thursday, December 24 through and including Friday, January 1, including Christmas and New Year's Day), Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Mid-Winter Recess (February 15 through February 19, including Washington's Birthday), Spring Recess and Memorial Day. The school will modify its calendar from year to year, consistent with student and staff needs and the furthering of its mission..

G. School Culture and Climate

Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policy - Provide a student discipline policy that reflects the mission and culture of the school

CASA L Code of Conduct

CASA L envisions the school as a learning community that treats children and adults with respect and kindness. CASA L is a place where children value diversity of ideas, develop compassion, and the recognize themselves not just as individuals, but citizens of a larger global community. As children mature and participate in communal classroom work, they broaden their ability to see things from varied perspectives and to work with people with viewpoints different from their own. They can then take their places in the world as empowered adults who can make good choices in their lives, good changes in the world, and work well with others in their occupational and social communities.

To this end, CASA L works to ensure that the school is a place where all students can learn and all staff can teach in a safe, secure and orderly environment. CASA L defines discipline as helping

children develop self-control and self-motivation in a school community that is safe for all members. To ensure that an environment is created where teaching and learning can flourish, CASA L has developed a series of rules that address proper student behavior, maintenance of order within the school and while people are engaged in school activities (Code of Conduct), and a statement of student rights and responsibilities. The CASA L staff ensures that parents and students are well informed of these policies both before enrollment and at the time students enroll in CASA L. The Code of Conduct must be signed by families to show that they have read and understand the rules, in order to hold them accountable for their actions. As such, students will not be surprised about what type of behavior is expected of them, and parents will be reassured about the type of classroom environment maintained at CASA L.

The Code of Conduct sets forth the policy of CASA L regarding how students are expected to behave when participating in school activities, on and off school grounds, and how CASA L will respond when students fail to behave in accordance with these rules. In all disciplinary matters, students will be given notice and will have the opportunity to present their version of the facts and circumstances leading to the imposition of disciplinary sanctions to the staff member imposing such sanctions. Depending on the severity of the infraction, disciplinary responses include suspension (short or long term), detention, exclusion from extracurricular activities, and expulsion. Where appropriate, school officials also will contact law enforcement agencies.

At CASA L, discipline is considered a process. The CASA L staff deal with each problem individually, and for each unacceptable behavior there is a range of consequences and actions a teacher or staff member will take. This is dependent on the frequency of this behavior, progress of the child, age of the child and severity of the behavior. The specific situation dictates which consequences will be used, revisited or skipped.

The first step taken in any disciplinary action is to restore a sense of safety and bring people into self-control. This may mean time out or a sympathetic conversation; whatever will help a child to be able to face a problem rationally. The outcome of the consequences should reinforce not only the essence of what is unacceptable to the group but also how one's behavior impacts on the group and on oneself. Potential consequences include: Speaking to the child individually; Holding a group discussion; Temporarily removing a child from a difficult situation within the class; sending the child to another class (teachers may not send students unattended into the hall as a disciplinary measure); Informing parent/guardian of behavior; Discussion with parent/guardian and setting up a plan of action with the parent/ guardian, articulating what "progress" is; Sending the child to confer with the Student Life Coordinator; Discussion with other school personnel; after school detentions; Formal meeting with the Student Life Coordinator, teacher and parent/guardian; Discussing and initiating other support systems; Guidance hearing; Suspension (Short and Long Term); and Replacement of property or reimbursement. The decision as to which consequence is chosen will be in accordance with guidelines established by State law, which will ensure both consistency and equitable treatment for all students and enables schools to exercise discretion and educational judgment.

Provisions for Students with Disabilities. the Student Life Team will have the authority to suspend or remove a student as a disciplinary action, upon conferring with the Special Needs/RTI Coordinator and Director of Instruction. CASA L will adhere to all Code of Federal Regulations on discipline provisions for students with disabilities that pertain to sections 300.530, 300.532(a), 300.532 (b),

300.533, 300.534, and 300.536. CASA L will ensure record keeping on the number of days a student with a disability has been suspended or removed for discipline reasons. This responsibility will fall to the school secretary, who will keep in close communication with the Directors of Instruction, the Special Needs/RTI Coordinator and the Student Life Team. Alternative instruction will be provided for students of compulsory school age who are suspended or expelled, on site or off-site, as appropriate. This responsibility will be that of the Special Needs/RTI Coordinator, in direct communication with the Student Life Team. CASA L will also ensure that parents and students with disabilities receive appropriate notification regarding suspensions or removals for disciplinary reasons. This will be the responsibility of the Student Life Team, working closely with the Special Needs/AIS Coordinator. When a suspension or removal of a student with a disability constitutes a disciplinary change of placement, the Student Life Team, Specials Need/RTI Coordinator will follow the Federal Regulations and ensure that the student is provided with a free appropriate public education (FAPE) as defined in the federal regulations. CASA L will follow all due process procedures should a student's change of placement exceed 10 days, described below.

CASA L will ensure that when the suspension or removal of a student with a disability constitutes a disciplinary change of placement, the CSE is immediately notified so that the CSE can meet its obligations to convene a CSE meeting within 10 school days to make a manifestation determination. The CSE meeting should occur within 10 business days of the change of placement and they will conduct appropriate actions consistent with NYCDOE regulations, such as a functional behavioral assessment and or the development a behavioral intervention plan, should that be determined an appropriate step; provide the student's parent with a copy of their procedural due process rights; and determine education services or the interim alternative educational setting consistent with the FAPE requirements.

Provisions for All Disciplinary Actions: Due process procedures shall be followed for all disciplinary actions consistent with federal case law pursuant to *Goss v. Lopez* (419 U.S. 565). The Student Life Team shall provide notice to inform the student and parents of the charges against him or her, in the form of letter, including the recommended disciplinary action, should it be a suspension or expulsion, and the date of the hearing, which shall determine the matter.

Detention and Restorative Justice: A student may be given a detention or restorative justice, consistent with the Student and Family handbook. Classroom teachers must get the approval from the Student Life Team in order to give a detention. Staff members, other than the classroom teacher, may suggest detention for a student's behavior outside of the classroom. The classroom teacher and Student Life Team will gather the facts and circumstances from both staff members and the student in order to come to a decision. It is the responsibility of the teacher to inform the family of the child of the reason why their child is being given detention or restorative justice. The Student Life Team will oversee after school detention and the restorative justice process.

Short-Term and Long Term Suspensions: The Student Life Team determines short-term and long-term suspensions on a case-by-case basis. Any student that has committed any of the infractions listed below that takes place on campus, on the school bus, or school sponsored events off campus, shall be subjected minimally to a short-term suspension enforced by the Student Life Team:

- Violent, abusive or threatening language, in written or verbal form.
- Bullying or harassment.
- Gross Insubordination

- Inappropriate touching or contact with other students or school staff.
- Academic Dishonesty, including cheating on exams or quizzes.
- Vandalism of school property or the property of staff or students.
- Trespass on school property.
- Abuse of school property or equipment.
- Improper use of technology resources, including accessing inappropriate materials on the internet or sharing materials with others
- Used forged notes or excuses
- Engage in acts of sexual harassment, including but not limited to physical contact or offensive sexual comments.
- Steal, attempt to steal, or possess property known by the student to be stolen.
- Any attempt to intentionally cause physical injury to another person.
- Repeatedly commit minor behavioral infractions, which, in the aggregate disrupt the learning environment
- Possession, use, attempt to use, or transfer any firearm, knife, razor blade, explosive, mace, tear gas, or other dangerous object.
- Commit or attempt to commit arson on school property.
- Commit a disruptive or dangerous act that affects the learning environment.
- Possess, sell, distribute or use of tobacco, any alcoholic beverage, controlled substance, imitation, or marijuana on school property or at a school-sponsored event.
- Assault any other student, staff, or community member
- Endanger the physical safety of another by the use of force or threats of force, which reasonably places the victim in fear of imminent bodily injury.
- Make a false threats or pull a false emergency alarm.

Health and Safety Exclusion: At the discretion of the Student Life Team, a student may be deemed a Health and Safety risk and be excluded from the school in order to 1) complete the investigation of a serious incident or 2) to ensure the safety of the students or staff in the building. Health and Safety exclusions shall be made in writing and are temporary, to establish a safety or to complete the investigation of a serious incident. Should an exclusion occur, parents shall receive regular updates on the status of the exclusion and be notified of their right to compensatory education during an exclusion.

Procedures and Due Process for Short-Term and Long-Term Suspensions:

The Student Life Team may impose a short-term suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion and shall follow due process procedures consistent with federal case law pursuant to *Goss v. Lopez* (419 U.S. 565). Following the recommendation of a short term or long term suspension, or expulsion,, the student and parent will be provided with an opportunity, in person, to attend an informal hearing (suspensions of five days or less) or a formal hearing (six days or more, including expulsions) held by the Student Life Team, to hear the charges raised against them and provide exculpatory evidence. The Student Life Team decision's, following a hearing, for a short term or long-term suspension may be appealed, by the parent or guardian, to the Executive Director, within 10 days, in writing.

Following an incident, the investigation by the Student Life Team and the decision to recommend a suspension or expulsion written notice shall be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery,

email or equivalent means reasonably calculated to assure receipt of such notice within 24 hours of suspension at the last known address. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the School has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident or incidents which resulted in the suspension recommendation and shall indicate that a formal hearing will be held on the matter which may result in a long-term suspension (or expulsion). The notification provided shall be in the English, with a translation available upon request. At a formal hearing the incident will be reviewed. The hearing shall include the Student Life Team member, staff members involved with the incident, and the student with his/her parent(s) or guardian(s); the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, question witnesses, and present evidence at a formal hearing.

If a Student Life Team member initiates the suspension proceeding, he or she may personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, in his discretion, designate another hearing officer to conduct the hearing. Following the hearing, the Student Life Team member (or Executive Director for an expulsion proceeding) may accept, reject or modify the original recommendation's charges and disciplinary action. The Student Life Team member's decision to impose a long-term suspension may be challenged by the parent or guardian via a written appeal, within 10 days of the decision to suspend or expel. In extreme circumstances, an expulsion recommendation may be required and be decided by the Executive Director. For expulsions, the due process procedures allow parents to appeal the Executive Director decision to the BOT, within 10 days of the date of the decision, in writing.

Following a decision to suspend or expel, the Student Life Team shall notify the parents or guardian in writing via a Suspension or Expulsion letter that the student has been suspended from school. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery, email, express mail delivery within 24 hours of the decision to recommend a suspension at the last known address(es) of the parents or guardians. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone. The procedures for filing an appeal shall be included in the suspension or expulsion letter.

