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I. Mission, Key Design Elements, Enrollment, and Community

A. Mission Statement and Objectives

Mission: The mission of Rochester College and Career Charter School (RCCCS) is to provide a world-class education to Rochester students so that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in both college and family-sustaining careers.

Objectives: The RCCCS objectives are aligned to the mission and key design elements of the school, and the applicable New York State (NYS) and federal regulations: RCCCS students will perform at or above grade level in all core subject areas when they enter high school, so that they are on track and prepared to graduate with a Regents diploma; and RCCCS will ensure that students are exposed to and engaged with a rich variety of college and career opportunities that will lead to personal and professional satisfaction and future leadership of our region.

Education Law §2850(2) Objectives: RCCCS will materially further the following objectives, specified in Education Law Section 2502(2):

- **Improve student learning and achievement:** RCCCS will improve student learning and achievement by creating and implementing a rigorous, Common Core State Standards (CCSS)-aligned curriculum, ongoing formative and summative assessments, and a reflective, mastery-based approach to instruction, driven by real time data reporting and analysis. Specifically, the staff will use assessments to collectively determine evidence of student learning and mastery. (See below for more information.)
- **Increase learning opportunities for all students, with a special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at risk of academic failure.** Students will be exposed to both college and family sustaining career pathways (“family-sustaining career” is one in which compensation is enough to sustain a middle class existence for both the individual who holds the job and her or his immediate family), with the expectation that each student will be prepared for entrance and success in a rigorous high school program, and eventually college. All students not only need to be high school, college, and career ready but they also need to understand that we all end up involved in the world of work. An effective school-to-career approach makes the experience relevant, goal oriented, and, therefore, engaging. At RCCCS, we will aim for all students to be prepared to avail themselves of family-sustaining careers as and embrace our motto, “Every day is career day.”

Our college and career-focused, expanded learning opportunities will begin as soon as kindergarten. These “college and career touches,” as we refer to them, will evolve as our students progress throughout our program. A college and career touch is any experience through which students learn about college and career paths with the help of teachers and/or persons and resources from the community at large. To illustrate, in elementary and middle school, college and career touches will include read-alouds, field trips, guest speakers, and projects about family-sustaining career opportunities, which will be woven into our curriculum and driven by the CCSS.

As detailed in the Community to be Served and the Special Student Populations sections, we will ensure that we meet the needs of all students when striving toward these objectives, including those students with special needs, students who are ELL, and students who qualify for Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL), by providing differentiated services and ongoing student and family support. By holding a longer school day and school year, we will have adequate time to provide the instruction, resources, and preparation that all of our students need to enter high school on or above grade level, and eventually attain their college or career goals.

Reflected Throughout: The mission statement and the objectives of the school have guided all programmatic, fiscal, and operational decisions for the school. As such, they are woven throughout the full application and discussed in greater detail.

B. Key Design Elements

An Educational Program Aligned to Education Law §2850(2) and Evidence of Success: RCCCS will be modeled upon the successful work of the Charter School for Applied Technologies (CSAT) in Buffalo, New York (a K-12 charter school). When researching the CSAT model, the founding group was encouraged and excited about the success of CSAT and worked to adapt the model so that it would best meet the needs of the Rochester community. RCCCS will begin as an elementary and middle school (although we will only serve students in grades K-6 during the first charter term), as we believe students need a strong foundation of learning to be equipped for the rigors of high school. Our ultimate aim is to one day include a high school program as CSAT does that focuses on preparing students for college and careers in high growth, high demand industry sectors, and early college high school instruction; however, that component of the model will be addressed in subsequent renewals provided that the school is serving the students well and is well positioned for growth.

We have chosen to model our school after CSAT because it has utilized an innovative approach to educating city students, similar to those whom we will serve in the RCSD, and achieved ambitious student achievement outcomes. To illustrate, as indicated in a recent memorandum from New York State Education Department (NYSED) to the P-12 Education Committee¹ in which NYSED approved the CSAT Board of Trustee's request for expansion, the following points were noted:

CSAT is a school 'In Good Standing,' and has never been identified for improvement under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. From 2010-2013, the School outperformed the Buffalo City School District as the sending district on the aggregate 3-8 State English Language Arts and Mathematics Assessments. From 2010- 2012, the School has outperformed or nearly outperformed Buffalo, Kenmore, and the State in ELA 11 at the high school level and consistently outperformed the districts and the State averages in Integrated Algebra.

In addition to the points above, the following criteria, as required by the NYSED Charter School Office for a true replication, further increases our confidence that CSAT is worthy of emulation: CSAT has been in operation for over 14 years, and NYSED has approved their requests for expanded enrollment; CSAT has received two full five-year renewals from the NYSED Charter School Office and SUNY Board of Trustees (the authorizing bodies of NYS); CSAT provides a program of instruction for the same grade levels that RCCCS aims to serve; CSAT has exceeded district averages in the aggregate on the State ELA and Math assessments for all grades tested; CSAT has met or exceeded the four- and five-year State average graduation rate in the aggregate (specifically, 95% versus 76%, and 40% of students at CSAT received a Regents advanced diploma, versus 31% statewide); CSAT has met or exceeded the State cohort graduation rate of 80%; CSAT has achieved a State Accountability Designation of a school "In Good Standing" each year of its charter term; and CSAT has been in compliance with local, state, and federal laws, and its charter contract.

CSAT meets nearly all the requirements for a replication model. While CSAT elementary

students remain below the State averages in the aggregate for the State ELA and Math assessments for all grades tested, CSAT students are prepared to succeed in secondary school. Total cohort results in secondary level ELA after four years of instruction show that 97% of CSAT students are proficient (vs. 81% State average), and total cohort results in secondary level math after four years of instruction show that 99% of CSAT students are proficient (vs. 84% State average). Additionally, the 2014 graduation rate at CSAT was 95%, and since its first graduating class in 2008, CSAT has graduated 98% of its students (553 of 562 students). In fact, three of those senior classes have graduated 100% of its class. These outcomes are well above the Buffalo Public Schools graduation rate (53%), state (74%), and national (74%) averages.

By adopting the CSAT approach and modifying it to be unique to Rochester, the RCCCS educational program will materially further the following objectives, as specified in Education Law §2502(2): Improve student learning and achievement; and increase learning opportunities for all students, with a special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at risk of academic failure. To further these objectives, we have designed the following key elements, which will guide all programmatic and fiscal decisions of the school, and are directly aligned to our mission and objectives in order to ensure that all students meet the NYS academic achievement standards.

Key Design Elements: The key features that are core to the school's overall design include:

- 1. A Focus on Learning and Standards Mastery:** RCCCS will not rely on compliance with a specific way of delivering instruction (a focus on teaching) and/or using only a specific set of materials/programs in order to ensure progress. Instead, the school will rely on analyzing the outcomes (learning) to select a great variety of inputs (teaching). At the outset of each year, grade level teams will review the essential standards and adjust curriculum/make modifications in order to ensure that the needs of all students are met. Additionally, we will incorporate career and technology into the curriculum, by using both as a means to teach the content and grade level standards, as aligned to the NYS CCSS. After analyzing standards and making adjustments as necessary, teams will then agree on how students will demonstrate mastery for each standard and ensure a common understanding of what evidence will be required. From there, individual teachers will determine the best approach to instructional delivery, provided that all techniques, formative assessments, and methods are scrutinized once assessment data is available. In other words, the effective practices are not predetermined; rather, they become evident upon data analysis. Best practices will then be shared amongst grade level teams and school wide, as appropriate. In order to glean these trends in an expedient manner, the entire school will use eDoctrina® software, which was developed at CSAT and is now used at schools throughout the country. This real time data software system allows teaching teams to engage in deep analysis of achievement data on a daily basis. A "no zero policy" and mastery-based approach to learning ensures that students are provided several opportunities throughout the year to demonstrate mastery of standards, and teachers are expected to reteach the material until students have done so.
- 2. Professional Development (PD) in the Context of Teamwork:** The school will be comprised of highly effective grade level teams in grades K-6 and subject area teams in grades 7-8, who will meet daily and collaborate as professional learning teams. To promote teacher growth and student achievement, we believe that PD should be targeted on the most high leverage opportunities and areas of growth, as identified by student actions, teacher actions, and student achievement data. We will provide teachers with opportunities to learn, challenge, and grow from each other; teachers will receive frequent, relevant PD through

ongoing coaching, collaborative planning, and professional learning (as further described in the [PD](#) Section. In addition, our highest performing teachers will work with administrators to design and implement PD and support the induction and development of new teachers.

