



I. Executive Summary

“The quality of life in the 21st century will depend in large measure on the generation of new wealth, on safeguarding the health of our planet, and on opportunities for enlightenment and individual development. The environment is a critical element of the knowledge base we need to live in a safe and prosperous world”¹

Mission Statement

The mission of Engage Charter School for Environmental Education (ECSE²) is to provide our scholars with a rigorous, well rounded, college preparatory education encompassing environmental awareness through citizenship, experiential learning, and an understanding that we are all members of an interconnected global society. Each scholar will engage in an Environmental Education curriculum embedded within all context areas including Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Students will be further supported with substantial hands on learning opportunities promoting critical thinking and an understanding of our individual impact on the eco-system and the subsequent "greening" of our global society.

Introduction

Engage Charter School for Environmental Education (ECSE²) is a newly proposed 7-12 school focused on increasing environmental awareness and sustainability within New York City Community School District 27. ECSE² has established an institutional affiliation with the Education Leadership Department at Columbia University, Teachers College and The Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education at New York University.

The Education Leadership Department at Columbia University, Teachers College will provide the school with the following resources under the guidance of Craig Richards, Ph.D., Program chair and Director:

1. Facilitation of on and offsite organizational leadership training for Administrators and Coordinators
2. Facilitation of on and offsite education leadership development training for members of the Board of Trustees
3. Facilitation of on and offsite education leadership development training for teachers facilitating the building of capacity and the establishment of teacher leaders
4. Access to professional development opportunities and programs at Columbia University, Teachers College

The Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education at New York University will provide the school with the following resources under the guidance of Mary Leou, Ed.D., Director:

1. Facilitation of on and offsite Professional Development for staff members to effectively infuse environmental education across content areas
2. Assist in developing curriculum that will provide teachers and students with a framework to promote interdisciplinary learning and environmental literacy
3. Students will receive exposure to New York University's campus and its resources in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education
4. Assist in the development of project based learning within units of study focused on interdisciplinary learning and environmental literacy
5. Access to professional development opportunities and programs at New York University
6. Access to over 100 non-profit and government agencies in the New York Metropolitan area providing services within the fields of environmental education, literacy, justice, conservation and technology

¹ Environmental Science and Engineering for the 21st Century: The Role of the National Science Foundation (NSB 00-22, February 2000)



Rationale

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) defines environmental education as “the teaching about the natural and built environment which provides a real-world context for learning by linking the classroom to the students’ community. Students are engaged in hands-on, active learning that increases their knowledge and awareness about the environment. Because environmental education encourages inquiry and investigation, students develop critical thinking, problem-solving and effective decision making skills. Environmentally literate students become citizens who are able to weigh various sides of an environmental issue and make responsible decisions as individuals and as members of their community. Quality, standards-based environmental education improves everyday life by protecting human health and encouraging stewardship of natural resources.”

Educational Program

The school’s instructional methods and philosophy are based on the following pillars supporting the foundation of ECSE²:

Grow: Scholars will grow as academics and as positive productive members of society.

Respect: Scholars will respect each other, the community, and the earth.

Engage: Scholars will focus on global citizenship, service learning and community leadership developed through curriculum and practice.

Excel: Scholars will believe they can succeed in academics and in life.

Now: Scholars will understand the necessity of environmental conservation, global citizenship, and the value of education within our 21st century society. A sense of urgency is paramount to the educational climate of ECSE².

We Encourage Our Scholars to Go GREEN!

ECSE² will accomplish its mission by utilizing innovative methods that will provide challenges and opportunities for educationally under-served students to achieve the necessary skills and knowledge needed to succeed, not only in academia but also in life. Through an adherence to the ***Breaking Ranks Model of High School Reform (2001)***² developed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) in partnership with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Engage Charter School for Environmental Education seeks to uphold the core tenets of the groundbreaking school reform model. ECSE² seeks to create a secondary school that will be a learning community that reflects “cultures of respect and trust among staff and students, where the spirit of teaching and learning is driven by high standards of learning for all.” Whether our students become environmental engineers, conservationists, or scientists, ECSE² will provide youngsters with the critical thinking, problem-solving and communication skills needed to succeed through an environmental awareness lens. Our academic program will employ the key components of high performing secondary schools as outlined in the *Breaking Ranks Model of High School Reform*: “high expectations for all students; a curriculum organized around essential learning and connected to real-world tasks; personalization in the learning process; flexibility in time for instruction; use of technology to support teaching and learning; continuous professional development; collaborative leadership; and partnerships to support post-secondary success.”

ECSE² will implement an educational program closely aligned to the transforming NYS learning standards and the evolving **Common Core State Standards** (CCSS) within the content areas of: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Social Studies, Health, Physical Education, Foreign Language, the Arts, Post Secondary Education Preparedness, and Parental Involvement. The Common Core State Standards provide a clear and consistent framework of skills that students should have within

² Lachat, M.A. (2001) *Data-Driven High School Reform: The Breaking Ranks Model*. Brown University: The Education Alliance.



their K-12 education careers so that they will not only successfully complete high school but be prepared for credit-bearing academic college courses as well. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need to be successful. At ECSE² not only do we embrace CCSS but they will be explicitly implemented across disciplines through the lens of environmental education.

Engage Charter School for Environmental Education will employ the Common Core State Standards in the following ways:

- Curriculum alignment across content areas with an inter-disciplinary focus where applicable
- Encourage writing, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills through Bloom's Taxonomy and instructional differentiation
- Engage in the creation and sustainability of vertical and horizontal teacher teams to effectively analyze and modify curricular goals based on qualitative and quantitative student data
- Address varied learning styles by providing classroom instruction differentiated by content, process or product offering students multiple entry points into the curriculum
- Engage in scaffolded instruction requiring the use of developmental classroom lesson and unit planning

To address the environmental education focus on which the school is founded ECSE² will utilize the ***Excellence in Environmental Education – Guidelines for Learning (k-12)***³ created by North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE). This curriculum framework utilizes a four strand approach to teaching and learning within Environmental Education with scaffolded levels of understanding and performance suitable for ECSE² scholars grades 7-12. Additionally, the framework demonstrates ways in which educators may make contextual connections between disciplines and offer learners multiple entry points into various curricula through the lens of environmental education.