Provisions to Implement Alternative Instruction Options:

- *Alternative instruction must be made available within 24 hours of the beginning of a suspension, regardless of the length of the disciplinary action.*
- *While homework assignments may be included in a student's requirements, direct instruction must be provided by a CASA L staff member or contracted instructor..*
- *The time allotted to direct instruction must be enough to ensure that the student will progress at the same rate as if s/he had attended class. This is typically no less than two hours per day.*

Students removed for a period of five days or fewer will receive classroom assignments and a schedule by to which to complete missed assignments and/or tests during the time of the suspension. When a charter school or other public school suspends a student of compulsory school age, it must take immediate steps to provide instruction elsewhere. CASA L will provide additional alternative education instruction for a minimum of two hours for each school day at a time and place determined by the school. Instruction for each student shall be sufficient to enable the student to make adequate academic progress.

Students removed for a period of more than five days will be provided with instruction by one or more of the following individuals in consultation with the student's teacher(s): teacher aides,

trained volunteers, individuals within a contracted facility, a contracted instructor or a tutor hired for this purpose. Instruction will take place in one of the following locations: the student’s home, a contracted facility (school district in the location of the student), an appropriate off-site facility or a room that is used by CASA L as a suspension room. All provisions of services during removal will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the needs of the suspended child. At CASA L, involuntary transfer as a discipline option is not a policy.

Students Right to Appeal: Students have the right to appeal suspensions and expulsions in writing, following the issuance of a Suspension or Expulsion letter following a formal or formal hearing. All appeals must be made in writing, within 10 days of the decision, to the Executive Director (for suspensions) or the Board of Trustees (for expulsions). Appeals of the decisions of the Board of Trustees for a suspension or expulsion should be directed to the school’s authorizer, the NYCDOE.

Searches: A student and/or the student's belongings may be searched by a school official if the official has a reasonable suspicion to believe that a search of that student will result in evidence that the student violated the law or a school rule. Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from the student by school authorities.

Student lockers and desks remain the property of the school, though the school is not responsible for books, clothing, or valuables left in lockers or desks. A student shall not place or keep in a locker or desk any article or material which is of a non-school nature and may cause or tend to cause the disruption of the mission of the school.

The following rules shall apply to the search of a student’s possession or school property assigned to a specific student and the seizure of illegal items found therein:

- School authorities will make an individual search of a student's locker or desk only when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in the possession of an item which is prohibited on school property or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
- Searches shall be conducted under the authorization of the school Executive Director or his/her designee.
- Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from student lockers or desks by school authorities.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN

A. Applicant Group Capacity

The organization and development of CASA L will be led by an extremely committed planning team and Board of Trustees in waiting, comprised of educators, parents, businesses, legal, social services, non-profits, and members of the Bushwick community. Currently, CSD-32 has one of the highest English Language Learner and Special Education rates in the City, highlighting the need for additional, supportive educational opportunities in the community. As the idea developed for the school, team members brought together others with diverse skills, a passion for education reform and the desire to see more educational options for underserved youth in NYC, particularly Bushwick

Brooklyn. The group has interacted weekly either via face-to-face meetings, conference calls and email to develop this proposal. The planning team divided the application into functional sections; subcommittees developed individual sections based on their expertise, along with a consultant who has existed in the charter school space for over a decade.

CASA L's proposed board and planning teams' experience and scope of experience span decades and runs deep. These areas include: Early Childhood, Education, Administrative, Managerial, Non-Profit, Policy, Curriculum/Program Design, Organizational sustainability, Staff Development, At-Risk Populations, Engagement, Technology Integration, HR, Community Relations, Stakeholder Development, Youth Services, Finance, Administration, Operations, Psychology, Compliance, Analytics, Project Mgmt., Public/Social Services, Student Support Services, Engagement, Counseling, Africana Studies. The table below highlights the depth and breadth of expertise and experience:

CASA L engaged Joshua Morales to serve as an advisor to the application development process. Mr. Morales has extensive background in the areas of education policy, administration, governance, operations, organizational management and finance. His experiences include holding senior positions in the financial services industry in the areas of marketing, finance, product development and analytics within a ten-year span for companies like Dresdner Bank NA, Industrial Bank of Japan, Amerindo Investments & Alliance-Bernstein LLC. After finance he joined the NYC Department of Education. During his tenure he served as Regional Operations Director for Region 10, covering CSD 3, 5, 6 (Upper West Side, Harlem and Washington Heights); Regional Network Specialist, leading a team human resource, operational and financial specialists; Director in NYCDOE Charter School Office, supporting & providing district and authorizer services for over 130 charter schools as well as serving a key policy maker and new school development evaluator. Since Mr. Morales' departure from the NYCDOE, he has consulted with the NYC Charter Center, Walton Foundation, Newark Public Schools, as well as provided advisory services to emerging charter schools and organizations. He also served as Executive Director of New Beginning Charter School located in CSD-16 from 2010-2014 and currently serves on the Board for Democracy Prep Charter Schools in Harlem. His guidance has assisted in the development of this application.

B. Board of Trustees and Governance

The CASA L founders are committed to developing a well-informed board, with the knowledge needed to support and develop an effective charter school. An effective working relationship between the Board and the Executive Director has been built upon three principles: 1). Recognition of the distinction between governance work of the board and management work of the staff, 2). Recognition of ends/means distinction with a bias in favor of high impact decision-making, 3). Establish and maintain clarity about what activities the board engages in and what activities staff engage in.

The school's Board of Trustees will have a supervisory or oversight role with the Executive Director. The Board hires, supervises, evaluates, compensates, and (if necessary) terminates the Executive Director. The Executive Director, in turn, hires, supervises, evaluates, and makes compensation decisions within the scales and budget set by the Board as provided for by the board-approved annual budget. The Board-Executive Director relationship reflects the distinction between "ends decision-making" by the Board of Trustees and the means used by staff to achieve the ends set by the Board. Ends decision-making has the effect of creating boundaries with autonomy for the

Executive Director and his or her staff. Such Board major decisions including setting the budget, determining the strategic plan, formulating major policy, and interpreting laws and regulations with which the school must comply, create the playing field upon which the Executive Director has the authority to act.

CASA L understands and values the responsibility of governing a public entity, more specifically a public charter school. The Board will have a performance contract with the Board of Regents that provides the school with the autonomy to design and operate its programs in exchange for accountability for results, namely academic performance, organizational viability and fiscal soundness.

To serve on the CASA L board of trustees, candidate qualifications will include: a belief in the mission, vision and design of the school; an expectation that all children can and will achieve academic excellence; demonstrated understanding of board duties; the ability to attend board and committee meetings and volunteer for board work, relevant experience and expertise, such as: education, business, management, finance/accounting, law, government, personnel, marketing/public relations, fundraising, and/or community relations or organizing; capacity to examine performance data, financial documents and management reports and make informed decisions in the best interest of the school; be at least 18 years of age.

The Board's responsibilities will include:

- Establishing the school's mission, vision & goals, as well as participate in school design process.
- Evaluating schools programs and progress toward charter goals.
- Ensuring adequate resources development for implementation of the school program.
- Recruiting, hiring and evaluating the Executive Director.
- Developing, reviewing & approving major policies as necessary.
- Preparing for, attending and participating in board and committee meetings.
- Monitoring program implementation, fidelity & compliance in relation to the charter agreement, laws & regulations.
- Facilitating long-term strategic planning and resource development.
- Recruiting and orienting new board members and assessing board performance.
- Participating, as appropriate, in the grievance process.
- Enhancing the school's public standing and commitment to excellence.

	Education	Youth & Social Services	Organization & Management	Finance	Operations	Legal	HR/Staffing	Family / Parent Relations	Community / Public Relations	Real Estate / Facilities	Fundraising / Development
Clentine Fenner Director, McDonough Street Community Center	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Andre Lake Executive Director, Brooklyn Empowerment Neighborhood	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Janatha Miller Early Childhood Educational Consultant, NYC Dept. of Mental Health & Hygiene	X	X	X			X		X	X		X
Tosha Miller Vice President, Citigroup Global Markets			X	X	X	X	X		X		X
Shenna Buie NYDOE Program Administrator, School Counseling	X	X	X		X		X	X			
Melissa Neal-Washington Specialist, NYC Department of Social Services		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Maureen Johnson Early Childhood Trainer, NY Works for Children	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			

The Board of Directors shall consist of 7-15 members and will meet monthly. All meetings will be compliant with the Open Meetings law. The Board Chair will head the Board of Directors meetings. The Officers of the Board shall include a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, each of whom will be duly elected by the voting members of the Board. Board members will serve staggered three-year terms with some initial terms under three years to spread turnover.

The Board will operate as a whole and in working committees including Academic, Finance/Operations, Engagement & Development, and Evaluation & Accountability. Other committees may be constituted as needed. Committees will have a job description that describes

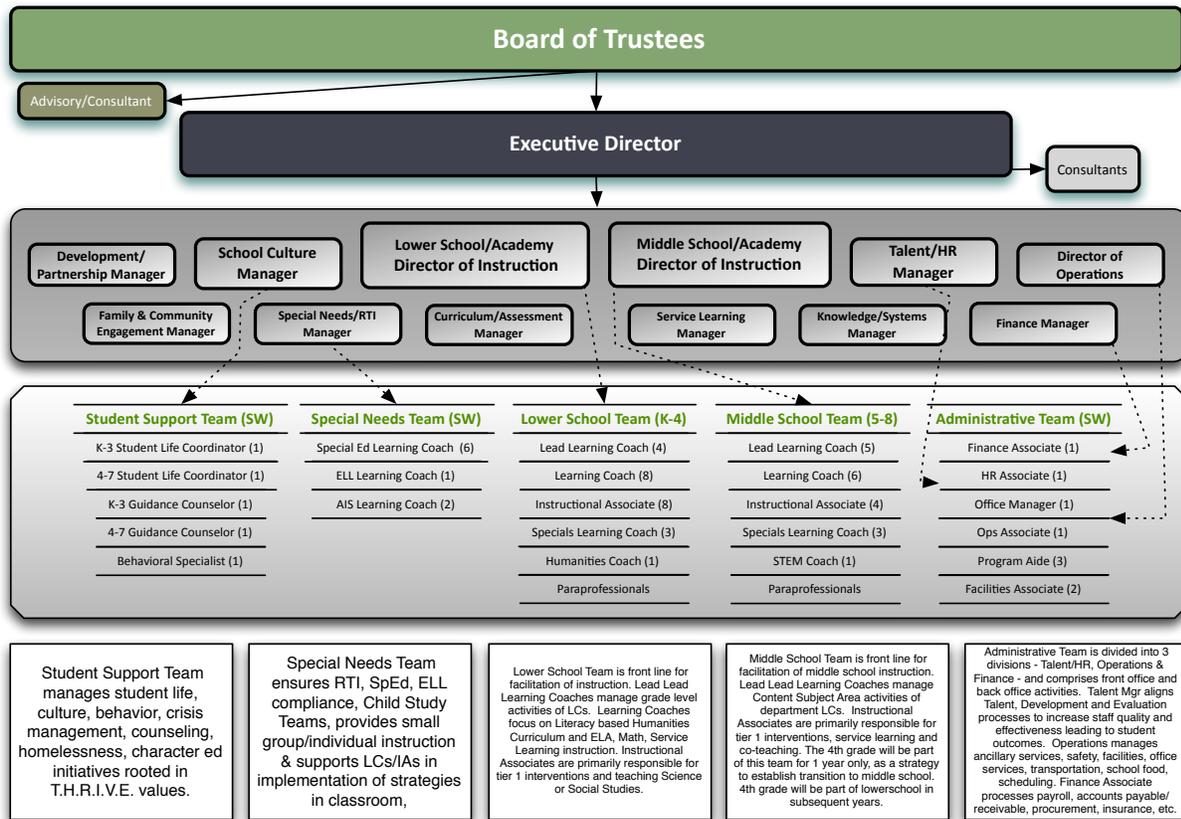
any delegation of authority by the Board as well as Committee Chair appointed by the Board Chair. Minutes will be taken at all board and committee meetings. Copies will be posted on the school website and archived.