- 3. School to Career Focus:** We believe that every one of our students, regardless of his/her academic performance, socioeconomic standing, or personal goals, is headed for the “World of Work.” While RCCCS will be a K-8 program, the ultimate goal is for the school to serve students in grades K-12. To this end, we will build our K-8 programming in such a way to prepare and support students for a rigorous high school program. Some may enter the workplace after receiving a diploma from RCCCS (once it is offered), while others will do so after college. Either way, our students will need to have the skills and knowledge that will allow them to succeed during high school and beyond. And, just like CSAT, our students will embrace the motto that “Every day is career day.” We will aim to expose our K-8 students to as many college and career touches as possible during their foundational years, including read-alouds, field trips, guest speakers, and projects. These college and career touches will be woven into our curriculum, and used for several purposes, including, but not limited to: (1) increasing student knowledge and understanding around family sustaining career opportunities; (2) creating a foundation for students’ reflection on their work and what they hope to contribute to the community once they enter the “world of work;” (3) providing context, meaning, and value for the lessons and objectives that they are learning in school each day, to increase investment, understanding, and interest in school; and (4) helping motivate students in the short term towards achieving their long term goals. To achieve these objectives, we will ensure that the college and career touches are not merely one off experiences for students; moreover, we will weave them into our curriculum and use them as another tool to engage students, in a way that is aligned to the NYS CCSS and curriculum.

Mission Alignment: In order to achieve our mission, we have selected the key design elements described above, all of which are directly aligned to our mission. We will embrace a mastery-based approach to learning, which will be guided by ongoing data driven instruction, to ensure that students are mastering state standards and on track for graduation and beyond. As an organization, we will give teachers flexibility in their approach to instruction, while maintaining that their primary focus be on student mastery; allowing this level of flexibility will ensure teamwork around our shared, primary goal of increasing student outcomes. And, finally, our budget reflects a staffing model that will ensure RCCCS is able to implement the three key design elements described above. This is described fully in [Management and Staffing](#).

Core Beliefs and Values: The key design elements are indicative of the group’s core beliefs:

- 1. A Focus on Learning and Standards Mastery for All Students:** We believe that all students in Rochester deserve a high quality education that prepares them for success in high school, college, and career, and believe that if given multiple opportunities to master grade level standards, access to excellent teachers, and adequate social emotional support, all students will learn and achieve at high levels.
- 2. PD in the Context of Teamwork:** We believe that effective PD is critical to teacher performance and student growth. Therefore, PD will be targeted on the most high leverage opportunities and areas of growth, as identified by student actions, teacher actions, and, ultimately, student achievement data. We also will provide teachers with opportunities to learn, challenge, and grow from each other.
- 3. School to Career Focus:** Even though we will start as a K-8 school, we believe that

exposing children at a young age to college and career opportunities is essential to their investment in learning and our community. As discussed above, we recognize the need for alternative family sustaining pathways in the Rochester community and believe that we should help students identify the pathway of interest to them from an early age.

Enrollment Preference: RCCCS’s mission is to serve students in the city of Rochester. As outlined in the [Community to be Served](#) Section, there are very few high performing elementary, middle, or high schools in the RCSD, and so children who attend these schools are at risk of academic failure. We will provide an enrollment preference to students who reside in the RCSD and to students whose siblings already attend the school.

Serving All Students: The key design elements will serve the diverse needs of all students as described above.

C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

Projected Enrollment: RCCCS will begin year one with 190 students: 66 in kindergarten, 62 in first grade, and 62 in second grade, with approximately 20-22 students per class. We will add an additional 65 or 100 kindergarten students each year thereafter until we reach capacity at grade 6. Our projected enrollment is as follows:

Projected Enrollment Table Over the Charter Term						
Grades	Ages	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022
K	4-5	66	65	100	100	100
1st	5-6	62	64	75	100	100
2nd	6-7	62	60	65	75	100
3rd	7-8		60	60	65	75
4th	8-9			60	60	60
5th	9-10				60	60
6th	10-11					60
Totals		190	249	360	460	560

Application, Admissions, and Enrollment Process: The proposed RCCCS application will require only necessary information to admit new students and is not considered a pre-registration form. The application will reflect the guidelines set forth by the New York State Department of Education². Applications will be available on our website and will be distributed in hard copy to local community organizations, including (but not limited to) The Boys and Girls Club of Rochester, Head Start programs, and Hillside Children’s Center. Families or guardians of students interested in enrolling in the school must submit a completed application by April 1 each year. Applications, once completed, can be hand-delivered, mailed, or emailed. The school will provide email or postcard confirmation for all applications received by the April 1 deadline. Students who submit applications after the April 1 deadline will be added to the waitlist. The waitlist will expire annually at the lottery drawing for the next school year.

Public Lottery: If the number of applicants exceeds the number of open seats in the school, a random lottery will be held to select the students. The lottery will either be conducted by a third party or video-taped, in order to ensure a fair process for selection. Preference will be given to students residing in the RCSD and to students whose siblings are enrolled in the school. Students who are not selected from the lottery will be placed on a waitlist in the order in which their name is drawn from the lottery. For a more detailed description of the RCCCS admissions policies and procedures, see Attachment 1.

² See <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/documents/NYSCSUniformAppFormDirectionstoCSforUseNov2011.pdf>

Vacancies: In the event that vacancies become available during the school year, students on the waitlist will be invited to attend the school in the order that they appear on the waitlist. However, we will no longer invite students to fill vacancies after October 31st each year.

Rationale for Enrollment: The rationale for selecting our enrollment size is as follows: RCCCS plans to enroll elementary school students from the RCSD. Since many students in the RCSD enter kindergarten already behind their more affluent peers, we firmly believe that starting our school at the elementary level, providing a solid foundation, particularly targeting vocabulary development and literacy skills in the early years, will allow us to have the greatest impact on our students. Further, by opening in year one with only kindergarten, first, and second grade, we can invest our students and their families in our mission and school culture from day one. This way, a longer school day and school year will be a routine part of students' and families' school experience from the very beginning. Each class will include less than 25 students, which, when accounting for our Consultant Teachers (special education certified teachers) and Teacher Aides at the kindergarten level, will allow for a student-to-teacher ratio of at least 12:1. This individualized student attention will provide excellent opportunities for differentiated instruction ensuring that all students are provided several opportunities for reteach, intervention, and standards mastery.

Additionally, while we support our teachers' right to organize, we wanted to allow the school to be fully operational for two full years before providing the option to do so. Therefore, we kept our enrollment under 250 students during the first two years of operation. Finally, we anticipate an annual attrition rate of approximately 10%. By allotting 190 students in our founding year, and expanding our kindergarten class size to 100 (from 65) with four classes in year three of operation and to 75 students in first grade in year three, we have proactively accounted for any attrition that may occur. We will combine these enrollment strategies with the retention strategies outlined below, in order to ensure sufficient revenue to support a strong academic team and program that will be essential to the success of the school.

Growth Strategy: The growth strategy for the school is to add one grade level each year, beginning in our second year of operation. We plan to begin with grades kindergarten through two, and to add a new grade level each year, until we reach grade eight. We have chosen to only add one grade per year in order to maintain the quality of our program and a strong school culture as we grow.

Meeting or Exceeding Enrollment Targets: In order to meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets established by the Board of Regents, we are conducting ongoing recruitment and outreach at organizations that serve students who qualify for FRPL, students with disabilities, and ELL students, including (but not limited to) the Monroe County Social Services, the Carlson Metrocenter YMCA, and Hillside Children's Center, provider of care for youth and families with a wide range of emotional, behavioral, or life-circumstance challenges. We also plan to place ads in or on local urban and Spanish language media outlets in high visibility areas. We will continue to distribute flyers in areas with the highest poverty and at refugee outreach organizations. Finally, we will reach out to families directly by sending direct mailings to Rochester City residents and going door-to-door to share information about and an application for RCCCS.

As further described below, 566 people interested, supportive, and/or intent on enrolling their children in the proposed school signed our petition. At least 411 live in the target community; 310 represent parents who reside in the target community, and these parents have at least 427 school-age children. Given the current level of interest in RCCCS, and the ongoing and extensive

recruitment that we plan to conduct once authorized, we are confident that we will be able to meet our projected enrollment goals of 190 students in the first year, and 560 at capacity.

Recruitment and Retention Plan: RCCCS plans to build on the success that CSAT has experienced regarding recruiting and retaining a broad cross-section of students. To illustrate, Buffalo CSAT is now the largest charter school in NYS and serves approximately 1,940 students from 19 different school districts in Western New York. We will adopt a similar approach, but have modified it to include strategies that have proven to be successful with local Rochester charter schools.

Recruitment Plan: Our recruitment plan will include the strategies listed below and will begin (or continue, as applicable) immediately upon charter approval. The strategies will be ongoing in order to sustain continuous enrollment throughout our charter term.

- *Ongoing Advertising:* We will continue to communicate information about our program in accessible formats and languages with local media outlets, including radio stations, news organizations, and local parent websites. And, providing we can afford to do so, we will post advertisements on billboards and television channels. We will send direct mailings to parents and families who reside within a five mile radius of our proposed school location in the RCSD, and we will continue to use social media as a tool for communicating information about our program to a broad cross-section of the community.
- *Ongoing Community Outreach:* We will continue to partner with local religious groups, community centers, and organizations, as well as state and local officials to notify them of our program, the students that we are planning to serve, and means for obtaining further information. We will continue to hold town hall meetings at libraries and public locations throughout the community in order to notify as many community members as possible about our work. We have created an email address and website where community members and parents can direct any inquiries about the program as well.
- *Parent Engagement:* We will continue to solicit parent feedback and input on our program, by creating a parent association, sending out surveys, and creating a parent recruitment committee, so that we can continuously meet the needs of the community and improve, but also so that we can actively engage with parents and notify them of all that RCCCS has to offer. We will organize events at locations that have high levels of interaction with school-aged parents, such as early childhood centers, churches, and libraries, in order to make sure we are reaching as many parents as possible.
- *Open Houses and School Social Events:* Once our school is operational, we will invite prospective parents to tour the school and join our staff and current families for social events. This approach will allow prospective families to gain familiarity with the school model, ask current families about their experiences, and engage with the staff.