Excellence in Environmental Education – Learning Strands

- Strand 1 – Questioning and Analysis Skills
- Strand 2 – Knowledge of Environmental Process and Systems
 - 2.1 – The Earth as a physical System
 - 2.2 – The Living Environment
 - 2.3 – Humans and Their Societies
 - 2.4 – Environment and Society
- Strand 3 – Skills for Understanding and Addressing Environmental Issues
 - 3.1 – Skills for Analyzing and Investigating Environmental Issues
 - 3.2 – Decision Making and Citizenship Skills
- Strand 4 – Personal and Civic Responsibility

To encourage enrichment, rigor and exposure to college level work Engage Charter School for Environmental Education will employ the **International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program**. The IB Diploma Programme will offer students the opportunity to engage in six courses spanning three core requirement components, the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge (TOK) and Creativity, Action, Service (CAS). The IB Diploma Programme goals provide students with: a broad and balanced program of study, development of critical-thinking and reflective skills, development of research skills, development of independent learning skills and development of intercultural understanding. Engage Charter School for Environmental Education has chosen the following courses to challenge our students

³ The National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education (1999). *Excellence in Environmental Education: Guidelines for Learning (k-12)*. Washington, DC: North American Association for Environmental Education.



will focusing on our mission to produce scholars that are environmentally literate and college ready: Standard Level Environmental Systems & Societies, Higher Level English A1, Higher Level Social & Cultural Anthropology, Standard Level Mathematical Studies, Higher Level Film, and Standard Level Foreign Language.

For our scholars, achieving academic and personal success in a supportive learning environment is of the utmost importance. Limiting the class size to 18 will encourage individualization and differentiated instruction thus benefiting all students in their quest for academic achievement. The school's small size will encourage the fostering of positive personal relationships among students, staff, administration, and families, ensuring that no student will be left behind.

ECSE² will employ extended learning time which will encompass an extended day and extended year schedule. Students will be in school from 8:00 am to 4:45 pm Monday through Friday and the school year will run for approximately 200 days. This modified extended year concept has been taken from the Chicago Public Schools⁴ model of year round instruction. More time on task with necessary supports will allow our scholars to make even greater academic gains from year to year.

Students will begin each day with 30 minute **Advisories** and end each day with 90 minute **Learning Labs**. The Learning Lab will provide opportunities to students for remediation, enrichment, and collaborative activities such as high interest clubs and teams. Working closely with organizations such as The Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education at New York University there will be opportunities for student leadership, planning and implementation of environmental education based service learning projects, career education, higher education exploration and experiential learning opportunities within the Learning Labs.

During the Advisory small working groups of students and adults are charged with contributing to the development and monitoring of **Individualized Academic Plan** (IAP). This document will encourage the exploration of their various ways of interpreting and comprehending the world through multiple intelligences surveys, interest inventories and goal setting. Through the creation of an Individualized Academic Plan all stakeholders will be better able to assist in the growth and development of students. The IAP's will both direct and guide each student's academic, leadership, and community work. Each child's IAP, based on learning styles, predictive assessments, interviews with the student, parents and socio/academic history from previous schools, will be reviewed with grade advisors and all relevant stakeholders a minimum of three times per year.

Engage Charter School for Environmental Education youngsters will be required to:

- Become lifelong learners about the environment and the concepts of sustainability within formal and non-formal educational settings. Our student will learn about child environment health, healthy home hazards, healthy home/school/community and the role of government regulations. Students will be become **Healthy Community Ambassadors**. (Community Service Project)
- Be able to analyze unique themes to integrate content and issues across disciplines and curricula. ECSE² lessons require an understanding of the interdependence and interconnections of humans and the environment. ECSE² curricula elements will include knowledge of global socio-geopolitical disciplines, biological and physical sciences, and human socio-economic systems.
- Create opportunities to develop and/or exercise integrated approaches on environment and sustainability projects. Students' skills to be integrated include but are not limited to problem solving, conflict resolution, consensus building, information management, interpersonal expression, and critical and creative thinking.

⁴ Concept from <http://www.cps.edu/Calendar/Pages/Calendar>



- Create partnerships between other schools in the district and the broader community to advancing environmental education. Students can give seminars to schools, libraries community groups on home hazards as lead paint, secondhand smoke, pest control, chemical control, and fire safety. (Community Service Projects)
- Understand diverse cultural perspectives and approaches to problem solving as it relates to environmental education and sustainability.

Governance and Organizational Design

A primary strength of Engage Charter School for Environmental Education is the outstanding capacity of the founding group to effectively launch, oversee and govern the school. The founding members have extensive and relevant experiences and talents within the areas of secondary education, higher education, adult education, environmental education, law, finance, organizational leadership, management, grant writing, real estate, and community activism.

- **Nikole T. Booker** – Ms. Booker is the Lead Applicant and proposed Head of School. Ms. Booker is currently a High School Assistant Principal of Administration and Instructional Support Services within the New York City Department of Education. Holding dual certification in School Building and School District Leadership (SBL/SDL), she is a graduate of Columbia University, Teachers College where she received an M.A. in English Education, Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (C.A.S.) in Education Administration from Brooklyn College and an Ed.M. in Organizational Leadership through the prestigious Summer Principal’s Academy (SPA) at Columbia University, Teachers College. Ms. Booker is currently an Ed.D. candidate in Educational Leadership at Concordia University Chicago.
- **Erika C. Hurtado** – Ms. Hurtado is the proposed Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Ms. Hurtado is currently a Bi-Lingual High School Mathematics Teacher and Director of a Small Learning Community within her respective school within the New York City Department of Education. Holding a certification in School Building Leadership (SBL), she is a graduate of Columbia University, Teachers College where she received an Ed.M. in Organizational Leadership through the prestigious Summer Principal’s Academy (SPA).
- **Karen L. Booker** – Director of Housing Education and Operations. Ms. Booker has been working in the field of real estate development, property management, adult education, and organizational leadership for over twenty five years within the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). Creator of the Housing Education program for HPD focusing on environmental education, Ms. Booker specialized in environmental law compliance for property managers and real estate development firms city wide. She serves on the boards of several organizations including Neighborhood Housing Services of Jamaica, Queens and Vice Chair of the Habitat for Humanity for Humanity, Queens Chapter. Ms. Booker is a Graduate of The New School, Milano Graduate School of Urban Policy with an M.S. in Management and Urban Policy Analysis.
- **Deborah Boatright** – North Atlantic Regional Director, Neighborhood Works of America. Ms. Boatright has extensive experience in real estate and community development, having worked as the Assistant Commissioner for the New York State Department for Housing and Community Renewal and the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. Ms. Boatright is a Graduate of The New School, Milano Graduate School of Urban Policy with an M.S. in Management and Urban Policy Analysis.
- **Dr. Evanda Young** – Professional Developer and Educational Specialist. Dr. Young has extensive knowledge of curriculum creation and implementation with tremendous expertise in Science and Technology. With over 20 years of experience in secondary education for the New York City Department of Education, Dr. Young is a diligent school reformer with an emphasis on adult development, the creation of professional learning communities and infusing literacy and technology across the curriculum.



