

PROSPECTUS REQUESTS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of Quest Academy Charter School (QACS) is to serve the uniqueness of each individual child and encourage students to develop their strengths as well as explore their areas of interest through a holistic constructivist approach. The staff, families and students will work collaboratively and cooperatively to provide a rich, educational experience that values character qualities, intellectual knowledge, respect for diversity and life long learning skills, necessary to help students become healthy, independent, productive members of society.

We will support all students including those who are at-risk with social/emotional, behavioral and learning issues as well as students with neurobiological disorders who are struggling with success. Students will be provided with the opportunity to develop cooperative, differentiated and experiential learning styles, shared responsibility and ethical values. Students will be taught problem solving techniques, conflict resolution skills and bullying prevention strategies to create and maintain an orderly, trusting, and caring environment where teaching and learning are exciting and students are assisted as they develop responsibility. QACS members believe that all students can and will learn at high levels when provided with the right learning conditions.

QACS members believe excellence in education is comprised of meticulous and rigorous endeavors. We will provide a stimulating, engaging and motivating educational environment that recognizes student capabilities and promotes social awareness. We believe that students learn best and teachers teach best when teachers, administrators and families work as colleagues to develop, modify and personalize education. QACS members will aim to meet or exceed state performance standards through understanding that educating a child effectively must include all aspects of their lives including academic, emotional, social, physical and cultural skills, with the recognition of individual differences. We will accomplish this by utilizing a strong curriculum and rigorous academic program as well as offering small class sizes and valuing individual learning styles. We will implement a holistic constructivist approach based on the theory of Multiple Intelligences by Howard Gardner and the Cooperative Discipline model developed by Rudolph Dreikurs.

QAC's purpose is to inspire and empower students to reach their full academic and creative potential. A holistic way of thinking seeks to encompass and integrate multiple layers of meaning and experience rather than defining human possibilities narrowly. The art of holistic education lies in its responsiveness to the diverse learning styles and needs of evolving human beings. The theory of multiple intelligences brings a pragmatic approach to how intelligence is defined and allows us to use our students' strengths to help them learn. We will make every effort to provide opportunities for our students to use and develop all the intelligences and their natural talents. Students' current stages of development will be recognized and valued thus enhancing their learning through mutual support. Multiple Intelligence means that students are viewed as individuals and using instruction that recognizes students interests and talents. QACS staff, students and families will enhance their learning using Multiple Intelligence as cited by Thomas Hoerr in [Becoming a Multiple Intelligences School](#) and by Ellen Arnold in [The MI Strategy Bank: 800+ Multiple Intelligence Ideas for the Elementary Classroom](#). Learning will be based on the student's Metacognitive needs, interests and learning styles and will empower the students to reach benchmarks and demands of the New York State Standards in a personal and relevant way. This methodology highly motivates and inspires a child, leading a student to learn how to learn and yields a life-long learner.

QACS members will incorporate a variety of creative routes to assist in the success of our students' education. We will utilize curriculum-based and intelligence-based learning centers, thematic instruction, learning stations and club activities to offer continuity and make learning more meaningful. Each student will participate in a strength-based interview, as a resource to assess their current levels, what they know, how they learn best, what they need to know and personal interests. Staff will be trained in Multiple Intelligence Theory and Practices. Dr. Ellen Arnold is consulting with our planning team and is willing, available and committed to help us succeed. Additionally, Dr. Thomas Hoerr is consulting with our planning team as a knowledgeable resource who is the founder of a Multiple Intelligence School as well

as a renowned author. Information gained from the strength-based interview will be reviewed by the Child Study Team to develop a personalized education plan.

QACS will strive to provide parents and students with an alternative public school that integrates the Humanities, Arts, Social Responsibility and Sciences by offering small class sizes, valuing individual learning styles, and celebrating student successes. QACS members believe children succeed when they are accepted for who they are and what they can become.

Throughout the history of education teachers have struggled with various student behavioral issues. The development of a child's social, emotional and behavioral skills has to do with how a child relates to others, how they feel about themselves, and how they behave. To succeed in school, a child needs to have certain predictable social, emotional and behavioral skills. Deficits in any of these skills negatively impact the child's success in school. QACS will adopt the Cooperative Discipline classroom and school reform model derived from the philosophy of Rudolph Dreikurs. Based on this research-based approach, students excel when they feel like they are active participants in the learning process rather than its passive recipients of the school culture. When knowledge is not something that occurs outside of their lives but is a direct outcome of their interactions with their environment and teachers, students become self-disciplined and thrive. They develop a sense of responsibility towards academics. They work collaboratively with teachers and parents to help establish a cooperative plan for classroom and school rules. We will create a school-wide system of interventions and positive behavioral supports that provides all students additional support when they experience difficulty in their learning and celebrate success in all of our students' endeavors.

Character education, preventative and peer counseling will be in every class every school day. Our school psychologist and social worker will focus on these components and train others. Children need support as they cope with daily problems. They experience various forms of trauma and lack the ability and knowledge to deal with painful feelings that arise from conflicting relationships. Many children may need help, support and encouragement with interrupting family patterns that cycle from generation to generation. A child needs to be given the opportunity to talk with an adult who is non-judgmental, caring and open minded to their needs in order to achieve success in school. Counseling support will focus on one specific topic each month.

Many students are feeling unsuccessful, frustrated, failing and need support in an alternative educational setting which QACS members believe fills a gap in current academic offerings in the Rochester area. We will include students who are identified as at-risk with social/emotional, behavioral and learning issues who are struggling with success. Our multiple intelligence, character based, family and community connected program will offer a personal approach and immerse children in exploration and creativity to provide a nurturing and challenging environment to develop the whole child. Students will be encouraged to achieve goals and objectives; to grow academically, emotionally, socially, physically and culturally, with the recognition of individual differences.

QACS members include individuals from diverse backgrounds who are capable, knowledgeable, trained, competent experts in their fields. QACS members include individuals with doctorates in education, a retired superintendent, licensed and school psychologists and social workers, teachers of general and special education as well as teachers of music, art and physical education, parents, academic and behavioral specialists, speech and language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, a registered nurse specialist, administrative assistants, custodian, teaching assistants, college professors, a chiropractor, realtor, community leaders, insurance agency representative, lawyer, and financial advisor. Our team will work together to invent, innovate and adjust our program on the way to excellence. The members have over 100 years of experience collectively. They are accomplished in their fields and are committed to offer an alternative approach to how students are educated and become successful. QACS members have a high capacity to effectively launch, oversee and govern a charter school.