The Board will delegate authority for the day-to-day operations of the school to the Executive Director, who reports directly to the Board. The Board will establish measurable annual performance goals, conduct mid-year and end-of-year evaluations of the Executive Director, and ultimately hold him or her accountable. At minimum, the Executive Director will present a dashboard at each board meeting, including enrollment, attendance, financial, compliance and student performance data.

The CASA L Board will build its capacity by implementing a process of ongoing board development. Board development plan consists of the following elements:

- *Orientation:* Each new board member will be provided information about the school, such as a copy of the approved charter; information about CASA L's financial status, such as the latest financials and by the end of year one, the latest audit; a tour of the school facility and an introduction to the school's staff. It will be the Board's Executive Committee that has the responsibility to organize and implement these initial activities. During orientation, the officers of the Board will discuss the primary responsibilities and expectations of individual board members with the new board members, and will particularly discuss his/her specific personal and/or professional skills in relation to the needs of the board. New Board members will be assigned to one or more of the standing committees and made aware of their responsibilities.
- *Training:* Training will take into consideration the needs of individual Board members as well as the needs of the overall Board. To address individual and entire Board needs, training opportunities such as consultants, workshops, seminars, resource materials, and e-training will be identified (e.g., BoardNetUSA, Governance Matters, greatboards.org) and disseminated. The Board Chair will be responsible for maintaining a schedule of training events. In this capacity, s/he is expected to acquire information about training opportunities from various sources and will be expected to provide an updated schedule of training events to Board members at each Board meeting. In addition to cultivating sources of information, the Chair will accept suggestions for training from the various board committees.
- *Standing-Committee Assignment:* Each Board member will be assigned to one or more standing committees of the Board during his/her orientation. In order to carry out committee responsibilities, Board members will be required to learn new information, policies and procedures. The Chair of each standing committee will assist committee members in this learning process by recommending appropriate training opportunities and allocating time at committee meetings to provide needed training and guidance.
- *Evaluation:* The annual self-assessment of the Board's performance should be considered a form of ongoing development. The process will include three parts: (1) a self-assessment by each individual member of his/her performance, (2) an evaluation of each individual Board member by the Board Chairperson, through the review of an annual member "Board Report Card", and (3) an evaluation of the Board's performance by the Board as a whole. The Executive Committee will provide each Board member with survey instruments designed to achieve a comprehensive assessment of self and the board.

C. Management and Staffing. Proposed organizational structure



Hiring Practices: CASA L's philosophy is that the quality of the professional staff determines the quality of education offered in the school. It is therefore the responsibility of the Executive Director to locate and recruit the best qualified candidates to meet the school's educational needs.

Teachers are the driving momentum at CASA L. The Organizing Committee plans to advertise teaching positions on websites of local colleges and universities with schools of education, education-related websites, and education job fairs. Qualified candidates who apply will be asked to develop and execute a demonstration lesson to a class of students. The demonstration lesson will be observed and may be videotaped by members of the hiring committee who will evaluate the lesson against a pre-determined rubric. Candidates with a successful demonstration lesson will be interviewed by a hiring committee comprised of administrators and staff members. The ED will make the final hiring decisions based on the candidate's experience, demonstration lesson, interviews, references, and input from the hiring committee.

CASA L will seek to establish a broad applicant pool for all available and vacant positions. CASA L will diligently seek its employees through a variety of means, which may include advertisements in newspapers and educational journals, relationships with colleges and graduate schools of education, teacher recruitment fairs, and email and phone networks. CASA L will attempt to promote diversity in its applicant pool by advertising positions in targeted media (e.g. minority newspapers), networking with minority organizations and participating in minority recruitment

events. CASA L will comply with all federal, state and local laws and requirements regarding the hiring of staff and will not discriminate in hiring, employment, contracting, or retention for reasons of race, sex, age, religion, disability or other reasons prohibited by local, State or federal law.

In particular, teachers may be recruited through one or more of a variety of methods, including job postings in New York City and national media, participation in teacher fairs and similar events, job postings and communication with education schools/departments and alumni associations at colleges and universities; job postings on New York Teachers.net and/or other appropriate websites, and networking and communication with the New York Charter School Center, Teach for America and similar organizations.

CASA L's hiring process will include the following five phases:

1. Screening—All prospective employees will complete an employment application, which will request information related to prior work experience, special skills, educational background and will also provide consent to CASA L to check references. CASA L will also require all candidates to attach a résumé to the application. CASA L will retain both the application and the resume in its employee files. CASA L will not ask questions irrelevant to the position or questions that violate the law in regards to hiring practices.
2. Interviewing—CASA L's interview process is designed to help the Executive Director or designee determine whether a candidate: a) possesses the necessary skills to be a productive member of the School's staff; and b) will fit into CASA L's unique culture and environment. CASA L will develop an interview protocol, a process for checking references, a list of interview questions and a rubric containing objective criteria. The Executive Director or designee may elect to pre-screen candidates with a telephone interview to discover whether the candidate has the knowledge and experience required and to ascertain whether the candidate agrees with and can work in a manner consistent with CASA L's instructional philosophy and culture. CASA L may tape record phone interviews upon informing the candidate that the call will be recorded.
3. Checking References—CASA L may check references to get a fuller picture of a candidate's qualifications and experience, as needed.
4. Offering Employment—CASA L will offer employment through a job offer letter and a phone call. CASA L's job offer letter will include at least the following: a) job title or position offered; b) salary, benefits and perks offered; c) instructions to accept or decline the job offer; and d) where appropriate, a restatement that the employment will be at-will. CASA L will contact candidates not selected and inform them via email, phone call or a letter.
5. Fingerprinting—Before employees can begin working, they must clear the NYSED fingerprint screening process. OSPRA form 101, 102 and/or 104 must be submitted to NYSED for each new employee.

Staff Qualifications: Staff selection shall be based on strong academic preparation, professional competence, intellectual rigor, emotional maturity, enthusiastic professional attitude, knowledge of instructional practices, and ability to contribute to the furtherance of CASA L educational goals. Attention will be paid, among other factors, to the candidate's academic records and to his/her previous relevant experience. Successful candidates for staff positions must demonstrate that they are aware that children have many different family circumstances and that they are willing and able

to support the educational and developmental needs of a diverse student population. CASA L's teaching staff members must fulfill their individual responsibilities and work in concert with the other members of the teaching team. Successful candidates will also demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and learning through professional development.

CASA L will continue to make efforts to attract key personnel who contribute to the diverse skill-set necessary to operate a charter school. We anticipate hiring a diverse team of educators, from a wide range of teaching experiences, to serve a diverse population of students. Teachers with at least two years of experience designing and teaching an integrated curriculum, differentiating instruction for children who have multiple learning styles and preferably have achieved a Master's Degree in Education.

Selection of Executive Director (ED): CASA L's organizers understand that the school's success is contingent upon the quality of its leadership and key staff. Thus, they are engaged in a comprehensive process to identify persons with appropriate qualifications and experience to fill key leadership roles. CASA L will develop a plan to recruit and select qualified persons to fill each staff position and to recruit candidates to fill vacancies that may arise on the Board. To fill staff positions, the School will use several recruitment strategies, including: a) advertisements in relevant publications; b) referrals by the New York City Charter Center, CEI-PEA and similar organizations; c) participation in educational job fairs and other recruitment events; and d) networking and communication with charter school organizations, educational organizations, colleges and universities, Teach for America and similar organizations.

The selection of CASA L's initial Executive Director (ED) is critical to the successful implementation of the School's academic program and operations. The committee is currently interviewing potential candidates for the ED position.

CASA L has established a recruitment, screening and selection process that would ensure the hiring of a highly-qualified ED whose experience and educational philosophy would be consistent with that of the School. Candidates for the ED are being recruited through a variety of methods including networking with relevant educational organizations such as the Believe Network.

Candidates for the ED position are being assessed and screened through a formal selection process of the Organization Committee. The screening includes: (1) working with the consultant in identifying potential candidates; (2) having consultant conduct an initial screening of all candidates, using the ED's job description as its guide in assessing candidates' qualifications and experience; and (3) establishing a list of finalists based on the initial review and conducting an additional, more rigorous screening of the finalists, including interviews and background checks.

Chief among the qualifications that the Committee is searching for is prior successful experience as ED in a high-performing New York City public elementary and/or middle school, along with the other qualifications listed in the ED's job description.

C.1. Charter Management Organization/Partner - Not Applicable, CASA L does not intend to contract with a charter management organization.

C.2. Partner – Not Applicable

D. Evaluation

CASA L will submit to NYSED an Annual Report by August 1 each year, in accordance with Education Law 2857(2), which will include the state-mandated School Report Card. The Annual Report will include a Progress Report, which evaluates the school's progress in meeting its approved accountability goals. The Report will also include information required by the Commissioner of Education in regulations adopted for this purpose, such as graduation rates, dropout rates, standardized test performance, total spending per pupil and administrative spending per pupil. A copy of the school's financial audit will also be included in the Annual Report. The Annual Report will provide information on progress in achieving the goals delineated in Section II.A. CASA L faculty, led by the principal, will conduct a self-assessment of their progress. BPL will assist CASA L in conducting the self-assessment and gathering information for inclusion in the Annual Report. In addition, CASA L expects to undergo programmatic audits related to any federal entitlement grants and competitive public grants it receives, including but not limited to Consolidated Title Funds and CSP grant funds. Furthermore, annual internal audits of the efficacy of instructional strategies will be led by the Principal and submitted to the Board of Trustees for review.