- **Joi Bonner** – Special Education and Middle School Specialist. Ms. Bonner is currently a Special Educator and Dean of Students within a New York City Department of Education Middle School. A NYC Teaching Fellow, Ms. Bonner has worked tirelessly to provide students with disabilities equal access to quality instruction and educational opportunities. With 10 years of experience, she is well versed in school safety, discipline and regulations within the middle school setting. Ms. Bonner has been instrumental in creating positive, safe learning environments for all children and brings tremendous Instructional Support Service and safety knowledge to our team.
- **Karen O’Grady** – Administrative and Operational support. Ms. O’Grady is currently a Principal’s Secretary in an alternative transfer high school with students who are over aged and under credited within the New York City Department of Education. She began her career as a School Aide and has worked in various capacities to streamline operational systems within other than personnel services. Within her current appointment Ms. O’grady has been instrumental in creating partnerships with local politicians, CBO’s and businesses including the creation of a business partnership with the Ritz-Carlton, allowing students within her charge the opportunity to experience the business world first hand through experiential learning.
- **Leah Chase** – Parent Coordinator/Community Associate for a New York City Department of Education, High School. Ms. Chase has been building bridges between school and community since 2003. Successfully taking on this task since its inception, initiated by Mayor Bloomberg, she was recently commended by Senator Malcolm Smith for quality of service. Having developed The Parent Resource Center within her respective appointment, she has elevated the quality of life for students and their families.
- **Randall Toure** – Practicing Attorney with experience in real estate development and charter school law, Professor of Real Estate Development and Public Administration, New York University. Having worked as the Vice President of the Atlantic Yards/Barclay Stadium Development for Forest City Ratner, one of New York City’s most prolific real estate development firms, and as a legislative aid for New York State Assemblyman Roger Green, Mr. Toure brings a tremendous legal mind to the planning team.

These individuals have been working as a group on the development of the ECSE² throughout 2010. They have visited and researched many different charter schools, collecting best practices in both education and charter school operations and have discussed charter school development and operation with a number of charter school Board members, administrators and teachers within the New York City area. This group attended a number of charter school related seminars and trainings sponsored by the New York State Charter School Association, New Schools Incubator Program and continues to consult such organizations as the New York City Charter School Center. The founding group of Engage Charter School for Environmental Education possesses community credibility, and the knowledge, skills, passion, and experience sufficient to launch, oversee and govern a successful charter school.

II. Student Population

II.a. Student Enrollment

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Full Growth
7 th	90	90	90	90	90	90
8 th		90	90	90	90	90
9 th			90	90	90	90
10 th				90	90	90
11 th					90	90



12 th						90
Total	90	180	270	360	450	540

II.b. Target Population

The goal of Engage Charter School for Environmental Education is to serve a student population with a high need for an experiential, supportive and rigorous learning environment offering a more individualized educational experience. This need clearly exists at the secondary level in CSD 27.

Key demographic⁵ information of the population ECSEE² seeks to serve includes:

- 83% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch
- 10% of students have Limited English Proficiency
- The student population of CSD 27 is very diverse: 35% Hispanic, 31% Black, 23% Asian, 10% White
- 9% of students at the middle school level have Individualized Education Plans (IEP's)⁶
- 8.8% of students at the high school level have Individualized Education Plans (IEP's)

Key information about academic performance in CSD 27 according to the most recent available data includes:

- Of the 33 high schools identified by NYSED as Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA)⁷ within the New York City Department of Education 30% are within Queens County further, 12% of all PLA high schools are located within CSD 27. This is the second highest concentration of PLA high schools within New York City.
- Of the 13 high schools within CSD 27 40% are either PLA schools or slated for a school improvement intervention model as per the New York City Department of Education

2009 NYS Performance Data - CSD 27									
Grades	ELA			Math			Graduation Rate		
	CSD 27	NYS	Diff.	CSD 27	NYS	Diff.	CSD 27	NYS Standard	Diff.
7*	76%	80%	-4	84%	87%	-3			
8*	64%	69%	-3	76%	80%	-4			
9-12 (2005 Cohort)	59%	77%	-18	54%	77%	-23	45%	55%	-10

*Measuring students performing at grade level/Level 3

2009 Federal Title I Accountability Data - CSD 27			
	ELA	Math	Graduation Rate
All Students	X	X	X
American Indian or Alaska Native	---	---	---
Black or African American	✓	X	✓
Hispanic or Latino	X	X	X
Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	✓	✓	X

⁵ Demographic and academic data in this section taken from 2008-2009 NYS Accountability and Overview Reports and Comprehensive Information Reports CSD 27

⁶ Middle and High School SWD data for CSD 27 calculated using NYC Dept. of Educ. S-Form report found here: [http://schools.nyc.gov/About Us/data/stats/Register](http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/data/stats/Register)

⁷ Calculated using information from http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/attach_a_jan2010.html



White	X	✓	X
Multiracial	✓	✓	X
Students with Disabilities	X	X	✓
Limited English Proficient	X	X	X
Economically Disadvantaged	X	X	X
Final AYP Determination (criterion met)	3 of 9	3 of 9	2 of 9
Overall Accountability Designation	District in Need of Improvement Year 1		

Key: ✓ *Met AYP in criterion* X *Did not meet AYP in criterion*

Special Education

Engage Charter School for Environmental Education (ECSE²) will not discriminate in admission based on a student’s disability. ECSE² will engage in equitable admission practices to ensure that we are able to enroll and maintain a percentage of special needs students comparable to enrollment figures within CSD 27. As such, our strategies for addressing the acquisition of special needs students will be as follows:

- During the application process we explain to parents and students alike that special needs services are available at ECSE². Additionally, all special needs services will be delivered by qualified professionals.
- With the hopes of retaining the highest number of enrolled students with special needs, we will whenever possible, work in conjunction with the students’ school district of residence to provide services in accordance with their respective Individualized Educational Plans (IEP’s).
- ECSE² will hire an appropriately certified special education teacher as a Special Education Coordinator (SEC) and contract with appropriately certified or licensed individuals to provide the special education programs and services as indicated on each student’s IEP.