II. STUDENT POPULATION

A. Student Enrollment

Anticipated Enrollment Table

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Kindergarten	30	30	30	30	30
1st	30	30	30	30	30
2nd	30	30	30	30	30
3rd		30	30	30	30
4th			30	30	30
5th				30	30
6th					30

B. Target Populations

In the initial year of operation, Quest Academy will enroll 90 students, 30 Kindergarteners, 30 first grade students and 30 second grade students; ages ranging from 5 years (turning 5 years before Sept. 1st) to 8 years. In the second year the school will add 30 third grade students; ages ranging from 5 years to 9 years. In the third year, the school will add 30 fourth grade students; ages ranging from 5-10 years. In the fourth year, the school will add 30 students in fifth grade; ranging in age from 5-11. In the fifth year, the school will add 30 students in sixth grade; ages ranging from 5-12 years. Each grade level will have 2 classes and will consist of 15 students.

Quest Academy Charter School shall not discriminate against any student based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability or for any other basis that would be unlawful for a public school. QACS shall be open to any child who is eligible under the laws of New York State for admission to a public school, and the school shall ensure compliance with all applicable antidiscrimination laws governing public schools, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and of Education Law §2854(2), governing admission to a charter school. New students will be admitted each year without regard to prior measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, handicapped condition, ethnicity, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry. QACS shall enroll each eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the number of applicants exceeds the capacity of the grade level. Pupils shall then be accepted from among applicants by random selection process, provided, however, that enrollment preferences are provided to pupils returning to the charter school in the second of subsequent year of operation, to pupils residing in the school district in which the charter school is located, and to siblings of pupils already enrolled in the school. Quest Academy Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Law section 2854 (2). Admissions to Quest Academy Charter School shall not be limited on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, national origin, or any other ground that would be unlawful.

SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY

Process: The application process will occur in three stages.

Stage I

At open houses held in the spring 2011 (see "Outreach," below), prospective students and their parents or guardians will hear a comprehensive presentation about the school. Discussions will include the school's academic program, the schedule for an extended school year, and expectations for student behavior and parental involvement. Also discussed will be any other community programs that exist to support the operations or mission of the school.

Parents and guardians interested in submitting applications for their children who did not attend one of the school's springtime open houses will be provided with a packet of written materials covering all the topics formally discussed at the open houses, and a meeting will be scheduled with appropriate school

staff and each interested parent or guardian to verbally review all the material and answer any questions the parent or guardian may ask.

Stage II

QACS will make available applications online, from the school's address and website, and accessible at locations throughout the city. We will accept applications to meet enrollment (15 per grade level) through mid-May, 2011, when the lottery will be held. Parents will be notified of their child's acceptance by the end of May. The transportation department of the student's district of residence will be notified by June 1st, 2011 of parental requests for transportation. Interested parents/guardians will be required to complete and submit an application form. The application will be fairly simple, requesting basic biographical information (name, age, etc.), contact information, and other important facts (e.g., school currently attending). Also, applicants will be asked to provide any information necessary for the school to make a determination of the student's "at-risk" status. Such information and eligibility determinations will be made through a process similar to that prescribed by the State Education Department and in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations regarding the subsidized meal programs.

Stage III

If the number of eligible applications for admission exceeds the spaces available for students, a random lottery will be held. Such a lottery will be open to the public, and attended and/or audited by a representative of a dispassionate outside organization. Under no circumstances will any member of QACS including its founders, Board of Directors, parents and staff, be connected with the lottery in any way, including the procedure of drawing applicants. Each student who is applying to the school will have an application that goes into the lottery. If a student who is applying to the school also has a sibling who is applying to the school – those names will be asked to be provided on the application. There will be grade level lists for the number of slots available for each classroom (maximum of fifteen students per class, thirty per grade level, grades K-2). As the person who is conducting the lottery draws an application, that child's name goes onto the grade level sheet. For example, if a child's application is drawn who is eligible for first grade, his or her name goes on the first grade list. If his or her brother or sister's name is on his/her application as a second grader, that child's name goes on the second grade list and so on. When the last applicant's name is pulled, and if by chance that applicant has a sibling and there is no space for the sibling, his/her name will be first name on waiting list. We will hold the lottery until all names are pulled so that there is an organized fashion to the waiting list.

Whenever a vacancy occurs, either prior to the start of a particular school year or during the course of that school year, the school will contact the parent or guardian of a similar child on the waiting list. Reasonable and multiple attempts will be made to contact the family of the student selected from the waiting list and get confirmation of whether the student is still interested in enrolling at The Quest Academy Charter School. If reasonable and multiple attempts to contact the student's parents/guardians are unsuccessful, the school may choose to select another student from the waiting list. The school shall maintain documentation of attempts made to contact the parents/guardians of any student in the waiting list.

Outreach

Upon receiving its charter, QACS will distribute invitations to "open houses" to parents and students throughout the Rochester area. The school will vigorously get these announcements to the public through as many available routes as practical, including (but not limited to):

- Child care organizations
- Community organizations of all kinds;
- Direct mailings;
- Public and private elementary schools;
- After-school programs;
- Youth and community centers;
- Businesses and civic organizations; and
- Flyers posted and distributed in various communities.

- Create Public Service Announcements (PSA) for local print and electronic media.

These methods will help ensure that the invitation to hear directly about the opportunities offered to children by The Quest Academy Charter School gets widely circulated. The purpose of these "open houses" is noted above. Information about The Quest Academy Charter School and the application process and time frame also will be widely distributed in a similar manner, affording families who do not attend one of these "open houses" the opportunity to learn about The Quest Academy Charter School and to apply for admission for their children.

In addition to the above approaches, the strategies we will use to reach families that are traditionally less informed about educational choice options include hosting rallies, setting up informational booths at local festivals, and going door to door to meet families.

Our target population will support all students including those who are "at-risk" with social/emotional, behavioral and learning issues as well as students with neurobiological disorders who are struggling with success. Our definition for at-risk students w/neurobiological disorders is as follows:

Students with a documented history and symptomology of or medical diagnosis of:

sensory integration and/or processing disorder

mixed receptive and expressive language disorder

attention deficit & disruptive behavior disorder; incl. ADHD, ODD

separation anxiety

selective mutism

reactive attachment disorder

prenatal exposure to alcohol and other drugs

mood disorder; incl. major depressive disorder, dysthymic disorder, bi-polar 1 and bi-polar 2 disorder

anxiety disorders; incl. panic disorder, social phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and generalized anxiety disorder

adjustment disorder

autism

Students with Disabilities

Quest Academy Charter School will educate 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 will adhere to all applicable federal laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). QACS will not discriminate in admission and enrollment practices on the basis of a student having or suspected of having a disability. All special education programs and services at Quest Academy 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 on site at QACS.