Evaluation of the Academic Program: The following data will be collected daily: attendance, student assessment, student discipline, and student enrollment. CASA L will collect feedback on the curriculum through structured conversations with faculty members. CASA L will also gauge the level of school-wide rigor through feedback from external stakeholders, such as the CSD-32 Superintendent and educators from successful district and charter schools. We will also assess progress by analyzing student credit accumulation and Regents passing rates. The Board's Education Committee will regularly monitor the academic progress and advise change as necessary. The School's Board and staff will analyze summative data on the academic program and how CASA L performed against its Organizational Goals (see section III.A) by the end of each year, driving key adjustments to curriculum and instruction.

Evaluation of Teachers: The instructional leadership team will be responsible for evaluating teachers and aides on an ongoing basis. Evaluations are based on 4 components:

1. Student achievement - ensuring that all students achieve 1 or more years of growth each year as demonstrated by student growth on standardized state tests, performance assessments, projects, and individual portfolios. These demonstrations of student mastery will be added to a teacher's portfolio and used to assess a teacher's score in the evaluation system.
2. Instructional performance—Teachers will be evaluated and coached based on their performance and effectiveness in the classroom using research-based instructional techniques. Each teacher will be trained and coached on the Big Picture Teacher/Advisor Competencies & Skills Rubric. Each teacher will also be evaluated using that rubric multiple times throughout the year by several evaluators.
3. Parent engagement—Teachers will also be evaluated on parent surveys and establishment of meaningful ways for parents to participate in their student's educational experience.
4. Teacher values and beliefs—Teacher attitudes and beliefs impact student progress, learning and achievement. Teachers must foster a culture that makes the classroom a safe, welcoming place for students to take learning risks. This will be measured through Principal observations and student surveys.

In addition to formal evaluation of teachers, CASA L will have a multi-faceted system of teacher assessment for learning, which includes incorporating school learning targets, annual work plan,

SMART & personal goals, performance portfolios, and annual Peer Review.

Teachers receive non-evaluative feedback from periodic informal & formal observations from the Executive Director, Instructional Director & peers. The ED will use this formative data each school year, at the conclusion of each semester to make adjustments and develop alternative supports.

Individual student-level and class-level assessment data from internal and external sources will be utilized to evaluate teacher performance. In addition to monitoring student data through Global Scholar on an ongoing basis, summative data from interim benchmark assessments and mock Regents exams will provide additional data points for teacher evaluation. CASA L will also comply with reporting procedures of the NYSED's Teacher-Student Data Linkage initiative, which will use student ELA & Math exam scores to link student growth data to individual teachers. The ED will use the data to celebrate student performance, encourage the sharing of best practices for effective teachers and take swift action to mobilize instructional support for teachers where data indicates lack of sufficient student growth.

School Leader Evaluation: The Board will carry out an annual evaluation of the Principal using key instructional benchmarks, progress towards achievement goals, operational benchmarks, staff and parent satisfaction surveys and other criteria that measure the overall health of the school. The Principal will create a personal learning plan, a targeted set of measurable and attainable goals, with the Board Chair, to be regularly reviewed. Should the goals of the ED's learning plan not be realized, the Board Chair will establish an action plan with the ED to include mentoring, increased monitoring, leadership consultants, and a timeline for improvement.

Operational and Fiscal Health: The Board is committed to ensuring that it holds itself and the administration accountable for the operational and fiscal health and viability of the organization, including sound budgeting practices. The Board's work to develop a budget will begin each January. The ED and the Finance Manager (FM) will prepare the annual operating and capital budgets, cash flow projections, and profit and loss statements after working together to identify and prioritize needs. Needs will be identified & prioritized based on how they best support student achievement, align with goals, and as well as fiscal and operational viability. Budgets draft will be reviewed and revised by the Board's Treasurer & Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will present the budget to the full Board of Trustees for approval by May of each year. The ED and FM will oversee the adopted budget totals. The FM will be responsible for preparing monthly budget presentations, including updated annual budget information, monthly budget information, monthly actual vs. budget, and projected year-end vs. budgeted year-end. The ED and FM will review these presentations with the Board Treasurer prior to each Board meeting. All material deviations will be documented and explained by the FM and ED. Any unexpected deviations in a budget category of more than +/-15% of the budget amount will be considered material. The Finance Committee will hold a discussion regarding any particular budget categories or material items. If necessary, the Finance Committee will bring the deviation to the Board's attention to discuss any impact it may have on the school's financial position.

Board Evaluation: Success is directly correlated to a Board's capacity and effectiveness, which will be evaluated annually. The process involves each Board member completing self, peer & organizational evaluation. These evaluations will relate to the functioning of the board, the

functioning of the school, clarity of roles and responsibilities, shared mission, contributions, engagement, processes, etc. This information will be analyzed annually by the Development Committee to inform Board development and to ensure that the Board has the requisite knowledge and skills to be responsible agents of the charter school.

Family and Student Satisfaction: CASA L will formally and informally gauge parent, teacher, and student satisfaction through the use of the DOE's Learning Environment Survey as well as CASA L survey. All parents will receive the surveys during fall & spring. The results of the survey will be tabulated and made public in CASA L School dashboard & school report card, which will be available on the school website. Additionally, results of the survey will be published in our Annual Report to the NYSED. Since the DOE parent survey does not disaggregate results by individual classroom teachers, CASA L will conduct its own surveys of parents annually. Satisfaction data will be reviewed in a public Board meeting. The data will be used to inform any changes to the school program, if necessary. CASA L will also gauge family satisfaction through parent teacher conferences, parent meeting & events.

E. Professional Development

Professional Development is the lifeline of teacher effectiveness and growth. To this end CASA L will uphold the highest standards and as it relates to training and supporting its staff.

CASA L Teacher Attributes: CASA L shall ensure that all personnel meet any applicable certification requirements specified under the Article 56 of the Education Law, but generally will not impose any certification requirements beyond what is mandated by law. The Board has designated hiring and termination of all school employees to the Executive Director. The Executive Director on an annual basis will issue offer letters.

CASA L, through its Executive Director, will hire energetic, qualified teachers dedicated to ensuring their students learning. The CASA L teacher should have:

- Demonstrated expertise in the subject they will teach, as evidenced by personal skills and knowledge, an undergraduate major or minor or graduate degree in the subject they will teach, or direct subject-area teaching experience;
- Demonstrated experience working with young children (examples include, but are not limited to: parenting, babysitting, involvement with community youth organizations, supervisory roles in the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts, and mentorships);
- Demonstrated communication skills;
- Demonstrated ability to engage the interest of young children;
- Flexibility and sense of humor;
- Demonstrated ability to work with diverse children, including those with special needs;
- Teaching experience in a public or private school, preferably in an urban setting;
- Demonstrated ability to work well with parents;
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively as a team member;
- Demonstrated ability to evaluate tests and measurements of achievement; and
- Demonstrated willingness to be held accountable for student results.

Professional Development for Teaching Staff: Regularly programmed staff development is an

integral part of CASA L's structure and culture to maintain continuity and consistency. The Executive Director and Director of Instruction will provide professional development: (1) To provide materials and resources to support best practices; and (2) To facilitate meetings to develop curriculum maps and teacher planning. They will provide ongoing support for teachers and their classroom instruction.

The daily schedules for teachers will provide for common planning time necessary for teachers to collaborate with each other. In addition, regularly schedule professional development time for staff will be provided. In designing its professional development program, CASA L used the principles embedded in "Best Practice for Teaching and Learning in America's Schools," second edition by Zemelman, Daniels and Hyde (Heinemann, 1998), and Sharon Taberski's "On Solid Ground," (Heinemann, 2000) as its professional development framework. The key principles of best practice learning outlined in these books inform CASA L's professional development program. These principles are as follows:

1. Schooling should be STUDENT-CENTERED, taking cues from young people's interests, concerns, and questions.
2. As often as possible, school should stress learning that is EXPERIENTIAL.
3. Learning in all subjects needs to be HOLISTIC.
4. Learning activities need to be AUTHENTIC.
5. Students need to learn and practice many forms of EXPRESSION to deeply engage ideas.
6. Effective learning is balanced with opportunities for REFLECTION.
7. Teachers should tap into the primal power of SOCIAL relations to promote learning.
8. Some of the most efficient social learning activities are COLLABORATIVE.
9. Classrooms can become more effective and productive when procedures are DEMOCRATIC.
10. Powerful learning comes from COGNITIVE experiences.
11. Children's learning must be approached DEVELOPMENTALLY.
12. Children's learning always involves CONSTRUCTING ideas and systems.
13. Students learn best when faced with genuine CHALLENGING choices and are responsible in their own learning.

Training and professional development during the school year: During the school year, teachers will engage in three kinds of professional development:

- Classroom observation and feedback session with the Directors of Instruction. The feedback session will take the form of meetings with the teacher.
- Teacher team meetings by grade level to address issues that arise across the classes. These meetings will also include the refinement of teacher skills and capacities based on the presenting needs.
- The learning of new skills, including proactive curriculum development based on student needs, oral and written assessment design for individual units, mid-year evaluations and end of year evaluations.
- Teachers shall be evaluated using a Rubric for Professionalism and Instructional Practice, such as Kim Marshall's rubrics.
- In each subsequent year, new teachers will undergo an induction process that will include intensive training of 10-15 days prior to the opening of school and additional workshops during their first year at the school. Teachers with more than one year of tenure at the school will

work in concert with other experienced teachers both to enhance their capacity and to induct new teachers into the learning culture of the school.

A major focus of CASA L and of the school’s professional development program is on the use and proper interpretation of data in meeting the individual needs of students. Specifically, assessments are used to identify areas of strength and areas in need of strengthening, both for students and teachers. The goal of all staff development is to help teachers improve student learning. Through the use of data collected through ongoing in-house assessments and state testing, we will evaluate the effectiveness of the staff development.

Strategies for ELL and Special Education Students: Professional development to support CASA L’s ELL and special education students will be provided in a variety of ways. During pre-service, teachers will be given the IEPs of the students that will be in the class, as well as the home language surveys of students who come from homes in which English is not the first language. The purpose of sharing these documents will be to provide teachers with important background information they will need to set up their classrooms for success. They will provide the teachers with an overview of how to read the IEP and will also meet with the teachers individually to help them better understand the modifications listed on the document. During the school year, they will provide in-service workshops on topics such as differentiation strategies, memory, and attention. During the school year, the Executive Director and the teacher will review lesson plans and look for evidence of differentiated instruction to support the different needs of the students in the classroom. To support the needs of ELL students, CASA L will contract services with a literacy consultant who has specialized knowledge supporting English Language Learners. During pre-service, the consultant will share best instructional practices that support language development. During the school year, the consultant will observe teachers and identify the ways they are scaffolding and supporting the development of their students’ mastery of the English language.