Retention Plan: The crux of our retention plan will be effective parent engagement and communication, as we know that effective communication with parents will be essential to assessing their satisfaction with our school, addressing any concerns, and keeping them abreast of student progress. Specifically, we will use the following strategies to increase parent engagement: regular communication regarding student progress; parent association membership and meetings; social events, such as breakfasts, spaghetti dinners, potlucks, and ice cream socials; choosing an accessible location for the school, and assisting with transportation concerns where necessary; and parent satisfaction surveys, inquiring about “intent to return,” and reasons behind a parent’s decision to do so (both positive and negative). We will use the following strategies to ensure effective, personalized, and strategic parent communication:

- Parent orientation at the outset of the year that explains our handbook, the School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS), student and family expectations, and introduces families to the staff and each other;
- Contracts with parents at the outset of each year, explaining what families are expected to assist students with in order to yield the greatest outcomes for performance (i.e. homework help, reading with child for 20 minutes, etc.);
- Ongoing communication from our principal, notifying parents about upcoming important events and school expectations; and
- Regular calls home to the parent, informing them of student progress (both positive and areas of growth).

Recruiting & Retaining Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and FRP: In addition to the general strategies listed above, we will apply the following strategies to recruit and retain students with disabilities, ELL, and students who are eligible applicants for the FRPL program.

Recruitment Plan: In order to recruit students with disabilities, we will continue to reach out to organizations and agencies serving children with special needs and their families to let them know we will have staff and resources available to meet the needs of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans (504 Plans). For example, one such agency is Hillside Children’s Center – a provider of care for youth and families with a wide range of emotional, behavioral, or life-circumstance challenges. Hillside offers mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice, special education, safety net, and developmental disabilities services to children and families throughout Central and Western New York. We have collaborated with Hillside to host a community meeting at which we offered materials about our program and addressed any questions or concerns that parents had about RCCCS.

To reach families with limited English proficiency, we will translate promotional materials into Nepali, Somali, and Arabic – the most commonly spoken languages by immigrant and refugee families in the area. We will advertise in non-English media outlets, and reach out to organizations and agencies serving ELL families. We have, and will continue to, connect with local refugee organizations, including Catholic Family Center’s Refuge, Immigration, and Language Services Department, the Somali Center, and RCSD’s Rochester International School (RIA), to recruit refugee and immigrant families to the school and ensure linguistic diversity.

Finally, in order to ensure that we reach students who qualify for the FRPL program or whose families may be less informed about available school options, we will conduct direct outreach efforts, including going to door-to-door in high poverty neighborhoods throughout Rochester to notify parents about our program, and sending out direct mailings with information about RCCCS with a copy of the application to families residing in the RCSD. We will also continue to partner with early childhood centers that serve students in high poverty neighborhoods.

Retention Plan: In order to retain special education students, RCCCS will employ a Special Education Coordinator, who will primarily be responsible for ensuring that appropriate services are provided to students with IEPs, 504 Plans, or any student who falls under the protection of IDEA, so that they succeed in school. RCCCS will also employ a certified special education teacher for every grade level team in grades K-5, as well as a certified special education teacher who will be assigned to each of the grade level/subject area teams in grades 6-8. Special education programming and related services support (e.g., speech-language) will be provided per a student’s IEP and then based on identified need, impacting academic performance and growth. Regular screening, assessment, and progress monitoring is planned to benchmark performance

and track growth. Individualized learning/intervention plans will be developed for all students who would benefit from additional support to accelerate academic growth. We will provide ongoing communication to all parents, but particularly to parents of students with IEPs, to ensure that they are aware of both progress and concerns related and unrelated to the student's disability or area of need.

In order to retain ELL students, RCCCS will engage an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) teacher who will work with staff to provide appropriate instruction to students, as well as work one-on-one or in small groups to help students acquire English. Communications with families will be in the home language to the extent reasonably possible. We will have translators available for parent conferences and school events, so that ELL students and families can be full participants in the RCCCS experience.

In order to retain students who qualify for the FRPL program, or whose families may be less informed about available school options, we will provide wraparound services to address student needs, including a full time nurse and a social worker. We will also hire a Family Support Coordinator to strengthen its students and families through school, community, and parent collaboration in order to promote student success and well-being. For a full description of these supports, please refer to the [Special Student Populations and Related Services](#) and [Family and Community Involvement](#) sections.

Ensuring Adequate Enrollment and Allowing for Full Accessibility: In order to continuously meet or exceed the enrollment targets set forth by the Board of Regents throughout our charter term and retain students from our target community, we will continue to conduct outreach and advertise throughout the Rochester community as described above. Our proposed school is located in a central area, accessible to parents and families by public transportation. Furthermore, we will ensure that the school facility is accessible to all enrolled students.

D. Community to be Served

Community to be Served: RCCCS will serve the Rochester community. Rochester is home to nearly 210,000 people according to the 2014 population estimates from the United States Census Bureau³. Approximately 43.7% of the population is White, 41.7% is Black or African American, 3.1% is Asian, 16.4% is Hispanic or Latino, and 0.5% is American Indian or Alaska Native. While 80% of residents age 25 years or older have a high school degree or higher, only 25% of residents age 25 years or older have a bachelor's degree or higher. The median household income is \$30,784 and 33.8% of residents live in poverty.

Student Population to be Served; and Identification of Student Needs and How the School Will Address Those Needs: RCCCS will recruit and serve students from the RCSD, which has the highest poverty rate among the NYS Big 5 districts. Twenty-two percent of schools in the RCSD have a poverty rate of 90% or higher. The current student population in the RCSD⁴ is as follows: 60.1% African American/Black, 25.6% Hispanic, 10.2% White, and 4.1% Asian/Native American/East Indian/Other; 84% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch; 16.5% with special needs, and 10% with limited English proficiency; and 87 different languages are spoken. The RCSD has a graduation rate of 43%, and of 54 schools, only nine are in good standing, 29 are focus schools, and 16 are priority schools. Furthermore, the 2014-2015 State tests⁵ indicate that overall proficiency for students in grades 3-8, or students who scored at levels

³ <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/3663000>

⁴ <http://www.rcsdk12.org/domain/8>

⁵ <http://data.nysed.gov/assessment38.php?subject=ELA&year=2015&instid=800000050065>

three and four, is 5% in ELA and 7% in mathematics.

As detailed in the [Special Student Populations and Related Services](#) and [Assessment System](#) sections, RCCCS will conduct ongoing assessments to identify students' academic and social needs. RCCCS will address those needs through academic intervention services, ELL services, and social emotional services and supports. We will also continue to use what information we know about the District population to plan strategically to support student and family needs. More specifically, RCCCS will provide rigorous academic instruction as well as emphasize teamwork and strategic teaching strategies, while engaging students and families around family sustaining career opportunities. By keeping students in school for a longer day (8 hours) and a longer school year (199 days), we will ensure that students and teachers have adequate time to reach our mission and objectives.

Rationale for Selecting Rochester and Ability to Serve the Rochester Community: We chose to open our school in the City of Rochester because we care tremendously about the city, and we see a great need, since there are very limited options for students to attend high-performing public schools in the RCSD. As Rochester community members, business owners, educators, and parents, we value education and believe it is the vehicle toward ensuring Rochester's success in the future. We are motivated, committed, and passionate about implementing a school to career program, even for our youngest students. We are inspired by the work of CSAT and aim to harness the best practices that they have established, so that we can create a rich and engaging school to career focused program. Rochester is known for its deep history in technology and advanced manufacturing, and it is a focus that we know will spark student interest.

Our skill sets, both individual and collectively, will allow us to govern RCCCS successfully and serve the students of the RCSD well. To illustrate, all members of the applicant group reside in the greater Rochester community and are invested members of the community. Collectively, we bring a variety of skills from the education, business, and nonprofit sectors, including, but not limited to: education, special education, technology and innovative teaching strategies, human resources, strategic partnerships, philanthropy, finance, accounting, nonprofit management, small business management, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and consulting.

Value of the School: If approved, RCCCS will add tremendous value to the Rochester community by working backwards from the premise that all of our students must be prepared to thrive in college or a family sustaining career of their choosing, and the first step towards attaining that goal is advanced performance in literacy and mathematics for our youngest learners.