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 Committee on Special Education of the students' school district of residence. Since the CSE should consider the educational programs and services and extracurricular and other nonacademic activities available in the Quest Academy Charter School setting, the parents, in conjunction with the school, may have to ask the CSE to attempt to tailor the IEP to meet the individual needs of newly enrolled students in the context of the charter school program. If the CSE must recommend a special class or other appropriate placement not available at the school and the Quest Academy Charter School is unable to directly provide services to the extent necessary, the student's parent or guardian will make the choice to either retain their child at QACS in a less restrictive environment or transfer their child to their district of residence for provision of services. Currently a population of 16.35% of students with disabilities exists in the Rochester City School District. QACS

aims to have a 30% population of students with disabilities to enhance the education of our at-risk target population.

Students with disabilities will be expected to participate in and receive credit for nonacademic, extracurricular and auxiliary 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. The charter school will use technological programs in the classroom to enhance the curriculum, particularly in the areas of reading, writing and in math. Students will be proficient in using the computer to not only aide them in the classroom, but will also use the computer for research. The school will use the Child Study Team (CST) in the school. The 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 will be child-centered and facilitates a process that results in the implementation of accommodations, services, and interventions that will enable students to be successful in school. Quest Academy staff will closely monitor student progress through their strength-based interview and personal education plan. Child study teams will meet monthly to discuss progress of each student as well as three way conferences with student, parent, and teacher to make certain response to intervention is detailed and assists the student be successful. The Woodcock Johnson and BASC 2 given at the beginning of each year will assist in the early detection of students with a disability.

If a QACS student with disabilities cannot participate in regular State assessments, the State Alternate Assessment for Students with Severe Disabilities (NYSAA) will be administered as required by law and as allowed under the student's IEP. The State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) is a part of the New York State Testing Program; it is a data folio-style assessment in which students with severe cognitive disabilities demonstrates their performance toward achieving the New York State Learning Standards. The Committee on Special Education (CSE), which follows specific criteria, will determine eligibility for participation in NYSAA. Student performance will be recorded through direct observation and documentation and may include other information such as work products, photographs, audiotapes and videotapes as needed. Students will be assessed once a year beginning in the school year they become ten years old. QACS will access the technical assistance of the Rochester City SE-TASC (Special Education Technical Assistance Support Center) in order to provide staff development to the teachers on this matter as well as on information pertaining to al issues and regulations for the education of students with disabilities attending the QACS. Quest Academy Charter School staff may create individualized assessment instruments to utilize with these students as needed. These alternative assessments will be submitted for approval and included in the students IEP. Some additional resources that will be used for designing alternative or individualized assessment are:

- US Department of Education 's Basic Concepts for Teachers and School Administrators;
- Salvia & Ysseldyke 's Assessment in Special and Remedial Education;
- Bagnati 's Assessment for Early Intervention: Best Practices for Professionals;
- Anderson & Burke 's Assessing Affective Characteristics in the Schools.

English Language Learners

As a first step, QACS will attempt to identify ELL students through a survey sent to every student's household after the annual enrollment period, which will be designed to identify students who may have limited English proficiency. This survey will be the *Home Language Questionnaire* issued by the State Education Department. If, based on answers to the *Home Language Questionnaire*, it is determined that the student is of foreign birth or ancestry and comes from a home where language other than English is spoken, an informal interview by school staff (in English) will be conducted. If the interviewer determines that the student speaks no English, that pupil will be classified as an ELL student. If the interviewer determines that the student speaks some English, an oral exam as used by the local district will be administered. If the student scores below the established cut-off point on the test, that pupil will be classified as an ELL student. If student scores above the established cut-off point on the oral test, a written exam as used by the local district will be

administered. If the student scores below the established cut-off point (40th percentile or statewide reference point) on the written test, that pupil will be classified as an ELL student. If student scores above the established cut-off point on the written test, the student will be determined not to be an ELL student. Currently a population of 9.62% of English language learners exists in the Rochester City School District. QACS aims to have a 15% population of English language learners to enhance the education of our at-risk target population.

The school's teachers will receive training on educating ELL students and will be responsible for observing each student throughout the class day with an eye toward detecting limited English proficiency. Any student suspected of having limited English proficiency will be tested to determine if and what level of services, if any, are necessary. Any student classified and receiving educational services as an ELL student who subsequently tests above the 40th percentile will be deemed to be no longer in need of ELL services. QACS intends to use the various curricula behaviors lists to assess ELL status and ELL student progress. This assessment process is the same used for the traditional student population. As a possible alternative, if necessary, we may also use the Language Assessment Battery (LAB), the reading assessment test administered by the local school district.

In addition, the school also will use 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*.

QACS education plan for all children will be a developmentally based, individualized approach. ELL students, like traditional students, will have a personalized education plan, collaboratively developed by student, parents, and teacher to meet that child's individual needs. Instruction in all curricular areas will begin with what the child already knows, engage the child in inquiry-based learning and hands-on experiences, and provide constant and intense immersion in the English language throughout the school day.

QACS plans to provide all needed staff and specialized curricular materials to enable ELL students to achieve proficiency. QACS also will directly provide or make referrals to appropriate support services, which may be needed by ELL students in order to achieve and maintain a satisfactory level of academic performance. Such services may include individual counseling, group counseling, home visits, and parental counseling. Our Child Study Teams will review students' needs and make recommendations for program modifications, use of translators and translated materials to help parents understand their rights and make informed choices about their child's educational program, or the provision of English as a Second Language classes. Additionally, our strength-based interview will identify each student's strength, interests and weaknesses so we can develop a personal education plan.

QACS's education plan for all children will be a developmentally based, individualized approach. ELL students, like traditional students, will have a personalized education plan collaboratively developed by student, parents, and teacher to meet that child's individual needs. Instruction in all curricular areas will begin with what the child already knows, engage the child in Metacognitive learning and hands-on experiences, and provide constant and intense immersion in the English language throughout the school day. 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 verbal and written - will be modified appropriately for any ELL student's developmental level.

Students will not be forced to stop using their primary language while learning English. If a teacher at the charter school feels it is beneficial, the school will ensure that there will be somebody in an ELL student's classroom who knows the child's language.

Teachers at the charter school will receive professional development training on communicating with students designated as English Language Learners and in techniques for detecting whether a student has English language deficiencies. Also, within the school's daily class schedule are blocks of time that can and will be used for more intensive English language instruction for ELL students (as well as for other individualized support for students with different needs). We will be 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, ESL pull-out instruction and/or assignment to an aide or teacher who speaks that child's non-English language.

Based in the Home Language Questionnaire, QACS will know which students come from homes in which languages other than English are primarily spoken. In such instances, any school communication with the parents shall be in the language the parents best understand or otherwise authorize. All facilities deemed necessary by the school for the proper instruction of English Language Learners will be in place by the time QACS begins classes, and such facilities shall be used properly by charter school staff.