ECSE² will identify and hire highly qualified and appropriately certified special education teacher(s) to provide appropriate instructional services as indicated on student’s IEP’s. All special education teachers will be highly qualified, as defined in 34 CFR 300.18 with regard to core academic subjects. The special education teacher (or one of the special education teachers in the case of more than one special education teacher) will be assigned as our Special Education Coordinator in addition to his/her teaching responsibilities. The Special Education Coordinator will have the responsibility to interact with the school district. The Special Education Coordinator will also be responsible for contacting each student’s home school district’s special education department before the beginning of the school year to make sure we receive each student’s IEP on time. He/she will also be required to attend any necessary Committee on Special Education (CSE) meetings and must prepare necessary reports in a timely manner.

Based on each student’s IEP, ECSE² will also contract with appropriately certified or licensed individuals to provide special education programs and services. Where necessary, ECSE² will hire staff to meet the needs of our special education students and continue to contract special service providers. In pursuant to the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act, all special education teachers will be certified and qualified. As indicated on the students’ IEPs provided by their home districts, ECSE² will provide resource and related services in accordance with Federal IDEA regulation (section 300.114) — “to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children who are non-disabled, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.” ECSE² will create a School



Based Support Team who will ensure that a continuum of alternative placement is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services. In determining the educational placement of a child with disability, ECSE² will ensure that:

- The placement decision will be made by a group of persons, including the parents, and other persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data and the placement options.
- The child's placement will be determined at least annually; it will be based on the child's IEP, and will be as close as possible to the child's home.

Limited English Proficiency

ECSE² will make good-faith efforts to attract and retain students with limited English proficiency. Native speakers or translators will be made available to facilitate the enrollment process with the hopes of attracting LEP students. The advertising materials will be delivered and displayed in different cultural centers to ensure that equal access to all students is provided and best efforts are being made to attract the widest possible diversity of students to ECSE². The pamphlets will be prepared in those languages as well as in English to reach all groups of potential students.

ECSE² will create an English as a Second Language (ESL) Coordinator to serve LEP students extensively. Similar to the Coordinator of Special Education position, one of our teachers will manage student needs, as well as the quality of service provided to LEP students. The ESL Coordinator will have special monthly meetings with both the Head of School and Director of Curriculum and Instruction as needed. During the initial phase of this service, both teachers and the ESL Coordinator will be responsible for identifying students in need of ESL services.

- The process begins with the Home Language Questionnaire to screen all new entrants for potential limited English proficiency.
- If the Home Language Questionnaire indicates that English is the only language spoken in the home, the screening process need not continue.
- If the home language is one other than English or the student's native language is one other than English, appropriate school staff will informally interview the student and the parent/guardian in English, or when necessary in their native language.
- If the student speaks a language other than English and speaks little or no English, the school will administer the Language Assessment Battery- Revised (LABR). A student who scores below the designated proficient level will be determined to be Limited-English Proficient (LEP), thus eligible for ESL services. The LABR will be administered only once to each incoming student.
- After placement into ESL services, student achievement or progress in the English language will be measured annually (usually in April and May) with the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) and the New York State English Language Arts assessment.
- NYSESLAT Scores 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.

Students at ECSE² with limited proficiency in English will achieve proficiency in the English language through the use of the school's services and teaching methods. Engage Charter School for Environmental Education will ensure that ELL students will not be excluded from curricular and extra-curricular activities based on present levels of performance additionally, ELL students will not be assigned to a special education program due to a lack of English proficiency.

ECSE² will follow the freestanding ESL program as described in the Guidelines for Programs under Part 154 of Commissioner's Regulations for pupils with Limited English Proficiency, and the Addendum to the Regulations of the Commissioner Relating to the Education of Students with Limited English Proficiency. The goal of this program is acquisition of English language skills, so that the ELL student



can succeed in an English mainstream classroom. We will build the required minutes of dedicated ESL instruction into students' schedule. All content area teachers will have specialized training in meeting the needs of ELL students. Through our ESL Coordinator teachers will be provided with a variety of strategies to successfully engage with LEP/ELL students in and out of the classroom. The NYSED publication, *The Teaching of Language Arts to Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners: Learning Standards for ESL and A Resource Guide for All Teachers*, will be extensively used in the school's ESL program as well. ELL students will receive the same academic content as those students who are non-ELL students. All instruction will be in English; however, the level of English used for instruction--both verbal and written--will be modified for any ELL student. Teachers will use ESL methodology to teach vocabulary and concept development in mathematics, science, social studies and other subjects. High-interest grade-level and appropriate-level reading materials will also be provided to ELL students. Access to native language materials will also be a goal of our program.

All ECSE² teachers will receive ongoing professional development training in working with ELL students under the guidance of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and ESL Coordinator. Key professional development organizations such as Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) will be invited for on-site workshops during the school professional development days, and ESL teachers will attend the Bilingual/ESL workshops offered through the New York City Department of Education. Within the schools' daily schedule are blocks of time that can and will be used for more intensive English language instruction for ELL students. The Freestanding English as a Second Language Program will be implemented.

ECSE² is committed to implementing its program for English Language Learners in compliance with the evaluative standards set forth by the federal No Child Left Behind Act, as provided by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. For example, evaluating student performance outcomes shall include student performance on State and standardized tests, overall grades, the extent of participation in extracurricular programs, and dropout rates. In addition, program implementation will be evaluated by examining on an ongoing basis the following factors:

- How students are identified as ELL
- The resources provided for ELL programs to ensure they are consistent with program design and student needs
- Information collection practices (e.g., observation of students, appropriate data collection, staff and parent interviews)
- Sufficient staff and resources are consistently provided to all students with identified needs
- Monitoring staff adherence to applicable procedural and service requirements
- Monitoring of students that transitioned from ELL services

Outreach & Recruitment

Engage Charter School for Environmental Education will be open to all students in our particular grade range on a space available basis and ECSE² will not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability or any other ground that would be unlawful if done by a school. In addition, ECSE² will not discriminate based on intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry provided. Students who are applying from different districts will be accepted. Students who use English as a second language and students who are classified as eligible for special education will be welcomed as well.

ECSE² will comply with the provisions of Section 2854(2) of the Education Law. Pupils residing in CSD 27 and /or siblings of pupils already enrolled in the charter school would be preferred. There are no tests or academic requirements for entrance. During specified information sessions, parents will be required to complete all documentation and provide proof of residence and proof of guardianship. In the sessions, parents will receive the Registration and Lottery Rules and Procedures handout. Representatives of the



school will answer any questions they have regarding the random selection process. If applications exceed capacity, a lottery will be held to determine admission and a list will be maintained by grade level in the order of the lottery results.