Rationale for how RCCCS will Enhance/Expand Educational Options: If approved, RCCCS will be the first K-8 college and career focused school located within RCSD school limits. We believe that providing this option for students will greatly enhance and expand the educational options for students in this community

Evidence of Family & Community Support: Robust and growing family and community support for RCCCS has been cultivated through extensive community outreach targeted to parents of pre-K through 6th grade students (see [Public Outreach](#)) and community stakeholders within the City of Rochester: In just 4 days in March 2016, **23 parents** of potential students completed "Intent To Enroll forms." To date, **566 people** interested, supportive, and/or intent on enrolling their children in RCCCS signed our petition. At least **411** live in the target community; **310** represent parents who reside in the target community, and these parents have at least **427** school-age children. On RCCCS's parent survey, 93% of respondents feel Rochester needs

additional high-quality schools and the majority support the development of new charter schools in the RCSD; 94% indicated that a college and career focused charter school would benefit students in more than one domain; 83% indicated, specifically, students would benefit academically and in their future aspirations. Several parents who attended Public Focus Groups and Feedback Sessions expressed interest in the school's key design elements, and their support for a new charter school that would prepare students for college and 21st century jobs. Participants hope the school will open for 2017 in RCSD. We are continuing our outreach and recruitment efforts, urged on by the support garnered so far, which indicates a strong demand and interest for a college and career focused charter school in the RCSD.

E. Public Outreach

The RCCCS applicant group has conducted community outreach in order to understand the needs of the community, gauge support for the school proposal, and elicit feedback to enhance school design. Specifically, the RCCCS team has held information sessions, attended community events, forged partnerships with community organizations, and met with various community and business leaders. A detailed list of the outreach efforts is included in Table 2 with documentation provided in Attachment 2b, and several of the outreach efforts were conducted in collaboration with other community-based organizations.

Means Employed to Ensure Community is Informed About the Proposed Charter School: To ensure that the Rochester community was fully informed about RCCCS, our proposed location, student population, grades and educational program, beginning in May 2015 the team completed the following: went into the community on approximately 60 different occasions to share information with parents and community members; publicly listed all info sessions and focus groups; distributed letters and informational overviews to local news outlets, City and State officials, community organizations, local colleges and universities, faith based organizations, and existing charter schools in the RCSD; developed a website; and managed a dynamic Facebook page.

Evidence of Public Meetings: The RCCCS outreach team held a total of 26 information sessions. The meetings began on June 8, 2015, and continued through March 25, 2016. A summary of these meetings and some evidence is found in Table 2 and Attachment 2b.

Means Employed to Solicit Community Input: In our outreach letters, emails, on our websites, via social media, and at all outreach events, we encouraged parents to provide written, phone, email, website, in-person, and survey feedback on the charter school program and the needs of students in the RCSD. We have aligned with 15+ community organizations to offer 15+ public and targeted parent information sessions and actively solicit and document input from parents, students, and organizational leaders. RCCCS publicized (flyers, posters, online, email) and conducted focus groups with parents in the Rochester community, many of whom have children that attend the RCSD.

Response to Comments: The RCCCS community outreach team diligently recorded parent feedback and action taken in Table 2 and Attachment 2b in order to incorporate it into our program design and to inform future student recruitment and outreach efforts. Parent feedback led group to: create a College and Career Pathways Coordinator position to structure/oversee hands-on learning and college-bound/career-readiness culture; delineate purposeful extracurricular offerings; plan for IEP supports; open in safe, accessible location; highlight that all students are welcome to apply to the school; and offer applications in English, Spanish, and other languages, as feasible. Additionally, given the feedback around smaller class sizes, attention, and emotional and behavioral support, we have ensured Teacher Aides are available

for our younger students, that at least one Consultant Teacher, certified in Special Education, is staffed on each grade level, and that we have adequate staff to provide social emotional support, including behavior intervention, within the building.

Ongoing Approach to Engage with the Community and Solicit Public Input: We will continue to engage and build our school community through public input in the same manners evidenced in Table 2: in-person outreach, public info sessions, media releases, emails to our growing base, letters to community leaders, dynamic websites, surveys, thoughtful social media presence, board member networks, community events, targeted information sessions. We will continue to keep our outreach partners within the community – the Rochester Museum and Science Center, the Boys and Girls Club of Rochester, YMCA, Universal Pre-K providers, Head Start, Charles Settlement House, Southwest Area Neighborhood Association, for example – updated about our progress and work together to engage students once the school is opened.

How Students in the Community Will Be Informed About the Charter School: Because we propose to open K-2nd Grade and grow to K-6, we will reach elementary and future elementary students in the RCSD through in-person outreach at Pre-Kindergarten, Early Pre-Kindergarten, neighborhood afterschool programs, city recreation centers, libraries, and city-wide children’s events (concerts, fairs, sports tournaments) in the communities where our target students reside. We have created partnerships with leaders of these programs to share information, set up information tables, and hold enrollment events to keep students informed about the school. We will have a “For Students” page on our website and share student-focused information through email and social media.

How Students in the Community Will Be Given an Equal Opportunity to Attend the Charter School: In many instances, we have been among the first schools to speak directly with parents about future school options for their child and we are resolute that all students be given an equal opportunity to attend this Charter School. Because we will continue to engage students from diverse neighborhoods and with high concentrations of families in poverty, our applications will be available in multiple languages and to parents in-person, online, and at partner organizations throughout the city (returnable via online, email, fax, mail, or in-person). Every year, we will work with RCSD to procure addresses of each incoming K, 1st, and 2nd grade student to provide information and an application to every prospective student. We will work in collaboration with other schools/organizations to set up parent information and enrollment events at Universal Pre-K programs throughout the city in advance of each school year.

F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact

Schools in the Area: The RCSD currently offers 27 elementary (pre K-6 or K-6) schools, 14 K-8 or K-12 schools, and 25 secondary schools⁶. The RCSD currently serves approximately 30,000 students, with approximately 20,000 students enrolled in grades K-8.

Programmatic Impact: RCCCS does not anticipate having a negative programmatic impact on other K-8 schools in the Rochester area. Our review of the current school options indicates that the added students at RCCCS will not dramatically impact enrollment at either traditional public or other public charter schools in the Rochester city and surrounding areas. RCCCS would provide tremendous value in the community, since no other elementary school has a school to career focus in the Rochester area. Even at full capacity, we will have approximately 560 students, or approximately 2.8% of the RCSD population. Considering the large number of elementary students in the Rochester area, the unique and innovative school design, community

⁶ www.rcsdk12.org/domain8

outreach efforts, and the waitlists at other Rochester-area elementary charter schools, RCCCS does not anticipate challenges with enrollment (capacity) or retention of students.

Fiscal Impact: The expected fiscal impact of RCCCS on the RCSD budget is less than 0.9 of 1%. The adopted FY 2014-15 RCSD budget is \$788,259,462, premised on a projected enrollment of 28,119. In Year 1, RCCCS expects to enroll 190 students (0.7% of current RCSD enrollment) and receive per pupil revenue of \$2,344,600 (0.3% of current RCSD budget). In Year 5, RCCCS expects to enroll 560 students (2.0% of current RCSD enrollment) and receive per pupil revenue of approximately \$6,910,400 (0.9% of current RCSD budget). The fiscal impact on other public and non-public schools in the area cannot be defensibly calculated, but it is reasonably expected to be equally immaterial.

II. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

A. Curriculum and Instruction

Plan and Framework for Teaching and Learning & Furthering the School's Mission and Key Design Elements: In order to meet our mission and ensure that our students are prepared and equipped for a rigorous high school education, our school will provide a framework for teaching and learning that is academically challenging and standards-based. Our core academic offerings will be in alignment with New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) and will be inclusive of the CCSS and the New York State Testing Program (NYSTP). Additionally, our curriculum will ensure that our school's mission and key design elements are implemented in such a way that we meet the mission of preparing and equipping students for future success. Please see below for a detailed discussion of the curriculum, how teachers will know what to teach and when to teach it, the curricular resources to be used, and when the curriculum will be reviewed. Following is a brief summary of each of the core academic areas, as well as the college and career focus:

English Language Arts: RCCCS firmly believes that literacy is the foundation for success in all academic and career areas; as a result, a balanced literacy approach with significant time devoted to ELA, particularly in the beginning years, will be provided for all students. More specifically, students at RCCCS will receive approximately 150 minutes of ELA instruction each day in grades K-5 and approximately 90 minutes in grades 6-8. The ELA program will ensure reading fluency, comprehension of fiction and nonfiction texts, and strong writing ability in a variety of genres. Students will be provided with opportunities to practice their fluency through guided group and individual reading of a variety of texts and genres using Reading Workshop (discussed below). Additionally, our ELA curriculum will ensure that our students build stamina and skill so that they are able to read challenging, grade-appropriate complex literature and informational text, as emphasized in the CCSS. Students will also learn to discuss text- and evidence-based questions; they will acquire the appropriate academic vocabulary to confidently and succinctly explain their thoughts. Further, students will receive explicit instruction in grammatical foundations, steps of the writing process, writing essays in a variety of genres, and all elements of the research and writing process through Writer's Workshop (discussed below). Our ELA curriculum will ensure that students are able to research and write while employing detailed descriptions, providing ample evidence from the text, research, and group-related information.

Mathematics: Students will receive at least 90 minutes of math instruction each day. Our math curriculum will ensure that students develop strong foundational numeracy skills, which students will build upon to master more advanced mathematics. As articulated in the CCSS, students will receive mathematical instruction on fewer topics with greater depth; students will

be provided with strategies for learning facts, working computation problems, and solving problems. Further, RCCCS will emphasize application and problem solving so that our students leave 8th grade with the ability to understand and analyze proportional relationships; apply and extend previous understandings of operations with fractions to add, subtract, multiply, and divide rational numbers; solve real-world and mathematical problems; and solve linear equations.