QACS will evaluate its success in serving ELL students in various ways, including but not limited to: testing using the NYSESLAT, state required standardized tests taken by all students of a particular grade level; teacher evaluation of each student's performance in academic content areas to measure the student's progress in core subjects; and, informal teacher observation to determine English comprehension and speaking. If an ELL student fails to show appropriate progress in academic areas measured by these assessments and teacher assessment of classroom work, modifications to the instructional program may be made for individual students. Any students classified and receiving educational services as an ELL student who subsequently tests above the 40th percentile on the NYSESLAT, or other appropriate exam, that student will be deemed no longer in need of ELL services. Students will not be exited from the ELL program unless they can read, write and comprehend English well enough to participate meaningfully in the school's program.

QACS will periodically evaluate the effectiveness of its ELL program. The school will determine if it is successful in achieving the program's goal of helping ELL students overcome language barriers sufficiently well and sufficiently promptly to ensure that ELL students can participate meaningfully in the school's programs. If we find that the ELL program is not meeting this goal, the program will be modified accordingly. QACS will evaluate its success in serving ELL students in various ways, including but not limited to: testing using the NYSESLAT, state required standardized tests taken by all students of a particular grade level; teacher evaluation of each student's performance in academic content areas to measure the student's progress in core subjects; and, informal teacher observation to determine English comprehension and speaking. If an ELL student fails to show appropriate progress in academic areas measured by these assessments and teacher assessment of classroom work, modifications to the instructional program may be made for individual students.

Title III funding is for Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students. Public Law 107-110. The LEP allocations are based on the number of public and nonpublic LEP students served by each LEA compared to the State total. As students are enrolled in Quest Academy, any student suspected of having limited English proficiency will be tested to determine if and what level of services, if any, are necessary. These monies will be used to enhance the education of our ELL learners through required staffing and unique curriculums and materials.

Federal free and reduced priced lunch programs

The City of Rochester reports an 85% poverty rate. It is highly likely that the entire student population of the Quest Academy Charter School lives within the city of Rochester, the school's members anticipate that approximately 75% of the students will receive Title I funding. These monies will be used to enhance the students' curriculum materials, equipment and meals as needed.

QACS Curriculum and Approach to Instruction Designed to Enhance All students Education

The Quest Academy Charter School will offer new and effective teaching methods that have been shown to result in sustained student learning and achievement. We will offer effective and consistent instruction through innovative methods that:

- Perform strength-based interviews and develop individual educational plans
- Organize flexible and goal oriented
- Support inquiry and exploration through project-based learning
- Emphasizing modeling and guided practice, consistent checks for understanding, encourage and enhance independent practice so students can connect ideas and concepts and apply what they know to new contexts.
- Actively engaging students in the learning process through peer tutoring, cooperative discipline and experiential learning.

- Establish curriculum based learning centers – use specific intelligences to address a skill or understanding.
- Invent intelligence based learning centers- designed to enable a student to pursue some of the skills related to a particular intelligence.
- Create thematic Instruction since students learn best when learning is meaningful – themes are selected and developed by child study teams with students.
- Offer purposeful and ongoing assessments that guides subsequent instruction
- Adjust instructional practices according to the pace and rate of the student’s progress
- Use pro-active discipline by creating fair rules that are based on clear agreements and democratic processes of decision-making that lead to shared responsibility
- Reinforce reading and writing across the curriculum

Multiple Intelligences is grounded in developmental learning theory, taking advantage of students’ individual strengths to meet their individual needs. Instruction naturally begins with the students’ strengths eliminating the inefficiency of grade level system covering curricula familiar to the student. This allows a student in need of academic challenges beyond that of a traditional system to receive such challenges whereas a student who needs extended time and strategies to understand and demonstrate a skill or concept will be given what they need in order to be successful.

All students, including “at-risk” students will receive expanded learning experiences through this developmental approach. The developmental learning approach is naturally sequential; therefore, learning experiences are meaningful and have purpose. Students learn at varying rates. At the Quest Academy School, students will move at their own pace, while being encouraged and supported to succeed, as they develop reading, writing, mathematic, scientific, social studies, art, music and physical education strategies toward reaching mastery levels. Individual progress is measured against specific, developmental benchmarks. Learning experiences are built around what a student knows and their Metacognitive profile. Accommodations are made for individual learning styles and interests. Our students will develop an understanding over time as opposed to simply acquiring knowledge. This logical sequence of learning will assist students to pose questions, understand, apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information across the content areas. Approaching education this way allows for a safe, non-threatening, non-competitive environment where diverse learners are celebrated. The students can become greater risk takers, which allow them to grow, learn, connect with others, and become life-long learners and healthy, independent adults.

The Metacognitive approach also allows for rigorous staff reflection and evaluation. The staff members are motivated to learn and work with the individual child. All staff members working with students will actually teach students rather than simply cover curriculum. QACS philosophy believes that learning needs to be natural, purposeful and meaningful. The staff members will recognize and value students’ prior knowledge and experience, while each student moves through the learning continuum efficiently, personally and naturally. This particular type of environment is planned carefully and attentively with the following considerations:

Expectation -We believe all students can learn. We have to treat students individually, recognizing their strengths, interests and weaknesses.

Demonstration - All staff members will model optimum learning experiences thorough interactive experience.

Successes- We will celebrate the success of each student’s accomplishments and growth acknowledging their efforts helping them feel encouraged and motivated to learn.

Highly trained staff that engages in observing characterizes our individualized, developmental, strategic approach and assessing student progress while the student is in a learning situation. We will prescribe a tailored and personalized education plan for each student. This educational program will improve student learning and achievement.

III. SCHOOL DESIGN

Our educational focus and philosophy is that every child is unique and can learn. Metacognition is knowledge of one's own thoughts and the factors that influence their thinking. We believe if every student understands his/her own cognitive profile, he/she will be able to communicate which strategies are most successful for personal growth. The strength-based model we plan to utilize will provide a successful learning experience and unlock the potential of each and every student. QACS will utilize a Multiple Intelligence approach and the Cooperative Discipline model to assist students in becoming invested, independent learners who will actively participate in their educational and personal growth. Multiple Intelligence theory teaches us that all students are smart, but they are smart in different ways. (Hoerr, 2000). The ways multiple intelligences can be used in both the classroom and our school are as unlimited as the creativity and energies of our team since it is neither a curriculum nor pedagogy. We also believe that students are capable learners who feel good about themselves when they contribute to their education. The Cooperative Discipline model follows this philosophy and will enhance the education of each student at QACS. According to psychologist Rudolph Dreikurs, "children want desperately to belong. If all goes well and the child maintains his courage, he presents few problems. He does what the situation requires and gets a sense of belonging through his usefulness and participation. But if he has become discouraged, his sense of belonging is restricted. His interest turns from participation in the group to a desperate attempt at self-realization through others. All his attention is turned toward this end, be it through pleasant or disturbing behavior, for one way or another, he has to find a place." (Rudolph Dreikurs, *Children, the Challenge* p58.)