To promote Engage Charter School for Environmental Education as a school of choice within the community, we will engage in the following practices to effectively recruit students:

- Attend and participate in community events organized by local elected officials, community based organizations, and other cultural institutions to inform families about ECSE² and garner parent and student interest through collateral material
- Foster relationships with school leaders, counselors, and Parent Teachers Associations of district and charter elementary schools to promote ECSE² as a school of choice for students leaving grade 6
- Present at local Block Associations, New York City Housing Authority Tenant Associations, and other community based groups to inform the community at large about the opening of our school
- Meet with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for Community School District 27 to inform them about the school and provide collateral materials at the office to be provided to parents of student with special needs
- Create an internet presence through the creation of a school-wide website
- Leveraging collaborations with CBO's and institutional affiliations to facilitate outreach and recruitment
- Regularly publish a print and email newsletter to share our progress with people who have signed up for our mailing list or have signed a petition of community support
- Organize informational and social events at libraries, Community Based Organizations, churches and businesses

ECSE² will publicize the school through collateral material to be delivered to a variety of community settings such as public libraries, youth and community centers, neighborhood organizations, and public housing developments. All collateral, enrollment and registration materials will be produced in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. Due to the international nature of New York City, bilingual members of ECSE² staff will conduct information meetings in English, Spanish, French and Haitian Creole when available. If they are not available, translators will be hired on an as-needed basis. In addition, all community activities will be held on varying days at varying times to address conflicting work hours or issues of child care for our potential parents.

III. School Design

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

Following the family interview and enrollment process, the students at Engage Charter School for Environmental Education will be immediately assessed in the key subjects of Mathematics and ELA, to determine the student's initial level of performance through the Performance Series Scantron computer based universal assessment. Identifying our students' needs will aid in the modification of our curriculum, by anticipating the challenges our students will face. This will help us arm ourselves with a variety of pedagogical tools and strategies that will help us to better serve our students.

At Engage Charter School for Environmental Education, we plan on closing the achievement gap by preparing our students emotionally and academically to handle a rigorous high school curriculum. During their Advisory class, our students will learn about who they are as individuals, as well as our school's philosophy which is based on the following pillars supporting the foundation of ECSE²:

Grow: Scholars will grow as academics and as positive productive members of society.

Respect: Scholars will respect each other, the community, and the earth.



Engage: Scholars will focus on global citizenship, service learning and community leadership developed through curriculum and practice.

Excel: Scholars will believe they can succeed in academics and in life.

Now: Scholars will understand the necessity of environmental conservation, global citizenship, and the value of education within our 21st century society. A sense of urgency is paramount to the educational climate of ECSE².

We embrace each scholar who walks through our doors being mindful of where they are academically, socially, and emotionally while supporting empowering them through our unique educational approach. Within the Advisory program students will embark on a journey of active citizenship through an environmental lens using our five guiding questions that are integrated throughout all course work starting with *Who Am I? Who Are We? Who Are They? What Will I Do?* Combined with the overarching query of *Why Do I Care?* These questions are designed to first empower students by exploring who they are relative to the world around them, and provoking them young people through explorative and experiential learning which tends to lead to action around self reflection and an understanding of socio-economic geo-political systems.

Through the principles of effort based learning, students will be taught about self accountability, dedication and most importantly that hard work equals success. All of our young scholars will be given an extended day schedule, which will give the professors of ECSE² the necessary time needed to help our youngsters master the skills needed to excel in both Mathematics and ELA. The purpose of our extended day program at ECSE² will be two-fold: the first being to educationally target the areas of deficiencies our youngsters struggle with, and to model and provide an environment conducive to research, learning, and exploration.

In order to increase student achievement in ELA and Mathematics, our students will receive 1 full hour of instruction per discipline in the subjects of Mathematics, English, Social Studies and Science daily. During our Learning Labs, on Mondays and Wednesdays our students will engage in extracurricular activities and on Tuesdays and Thursdays our students will receive 1 hour and 30 minutes of remediation and enrichment classes in order to address our students deficiencies and strengths. Finally on Fridays, our students will engage in Environmental learning. In addition to longer instructional time and an extended day, our interdisciplinary curriculum will also be vertically and horizontally aligned to the Common Core Standards.

In the area of Mathematics the Carnegie Math Curriculum will be implemented as follows: 7th grade (Bridge to Algebra), 8th grade (Algebra I), 9th grade (Geometry) and 10th grade (Algebra II). This sequence enables our students to take full advantage of our IB curriculum throughout their last two years of high school. In addition, during our Tuesday/Thursday Learning Labs students in need will receive a minimum of two hours a week of Carnegie Learning's Cognitive Tutor Software. The Cognitive Tutor is one of the most researched mathematics curricula in use today with its basis in the ACT-R Theory of knowledge and performance. Most importantly the Cognitive Tutor software differentiates instruction for individual students by assessing each student's skill strength and weaknesses. In the area of English Language Arts/Literacy Scholastic Inc.'s Read 180 program will be implemented as follows: students in need as determined by the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) will be programmed for a 60 minute Read 180 literacy class in place of a stand-alone ELA course. The remaining 30 minutes of the recommended 90 minute block will be provided during our Tuesday/Thursday Learning Labs and will focus on the individualized computer based instruction.

Limiting the class size to 18 will encourage individualization and differentiated instruction thus benefiting all students in their quest for academic achievement. The school's small size will encourage the fostering



of positive personal relationships among students, staff, administration, and families, ensuring that no student will be left behind. The conscious decision of a smaller class size, and the implementations of Scholastic Inc.'s Read 180 computer based literacy program and Carnegie Learning's Carnegie Math web based numeracy program, will not only ensure a high quality education for our scholars, but will guarantee the highest degree of individualized instruction to help our students achieve proficiency in ELA and in Mathematics effectively decreasing student achievement gaps.