Science: RCCCS recognizes that New York State is currently in the process of finalizing New York State P-12 science learning standards. We expect that these standards will be finalized prior to the opening of RCCCS in the fall of 2017, and, as a result, will utilize these standards as the basis for our science program and instruction. At RCCCS, students will explore physical sciences, life sciences, and earth and space sciences. Students will receive 60 minutes of science instruction every other day. Additionally, teachers will alternate units of study (discussed below) based in science and social studies as they plan their ELA instruction in order to provide even greater exposure to these content areas.

Social Studies: Students will receive 60 minutes of social studies instruction every other day. The RCCCS social studies program will ensure that students acquire the “knowledge, intellectual skills, civic understandings, and dispositions towards democratic values that are necessary to function effectively in American society,” as explained in the *Social Studies Overview*⁷ provided by the New York State Education Department. RCCCS will integrate the eight critical dimensions of teaching and learning social studies as recommended by this same report: intellectual skills, multidisciplinary approaches, depth and breadth, unity and diversity, multiculturalism and multiple perspectives, patterns to organize data, multiple learning environments and resources, and student-centered teaching, learning, and assessment.

College and Career Focus: We believe that the focus on college and career cannot be understated; as a result, we will emphasize both college and career pathways for our students, while reiterating the importance of obtaining a *family-sustaining career*. A “family-sustaining career” is one in which compensation is sufficient to sustain a middle class existence for both the individual who holds the job and her/his immediate family. We recognize that every student’s path to a family sustaining career will look different, and it will be our goal to ensure that they are set up for success in whatever path they decide – whether they head straight to college or pursue a career after graduation. In order to ensure the college and career focus, we will weave it into the curriculum, where possible. We will employ a College and Career Pathway Coordinator, who will be a part of the Leadership Team and will work with the other members of the Leadership Team and Board to identify key college and career pathways both locally and nationally at the outset of the first school year and revise as needed in subsequent years based upon trends. The College and Career Pathway Coordinator will be responsible for working with teachers to help integrate college and career pathways into the curriculum, form partnerships with local businesses, and ensure college and career touches happen regularly for students. For each month of the school year, we will have a school-wide focus on a particular career. Teachers will be expected to incorporate learning experiences around this career path into their unit and lesson plans for the month, where aligned, and we will also include school-wide experiences to further student learning across grade levels.

Regardless of each student’s choice, the college and career focus will serve as the central underpinning of our school. We will use college and career focus to invest students in their learning and understand the role of education in this path. At the elementary and middle school

⁷ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/socst/pub/ssovervi.pdf>

levels, we will take a foundational approach by incorporating the college and career focus into the culture of the school. We will discuss college with our students beginning in kindergarten. All students will understand the concept of college; we will take field trips to local colleges and universities; pendants and college paraphernalia will be posted throughout the school; and we will refer to each class by the year they can expect to graduate from a four-year college (i.e. Class of 2038). We will provide the same emphasis on career: as early as kindergarten, students will understand what it means to “go to work;” they will understand that they have various career choices, and we will emphasize the career paths most in demand in our community. Similar to CSAT, visual displays of various careers will be hung around the school, with a picture of an individual working in that particular field. We will use daily morning meeting time to reinforce these messages throughout the school year, and teachers will also incorporate this focus into student learning, as discussed further below.

Curriculum, Resources, and Instructional Strategies

Curriculum Creation, including what to teach and when; and Review Process: In order to create the curriculum and ensure that teachers know what to teach and when, the Principal will review the CCSS, the third grade state tests, and the curriculum plans already developed by CSAT. S/he will use this information to create RCCCS curriculum maps for kindergarten, first, and second grade to ensure that power standards and important skills are prioritized and reviewed throughout the year. We will divide the curriculum maps by grade and subject into units of study. As the school adds a grade level each year, this process will be repeated for all grade level and subject areas with the support of the Instructional Coach and the Assistant Principal (once hired in year three). Once the school reaches full capacity, the grade level teams, or Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), described more fully below, will use student achievement data from the year before, and the existing curriculum maps, and any changes to the state standards or assessments, to revise and improve the curriculum map for the upcoming school year. Thus, the curriculum review process will be formally conducted on an annual basis by PLCs (with approval from school leadership). Informal ongoing revisions, however, will be made as PLCs glean information from assessments (with the approval of school leadership).

RCCCS will divide its teaching teams by grade level for grades K-5 and by a combination of grade/subject area in grades 6-8. These teams will be referred to as PLCs. Each PLC will include a Consultant Teacher, or a floating teacher who is certified in special education and works with the PLC to support the individual needs of the students in the PLC’s particular grade level or content area. Each PLC will collaborate interdependently in support of all students in their grade and/or students learning their subject specialty. The PLCs will be afforded common planning time at the outset of the year and each day, which will be used for the ongoing development of the curriculum. To illustrate, since the school calendar will be broken down into four quarters, the PLCs will work one quarter ahead of schedule to ensure that plans are completed well in advance. For instance, the quarter one planning should be completed by the end of the pre-service PD days. From there, the PLCs will begin work on the quarter two planning, which will be reviewed and finalized by the end of quarter one. The process will repeat for the next two quarters.

During this time, PLCs will create units that are aligned to the curriculum maps for the year. The units will contain the essential questions for guiding instruction and learning throughout the course of the year, and concepts, skills, and vocabulary that must be taught in each unit, as aligned to the CCSS. PLCs will use the concepts, skills, and vocabulary for each unit to create unit objectives, which will be phrased in student-friendly “I can” statements. Each PLC will then

create the unit assessments so that they share a common understanding and agreement on what standards mastery will look like for all students in that grade level and subject area. Individual classroom teachers, with additional input from the grade level Consultant Teacher, as needed, will then use the “I can” statements to create daily lesson objectives, and, as discussed in more detail below, will use their knowledge of their students, and their professional judgment, as they determine the best instructional approaches for leading students to mastery of that objective.

In addition to unit assessments, the Leadership Team will create benchmark assessments aligned to the curriculum maps for each grade level and subject area that will be administered at the beginning, middle, and end of each year. These assessments will be created using eDoctrina®, which has a database of NWEA questions, past state test questions, and questions from the *Core Knowledge Sequence* and EngageNY resources. The benchmark assessments will be used to measure standards mastery but also to inform progress, growth, and areas for reteach and review throughout the year. This continued process will ensure tight horizontal alignment of the curriculum. The process also guarantees that students will be exposed to the same rigorous and viable curriculum, since it will continue until the school reaches full capacity. From there, the curriculum maps will be available to PLCs each year to modify and improve, as needed. Furthermore, RCCCS’s PD days for returning teachers at the outset of the year will focus on vertical alignment of the curriculum. Multi-grade teams in grades K-8 and subject area teams in grade 6-8 will meet and follow protocols to review the scaffolding nature of the curriculum and make adjustments in expectations, pacing, and rigor. The results of this process will ensure alignment across grade level and content areas.

Theoretical Base for Curriculum Development: As discussed above, our approach to instruction will be completely standards-based. Once PLCs have identified the objectives and shared assessments for each unit, teachers will use the most appropriate and effective instructional resources to support their implementation of the curriculum and their daily lesson planning. And, as previously discussed, teachers will choose from a variety of resources that the school will have on hand (as outlined below) to create their lessons, and the manner in which they teach it, so long as students are mastering the standards on the shared, pre-determined assessments. This approach, as outlined in *Understanding by Design*, by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, casts assessment as the central role of teaching and learning, by arguing that assessment should not be an afterthought, but rather the central point of instruction⁸. Wiggins and McTighe argue that we will not know if students have learned anything after a lesson unless we assess them with questions that are aligned to the lesson. The “UbD Framework,” embodies our first key design element, as it calls for a “focus on ensuring learning happens, not just teaching,” as measured by standards mastery, and as stated above. Furthermore, teachers are more apt to lead students towards achieving the standards, to an adequate level of rigor, if they know what mastery looks like from the outset, and they have broken down each standard at the beginning of the planning process.

Curricular Resources: We will adopt highly regarded, Common Core aligned, curricular programs and resources to support instruction around the CCSS. Teacher will have the flexibility to use these resources and others, as appropriate, to help students access and master the standards taught in the core subject areas. Each subject area is discussed in more detail below:

ELA Curricular Resources: Our early elementary school teachers will have access to The *Core Knowledge Sequence* to guide their ELA instruction. The *Core Knowledge Sequence* is a

⁸ <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/interview-grant-wiggins-power-backwards-design-ben-johnson>

detailed outline of specific content and skills to be taught across all subject areas, including language arts, history, geography, mathematics, science, and fine arts. As such, there will be an interdisciplinary component to our ELA instruction, which will further content knowledge of other core subject areas of science and social studies. The *Core Knowledge* program maintains that reading, listening, writing, and speaking with understanding require a shared body of common knowledge, and that to be proficient speakers and writers, students must not only have the skills to read and write, they must understand the context in which they are doing so, in order to reach their intended audience. The intention of this program, therefore, is to create a body of well-educated, literate Americans, who can communicate effectively.