QACS will blend elements from a constructivist approach, with a more holistic approach to meet the wide range of developmental needs of urban youth and offer a challenging, relevant curriculum in an alternative context. Through this balanced, integrated approach, QACS will support and expand inclusion as well as acknowledge and recognize the diversity of students' learning styles. This will be accomplished through 1) smaller class size, 2) through use of a multiple intelligence teaching approach, students will have an equal chance at understanding and assimilating knowledge, 3) providing students more time on task (due to a longer school year), 4) integrating curricular areas to enhance learning and give meaning to students and 5) instilling a sense of cooperation and self-motivated discipline through the implementation of the Cooperative Discipline model of classroom management.

We will support all students including those who are "at-risk" with social/emotional, behavioral and learning issues who are struggling with success. The most serious health and social problems confronting the U.S. today are caused in large part by behavioral patterns established during youth. (Kolbe, L.J., Collins, J., & Cortese, P.1997). Students will be provided with the opportunity to develop cooperative, differentiated and experiential learning styles, shared responsibility and ethical values. Students will be taught problem solving techniques, conflict resolution skills and bullying prevention strategies to create and maintain an orderly, trusting, and caring environment where teaching and learning are exciting and students are assisted as they develop responsibility.

Emotional intelligence includes self-awareness and impulse control, persistence, self-motivation and empathy. These are the attributes of character and self-discipline. Lack of emotional intelligence can sabotage the intellect and add to risks in children including depression, anxiety, aggressiveness and violence. (Goleman, 2006). Effectively utilizing the school system to affect the health and well being of students' means paying explicit attention to their social and learning needs. Schools offer a place to reach children with basic and essential life lessons they may not receive otherwise. (Goleman, 1995). We believe emotional intelligence is not fated at birth, but that it can be nurtured and strengthened. Emotional intelligence will be a major focus of Quest Academy Charter School through the multiple intelligences of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills to improve the education of our students. Here are six principles of good practice we will utilize to help reinforce positive emotions:

1. **Prompt motivation.**

Motivation comes from confidence, which, in turn, is the harvest of competence. We will break down new challenges into manageable components. From taking turns in a game to learning to

read, we will monitor progress, support effort, praise new competencies, and give each student a chance to showcase them.

2. **Spark curiosity.**
Curiosity thrives on opportunities to take chances on ideas and to enjoy the messiness of questions, as well as the tidiness of answers. We will provide those opportunities.
3. **Nourish intellect, talent, and power.**
We will find what each student does well and budget time and energies for the good stuff.
4. **Encourage connections.**
Our staff and parents will help students connect experiences with words, words with pictures, pictures with music, and by weaving ideas and happenings into a web of life.
5. **Monitor growth.**
We will maintain a portfolio for each student. Ask the child to keep a journal (words or pictures).
6. **Accept special considerations.**
We will provide support for weaknesses, laughter for the good of all, organizational help, and opportunities for development of talent and reinforcement of character.

QACS believes that a registered professional nurse, identified as a Health Care Specialist, is a vital addition to improving the health of all members of our school. Research has indicated that students who attend schools who employ nurses have decreased absenteeism, decreased drop out rate, and improved test scores. (National Association of School Nurses, 2003). We will enhance our holistic educational program for students, families and staff thorough logically integrating each student's medical needs. The National Association of School Nurses defines school nursing as: "A specialized practice of professional nursing that advances the well-being, academic success, and life-long achievement of students. School nurses facilitate positive student responses to normal development; promote health and safety; intervene with actual and potential health problems; provide care management services; and actively collaborate with other school personnel to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self management, self advocacy, and learning." "School is the second most influential environment in a child's life." (New York State Association of School Nurses, 2009).

The Quest Academy Charter School will subscribe to a performance-based accountability system and meet student achievement goals by implementing the New York State learning standards and using the highly successful reading and mathematics programs of Houghton Mifflin. QACS will:

- Be accountable to the 30 learning standards of New York State
- Administer standardized tests at each grade level to determine cohort performance in relation to New York State standards
- Enable students to use their intelligences in learning and sharing information
- Use curriculum based learning centers – use specific intelligences to address a skill or understanding, focusing on objectives specific to areas of curriculum
- Develop intelligence based learning centers- designed to enable a student to pursue some of the skills related to a particular intelligence
- Evaluate Projects, Exhibitions, Presentations – students use their intelligences to share what they know, providing teachers with more meaningful information about the strengths and weaknesses of each student
- Develop consistent and comprehensive scoring guidelines that are linked to the standards and that will measure student performance in a way that will be easily understood by educators, students and family members
- Use assessment as a way for students to gain insight into how to improve not just as a checklist
- Maintain student progress reports
- Be subject to supervision by the State Education Department and the State Board of Regents

QACS believes a strong internal leadership is the key to developing an effective performance-based accountability system. Academic achievement is correlated to the specificity of accountability

benchmarks. Quest Academy staff will incorporate evaluations and include in-class observations, structured discussions with teachers, and assessments of teaching materials/resources.

The principal features of the four accountability systems at Quest Academy are:

- **Bureaucratic-supervisory relationships; rules and procedures;**
 - * Hierarchical accountability reflects the obligations and responsibilities to the organization and emphasizes compliance with rules, regulations, and organizational directives.
 - * School Leader is accountable for implementing education policy in the schools and is accountable to the Board of Trustees. Staff is accountable for implementing education policy in the classroom and are accountable to the school leader.
 - * School Leader ensures democratic control, ensuring openness and dialogue, creating trust, affirm basic values and ethical standards, improve performance.
 - * School Leader provide answers and explain personal decisions; give an account of the activities and performance of organizations.
 - * All are accountable to the students and their success.
- **Legal-contractual relations and legal obligations;**
 - * Insure that all staff holds appropriate certification as required by law
- **Professional- deference to expertise;**
 - * Are highly qualified
 - * Demonstrate effective skills in the education of children
 - * Internal responsiveness to its students/parents as evidenced through parent-teacher meetings, Child Study Teams
- **Political- responsiveness to stakeholders.**
 - * Board of Trustees is accountable for monitoring Charter and is accountable to the Board of Regents.
 - * Informing the public, providing information on objectives and results etc.