Teacher PD Priorities: As stated previously, CASA L will support ongoing professional development through an investment in embedded staff development with the Executive Director and Directors of Instruction along with common planning time as a critical component of each teacher’s daily schedule. Job embedded professional development will begin at the start of the school year and will continue throughout the school year. The typical job embedded professional development process will extend over a period of several weeks and usually will include: (1) How to create and maintain an effective environment for student learning. (Classroom Management); (2) How to engage and support all students in learning (including special populations: Economically Disadvantaged, ELLs, Special Education, Gifted and Talented); (3) Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning; (4) Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students; (5) Using assessment to drive instruction; and (6) Effective collaboration in the co-teaching model.

F. Facilities

The following table summarizes the facilities needs of CASA L each year for growth to full capacity.

Year	Grades	# Classrooms	Specials	Offices/Storage
2017-18	K - 2 Enrollment: 150	6	Special Needs Room Visual & Audio Arts, Gymnasium, Recreation/recess space	Main office Staff Workspace Storage IT closet

			Bathrooms Nurse office	Conference room
2018-19	K - 3 Enrollment: 200	+2 (Total: 8)	Multiuse room Urban Farm/Greenhouse	Dean/Social Worker/counselor office Science Lab Knowledge/Business/Finance
2019-20	K – 5 Enrollment: 300	+4 (Total: 12)	Science lab Music room	
2020-21	K – 6 Enrollment: 350	+2 (Total: 14)	Learning Lab Library/PD	
2021-22	K – 7 Enrollment: 400	+2 (Total: 16)	Auditorium	

CASA L will seek to secure private space for its first charter term. Based on market comps we anticipate between \$18-21 p/sq ft.

CASA L classroom will be a well-prepared, child-centric environment that reflects inquiry, simplicity, and order. It consists of well-chosen materials and activities that are required for learning. Material & displays are maximized to best facilitate the child’s learning. The classroom will be designed to minimize things that may over-stimulate and distract. Walls will be painted in neutral colors. Shelves will display a few objects at a time. This prepared environment provides a calm, nurturing, quiet background that encourages and supports learning. Furnishings are selected for their simplicity and durability. The furniture in all classrooms will include tables and chairs, storage furniture, classroom libraries, rugs, lighting, reading “nooks,” and other supplies that are appropriate for early childhood. All offices will contain a requisite and appropriate amount of office furniture. Storage areas will secure technology, materials, equipment and supplemental school furnishings meetings & events.

Technology: The school will have a server with a centralized database and a network system that will give everyone access to the data management system and wireless access to the Internet. All administrative and operational staff will have individual desktop computers and all teachers will have an individual laptop. All classrooms will contain a desktop computer with a large screen connected to a speaker system for teachers to use with students. From year 2, the area set aside for parent meetings will also contain a computer to allow access to computers for families who may not have computer access at home. All computers will connect to a printer/copier/scanner.

G. Insurance

CASA L has engaged Arthur Gallagher Risk Management Services, a charter school insurance provider, and has estimated limits, rates, eligibility for insurance with the following coverage at a cost that is aligned with current budget projections. The following table is a summary of coverage and estimates.

Coverage	Limits
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General Liability (include corporal punishment and Athletic Liability)	\$1,000,000 occurrence expressly covers field trips and athletics / \$3,000,000 aggregate
Workers Compensation with Employers Liability	As specified by New York Laws; \$1,000,000 employers liability limits
Employee Benefits Liability	\$1,000,000 per occurrence dedicated limit
Automobile/Bus Liability including non-owned and hired including underinsured	\$1,000,000 per occurrence dedicated limit
Umbrella / Excess Liability above primary program (GI, Auto, Abuse, D&O, EPLI, ELL, EBL)	\$10,000,000 follows from over primary coverage
Employment Practices Liability	\$1,000,000 per occurrence dedicated limit
Educators Legal Liability E & O	\$1,000,000 per occurrence dedicated limit
Directors & Officers (includes broad named insured language)	\$1,000,000 per occurrence dedicated limit
Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Liability	\$1,000,000 separate limits from the GL \$2,000,000 aggregate
Crime / Honesty Bond / Employee Dishonesty / Fidelity Coverage	\$500,000 - \$1,000,000 limits as needed and based on cash flow of the school
Property/Lease and Boiler Machinery Coverage	Blanket Limits on an all risk of direct physical loss basis including EQ and Flood options if available/needed
Student Accident Coverage (Athletics)	Primary \$25,000 option and CAT option at \$5,000,000

H. Health, Food, and Transportation Services

Health – CASA L will provide its student with health services in compliance with state law by employing required medical personnel to create a Health and Safety Plan as well as a Medications Administration Plan in compliance with Education Law, Article 19, Section 902, to the extent that such health services are available to children attending other public schools in the district. This is done through a contractual arrangement with the regional office to supplement the level of health services mandated to be provided to CASA L in accordance with §2853(4)(a) and §912 of the Education Law. The School Nurse will collect and maintain student health records in a secured location, including immunization records of all students. If student immunization records are not submitted to the school’s School Nurse, a letter will be sent to the family notifying them that their child will be excluded from school 14 days after notification as per Public Health Law 2164.

Staff: CASA L will request a Nurse from the NYCDOE or NYCDOH, and if not available CASA L will allocate resources to hire a Nurse to supervise the disbursement of medication, the treatment of students who are ill, the treatment of students who are injured, and to train faculty and staff in first aid, including but not limited to, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency response utilizing the Automated External Defibrillator (AED). In the Nurse’s absence these responsibilities will become that of the Executive Director or his/her designee. A group of CASA L teachers and administrators will be trained and certified as First Responders in the event of a medical emergency that may require the use of AEDs or perform CPR. The use of an AED device will be reported to the Regional EMS office. AED devices will be maintained and checked on a regular basis to ensure

function. The nurse will additionally be responsible for all record keeping and correspondence related to these responsibilities.

Immunization: CASA L, in accordance with NYS law, requires that each student entering CASA L have a certificate of immunization at the time of registration or not later than the first day of school. State immunization requirements include: Diphtheria [Toxoid Containing Vaccine (DTP, DTaP) 3 doses]; Polio [(IPV) (OPV)3 OPV or 4 IPV]; Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR) 2 doses of measles containing vaccine and 1 dose each of mumps and rubella (preferably as MMR); Hepatitis B [3 doses, 7th graders entering school after 9/1/00 – 3 doses of RecombivazHB, Engerix B or 2 doses of adult hepatitis B vaccine for children 11 to 15 years old]; Varicella [1 dose]. Before a child can be permitted to enter or attend CASA L, parents or guardians must present documentation that their child has received all required doses of vaccines or that their child has received at least one dose of each of the required vaccines and is waiting to receive the subsequent doses at the appropriate time intervals. Parents may waive immunization in accordance with Public Health Law and exceptions to immunizations shall be granted if a licensed physician or nurse practitioner certifies such immunization may be detrimental to the student's health, or if the student's parent or guardian holds genuine and sincere beliefs, which may include religious beliefs, contrary to such immunization [see § 2164 (8) and (9) of the Public Health Law].

Defibrillator: CASA L, in accordance with §917 of the Education Law, will maintain on-site AED equipment to ensure ready and appropriate access for use during emergencies and shall ensure that a staff member(s) is trained in the operation and use of such equipment for use in CASA L and at any CASA L-sponsored events at other locations.

Hearing and Vision Testing: All new students will be tested by qualified individuals of the Department of Health (DOH). A review of student immunizations requirements and the proper supporting documents shall be completed for all new students. School staff will work with the DOH, local school districts, and other appropriate authorities to provide these services.

Medication Delivery System Procedures: CASA L will establish a secure, easy to understand, and safe medication delivery system protocol. The School nurse, with support from the Executive Director, will communicate to parents, students and staff the requirements for the administration of medications in the school. CASA L will avoid misunderstandings by widely circulating the requirements. These requirements for the administration of medication in school will be communicated in the student-parent handbook; school publications/calendars; inserts with report cards; mailings to physicians and/or local medical societies; and individual parent/student counseling.

- *Pharmacies:* (1) Only the medications necessary to maintain the student in school and which must be given during school hours will be administered in school. Any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day or while participating in school-sponsored activities (e.g., field trips, athletics) should comply with all procedures; (2) Any 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 by the nurse or licensed practical nurses under the direction of the nurse. Administration of such prescribed medications will not be performed by the other members of CASA L staff; and (3) Designated staff in the school setting, following assignment

and in conjunction with approval by the nurse, may assist self-directed students with the taking of their own oral, topical and inhalant medication. The nurse as well as the school administration will assure that the staff person receives the training and supervision needed to perform these tasks in a safe and effective manner.

- *Physician Orders:* CASA L requires written orders from a duly licensed prescriber and written parental permission to administer the medication. All medications, including nonprescription over the counter (OTC) drugs, shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis as determined by the student's health status.
 - Written orders for prescription and nonprescription OTC medications should minimally include: (1) Student's name and date of birth; (2) Name of medication; (3) Dosage and route of administration; (4) Frequency and time of administration; (5) For prn (as necessary) medications, conditions under which medication should be administered; (6) Date written; (7) Prescriber's name, title, and signature; and (8) Prescriber's phone number. The school nurse may request additional information, such as self-administration orders, diagnosis and/or potential adverse reactions, however, medication delivery should not be delayed pending this information, unless such information is essential to the safe administration of the medication.
- *Special considerations:* Medication orders must be renewed annually or when there is a change in medication or dosage: (1) The pharmacy label does not constitute a written order and cannot be used in lieu of a written order from a licensed prescriber; (2) When a properly labeled medication comes to the health office accompanied by a written request from the parent for administration of the medication, but without a written order from a licensed prescriber, the following procedure will be followed: (a) Contact parent regarding need for written order from a licensed prescriber; (b) Contact licensed prescriber to obtain verbal permission to administer medication; (c) Request fax or written orders to be received within 48 hours; (d) Contact parent and discontinue medication if written orders are not received in 48 hours; and (d) Document above steps.
- *Parental Responsibility:* (1) A written statement from the parent or guardian requesting administration of the medication in school as ordered by the licensed prescriber is required; and (2) It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to have the medication delivered directly to the health office in a properly labeled original container.
- *Prescription medications:* The pharmacy label must display: (1) Student name; (2) Name and phone number of pharmacy; (3) Licensed prescriber's name; (4) Date and number of refills; (5) Name of medication/dosage; (6) Frequency of administration; and (7) Route of administration and/or other directions
- *OTC Medications:* (1) Must be in the original manufacturer's container/package with the student's name affixed to the container. The same applies to drug samples; (2) For certain medications, especially controlled substances, standards of best practice include counting the medication upon receipt and periodically thereafter. This is not a legal requirement but constitutes a sound practice when handling controlled substances. Discrepancies should be reported to the parent immediately. The school administration should be informed of any discrepancies when such discoveries occur. Best practice includes close supervision of medication taking; (3) Medications will not be transported daily to and from school. Parents will be advised to ask the pharmacist for two containers, one to remain at home and one at school; (4) Instructions will be left for substitute nurses that are clear and concise on the

handling of all aspects of medication acceptance, handling, delivery and storage; and (5) Education of families regarding the CASA L's medication protocols is an ongoing responsibility of CASA L.