The *Core Knowledge Language Arts* (CKLA) program for grades K-2 is composed of two strands: a Skills Strand and Listening and Learning Strand. This way, students can master the sounds and letters for fluent decoding and encoding during one part of the day and then have additional time to master the skills essential for strong comprehension, such as knowledge, language, and vocabulary. Teachers will focus on the “Listening and Learning” strand of the CKLA program during read aloud. During guided reading, teachers will rely on the “Skills” portion of the Core Knowledge sequence to teach students the necessary techniques for developing fluency and comprehension skills to progress to the next reading level. Shared and independent reading will allow students time to practice these strategies with their peers and individually. While an emphasis will be placed on different strands during each part of balanced literacy, the two strands will be taught in tandem to ensure that students are receiving comprehensive literacy instruction that provides a strong foundation for both decoding and comprehension.

Our teachers in grades 3-8 will be encouraged to utilize the modules and resources available on the EngageNY website. EngageNY offers valuable instructional resources, PD materials, sample questions, video resources, and a toolkit for parents and families in implementing the CCSS standards. The modules are directly aligned to the CCSS, and include all the components of a well-designed unit plan, including guiding questions and big ideas, aligned assessments and performance tasks, a list of the standards and objectives, central texts, and a weekly breakdown of learning targets. The grade 3-8 modules focus on reading, writing, listening, and speaking in response to high quality texts. Each module is intended to last a quarter of the school year, with additional modules added for teacher choice. The modules sequence and scaffold the content, as aligned to the CCSS for ELA and Literacy. Each module includes an end-of-module performance task, which we will align with our benchmark assessments and track using eDoctrina®. Modules also include daily lesson plans, guiding questions, recommended texts, scaffolding strategies, examples of proficient student work, and other classroom resources.⁹

Teachers of all grade levels will have access to leveled readers, aligned with the Fountas and Pinnell reading levels, either through books donated or bought by the school, or through programs like Reading A-Z, to plan for and use as resources during guided, shared, and independent reading. The Fountas and Pinnell benchmark assessments will inform student’s reading level and teacher planning for the skills required to help that student develop fluency and comprehension skills required to move to the next level, as discussed further in the Assessment Plan section.

Mathematics: Teachers in grades K-8 will utilize the EngageNY modules to guide mathematics instruction and planning. The result is an integrated math program consistent with

⁹ <https://www.engageny.org/english-language-arts>

an instructional approach that is conceptual, uses manipulatives, and emphasizes skill introduction and development through real-life problem application. These programs are highly consistent with New York State's Learning Standards for Mathematics, Science, and Technology, which similarly emphasizes inquiry, investigation, conceptual application, and math integration.

The math modules include fewer topics, but require more in-depth engagement with the material, by integrating “the CCSS, rigorous classroom reasoning, extended classroom time devoted to practice and reflection through extensive problem sets, and high expectations for mastery¹⁰.” As a result, the amount of time spent on each module will vary, as the mathematical content is the focus for the module. For instance, a concept may be introduced briefly at the start of the year and then continue to develop through exposure to additional strategies and problem solving over the course of the year. The modules contain the additional materials necessary to build on this topic and provide student practice as they progress.

Science and Social Studies: To plan for science and social studies, teachers in grades K-2 will draw upon the cross-curricular concepts in the *Core Knowledge Sequence*, to ensure alignment and continuous content exploration across subject areas. In grades 3-8, teachers will use the EngageNY modules to plan for Social Studies, while also working to incorporate grade level content from both areas into ELA instruction. To plan for Science, teachers will use the Elementary Science Program (ESP) of the Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES. The Elementary Science Program provides a “hands on interdisciplinary curriculum that converts the elementary classroom into a science laboratory.¹¹” The curriculum is aligned to the CCSS for mathematics and Science and Technology. The ESP program emphasizes student-centered investigation, and is “hands-on, inquiry based, and includes interdisciplinary connections to math and language arts standards.¹²” ESP provides “mini units” that integrate science into ELA and math instruction, in a manner that’s aligned with the CCSS. The program aims for students to “DO science” by creating opportunities for students to share common experiences and provide an opportunity to read, talk, listen, and reflect orally and in writing about what they are learning. When the program is integrated with math, mathematical concepts such as data tables, graphs, and interpreting mathematical concepts in writing are all explored more fully. The program provides units that are directly linked to the NYS CCSS.

College and Career Focus: Teachers will be expected to incorporate learning experiences around the career path into their unit and lesson plans for the month, where aligned, and we will also include school wide experiences to further student learning across grade levels. The College and Career Pathway Coordinator will provide direct support and feedback to teachers on the incorporation of college and career pathways into unit and lesson plans. Teachers will incorporate, on a regular basis, college and career pathways into their instruction. For example, if the school wide career focus for September is “Veterinarian,” a 3rd grade teacher might plan to incorporate the following experiences: Multiple read-alouds about that profession, as aligned to grade level and content areas; Written or oral language performance tasks about that profession (i.e., an essay, letter, or presentation, for example), as aligned to the curricular focus; A field trip to a local animal hospital; A class visit with a veterinarian, where students are expected to reflect, plan, and write their questions, based on what they studied in class, including what a

¹⁰ <https://www.engageny.org/mathematics>

¹¹ <http://www.espsciencetime.org/files/1379634/complete%20guide%20to%20esp%20units.pdf>

¹² <http://www.espsciencetime.org/files/1379634/complete%20guide%20to%20esp%20units.pdf>

veterinarian does at work each day, the experiences that led the individual to pursue vet school, what college and vet school he/she attended, and what advice he/she would have for an aspiring veterinarian; a documentary about the profession; and independent reading (articles, leveled readers, or journals) that incorporates information about the work in that field.

This approach will ensure the curriculum helps students understand the relevance of what they are being asked to learn in school each day and encourages learning within the context of practical applications. And, further, the embrace of the CCSS ensures the rigor necessary for the development of the skills and habits of mind required to succeed in college and in a meaningful career. Importantly, this approach also conveys the message to students and parents that we believe that students are capable of difficult work and we respect ambitious goals they may set for themselves.

Additional Subject Areas: In addition to the aforementioned subject areas, we will provide technology classes to students. We believe that explicit instruction in technology is essential for student success in the core subject areas, as well as for college and career readiness. Students will learn foundational technology skills in the early years, with more advanced and explicit instruction in the middle school years, in an effort to ensure students are prepared for the “world of work” and college. Students will also participate in art, music, Spanish, and physical education classes. Exposure to these subject areas in elementary and middle school will lead to excellence in these areas in high school, ultimately assisting our students in attaining their college and career aspirations.

Instructional Strategies: While RCCCS will not employ pre-determined universal instructional practice expectations, we will expect teachers to implement proven structures, such as Reading and Writing Workshop, differentiated instruction, and small group instruction each day. Teachers will determine the specific strategies to use within those proven structures, and the effectiveness will be determined based upon the assessment. The Reading Workshop will be structured as follows:

- **Mini Lesson:** Teacher addresses the group in a Read Aloud, Shared, or Guided Reading piece to introduce and model an effective reading strategy (as aligned to CCSS).
- **Independent Practice (Individual, Small Group, or Centers Based):** Students then work independently, in pairs, or at a listening or computer center to engage with the task.
- **Debrief/Whole Group Share:** Students will come together as a class to discuss what they learned during this process.

The Writer’s Workshop will take a similar approach, in that the teacher will model a writing strategy, as guided by the steps of the writing process (collect, develop, draft, revise, edit, publish), and lead students through a mini-lesson on this topic. Students will engage in similar differentiated independent practice and/or conferencing with the teacher. And, finally, students will come together to share their process with the group. Teachers will also utilize differentiated instruction and small group instruction as a means to ensure the needs of each student is met:

- **Differentiation Instruction:** Teachers will provide differentiated instruction in content, process, products, and learning environment in order to reach all students. This will be done in all subject areas.
- **Small Group Instruction:** Teacher will utilize small group instruction as one structure to provide targeted and specific instruction to a small group of students. The small group instruction structure will allow students to receive differentiated and targeted instruction. Both teachers and Consultant Teachers will employ this structure.

Beyond these proven structures, RCCCS will not employ pre-determined universal

instructional practice expectations. Similar to CSAT, we will rely on analyzing the outcomes (learning) to select a great variety of inputs (teaching). More specifically, after teams select the essential learning and agree on a common evidence of learning, individual teachers are allowed flexibility in the delivery of instruction provided that all techniques and methods are scrutinized once the assessment data is available. Having implemented this approach for several years now, our colleagues at CSAT have discovered several effective practices as a result of their ongoing data analysis, which they have come close to considering school-wide practices. Examples of these practices include do now activities, communicating teaching goals to students using “I can” statements, and using exit tickets to assess student learning. We will, of course, rely on these strategies that have proven to be effective in increasing student achievement, particularly in our founding years. Finally, to glean our best instructional practices, PLCs will take time to identify and “unwrap” essential learning goals as dictated by the CCSS and isolate the crucial concepts and skills. From there, common formative assessments will be created and used specifically to measure student needs and the impact of teaching. To accomplish this goal, the school will rely heavily on the shared daily planning periods and the real time reports generated by eDoctrina®. Specifically, all PLCs will meet each day to focus discussions and make decisions specifically from their common formative assessments. The purpose of classroom assessments is to assist teachers in knowing and understanding the impact of instructional decisions on student achievement, and to learn from each other’s successes and areas of growth.