The Quest Academy Charter School will provide families and students in Rochester with more choices in educational opportunities, as it will be one of the few schools to implement a Multiple Intelligence Approach as well as the Cooperative Discipline Approach in teaching and learning.

The Quest Academy Charter School will offer an alternative to the available public school system by providing an expanded learning experience and personal approach for educating all students in the following ways:

- ≈ Students' needs, interests, and learning style will be reflected through a personalized education plan with information obtained from their strength-based interview.
- ≈ Integrity and individuality will be developed, honored and celebrated.
- ≈ Each student's quest for knowledge and inborn passion for excellence will be fostered and nurtured.
- ≈ Interdisciplinary curriculum: cross-curricular educational development where the connection between different fields of knowledge is shown through theme-based and project-based instruction.
- ≈ Student, Parent, and Teacher interaction and attention will be strengthened and increased through smaller class size and child study team meetings.
- ≈ Shared responsibility of teacher and student toward classroom management.
- ≈ Parents will have a "Kid in a Book" for their child. This will be a 3 ring binder, which contains all the information pertaining to their child. For example, medical information, copy of strength-based interview, and personalized education plan, etc.
- ≈ Students will have an individualized health care plan, pertaining to their medical needs and/or medical/psychological diagnosis.

- ≈ Students will have opportunities to make use of their prior knowledge, understanding and experiences.
- ≈ Each student will identify, recognize and pursue his/her own talents and interests.
- ≈ Each student will have a “What Works for Me Book”. This will be a 3 ring binder, which contains information about the student in his or her own voice.
- ≈ Each student will understand his/her own cognitive profile and develop problem solving skills and strategies to solve problems in all areas of life
- ≈ Students will recognize that any problem can be solved if they are resourceful, persistent and strategic.
- ≈ Students will understand character education and develop their own character.
- ≈ Students will benefit from preventative counseling to deal with the joys of becoming an individual.
- ≈ Students will learn from each other through guided peer counseling
- ≈ Students will recognize and take pleasure in diversity and ones uniqueness.
- ≈ Students will understand their individual strengths academically, socially, emotionally, physically and culturally.
- ≈ Student progress will be monitored by 3 way conferences (student, parent, and teacher).
- ≈ Increase parental involvement: QACS will develop added opportunities for parent-teacher communication and for parental participation in school activities and events.

Students experiencing behavioral difficulties will be provided with an Intensive Support Team and Room to deal with the issues in a safe, non-judgmental environment and setting away from the classroom.

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

English Language Arts

It is with the context of collaboration and self-motivating learning that QACS educators will teach the evidence-based English Language Arts and Mathematics programs of Houghton-Mifflin. ELA instruction will be centered around, but not limited to the Houghton Mifflin Program. We have chosen this core curriculum due to its explicit and systematic instruction of phonemic awareness, phonics and word knowledge as well as its comprehension strategies, skills and inquiry skills. We believe these elements are essential to ensuring that all students can begin to read authentic text by the end of the first half of first grade. We will be including the Houghton Mifflin’s writing component and incorporating supplemental writing instruction. In order to teach the essential component of organization of ideas and information, initial writing instruction will be based on the *Four Square* Method of teaching writing. While students become more proficient writers, we will integrate the *Six-Trait Writing Model* into our writing education. This model breaks down writing performance into a manageable group of teachable and assessable skills. We believe utilizing this model will assist students in understanding what works well and what areas are in need of improvement in their writing skills. Additionally, the traits give teachers a focus for developing their lessons.

Mathematics

Math instruction will be centered around, but not limited to the Houghton Mifflin Program. The New Houghton Mifflin Math offers research-based approaches in a highly accessible format so all students can reach grade-level success and beyond. It incorporates the following components: 1) High-interest activities 2) Research-based lesson plans 3) Differentiated instruction 4) Technology tools for lesson planning, intervention, and assessment 5) Comprehensive package of teaching resources provides everything needed for effective teaching. This math program encompasses problem-solving,

communications, making connections and representations reasoning and proof skills, as well as number sense and operations, measurements, geometry, algebra, statistics and probability. Our students will work in all areas throughout each year based on their level of progress and needs.

- 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); N/A**
- c. Focus on academic achievement of middle school student populations and preparation for transition to high school (if applicable); N/A**
- d. Utilize a variety of high-quality assessments to measure understanding and critical application of concepts;**

A comprehensive approach to assessment will be integrated at QACS. The assessment approach will include New York State assessments, Screening, Progress Monitoring, Diagnostic, and Outcome assessments. Data derived from the different components will be used for multiple purposes, including for accountability, to guide instruction, to evaluate the effectiveness of curricula, and to identify students at risk or performing substantially below expectations. The assessment plan was developed according to recommendations from state-of-the-art programs integrating assessment and curriculum, using evidence-based approaches (i.e., such as the Bankson Bernthal Test of Phonology and Test of Auditory-Perceptual Skills (TAPS).) Each of the components of the comprehensive assessments approach is described below in detail.

Authentic Assessment

One month prior to the start of the instructional school year, a personal education plan will be developed for each student based on the authentic assessment of his or her strength-based interview. We will incorporate a Metacognitive approach with the belief that if every student understands his/her own cognitive profile, he/she will be able to communicate which strategies are most successful for personal growth.

Screening and Diagnostic

Diagnostic tests will be used to measure a variety of specific skills, such as reading, language, mathematics or cognitive skills as well as screening methods. They are designed to provide a precise and detailed picture of the full range of a child's knowledge and skill so that instruction can be more precisely planned. At the beginning (within first 30 days of instruction) and end of school year, the staff will administer both the broad reading and math assessments from the Woodcock Johnson Achievement Battery to all students. The results will assist in providing teachers a beginning assessment of student's preparation for grade level instruction. They will alert the staff that a student will need extra help to make adequate progress in particular subjects during the year. The Woodcock Johnson Achievement Battery offers the following advantages:

Computer scoring and links to evidence-based interventions with the new *Woodcock Interpretation & Instructional Interventions Program™ (WIIIP™)*

Expanded depth and coverage-Achievement battery has seven additional tests and eight additional clusters; Cognitive battery has eight additional tests and five additional clusters

Extended grade norms from Kindergarten to university graduate students

Scoring software that eliminates hand-scoring

Comprehensive procedures that include three intra-individual procedures and three ability/achievement procedures

Broader cognitive factor scores that measure narrow aspects of each broad ability

Only cognitive test to offer calculated "g" score as General Intellectual Ability (GIA), rather than arithmetic mean score

Expanded Broad Achievement clusters that contain 3 tests measuring basic skills, fluency, and application

NU Tests of Achievement match all eight areas of IDEA legislation

Oral language tests included in the Achievement battery

Ideal for measuring basic psychological processes in problem solving models like Response to Intervention.