- *Medication Administration:* (1) All medications will be administered as close to the prescribed time as possible. Given student schedules and compliance with coming to the nurse in a timely fashion, medications accepted for school administration generally may be given up to one hour before and no later than one hour after the prescribed time. However, parents and licensed prescribers will be advised, so that they can advise CASA L if there is a time-specific concern regarding administration of the medication. Parents, students, and the nurse will work together to ensure the student receives his/her medication at the appropriate time; (2) If a student fails to come for a dose, the administration will provide support to nurse, such as a security guard, administrative or clerical staff to locate the student. If the medication has not been given for any reason within the prescribed time frame, CASA L will make all reasonable efforts to notify the family that day, as the family may need to adjust a home dose accordingly; (3) If students chronically fail to come for medications, the school nurse will contact the parent to address the problem. The licensed prescriber will be informed of the poor compliance, so that the medication protocol can be reviewed and possible adjustments made, i.e., home administration, extended release medication; (4) Ongoing communication and collaboration between CASA L and parents will occur to assist students in assuming personal responsibility for their health behaviors; (5) A medication may be changed or discontinued by a written order of the licensed prescriber at any time. If a parent requests discontinuation of a prescribed medication without the prescriber's order to do the same, CASA L will send a confirmation to the parent with a copy to the prescriber of CASA L's intention to discontinue the medication on the parent's request; and (6) When the dose of a medication is changed by a licensed prescriber's written order and a parent request, and the old pharmacy bottle label has not been corrected, the nurse may label the bottle with the correct dose until the new pharmacy labeled prescription bottle is received. The importance of parent compliance with sending in a new bottle quickly will be conveyed.
- *Storage of Medication:* (1) No medication will be brought into CASA L without knowledge of the nurse. Procedures that facilitate this practice so that parents and students do not feel the need to hide medication or to circumvent cumbersome procedures will be publicized; and (2) All medications, except as otherwise arranged, will be properly stored and secured within a health office cabinet, drawer or refrigerator designated for medications only. The site must include a lock for the cabinet, drawer and refrigerator, as well as a lock to the outside health office door. Controlled substances will always be secured and will never be left open or accessible to the public at any time. Even self-directed students will not be given unsupervised access to controlled substances under the care of CASA L. Whenever possible, medication storage units will be secured to the wall or floor, and will not have breakable glass doors. If possible, all medications will be stored in a health office. However, there may be instances when either requests are made by a parent and physician for a student to carry and self-administer medications because of the emerging nature of the health problem or the severity of the health condition.
- *Carry and Self-administer Medication:* If the CASA L nurse receives a request from a parent and licensed prescriber to permit a student to carry and self-administer her/his own

prescribed medication, such decisions will be made on an individual basis and in accordance with the following criteria: (1) Severity of health care problems, particularly asthmatic or allergic conditions; (2) Licensed prescriber's order directing that the student be allowed to carry her/his medication and self-administer; (3) Parent statement requesting compliance with licensed prescriber's order; (4) Student has been instructed in the procedure of self-administration and can assume responsibility for carrying properly labeled medication in original container on her or his person or keeping in school; (5) School nursing assessment that student is self-directed to carry and self-administer her/his medication properly; and (6) Parent contact made to clarify parental responsibility regarding the monitoring of the student on an ongoing/daily basis to insure that the student is carrying and taking the medication as ordered. This contact will be documented.

- Any student self-administering medication without proper authorization will be counseled by the school nurse. In addition, the parents will be notified. In all instances, school administration will also be informed. Periodic reevaluation of the effectiveness of the procedure will be instituted.
- *Emergency Medication*: The requirements allowing registered professional nurses to administer agents used in the emergency treatment of anaphylaxis include: (1) Following non-patient specific standing orders and protocols authorized by a physician or a nurse practitioner and (2) Maintaining or ensuring the maintenance of a copy of the standing order(s) and protocol(s) that authorizes them to administer anaphylactic treatment agents.
- *Non-FDA Sanctioned Requests/Herbal Remedies, Dietary Supplements and Natural Products*: CASA L will not honor requests for use of herbal remedies, dietary supplements and natural products as they are not sanctioned by the FDA.

Food - CASA L will participate in the Federal Free and Reduced Priced breakfast, lunch, and snack programs and intends to receive its meal services through the NYCDOE Office of School Food and Nutrition Services (OSNFS). All students attending CASA L are eligible for meals provided at the facility. Breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks will be served each day that school is in session. Meals will be in compliance with relevant health and safety regulations. Students can opt to bring their own lunch and not partake in the school lunch program.

Although CASA L plans to utilize food services provided by OSNFS, this does not preclude CASA L from exploring alternative options for food service to the school nor does it preclude the school from operating its own kitchen and providing its own meals, should successful development be undertaken. As have other NYC charter schools, which have chosen to contract for food outside of the DOE, CASA L will investigate other vendors who can provide healthy and appetizing menus for breakfast, lunch and snack to the school's students. The factors that will guide CASA L's decision to contract with an outside vendor and/or operate its own kitchen to provide meals will include, but not be limited to, cost, adherence to federal guidelines for free and reduced lunch, health and safety of children and workers, and menu choices.

CASA L anticipated students population, according to the NYSED enrollment target calculator, 94% are eligible to receive free and reduced price meals based on their parents' income levels. In order to receive these benefits, the parents of eligible students must complete and return the Family Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals (SD 1041 form) and CASA L will provide parents with this application upon enrollment. The following website provides the eligibility

guidelines for free and reduced-lunch

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/notices/iegs/IEG05-06.pdf>. The NYCDOE FRL application, which can be found online at <http://www.opt-osfns.org> is available in many different languages. As soon as possible, this form must be returned to the Office Manager (OM), then will be reviewed by the Knowledge Manager (KM) or Operations Manager (OM) for approval. CASA L will maintain each student's SD 1041 form on file for review once it has been completed and approved. These forms enable students to receive free and reduced price meals, and also form the basis for determining and distributing additional educational funding from the state and federal governments.

CASA L recognizes that the SD 1041 form can be difficult to collect from parents who are concerned over the confidentiality of the form; but CASA L will ensure parents that the information is personal and confidential and will remain at CASA L. While the forms will not leave CASA L, OSFNS can and will randomly audit the applications to make sure they are coded correctly.

Transportation - Being a community based school, CASA L anticipates most students reside within close proximity to the school, however will utilize the services of the NYCDOE and delegate responsibility to the NYCDOE for providing transportation services to the CASA L's students. Students will receive the same transportation services as other NYC public school students. Transportation is provided by the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT). After CASA L submits a Transportation Request Form and uses ATS or NIPSIS to supply the DOE with the necessary information about its students, the DOE will determine the eligibility for transportation of CASA L's students. This eligibility is based on age and distance from the school, in accordance with the Chancellor's regulations (Regulation A-801). Given the uncertainty of bus scheduling, CASA L will not guarantee parents that a child will have yellow school bus service until such service has been confirmed by OPT. To the extent we are able, in the event that students are ineligible for transportation services through the NYCDOE, CASA L will facilitate carpooling, where and when available. Special education students have different eligibility for transportation as well. Their Individual Education Program (IEP) dictates their eligibility. Transportation for special education students will be provided in accordance with all applicable State and Federal laws. The school students will receive transportation services for which they are eligible under Education Law § 2853(4)(b) and § 3635. If a student is not eligible for transportation, transportation becomes the responsibility of the child/s parents or guardian.

Safety/Security - CASA L will continue to ensure that the security and safety of student comes first. School Safety Plan will be adopted and submitted by October 1 of each school year. In aligning with that mandate the school follows set guidelines regarding the security and safety of students, the school will contract security services from an established, reputable and reliable security vendor. We have established positive relationships with the local precinct, NYCDOE school safety division, NYPD gang awareness unit and the local community officer. In terms of the building itself, CASA L has established clear policies and protocols pertaining to the safety and security. These polices and protocol includes:

Daily Security Procedures

- Establish the time when the building is to be opened and closed. The hours should be posted at all doorways.

- Determine when the administrative designee will be at the switchboard to receive incoming calls and to make emergency calls.
- Classroom doors may be closed while the children are in attendance but never locked.
- Check all locks on doors and windows.
- Check all pathways to doors to ensure free access.
- Check all doors to ensure they function properly and lock.
- Check security alarm system to make sure it is operating.
- Lock all rooms at night.
- Determine the building is secure at the end of the day.

Visitors To The Building

All visitors to the building should be screened as follows:

- Each visitor shows identification and their entrance is captured by the video surveillance systems..
- Each visitor's time-into the building is recorded.
- Each visitor is escorted or directed to his or her location.

Emergency Equipment

- Inspect the first aid kit monthly and replace materials as soon as possible;
- Maintain a walkie-talkie system key staff to utilize in the event of telephone service disruptions;
- Maintain battery operated flashlights;
- Maintain a battery operated radio to listen to emergency broadcasts;
- Check that all fire exits, sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire and smoke alarms are working properly at all times. The program must cooperate with the Fire Department inspections and implement corrective actions immediately;
- Maintain medication storage facilities and records. During an evacuation the designee should, if possible, remove the medication to a safe place; and,
- If possible, ensure that important files are stored as digital backups, available off-site. This includes contact information for both children and staff.

Drills: Participating in emergency, fire and evacuation preparedness drills.

During a drill everyone must leave the building immediately. The following steps should be taken:

- At the sound of the signal, the staff directs the children to stand.
- Teacher assistant/aide leads the children to the exit.
- Teacher takes up a position that will ensure calm, orderly, and quick exit.
- The Teacher closes the classroom doors to prevent the spread of fire.
- Staff and children walk a sufficient distance so that they are clear of the building.
- When an "all clear" signal is sounded everyone reenters the building.