In addition, teachers will coach and challenge each other to ensure that any assessment of student learning is also serving as an assessment of the quality and degree of teaching strategies during their PLC and Professional Learning Hours (PLHs, See PD section). This process will increase consistency in content taught as well as learning. Teachers will see for themselves where students fall prior to instruction, during, and after. Grade level (elementary) and discipline-specific (secondary) teams will meet around data daily to evaluate student progress, different teaching strategies, and set goals for themselves as well as their students. Once best practices within proven structures have been gleaned from student achievement data, teachers will be expected to share those best practices with their PLC and with the school as a whole. The Leadership Team will assist in sharing these practices, and will create opportunities (during PLH) for PLCs to share effective strategies for instruction across grade level and content teams.

Addressing the Needs of Special Populations: We believe that the curriculum, which is standards-based and aligned to the CCSS, will directly address the needs of special populations, as the focus will be on ensuring each student, regardless of where s/he begins his/her academic career is able to master the content. The curriculum will be rigorous and challenging and will be adapted/modified as necessary to meet the needs of special populations. Further, our insistence that students will master all grade level standards and corresponding “no zero” policy requires teachers to provide for flexible, small group instruction, and elicits multiple opportunities for student learning and mastery. That is, if a student fails to master a skill, the intervention plan provides for re-teaching and re-assessment. Once a student attains mastery of the standard, the student receives the final (mastery) score only, rather than an average of the attempts. This approach to learning ensures that all students are able to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to master the standards and curriculum. Finally, teachers are able to use various resources and strategies to implement the curriculum; this will allow teachers to adapt and modify instruction in order to ensure all students are learning.

Instructional Strategies and Practices Used for Successful Implementation: Please see above for information about the instructional strategies for successful implementation of the

curriculum, as well as how the curriculum and strategies will be particularly useful for special student populations. Please also reference section B. Special Student Populations and Related Services below.

Benchmark 1 of the Charter School Performance: Since RCCCS’s curriculum is standards-based and requires mastery before moving onto a new standard, school leaders and teachers at RCCCS will have a solid understanding of their students’ academic knowledge and skills. Utilizing the eDoctrina® software, teachers will administer and analyze assessment results on a regular basis, which will allow the school to understand whether adjustments need to be made to meet the accountability, similar schools comparison, trending toward proficiency, and proficiency indicators of Benchmark 1. RCCCS’s laser-like focus on data will trigger the school to make immediate changes (whether that be adjusting the curricular resources, attempting new teaching strategies, etc.), so that the school is able to meet Benchmark 1 of the Charter School Performance. For example, if a group of students is struggling, the teacher will identify needs based upon assessment results, provide additional instruction through re-teaching opportunities and small group instruction, and then will progress monitor to ensure students are mastering the skills and content. This process will allow the school to meet Benchmark 1.

B. Special Student Populations and Related Services

Meaningful Access to the General Education Curriculum: RCCCS will educate all students with special needs in the least restrictive environment. The lead teacher and the Consultant Teacher (who is certified in special education) will create a fluid classroom setting, where students with special needs have meaningful access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum. In this manner, all students will benefit from differentiation, which feels seamless and authentic; essentially, the goal is for all students to benefit from the individualized, differentiated small group system and supports in the room, without any sense of who has an IEP and who does not. All students will follow the general education curriculum, while students with special needs and ELLs, and any struggling student, will receive specialized supports needed to succeed.

To accomplish this goal, teachers will use small group instruction and, where possible, encourage students to work together during shared and independent practice so that they can learn together and from one another. Teachers will utilize culturally responsive teaching practices to ensure that students feel welcome and engaged in the curriculum, regardless of their home language or culture. Our Consultant Teachers will also co-plan each lesson, with a particular focus on including modifications or accommodations for the students in the room. The Consultant Teachers will further “unpack,” or break down, the objective in order to scaffold it for any struggling students, who need more support in getting to the final goal. Even though the Consultant Teacher will provide this support, all teachers will be trained in these strategies at the outset of the year, during pre-service training. The Leadership Team will use the eDoctrina® reporting to stay abreast of ELL and special education trends, progress, and areas of growth. They will use the data trends to inform and provide ongoing training and support during PLCs and PLHs throughout the year.

Additionally, RCCCS will ensure all after school and other extra-curricular programming will be accessible to all students, including special student populations. The Special Education Coordinator will work with school leadership and teachers to ensure that special student populations have access to all after school and extra-curricular programming. The Special Education Coordinator will have a thorough understanding of each special student populations’ needs and will ensure any and all adjustments/modifications are made to allow for all students to

participate in all school activities.

Classroom Environment and Instructional Approach: RCCCS’s “focus on learning” and mastery approach to instruction will provide for a classroom environment that is responsive to the needs of special education populations. The timely use of data to inform instruction will allow teams to clearly identify the gaps in skills. In that way, intervention and targeted supports through differentiated instruction and small group instruction can be provided to all students with a clear focus on the specific skill to be mastered and in a consistent, timely manner. More specifically, teachers will develop lesson plans to include small group differentiated instruction on skills that any students have not mastered, as indicated by the data, and work with the Consultant Teacher to ensure that all students have an opportunity to master that skill, even if they were not able to do so the first time the skill was taught. This group of students may include ELLs or students with an IEP and will take place during the independent work time of math block or during small group instruction for guided reading. The Consultant Teacher will also work with students to re-teach, do guided practice, utilize manipulatives, or provide 1-on-1 instruction to ensure each student’s needs is met.

Identify, Assess, and Serve Special Student Populations

Students with Special Needs: In order to identify and assess students with special needs (for those who do not come to the school with an existing IEP), RCCCS will implement a three-tiered Response to Intervention (RTI) model. The Special Education Coordinator will oversee the RTI process, ensure that it is aligned with the assessment plan, and closely monitor students using common formative assessments. The initial data from these assessments will be used to identify in-class supports that may be helpful for the student. These will be Tier 1 supports, and will be provided in the classroom setting. Teachers will work with the Consultant Teacher at their grade level to ensure that lesson plans are targeted and differentiated sufficiently to reach all learners in the general education setting. From here, if we find that the intervention strategies in Tier 1 are not helping students make significant progress, we will provide Tier 2 supports, which will include supplemental small group instruction either in the general education or during the Intervention block, or both. The general education teacher will continue to work with the Consultant Teacher to create differentiated lesson plans during this time to ensure a variety of teaching strategies, such as graphic organizers, group or partner work, and so forth. And, finally, we will move to Tier 3 supports, if we find that the student is still not making adequate progress. Tier 3 supports will be provided in very small group settings, with about 1-2 students, and will be designed to include more intensive strategies and instruction than the Tier 2 supports. Students may receive “push in” support from the AIS Teacher and/or Consultant Teacher and/or individual or small group support during the Intervention block. Students in need of Tier 3 support will participate in 30-60 minutes of intervention at a minimum of four days per week. If assessment results indicate that students have made necessary growth, they will exit Tier 3 interventions.

All teachers and staff involved with the student and providing intervention services will record all results of the provided services. These records will be shared with the Special Education Coordinator on an ongoing basis. If there remains a suspicion of a disability, the student may be referred in writing to the CSE Chair of his or her district of residence by RCCCS or by the parent, in writing/phone call/email/in person, in order to obtain an individual evaluation and determination of eligibility for special education programs and services. Referrals will be made in accordance with the NYS Part 200 Regulations. Referrals will include reason(s) for referral, teacher reports, test results, intervention services and reporting of delivered services, and

parental contact regarding the disability concern. A copy of the referral with the Procedural Safeguards Notice will be sent to the parent and, when appropriate, to the student, in accordance to 34CFR §300.504. Parents will be notified of any concerns at the outset of the RTI process, and we will document the provided interventions at each step to continuously keep them informed. All records of interventions will be placed in the student file.

In order to serve special student populations in compliance with all applicable federal laws and regulations, RCCCS will employ a Consultant Teacher, a certified special education teacher, for each grade level in grades K-5; this individual will provide direct instruction to students with special needs and consultation to the general education teachers on the grade level team, as needed. Similarly, a certified special education teacher will be assigned to each of the grade level/subject area teams in grades 6-8. Most of the special education support will be provided in an inclusive, push-in setting. In some instances, short-term, pull-out groupings will be used. In these cases, non-identified students may join the small groupings if they can benefit from the instruction. Additionally, we will provide our own language and speech therapists but will contract with the districts of residence for physical and occupational therapy services. We will also provide resource room accommodations for students with special needs, as needed. Please see below for program evaluation.