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

At Engage Charter School for Environmental Education we believe that it is our responsibility and moral duty to prevent the dilemma of averaged and under accredited that plagues hundreds of schools. The high school graduation rate in District 27 is currently 45%. Engage Charter School for Environmental Education plans on reaching a graduation of 95% by implementing the following action plan:

7th – 8th Grade

- The creation of an Individualized Academic Plan for all scholars.
- The IAP's will both direct and guide each student's academic, leadership, and community work.
- Each child's IAP, based on learning styles, predictive assessments, interviews with the student, parents, SMART goal setting and socio/academic history from previous schools will be reviewed with grade advisors and all relevant stakeholders a minimum of three times per year.
- Advisory / Guidance: *Who Am I? Who Are We?* Preparing Emotionally and Academically for High School Success through service learning and self-reflection
- Intense Enrichment and Remedial courses and tutoring offered during our Learning Labs to provide our youngsters with a solid foundation in literacy and numeracy.
- Preparing our 8th graders to excel in the Algebra and Earth Science Regents Exam prior to entering the 9th grade.
- Any failed course will be immediately recovered during the extended year through computer and classroom based credit recovery opportunities.
- Parental Outreach: Working in collaboration with the Parent Coordinator, various workshops for parents will be held in order to motivate parents to take an active role in their child's educational career.
- Parent / Teacher Conferences will be held at the end of each marking period, in order to set and re-visit academic goals. In addition, through the creation of Engage Charter School for Environmental Education's website, parents will have an opportunity to view homework, upcoming exams, and announcements and most importantly parents will be able to contact the teachers via e-mail and even participate in a web based Parent/Teacher Discussion Board via Pearson's PowerSchool data management system.

9th – 12th Grade

- The creation of an Individualized Academic Plan for all scholars.
- The IAP's will both direct and guide each student's academic, leadership, and community work.
- Each child's IAP, based on learning styles, predictive assessments, interviews with the student, parents, SMART goal setting and socio/academic history from previous schools, will be reviewed with grade advisors and all relevant stakeholders a minimum of three times per year.
- Advisory / Guidance: *Who Are They? What Will I Do?* Combined with the overarching query of *Why Do I Care? Effectively Preparing Emotionally and Academically for Higher Education Success* through service learning and a reflection of one's place and purpose within society.
- Intense Enrichment and Remedial courses and tutoring offered during our Learning Labs to provide our scholars with the proper support and rigor in Mathematics and ELA, in order to prevent our students from failing and to continue to foster a learning environment that invites and welcomes curiosity and challenge.
- Preparing our 9th – 10th graders to excel in all NYS Regents Exams by the completion of the 10th grade.



- Any failed course will be immediately recovered during extended day hours via the offering of Independent Study or computer based credit recovery programs.
- Parental Outreach: Working in collaboration with the Parent Coordinator and College Advisor to conduct workshops on “Life after High School,” and taking an active role in their child’s educational career.
- Parent / Teacher Conferences will be held at the end of each marking period, in order to set and re-visit academic goals. In addition, through the creation of Engage Charter School for Environmental Education’s website, parents will have an opportunity to view homework, upcoming exams, and announcements and most importantly parents will be able to contact the teachers via e-mail and even participate in a Parent/Teacher Discussion Board via Pearson’s PowerSchool data management system.
- Creating academic rigor and relevance for all of our scholars.

Re-Enrolled High School Drop-outs

- The creation of an Individualized Academic Plan for student.
- The IAP will both direct and guide each student’s academic, leadership, and community work.
- Student’s IAP is based on learning styles, predictive assessments, interviews with the student, parents and socio/academic history from previous schools, will be reviewed with grade advisors and all relevant stakeholders a minimum of three times per year.
- An in depth analyzing of student’s transcript and academic history will be conducted in order to determine what option will benefit the student’s goal of graduation high school (i.e. Alternative High Schools such as: GED Programs, The YABC Program, Satellite High School etc.)
- Should the student decide to remain at Engage Charter School for Environmental Education, the student will receive all the academic support he/she needs in the classroom as well as Advisory and Learning.
- These students will also take advantage of our Independent Study and Credit Recovery Programs.
- Student’s Advisory class will be tailored to address his/her socio-emotional needs in themes such as: *Raising your Academic Self-Esteem, Hard Work = Success, It’s Never Too Late, etc.*

III.c. Focus on academic achievement of middle school student populations and preparation for transition to high school

Engage Charter School for Environmental Education recognizes that the transition from middle school to high school comes with a myriad of social and emotional considerations that can affect student performance. In addition to academic struggles, “behavior struggles in the form of suspensions and expulsions appear to increase significantly early in the ninth grade year” (Graber and Brooks-Gunn, 1996)⁸. A transition plan will be developed to assist in the Middle School transition to high school, thus reducing attrition rates ultimately maintaining academic performance.

Rigorous Curriculum and College Bound Opportunities

Whenever possible, opportunities for students to participate in an advanced program both in Middle School (where high school credits or the equivalent can be earned) and in High School where International Baccalaureate (IB) and college credits are earned. Additionally, middle school pedagogues will be given professional development opportunities to become familiar with the high school curriculum and requirements so that preparation for the high school curriculum can begin before the transition. Whenever possible, High School students will be exposed to college curriculum and the college experience. This will be done through our affiliations with The Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education at New York University and Columbia University, Teachers College as well as

⁸ Graber, J. A., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Petersen, A. C. (Eds.). (1996). *Transitions through adolescence: Interpersonal domains and context*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.



college visitations both locally and out of state, introduction to college students and mentor opportunities and given assistance in completing the necessary requirements for application admission to the college selection of their choice.

Support Services

While a majority of support services will be outsourced to independent contractors, guidance counseling and intervention services will be made available onsite for academic, emotional, and social support as well as crisis intervention.

Response to Intervention (Behavior)

Core Team & Assessment

A core team comprised of academic leaders, clinicians with general and special education teachers will be created to review student data, academic progress and behavior to determine which students will need intervention based on the pre-determined criteria. In order to ensure that the learning process is taking place and that student's social/emotional function is not negatively impacting student behavior and academic performance, student's academic achievement will routinely and systematically be monitored and assessed. The goal of this periodic assessment is to identify those students who may be in need of additional services. Although the identification of students with special needs is frequently done in student's primary years, diagnostic assessment will be used upon admission to ECSE², systematically and routinely throughout the middle school years to accurately assess student progress. If as a result of this assessment/observation or if the quantitative data collected suggests that a student may be at-risk or in need of additional supports (academic or behavior) a referral to the Core Team will be made.

Engage Charter School for Environmental Education will use a determined RTI (Response to Intervention) program to address the academic and behavioral needs of its students. The implementation of an effective RTI program for the Middle/High School must consider the complexity of scheduling, adolescent development and the resources available in the building. It must also consider and acknowledge the correlation between behavior and academic performance.