Sheltering-In: There will be times when the appropriate response to a disaster may require that emergency responders direct children and staff to remain within the building. This type of response is often referred to as "sheltering-in." The "sheltering-in" location must be

- A hallway and away from windows and glass;
- An area that is isolated and where ventilation can be turned off, if needed;

- An area that is lower than the first floor and away from the main entrance of the building; and,
- An area that has access to emergency resources such as water, cups, blankets, change of clothing, a battery operated radio, and flashlights.

Evacuation Plan: In the event of an evacuation, two (2) alternative locations should be identified in advance and communicated to all program staff and parents. Unless otherwise directed by the NYPD, the FDNY, or other emergency personnel, such a site is a safe walking distance from the original site. To prepare for an evacuation, each program should have a notebook binder in each classroom that contains an updated parent/caretaker/emergency contact telephone directory with a listing for each child in the program. This binder must be easily accessible so that during an emergency evacuation, the teachers can remove the binders to a safe location. The binder should include:

- a) Telephone numbers of parents' homes, businesses, cell phones, and email addresses (updated quarterly or on an as needed basis);
- b) Contact information on each child's medical practitioner. Medical alert information, for example penicillin allergies, is indicated for specific children;
- c) Information about the location and schedule of all limited mobility children. Limited mobility children are escorted to a previously determined "safety zone" room and then removed by designated personnel.

While in the evacuation site, attendance should be confirmed using the roster for both children and staff. The overall responsibility to evacuate is made by the designated Supervisor-In-Charge. The following steps should be taken:

- a) The local precinct is notified that the school is being evacuated.
- b) All classrooms and offices are locked.
- c) At the sound of the signal, staff members escort the children from their rooms and exit the building to the previously arranged site.
- d) During the evacuation, school staff in charge of children takes the binder with them to the pre-determined alternate location. Attendance of children and staff is taken at the alternate location. Missing children and staff are reported to emergency personnel as soon as possible.
- e) If the signal does not work, then an identified staff person is dispatched to each room to relay the information that an evacuation is in effect.

CASA L gives assurance that the building selected and/or modified meets architectural access requirements for persons with disabilities, as indicated in the Americans with Disabilities Act, and local building codes addressing architectural access.

I. Family and Community Involvement

Communication with Parents/Parent & Staff Involvement: CASA L will develop several means of communication with its parents and guardians, which include: (1) Quarterly parent meetings that are held at the beginning and end of each of CASA L's two semesters. Teachers and administrators will meet to discuss programs, overall progress, future plans, etc.; (2) Individual parent/guardian meetings with teachers at least twice per year. These meetings will be scheduled to occur during each mid-semester (approx. Nov. and April) following the distribution of progress reports to the

parents and guardians of CASA L students and will focus on each student's progress; (3) Progress reports sent to the parents/guardians of each student twice per year, each mid-semester; (4) Report cards sent to parents/guardians two times yearly, once each semester; (5) Development and maintenance of a CASA L website that is designed specifically to promote continuous parental involvement with the school and the promotion of email communication and the school's website as effective means of communication; (6) Facilitate the development and continued operation of an CASA L Parents Association (PA); (7) Standard procedure for staff to contact parents about student behaviors (either positive or negative). Contact can be made by phone, email or face to face meetings; and (8) Development and maintenance of a school climate that is friendly and inviting to parents.

Promotion of Parental and Staff Involvement in School Governance: CASA L will promote parental and staff involvement in school governance in the following manner: (1) Inviting parents and school staff to become members of various school committees, including committees of the Board; (2) Through the school's PA, surveys, interviews, etc., seeking the recommendation of parents on issues that significantly impact any aspect of the school, its operation and its instructional program prior to final decisions; (3) Reserving a trustee position on the Board for a parent of a CASA L student; (4) Reserving a standing agenda spot for the school's staff at each regular meeting of the Board; (5) Sharing the School's annual report separately with the School's PA and school staff and providing the PA and school staff the opportunity to make recommendations for improvement; and (6) Scheduling regular weekly faculty meetings at which time topics relevant to the effective operation of CASA L and implementation of its instructional program are considered.

Community Involvement: CASA L students will be extensively integrated in the community through the service, civic, experiential & internship opportunities. Students will learn from community-based mentors, entrepreneurs, artists, businesses, institutions, organizations and others. Students will also apprentice under professionals in skilled trades and fields. This will allow students to develop hard and soft skills that will help them become college and workforce ready.

J. Financial Management

The **CASA L Board**, and more specifically the **Treasurer**, and **Executive Director** will be responsible for CASA L's overall fiscal oversight. The Executive Director may delegate responsibilities to the Finance Manager (FM) or appropriate staff members, as needed, to ensure the smooth operation of financial policies and activities. CASA L has developed an internal financial controls policy and procedure manual that dictate the policies and procedures related to the School's financial transactions and activities and the staff positions responsible for discharging these functions.

Payroll - Policy: CASA L shall maintain a payroll system approved by the Board. Procedure: Documentation of authorized pay rates shall be maintained in the employee's personnel file. Personnel files shall be secured with access limited to authorized individuals. The School will contract with a payroll service to provide payroll processing. Personnel will be paid bi-weekly, by check. Personnel electing direct deposit will receive a check stub. Procedure: Employee time sheets will be maintained daily. Time sheets, signed by the employee and approved by a supervisor, shall be forwarded to the Executive Director *or Designee* at the end of the pay period for payroll processing. The Operations Manager will review the time sheets for signatures and approvals, review time worked and verify for mathematical accuracy, summarize the payroll information and forward it to the payroll service for processing. The Executive Director or designee will receive all

completed payroll reports and paychecks from the payroll service. The *Finance Manager* will review the payroll reports and document approval. The Executive Director *or Designee* will distribute the paychecks. All payroll changes will be authorized by the Executive Director and forwarded to the payroll service by the Finance Associate. S/he may delegate to the *Finance Associate* recording each payroll into the accounting system, including any payroll accruals, in accordance with GAAP. The *Finance Manager* will be responsible for payment of all payroll-related liabilities that are not handled by the payroll service. A deferred compensation program may be established in accordance with IRS and personnel policies and administered by a third party. All services performed by independent contractors will be processed as accounts payable. At the close of the fiscal year, Forms 1099 will be issued to independent contractors in accordance with IRS regulations.

Purchases- Policy: Guiding the purchase of all CASA L goods and services will be: (a) price; (b) quality; and (c) dependability. Particular vendors may be chosen for any one or any combination of these factors; however, at all times the selection of a particular good, service, or vendor shall be with the intention of maintaining a top-quality school. The execution of contracts and grants shall be within the scope of CASA L's mission, goals, and annual plans. Procedure: When a product is to be purchased that costs more than \$15,000, the Executive Director, or his/her designee, shall review appropriate vendors, ensure that the purchase is appropriate and represents a good value for the school. Professional service contracts in excess of \$15,000 per annum are also to be awarded in the same manner described as above. All contractual agreements shall be in writing, and signed and dated by the Executive Director or his/her designee. Purchases or contracts in excess of \$15,000 will be shared periodically via a report to the Board of Trustees in the form of a spreadsheet of purchases, with their listed expenses, or upon request.

Accounting and audit requirements - Policy: Independent audits of the financial statements shall be conducted annually by a New York State Certified Public Accountant selected by the Board. Annual financial audits will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and government auditing standards. Financial regulatory forms shall be completed as necessary by CASA L or an accounting firm selected by the school. Procedure: Appropriate financial forms and reports shall be filed with the charter entity, federal government and appropriate state agencies. Upon completion, audits shall be reviewed by **DO** and submitted to the Board for review. All audits shall include a management letter.

Cash management and investing: The following areas from the Internal Financial Controls Policy relate to cash management and investing:

- Investment Policies- Policy: The School's funds shall be invested in appropriate financial instruments, such as bank accounts, money market funds and certificates of deposits. Procedure: The **Finance Manager** shall identify excess funds available for investment, for approval by Executive Director. Major investments or changes in financial instruments shall be reviewed by the Finance Committee of the BOT.
- Borrowing Funds - Policy: All borrowing of funds and the establishment or increase of all credit lines must be approved by the Board. Procedure: Based on annual audits, financial statements, and cash flow projections, the Executive Director may establish credit lines and borrowing limits as directed by the Board. Borrowed funds will be repaid with appropriate, measurable and identifiable revenues in accordance with GAAP. The Executive Director or his or her designee

shall alert the Board if lines of credit or borrowing limits ever are not adequate to meet the needs of the organization. The Board may amend the borrowing policy and credit limits.

- Bank Cards - Policy: As needed, the school shall utilize a bankcard to pay for approved purchases.
- Procedure: Requests to utilize the school bank cards shall be made to the Executive Director via a Bank Card usage request form. All proposed uses of the school Bank Card must be documented and approved by the Executive Director.
- Petty Cash - Policy: The School shall maintain a petty cash fund to be used for reimbursements to employees for minimal out-of-pocket business-related expenses, not to exceed \$100.00. Procedure: The *Finance Manager* shall delegate to the *Finance Associate* the responsibility petty cash. The *Finance Associate* will reimburse employees for out-of-pocket expenses, not to exceed \$100.00, upon submission of a petty cash reimbursement voucher, approved by the *DO*, and substantiating receipts related to each expense. The *Finance Associate* shall verify all receipts as required for all requested reimbursements, make any required payment, and maintain the petty cash fund. The *Finance Associate* will count and reconcile the petty cash fund to receipts monthly. Replenishment of the petty cash fund will be documented by the reconciliation along with a check prepared by the *Finance Manager* as needed, and approved by the Executive Director.

Accounts Receivable- Policy: The CASA L will maintain accounts receivable in accordance with GAAP for scheduled receipts from the school districts, grants or any other amounts due but not yet received. Procedure: All revenues will be recorded on an accrual basis in accordance with GAAP. The *Finance Associate* will maintain an aged schedule of accounts receivable, which lists payer, date, description, and account, based on revenue/grant information provided by the *Finance Manager*. The *Finance Associate* will reconcile such schedule to the general ledger on a monthly basis and review the ledgers with the *Finance Manager*.

Accounts Payable- Policy: The School, whenever practical, shall pay bills within 60 days of their issue, unless alternative arrangements are made with vendors or unless a dispute arises. Bills of an amount which precludes payment within 60 days may be put on a payment plan, allowing a monthly payment agreeable to both CASA L and the vendor, unless another arrangement is reached, agreeable to both CASA L and the vendor. Procedure: All accounts payable shall be recorded on the accrual basis in accordance with GAAP. Accounts payable shall be maintained by the *Finance Associate* who shall ensure timely payment and the development of payment plans. The *Finance Associate* also shall maintain a schedule reflecting an aging of accounts payable balances listing the payee, transaction date, amount and payable description and account. Payments of bills shall be processed on or about the end of each week. Purchases or contracts in excess of \$15,000 will be shared periodically via a report to the Board of Trustees in the form of a spreadsheet of purchases, with their listed expenses, or upon request. All bills will be approved by the Executive Director prior to payment by the *Finance Associate*. No payment will be made without a properly approved bill or other supporting documentation, including, but not limited to, signed and dated packing slips. Payments will be made from bills. If original bills are not available, copies will be requested. Payments will not be made based on statements. The Board shall approve all contracts and loans.