Ideal for identifying specific skill deficits that will be the focus of intervention curriculum in problem-solving models like Response to Intervention.

Additional choice of Diagnostic measures will be guided by students' individual needs and determination of valid, reliable evidence-based approaches. Some examples of these include the Clinical Evaluation of Language-4 (CELF-4), Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-IV and Beery-Visual Motor Integration.

At the beginning of each school year (within the first 30 days of instruction), the staff will administer the BASC-2 Rating Scales to all students to assess and remediate behavioral strengths and weaknesses. All children are growing and learning naturally in the areas of social, emotional and behavioral skills. The components of the BASC-2 can be used individually or together to provide a complete, balanced picture of a student's behavior and emotions. Comprehensive and broad-based, this assessment is useful in providing information relevant for IDEA, *DSM-IV-TR*, FBA, BIP, and IEP. Psychometrically strong and up-to-date, BASC-2 enables us to readily differentiate between hyperactivity and attention problems. It also identifies positive attributes we can incorporate into the treatment process. This fast, group-administered universal behavioral screener offers early detection for early prevention. It catches issues that, if left untreated, could impede students' academic performance and their ability to develop and maintain positive relationships with others. We will use it to accurately identify those who may be struggling with underlying behavioral or emotional issues (internalizing and externalizing) and help distinguish them from students who are simply "having a bad day." It will also assist in the identification of those who excel in the areas of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and who may be strong candidates for peer counseling. The BASC-2 offers the following advantages:

- Takes just 5-10 minutes to complete with short forms (Teacher, Parent, and Student) that can be used individually or in any combination to meet our needs.
- Unparalleled in depth and breadth, this comprehensive intervention resource presents extensive information on common behavioral and emotional issues.
- Each of the 11 chapters presents both theoretical and practical information, from framework to implementation steps, including evidence for use research citations on over 60 interventions.
- Problems, Conduct Problems, Depression, Functional Communication, Hyperactivity, Leader/Social Skills, and Somatization.

The Woodcock Johnson Achievement Battery and BASC-2 are designed to be individual and are aligned with both the philosophy and instructional practices of Quest Academy. The standardized scores obtained from these assessments will provide another measure in which to monitor each individual student's growth.

State Assessments

Quest Academy Charter School staff shall administer all required New York State assessments for the grades served by the school. Assessments at QACS will change according to any future modifications to the New York State Assessment. Table 1 includes all New York State Assessments required at the time of this application.

Table 1. Current New York State Assessment requirements by grade and by year.

Grade	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
Grade 3	X	X		
Grade 4	X	X	X	
Grade 5	X	X		X

All students with disabilities shall participate in the New York State Assessments except in cases where the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the students' district of residence determines that such students cannot participate in regular state assessments. In these instances, New York State Alternate Assessments (NYSAA) shall be administered as required by law.

Progress Monitoring

The role Progress Monitoring tests is to keep teachers informed about student's progress during the school year. They will be used to give a quick sample of critical skills that will tell teachers if the student is making adequate progress toward grade level abilities and learning standards in each subject by the end of the year. The progress monitoring assessments will be administered two times during the year: during the period of instructional days 65-75 and 110-120. QACS will use the TerraNova tests (for mathematics, science and social studies) and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for English Language Arts. Each student, family and teacher will participate in a 3-way conference to review the Personal Education Plan. Additionally, QACS Child Study teams will meet monthly to review each student's progress through authentic assessment measures.

Outcome

Outcome assessments are given at the end of year because they can help the leader and teachers evaluate the overall effectiveness of their program or curriculum for all students. End-of-year outcomes will be evaluated using the same measures as those used for Screening and Diagnostics, *Woodcock Johnson Achievement Battery* and *BASC-2* and will be tied into the curriculum and Learning Standards adopted by QACS. This will be done to further track progress on specific skills. Additionally, some more abstract skills will be assessed to track student's integration of basic-level abilities. Therefore, abilities assessed will include skills, but not be limited to, Phonemic Awareness, Vocabulary, Comprehension, Mathematics Reasoning, Computation and Problem-Solving as well as Social, Emotional and Behavioral Skills.

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

The success of Quest Academy Charter School in part rests upon the development of a school culture in which all members of the school community share common goals for student achievement and work collaboratively to achieve them. In order for this to take place, parents and staff will need to have:

- regular, honest communications;
- a shared stake in the success of the school;
- a genuine voice in the way that the school is run.

To ensure that all three of the above occur; Quest Academy Charter School will employ a variety of techniques.

≈ Shared Stake/ Parental Involvement

Parents have the ultimate stake in their child's success, and Quest Academy Charter School will help translate this stake into the success of the school overall. The inclusion of parents in varied capacities will be an essential element of the education of children at Quest Academy Charter School. QACS will make the most of this involvement to make sure the children receive the best education they can through the merging of family, school, and community. Parents will have a formal role in the school's governance. Three seats on the school's Board of Trustees will be reserved for parents of children enrolled in the school.

In addition to involvement in governance, parents will be encouraged to and expected to participate in a variety of ways, including through: parent information workshops, develop and publish a school newsletter, volunteer as a lunchroom aide, playground monitor, or in a similar capacity at the school, help with a fund-raising campaign for the school. The Center for School Change at the University of Minnesota developed a list of 50 possibilities for parent involvement, which fall into six categories:

- assisting at the school;
- helping arrange experiences in the community;
- serving on a school council;
- increasing resources available to the school;
- sharing information about the school with community members;
- helping other parents develop parenting skills.

This list will be formally presented to parents and utilized throughout the school.

≈ Between staff and parents

Report cards and written progress reports for parents will be distributed four times per year providing parents with timely feedback on particular areas of success or difficulty. Quest Academy Charter School will hold teacher/student /parent conferences two times per year plus "open house" days for families. More importantly, families will be welcome in the school at all times, whether they are there to volunteer or simply to check out their children's learning environment. Teachers will be open to these visits, and recognize the value of parents who have a direct knowledge of a classroom's daily operation.

≈ Staff Involvement

When staff sign on at Quest Academy Charter School they must be prepared to work as a community of educators, focusing on the stated vision of the school and enacting a plan for its realization. They will need to embrace difference and varied perspectives, and be prepared to air and resolve conflict in a way that preserves the trust and mutual respect within the community. To foster coherence of purpose and collaborative work, the school has set aside time each week for teachers to have a forum for staff issues and to facilitate common planning. Teachers' daily and weekly free time will be used to plan on their own, coordinate with other teachers, or make themselves available to students for extra help. The teachers' work environment outside of this time also will enable the development of a true teacher "community," strengthening ties to each other and to the school.