- **Tier 1 – Universal Interventions: 80-90% of Students**
Tier 1 students present with minimal behavioral issues. The interventions present in this tier are preventative and proactive.
- **Tier 2 – Targeted Group Interventions: 5-10% of Students**
Tier 2 students are found to be presenting at-risk behaviors and are escalated to the next step of intervention. This includes, but is not limited to, notifying parents of their child's risk and need for intervention, documentation of the usage of intervention techniques and strategies, communication of strategies to the student's academic team (teachers, clinicians, etc.) and a review of data with the Core team at regular intervals. The interventions present in this tier are high efficiency and rapid response.
- **Tier 3 – Intense Individual Interventions: 1-5% of Students**
Tier 3 students are found to be presenting most at risk behaviors. These students will be referred for additional services and their individual cases reviewed by the Core Team and other appropriate staff. Additional services, including Behavior Management Plans, Functional Behavioral Analysis (FBA) completions, data collection and recording, will be used as a means of assessment. Similar to Tier 1 & Tier 2 students, Tier 3 students will be assessed periodically to determine the effectiveness of the recommended interventions. In certain circumstances, Tier 3 students may be referred for related services beyond the Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) model and SETTS services that are offered at ECSE²

School-Wide Behavior Management Programs

In addition to RTI for academic and behavioral concerns, ECSE² will implement a school-wide behavior management program to address additional behavior management needs. While the classroom teacher is



the primary disciplinarian, a variation of PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Supports) will be implemented as a means of ensuring a safe and orderly learning environment.

- **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**

The goal of PBIS is to teach and reward desired behavior. Through the collection and analysis of school wide and classroom data ECSE² will use the PBIS system to promote a safe and orderly learning environment. ECSE² will provide professional development opportunities for all stakeholders to familiarize themselves with the PBIS program.

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

Learning is fundamental, but the knowledge of how we learn enables us to take charge of our own learning. Therefore our goal is to ascertain our students' present levels of performance and elevate them to mastery and beyond through the use of appropriate assessment tools. The assessment tools below will allow us to determine an individual student's verbal and non verbal reasoning skills and problem solving abilities. In a balanced assessment system both summative and formative assessments are an integral part of information gathering. We plan to assess via standardized (summative) and non-standardized (formative) means. Assessments will be used throughout grades 7-12 to assess literacy and numeracy including reading comprehension, vocabulary, listening skills, written expression, numeracy skills, etc. Vertical and horizontal teacher teams will also select or develop their own assessments for content mastery.

Name of Assessment	Purpose of Assessment	Grade Administered
Scantron Performance Series Reading/Language Arts	A computer-adaptive test that quickly identifies the proficiency level in reading fluency, reading comprehension and writing development. This type of assessment compares performance scores to state standards content.	7-10
Scantron Performance Series Mathematics	A computer-adaptive test that quickly identify number fluency and math skills for grade level ,This type of assessment compares performance scores to state standards content .	7-10
NYS ELA	Identifies students ability to meet or exceed standards in reading, reading comprehension and writing	8
NYS Mathematics	Identifies students ability to meet or exceed standards in mathematical computation, mathematical reasoning and problem solving	8
NYS Science	Identifies students' ability to meet or exceed standards in Science content and use scientific tools.	8
NYS Social Studies	Identifies students' ability to meet or exceed standards in content reading and writing strategies (document based questions) in Social Studies.	8
NYS Regents Exam	Measures the level of mastery of NYS learning and Common Core State Standards(CCSS) in concurrence with high school graduation	8-10
LAB-R	Measures proficiency in English to determine English Language Learner placement	7-9
NYSESLAT	Annually measures English proficiency and progress post English Language Learner program placement	7-12
PSAT	Assesses students verbal and math skills as a predictive assessment of SAT performance	10-11



SAT/ACT	Assesses students verbal and math skills as a predictive assessment of the first year of higher education	10-12
Subject area unit common interim assessment	Mastery of topical areas in core subjects and to ascertain that teachers are following a viable curriculum and pacing calendar.	7-12
Teacher developed assessment and quizzes	Determine learning in various areas (ELA, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, etc)	7-12
IB Diploma Programme Examinations	Measures the extent to which students have mastered advanced academic skills within the six academic areas of Native Language, Individuals and Societies, Mathematics and Computer Science, The Arts, Experimental Sciences, Second Language	11-12

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

Through strategically targeting instruction to ensure learning is taking place and developing a common language around effective instructional practices, the faculty and staff at Engage Charter School for Environmental Education seek to increase present levels of performance for all students within our charge. Additionally, our school wide checkpoints will provide opportunities to regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of professional development offerings. As we analyze student performance data via scholarship reports via Pearson’s PowerSchool data management program as well as formative and summative assessment data, teacher teams and school building leaders engage in the practices of inter visitation, learning walks, peer feedback, and formal/informal evaluations to monitor professional development implementation.

Professional Development Topics	Skills
Environmental Education Across Content Areas <i>(Varying Learning Experiences)</i> Facilitated by The Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education at New York University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit reading comprehension instruction of non-fiction texts • Explicit Writing strategies: Expository & Persuasive • Analysis and incorporation of NAAEE – Environmental Education Curriculum across disciplines • Project based learning – Focus: Environmental Literacy • Infusing Environmental Education into the Learning Labs
Professional Learning Communities <i>(Professional Teaching Standards & Collegiality)</i> Facilitated by Columbia University, Teachers College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Leadership • Reflective Practice/ Self Reflection • Effective Environment • Assessing Learning • Organizational leadership for School Building Leaders • Educational Leadership for the Board of Trustees
International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme <i>(Varying Learning Experiences)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Implementation of IB • Integrating IB tenets and core practices into the curriculum • Effective Teaching for the Core IB Requirements
Using Data to Drive Instruction <i>(Tracking Progress)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarship Reports via Pearson’s PowerTeacher • Formative/Summative teacher assessment • Using universal assessment data to drive instruction • Data driven cooperative learning • SMART Goals



<p>Differentiated Instruction <i>(Varying Learning Experiences)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit Literacy/Numeracy strategies • Using graphic organizers • Scaffolded Instruction • Tiered, developmental lesson planning • Using multiple intelligences to drive instruction • Varying lessons for Content, Process and Product • Choice Boards
<p>Using Protocols to Look at Student Work <i>(Collaborative discussion)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigor obtainment • Student centered classes • Curriculum alignment – Interdisciplinary Structures • Standards based instruction and assessment – Common Core State Standards based
<p>Student Engagement <i>(Guided Discipline)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing Assessment/formative &summative • Student Engagement • Classroom Management • Student Contracts • Technology
<p>Infusing Technology into the Classroom <i>(Renewal and Reflection)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video clips & You Tube • Web Quests • Project Based Learning: Blogging & Podcasts • The Power of the iPad • Effective use of PowerPoint in the instructional setting • Virtual Libraries

III.f. Partner with low-performing public schools to share best practices

A dynamic relationship will be continuous with Engage Charter School for Environmental Education serving as a laboratory for educational innovation. We seek to partner with low-performing schools within CSD 27 to share best practices in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and interdisciplinary learning. It is our hope that through these partnerships stakeholders will be able to communicate and practice inter-visitation to share what works best for students within our district. We will attempt to formalize the process for district wide teacher collaboration through regular site visits, sharing videos and documentation on best practices through webinars, communication between school leadership teams, and invitations to select professional development offerings held by ECSE². The Engage Charter School for Environmental Education team is open to suggestions from all middle and high schools in the district about how to best facilitate a relationship that fosters growth for all schools ultimately improving student performance.