Fundraising; Bequests and Contributions. Policy: Non-restricted bequests and contributions shall be used for operations or special projects as designated and approved by the Executive Director,

consistent with conditions set forth by the Board. Bequests and contributions that are donor restricted shall be used for the purpose articulated by the donor, except that in no case shall the school accept any such bequest or contribution for which the donor restriction violates any federal or New York state law. Procedure: Bequests and contributions will be properly budgeted and accounted for in accordance with GAAP for nonprofit organizations. The *Finance Manager* will maintain supporting schedules to document revenues and expenditures related to unrestricted, temporarily restricted and permanently restricted net assets. Unrestricted bequests and contributions shall be used for operations or special projects as designated and approved by the Executive Director and/or Board. Bequests and contributions that are donor restricted shall be used for the purpose articulated by the donor. The Board will review and approve expenditures on a monthly basis in accordance with donor stipulations, if any.

Student Records: CASA L fully embraces its obligations to comply with FERPA and will follow all appropriate procedures to comply fully with the New York State Freedom of Information law (Article 6 of the New York Public Officers Law). CASA L will have trained staff who are responsible for managing the student information. The Knowledge Manager (KM), with support from Program Coordinators/Counselors, Office Manager (OM) and oversight by Executive Director (ED), will be responsible for tracking enrollment, maintaining school lunch program records, including student eligibility and other data to ensure accurate billing, reimbursements, all data relevant to Economically Disadvantaged, II and III programs and other services. The Knowledge Manager shall be the CASA L Records Management Officer (“KM/RMO”). The KM/RMO shall coordinate the development of and oversee a program for the orderly and efficient management of records, including the legal disposition or destruction of obsolete records.

CASA L will develop/select a robust & comprehensive student information system and knowledge management system to store, analyze and produce needed reports on all relevant student data. The KM/RMO will also be given the authority and responsibility to develop and maintain CASA L’s records management program, student information system and any other legally binding information. CASA L will use the NYCDOE ATS attendance codes when maintaining a student’s attendance record for the district and state. The Executive Director (ED), Knowledge Manager (KM) and Program Coordinators/Counselors & Office Manager will be responsible for the protection of all student records.

With regard to the special education program, the Special Needs Coordinator (SNC) will be responsible for maintaining and securing all records, as well as submitting all required reporting to appropriate agencies including necessary reporting for special education reimbursement through the NYCDOE portal, as well as submitting the information for presentation to the board via the school dashboard. The ED will designate duties to the Office Manger (OM) whose responsibilities will include: (1) collecting written excuses for student absences; (2) determining legal and illegal absences of students according to CASA L’S attendance policy; and (3) filing excuses for absences in a student's file. The KM/RMO will retain records for such a period and dispose of them in the manner described in Records Retention and Disposition Schedule ED-1, established pursuant to Part 185, Title VIII of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York and Article 57-A of the Arts and Cultural Affairs Law.

K. Budget and Cash Flow

See attachment

L. Pre-Opening Plan

The following table outlines the areas & milestones for implementation during the planning year.

DOMAIN	ACTION	Start Date	End Date	Duty
Governance	Ratify Bylaws and Code of Ethics	Jul, 2016	Jul, 2016	BOT
Governance	Appoint board officers	Jul, 2016	Jul, 2016	BOT
Academic	Negotiate and Sign MOU with Big Picture Learning	Jul, 2016	July, 2016	BOT
Facilities	Appoint Facilities Partner and Education Planner	Jul, 2016	Aug, 2016	BOT
Governance	Recruit School Leader	Jul, 2016	Sept, 2016	BOT
Facilities	Conduct facilities negotiations and execute lease for temporary space	Aug, 2016	Dec, 2016	FC
Facilities	Commence pre-development process for permanent space; approve facilities design plan	Aug, 2016	Oct, 2016	BOT, FC, ED
Operations	Obtain 501-C3 status	Aug, 2016	Jan, 2017	BOT
Finance	Approval fiscal policies and procedures	Sept, 2016	Oct, 2017	BOT
	Negotiation and sign MOUs with key CBOs for programmatic and afterschool partnerships	Oct, 2016	Apr, 2017	BOT
Finance	Contract with UFT to establish payroll and other financial systems (or other bidder)	Jan, 2017	Jun, 2017	BOT, ED
Staffing	Recruit Operations Manager	Jan, 2017	Feb 2017	ED
Recruitment	Recruit Students: develop and disseminate materials, host open-houses, conduct door-to-door marketing	Jan 1, 2017	Apr1, 2017	ED
Staffing	Recruit school staff: draft job descriptions, post positions, interview candidates, check references	Feb, 2017	Jun, 2017	ED, OD, ID
Facilities	Commence construction on permanent facility	Mar, 2017	Mar, 2017	FC
Staffing	Hire staff: salary negotiations and offer letters	Mar, 2017	Jun, 2017	ED, OD
Operations	Negotiate and sign MOU with UFT for collective bargaining agreement	May, 2017	June, 2017	BOT, ED, OD
Academic	Research and secure online content providers	Mar, 2017	Jun, 2017	ED, ID
Academic	Research and secure curriculum resources	Mar, 2017	Jun, 2017	ED, ID
Academic	Draft multidisciplinary learning modules for CCSS and NYS requirements	Mar, 2017	Aug, 2017	ED, ID
Academic	Research and secure standardized assessments	Mar, 2017	Jun, 2017	ED, ID
Technology	RFP for technology infrastructure	Mar, 2017	Jun, 2017	OD
Recruitment	Hold lottery: secure system with preferences, conduct lottery, inform parents	Apr 8, 2017	Apr 8, 2017	ED, OD
Operations	Obtain student records: obtain permission from parents, contact previous schools, etc.	Apr, 2017	Jul, 2017	OD, ED
Finance	Approve budget for FY14-15	Apr, 2017	Apr, 2017	BOT
Operations	Secure food services: coordinate vendor evaluation of kitchen capacity, solicit proposals, select vendors	Apr, 2017	May, 2017	OD
Operations	Secure transportation: contact DOE OPT, coordinate bus routes and stops, inform parents of options	Apr, 2017	Jul, 2017	OD
HR	Finalize staff handbook and personnel policies	Apr, 2017	Jun, 2017	BOT, OD
Operations	Develop and distribute student handbook	May, 2017	Jun, 2017	ED, OD
Technology	Install technology infrastructure	May, 2017	Jul, 2017	OD

HR	Complete fingerprinting and background checks	May, 2017	Jul, 2017	OD
Academic	Prepare school calendar and distribute to families	May, 2017	May, 2017	ED, OD
Technology	Install Hybrid Learning Management System	Jun, 2017	Jul, 2017	OD
Facilities	Obtain Certificate of Occupancy	Jun, 2017	Jun, 2017	FC
Recruitment	Conduct open houses for admitted students	Jun, 2017	Jun, 2017	ED, OD
Academic	Contract with Related Service Providers	Jun, 2017	Aug, 2017	ED
Academic	Conduct home visits	Jun, 2017	Aug, 2017	ED, OD
Operations	Secure insurance policies	Jun, 2017	Jun, 2017	OD
PD	Prepare Summer Readiness Program	Jun, 2017	Aug, 2017	ED, ID, IS
Finance	Complete Initial Statement of Financial Controls	Jul, 2017	Jul, 2017	OD
HR	Complete staff fingerprints and background checks	Jul, 2017	Jul, 2017	OD
Operations	Secure IEPs and student records	Jul, 2017	Aug, 2017	OD
Operations	Purchase AEDs and train staff	Jul, 2017	Aug, 2017	OD, ED, D
Academic	Begin community outreach to establish internship opportunities for year 1.	Jul, 2017	Sept, 2017	LTI
PD	Conduct Summer Readiness Institute	Aug, 2017	Aug, 2017	ED, ID, IS
PD	Develop staff growth plans	Aug, 2017	Aug, 2017	ED, IS

BOT=Board of Trustees; ED=School Leader (Executive Director) ID= Instructional Director;
FC=Facilities Partner, OD=Operations Director, PC= Program Coordinator, IS=Instructional Staff

M. Dissolution Plan

In the event of dissolution of CASA L, the Board of Trustees would immediately establish a transition team, would develop a dissolution plan & delegate to the School Leadership Team the responsibility to manage the dissolution process. CASA L will follow any additional procedures required by NYSED to ensure an orderly closure and dissolution process, including compliance with the applicable requirements of Education Law §§2854(2)(t), 219 and 220 and any closing procedures specified by NYSED.

The school will establish an escrow account of at least \$75,000, to be built up over the 3 initial years, to pay for legal and audit expenses associated with the dissolution of the school. No later than the timetable established by the NYSED, or July 1, whichever is earlier, the school would transfer all student records to the NYCDOE or the student's district of residence, if the student resides outside of New York City. Additionally, local school districts where each student resides at the time of dissolution will be notified in writing.

Closing procedure would incorporate the following actions:

- 3 weeks prior to final decision, establish transition team, develop closure plan, assign Roles & review budget to ensure that funds are sufficient to operate the school through the end of the school year.
- Within 24 hours of decision notify parents and affected school districts in writing when the closure decision is final. In the letter to parents after the closure decision is final, include the last day of instruction, end-of-the-year transition activities offer assistance to families in identifying new schools.
- Within 24 hours of decision School Leadership and Board Members meet with faculty & staff to discuss reasons for closure, the status of decision and likely timeline for a final decision, as well as emphasize importance of maintaining continuity of instruction throughout the end of school

year.

- Within 15 days after the final decision on the charter school closure and after all appeals have been exhausted, notify - banks, bond holders, benefit providers, creditors, contractors, vendors, etc. - of the school's closure, as well as the projected date of the last payment by the school toward its debt.
- Protect the school's assets and any assets in the school that belong to others against theft, misappropriation and deterioration.
- Maintain all corporate records related to contracts, lease, assets, grants, governance (minutes, bylaws, policies), employees (background checks, personnel files), accounting/audit, tax status, employee benefits.
- Preparation of end-of-year reports.
- Preparation & transfer all assets & student records, including final grades and evaluations, to the authorizer/district including all records regarding special education and supplemental services; student health/immunization records, attendance records, testing materials, student transcripts and report cards.
- Upon sunset of the charter agreement, dissolve charter school, end corporate existence, and notify the IRS.