Staff at Quest Academy Charter School will play an important role in the school's governance and administration in a number of ways.

The school leader, who will serve as their liaison to the Board of Trustees, will formally represent staff. Additionally, staff will be encouraged to attend the public meetings of the Board, to individually meet with and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees, as well as serve on informal committees. The Board of Trustees will prepare written briefings for the entire staff on a regular basis. The school leader will work closely with the Board's committees to enhance staff involvement to ensure that staff feels included in decisions and changes, which affect them and the services they provide. The school leader will request that staff provide feedback regarding communication and involvement to assist in improving ways to achieve this goal.

Together the school leader, teachers and parents will have much input in how the school is set up, what policies it establishes, and how to best meet the needs of the students.

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

QACS will partner with local public schools to share best practices in the following ways:

- a. Open house activities
 - b. Professional development for staff- shared expert guest presenters
 - c. Coordinated after-school programs
 - d. Parent/family night and weekend activities
 - e. Develop Book Clubs among students
 - f. Create Pen Pal Connections between students
 - g. Host dinner celebrations for students to meet and share friendship with families
 - h. Develop relationships between the students via the arts
- g. Demonstrate the ability to overcome start-up challenges to open a successful school through management and leadership techniques;**

The Board of Trustees will have final authority for policy and operational decisions of the school. The leader of Quest Academy Charter School will be the only school officer to report directly to the Board of Trustees. All other staff will report to the leader.

Board of Trustees: The Board's responsibilities include:

- Hiring, evaluating and dismissing the leader
- Ratifying and modifying the school's mission statement
- Participating in Board meetings and committees
- Establishing the school's code of ethics, adhering to its precepts and implementing the same upon employees of the school.
- Approving all management, operational, and service contracts
- Authorizing broad curricular guidelines or specific curricular programs, or delegating such authority.
- Approving assessments measures and performance standards
- Providing oversight of the academic program and performance of the school
- Approving admission policies and procedures for the school consistent with the terms of the charter agreement.
- Setting personnel policies, including: establishing qualification criteria for employees, creating dismissal procedures, approving codes of conduct, and authorizing and approving collective negotiations.
- Hearing complaints from individuals or groups, teachers or staff, alleging any violation of the provisions of the Charter School Act, the charter itself, or any ruling relating to the management or operation of the charter school.
- Ensuring that necessary accountability measures are in place, including the performance of the audits and annual reports, and that all necessary records and reports are transmitted to the Board of Regents.
- Approving the annual budget and providing guidance on fundraising.
- Involving parents and staff in the governance and administration of the school.

School Leader: Responsibilities:

- Providing leadership and direction to staff (including the consultants, administrative assistant, interns, teachers, teachers assistants, and paraprofessionals).
- Recruiting, evaluate, terminate staff with approval by Board of Trustees.
- Implementing and following the policies and procedures voted on by the Board of Trustees.
- Participating in planning and recommending changes in policy and procedures.
- Coordinating the collection of data required for the preparation of reports.
- Making formal reports to the Board of Trustees and Board of Regents.
- Administering scheduling, enrollment, and curriculum.
- Welcoming parents, children and guests to the school.
- Facilitating parent education and participation.
- Serving as a liaison between parents and teachers and the staff and the Board.
- Provide a safe environment for learning.
- Being familiar with and drawing on the resources of the community.
- Coordinating all administrative transactions, including the provisions of personnel services, record keeping, reporting, inventory, purchasing, etc.
- Ensuring proper budgeting, accounting, auditing, and financial planning.

The Board shall manage the activities, property and affairs of the Corporation and exercise its powers, subject to the Education Law of the State of New York, the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law of the State of New York, the QACS Charter and these Bylaws. The Board may delegate the management of the activities of the

school to others, so long as the affairs of the school are managed, and its powers are exercised, under the Board's ultimate jurisdiction.

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

Based on a report titled Improving Special Education in the Rochester City Schools, conducted by the Council of the Great City Schools in 2008-2009, they identify that there is lack of a comprehensive system of Response to Intervention, which has contributed to a special education incidence rate that is higher than that of most urban school districts. There are multiple incidents where the needs of at-risk students are not being served adequately. "With appropriate early services, referral to special education may be prevented for children showing early indicators of behavioral maladjustment". (Baker, J.A., Kamphaus, R.W., Horne, A.M., & Winsor, A.P., 2006).

QACS members and supporters have exceptional knowledge, strong rapport and valid experience with the Rochester City School District (RCSD). The founder and planning team members of QACS are extensively involved with the process, organization and goals of RCSD as we have practical, first hand experience with students, staff, parents, curriculum and policies. We are dedicated and loyal to the success of our students and their district. We believe this charter school fills a current gap for educating students. Many educators in the RCSD are struggling with the success of the at-risk population of students whom we aim to serve. They are confined within the laws and policies of public school systems and are searching for alternative ways to educate and help students be successful. We believe offering this alternative charter school will enhance the success of education for all students by focusing on individual needs and learning styles through a holistic constructivist approach. Superintendent Brizard states, "I'm a big supporter of charter schools." "I definitely think we need more." (City Newspaper, Aug. 11-17, 2010).

As we progress, our relationship with RCSD will become stronger as we all work together for the success of all students and families. QACS holistic constructivist approach based on the theory of Multiple Intelligences by Howard Gardner and the Cooperative Discipline model developed by Rudolph Dreikurs will improve accomplishments for students in both settings.

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

Our multiple intelligence, character based, family and community connected program will offer a personal approach and immerse children in exploration and creativity to provide a nurturing and challenging environment to develop the whole child. Students will be encouraged to achieve goals and objectives; to grow academically, emotionally, socially, physically and culturally, with the recognition of individual differences. The key features of the school will consist of:

School Choice: Students attend QACS by choice.

Student population : QACS will reflect the racial and socio-economic mix of the Rochester community

Small, K-6 community: QACS will open with in the city of Rochester with 90 students in grades K-1 in 2011-2012, adding one grade level annually through 2013-2014. The final student population will be 210.

Small class size: 15 students per class compared to 20-25 students per class in the Rochester Public Schools.

Student-Teacher Ratio: each classroom will have a small student-teacher ratio (one M.S. level teacher, one B.S. level teacher, and one teacher's assistant), which allows for more individualized attention and better quality education.

Longer daily schedule and school year: The school day will run from 8:00 (with optional before-care at 7:30) to 3:00 (with after school care to be determined). This will provide students with approximately one extra day of instruction per week. Additionally, we will run year-round allowing approximately one more week per year.

Strong Parental Involvement: Children do better in school when parents, family members and school staff work collaboratively.

Therapeutic Staff: A School Psychologist, School Social Worker and School Nurse will be part of every students education program.