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

The Board of trustees for Engage Charter School for Environmental Education is aware and well prepared to overcome the challenges to open a charter school. ECSE²'s Board of Trustees represent a cross section of the community and have expertise in areas of education, community service, business, management, administration, and environmental sciences. The Head of School for ECSE² will have the support of expert advice and counsel in the area of legal, fiscal management, education, administration, operations and community relations. The board members, with extensive state and local governmental management experience, will target issues relating to policy, procedures and operation. Board of Trustee Members with educational expertise will advise in areas of curriculum development, professional development and accountability.



During its planning year ECSE²'s Board of Trustees have studied typical charter school challenges during the first year of operations. Charter schools with inconsistent leadership and management philosophies as well as inefficient team building strategies can often lead to ineffective management and misdirected educational goals. Typically charter schools at startup have many management and leadership inconsistencies. To ensure this challenge is overcome ECSE²'s Board of Trustees and School Building Leaders have established their leadership and managerial philosophy to transition into three different phases as it correlates with the holistic development of the school. Caldwell and Spinks (1992)⁹ states that "transformational leadership is essential for autonomous schools' Transformational leaders succeed in gaining the commitment of followers to such a degree that ...higher levels of accomplishment become virtually a moral imperative."

Phase I: Balanced Leadership: Year 1

For self-managed schools such as ECSE² a balance between transactional and transformational school leadership is best. It is in this first year that ECSE²'s Head of School, who already possess strong interpersonal skills, must begin engaging all stakeholders to rise to a higher level of commitment, motivation, morality and dedication to the vision. ECSE²'s board expects that School Building Leaders and staff will have shared values and common interest as they achieve their vision of *Go GREEN* together.

Phase II: Leadership: Years 2- 4

During years two through four ECSE²'s Head of School will shift gears and include more managerial leadership functions into his/her leadership style.

- While the essence of the school's vision and teambuilding is still paramount, authority and influence are allocated to more formal positions within the school's hierarchical chart.
- Educational goals will be closely analyzed to ensure alignment to the mission and core tenets of the school
- Operating and accountability metrics of the school will be evaluated routinely to assess the process of leadership for efficacy measurement and instructional alignment.

Phase III: Leadership: Year 5

By the fifth year of operation the ECSE²'s Head of School will have developed and perfected a management-leadership rubric which can be duplicated to assist other charter and/or public school leaders.

Whereas ECSE² identified some of the challenges in startup with leadership and management, below are additional start-up challenges cited by the Board and the contingency plans developed to address them.

Staff Recruitment and Hiring: ECSE² is well aware of the importance of hiring highly skilled and talented professionals who will support the vision and mission of the school. The general elements of such a program and upon approval of the application, the specific details necessary to implement its plan will be instituted. The Head of School and the board designees will begin the search for an experienced and highly qualified Director of Operations and Compliance. Job descriptions for other positions have been developed and discussions will occur with various individuals and organizations that have access to potential candidates.

Facilities: This has been an issue for every charter school seeking to serve students within the New York City area. ECSE² has identified potential locations for the school within Community School District 27 and around the Jamaica, Queens Business District area. To assist with the procurement of space within our chosen CSD ECSE² has filed a letter of intent to Apply for a NYS Charter with the New York City

⁹ Caldwell.B.J. & Spinks.J.M. (1992). Leading the Self-Managed School. Farmer Press. Bristol, PA.



Department of Education office of Charter Schools. If suitable locations are not found within CSD 27 ESCEE² is willing to locate to surrounding CSDs 28 or 29.

Operations of the School: Typically, charter school Principals or School Leaders have the responsibility of overseeing both the academic and the operational start up activities of a new charter school. Having the Head of School solely responsible for operational duties limits the time he/she can spend on instructional leadership. To address this issue ECSE²'s Board of Trustees has made the determination to immediately hire a Director of Operations and Compliance who will answer to the Head of School but will be responsible for running the operations (all compliance, facilities, finance, safety) for the organization. This individual will regularly present the status of the school's "start up" activities to the Board of Trustees and will liaise with the state governmental personnel around such issues as data management, entitlements, annual reporting, finance, BEDS reporting, free and reduced lunch, safety, and health.

III.h. Demonstrate the support of the school district of location and the intent to establish an ongoing relationship with such district

Several members of our founding team are residents of Community School District 27. As such, there are tremendous ties to the community and a vested interest in the academic success of our youngsters. There is every intent by the founding team to maintain an ongoing, positive relationship with CSD 27 schools and the governing body. Further, Engage Charter School for Environmental Education will work closely with the District through the Committee on Special Education as well as CSE's from surrounding districts as necessary, and will take referrals from CSD 27 particularly in the areas of Special Education and English Language Learners.

III.i. Provide access to viable education alternatives to students in regions where there a lack of alternatives

As noted in Section II.b., students in CSD 27 are not receiving the education services to which they are entitled, further there are tremendous deficits in student performance as youngsters transition from middle to high school as well as overall performance at the high school level.

2009 NYS Performance Data - CSD 27									
Grades	ELA			Math			Graduation Rate		
	CSD 27	NYS	Diff.	CSD 27	NYS	Diff.	CSD 27	NYS Standard	Diff.
7*	76%	80%	-4	84%	87%	-3			
8*	64%	69%	-3	76%	80%	-4			
9-12 (2005 Cohort)	59%	77%	-18	54%	77%	-23	45%	55%	-10

*Measuring students performing at grade level/Level 3

Through an exposure to STEM through the lens of environmental education, individualized instruction, extended learning time, Individualized Academic Plans (IAP), an Advisory Program, Learning Labs and enhanced professional development opportunities supported by The Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education at New York University and the Education Leadership Department at Columbia University, Teachers College Engage Charter School for Environmental Education will improve the level of student achievement for scholars within CSD 27. Engage Charter School for Environmental Education will provide an alternative for youngsters to achieve levels of success beyond what is currently being offered. We will strive to work with our peer schools within the district to increase efficacy for all students.