English Language Learners: In order to identify English Language Learners, RCCCS will follow the NYS requirements for the identification and support of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) of non-native ELL. The initial identification process will begin with the completion of a Home Language Questionnaire by all incoming families as part of the enrollment process. For families who report that only English is used as home language, the process will end here, as the child is now categorized as a native English speaker. If the Questionnaire reveals that a language other than English is used at home, an interview will be conducted with the parents in their native language and in English. To accomplish this task, the RCCCS will identify staff members who are bilingual and/or contract with individuals who provide interpretation services through the districts. If the family declares that, although a language other than English is used in the home, the student only understands and speaks English, this student will be classified as not LEP and will join the general education program. If, on the other hand, the family reports that the child uses a language other than English, an initial assessment process will be used in which English proficiency is determined by the use of the NYSITELL. If the student scores at the proficient level, he or she will be classified as not LEP. If the student scores at the beginning, intermediate, or advanced level, the student will be eligible for ELL services. ELL or LEP identified students will participate in annual administration of the NYS English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). When the student scores at the proficient level, he or she will no longer be considered an LEP student.

In order to assess ELL students, the proficiency of the identified ELL students will be measured on an annual basis to determine their continuation in the program. RCCCS will evaluate each student's performance in the academic content area to determine progress in core subjects. RCCCS will use the NYSESLAT to assess all ELL students as required by NYSED. The scores on the NYSESLAT indicate proficiency level, on a beginning, intermediate, or advanced level. These scores will determine a student's participation in or exit from the program. If an ELL student fails to show appropriate progress in these academic areas, modifications to the instructional programming will be made. Students scoring high enough based on the NYSESLAT will be deemed no longer in need of services. No student will exit the program unless his or her reading, writing and English comprehension is sufficient to participate in a meaningful way in the

school's program.

In order to serve ELL students, RCCCS will employ certified ESL teachers to provide instruction. Given the multiple representations of native languages, support in first language will not be feasible. We will determine the number of ELL teachers that we need based on the projected enrollment of ELL students, as commensurate with the RCSD. We have budgeted one ELL teacher beginning in year one. Whenever possible, ESL services will be provided in an inclusive setting, though pull-out groupings of students with similar needs will be used as well, as we will generally strive to group students by English proficiency level. ELL students will participate in ELA; ELA will also have an ESL teacher if there is an ELL student in the room. ELL students will have stand-alone English language instruction in addition to ELA. The ELL teacher will also provide the pull-out services during the general intervention block at the end of the day, as needed. RCCCS believes that a structured English immersion program, where students receive explicit instruction around English language development, will be the most beneficial way to serve our ELL population. The variety of languages involved and the low incidence within the same age group will prevent the effective implementation of other ELL models. We will provide teachers of core subject areas with PD around research-based best practices to ensure they are properly prepared to support ELL students within their classroom. For instance, teachers will be expected to use clear, explicit instruction; increase opportunities for vocabulary development; frequently and consistently model and encourage the use of comprehension strategies and provide students opportunities for practice; increase opportunities for structured academic talk; and ensure that independent reading opportunities are structured, purposeful, and aligned with the students' current reading abilities. RCCCS will ensure that students classified as ELLs are not excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities based on an inability to speak and understand the language of instruction.

RCCCS will provide all necessary staff and specialized curriculum materials to encourage ELL students to achieve proficiency. Staff will be "highly qualified" pursuant to the provisions of the NCLB Act, and any instructors hired or contracted will be certified in accordance with NYS regulations. Facilities and curricular materials will not be inferior to those used for the general student population. We will provide or make referrals to appropriate support services needed to assist every student to achieve and maintain satisfactory academic performance, including, but not limited to, individual or group counseling, home visits, and parental guidance. The school will address students' needs if they are struggling with the structured immersion program and determine what additional services are required for satisfactory achievement.

Screening Process: RCCCS will comply with the federal Child Find requirements, which require schools to have a process in place for identifying, locating, and evaluating students with disabilities. A team of Consultant Teachers will screen all students who are enrolling in RCCCS for the first time to identify any indication that the child may need a specialized or Intensive Education Program, or referral to the CSE of the student's district of residence. The Special Education Coordinator will work with the grade level Consultant Teacher to schedule a separate time and location for screening new students. The Consultant Teacher for each grade level will be responsible for conducting the screening and referring the student, as needed. Similarly, we will use a Response to Intervention model (described above) to identify enrolled students with possible learning disabilities that should be referred to the CSE of the student's district of residence for an evaluation. The Principal, by way of the Special Education Coordinator, will coordinate all meetings with the appropriate CSEs. The Principal will ensure that the appropriate special education teacher(s) and at least one regular education teacher meet with the appropriate CSE on

a regularly basis to ensure compliance and to keep the CSEs informed of students' progress in accomplishing the goals of their IEPs. RCCCS will ensure appropriate staff participation at CSE meetings, and to do so, the Principal will make necessary provisions (such as hiring substitutes) to allow the teachers of a child to attend CSE meetings in the child's district of residence.

Supports, Programs, Resources, and Personnel for Special Education Students: At the beginning of each school year, the Principal and the Special Education Coordinator will coordinate meetings with all teachers and review the IEP requirements of all students in their classes. The entire document will be reviewed to cover student's needs, learning style, supplemental aids, test modifications, etc. Teachers will only be provided access to IEPs for the students they will be teaching. During the school year, additional meetings will be held to share the IEP with teachers of any newly identified or newly enrolled identified students.

In order to assist special education students both inside and outside of the general education classroom, each grade level team at RCCCS will have a certified special education teacher, who will provide direct instruction to students with special needs and consultation to the general education teachers on the grade level team, as needed. Similarly, a certified special education teacher will be assigned to each of the grade level/subject area teams in grades 6-8. Most of the special education support will be provided in an inclusive, push-in setting. In some instances, short-term, pull-out groupings will be used. In these cases, non-identified students may join the small groupings if they can benefit from the instruction. As noted above, we will provide our own language and speech therapists and will provide resource room accommodations for students with special needs, as needed.

Common grade-level formative assessments will be administered to students with disabilities in accordance with their IEPs. We will provide adaptations and/or accommodations for instruction, formative, and summative assessment administration, as dictated by each student's IEP. We will follow the same protocols during state testing, as permitted by the state, and will implement alternate assessments for students, where applicable.

Processes/Procedures to Provide Specialized Instruction Consistent with the IEP: Upon being made aware by self-disclosure on the part of the parent at the moment of enrollment, or by the receipt of transfer documentation, that a student has an IEP, the Principal will send a letter to the district notifying them of said enrollment. If the IEP is active and valid, services will commence immediately. If the IEP has expired, comparable services will be provided, and the CSE will be notified immediately, with a request for emergency review. Should the IEP call for substantially restricted services with no possibility of inclusion, the Principal will file a request for a CSE meeting for review. The resulting IEP will be implemented as developed. From there, the Principal will coordinate all special education activities and work closely with the Special Education Coordinator and the CSE to ensure that all IEPs are met. Please see above for more information about how the school will provide specialized instruction to students in need of special education services.

Process by Which the Proposed School Will Work With the Districts of Residence: As noted above, the Principal will work with the district of residence to ensure students receive services consistent with their IEPs. Additionally, the Principal and the Special Education Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring the collection, maintenance, and reporting of all data regarding students with disabilities. The reports will be shared with the school district of residence and the State Education Department, as required. RCCCS will use this information to conduct an analysis to ensure that our students are receiving comparable services to other students in the districts of residence. Similarly, the Principal and the Special Education

Coordinator will work closely with Director of Finance and Operations, who will closely monitor services that the district is providing and any corresponding costs.

IEP Record Keeping: RCCCS will follow all applicable requirements of the IDEA and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and will implement regulations relating to the confidentiality of student records (34 CFR §300.560-577 and 34 CFR Part 99). All staff will be trained in such requirements, and the Special Education Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of personally identifiable information within student records. In accordance with FERPA, parents will be allowed to inspect and review all of their student’s educational records.

Before disclosure of any personally identifiable student information to someone other than the parent or eligible student, RCCCS will obtain a signed and dated written consent of the parent or eligible student. Personally identifiable information will be released without the prior consent of the parent or eligible student to school officials and teachers only if RCCCS determines that such persons have “legitimate educational interests.” All files required by law to be kept confidential are kept under lock, in a place and manner that restricts access to only those individuals who are authorized to view these records. More specifically, special education records shall be kept under a locked file cabinet under the supervision of the Principal or the Special Education Coordinator in his or her secure office.

A sign-out and dissemination log will be kept with student records to track access. Student information with personally identifiable information will not be shared with outside parties without prior parent/guardian written permission. RCCCS will allow district or county social service workers to access these files when a legitimate educational interest is specified. Parents/guardians will have access to their child’s records to inspect accuracy and content without undue delay and within 10 days of the parent/guardian request.

Coordination and Communication: General education teachers and Consultant Teachers will be afforded time to coordinate and communicate on a regular basis. As noted above, Consultant Teachers (who are special education certified) will be expected to co-plan each lesson with teachers in an effort to include modifications or accommodations for students in the room. Consultant teachers will participate in the two grade level team meetings/PLCs provided each day. This will ensure frequent and fluid coordination and communication between those serving special student populations.

Ancillary/Support Services: As described in our “Family and Community Engagement” section, the school will use its health clinics, health educators, counselors, social workers, and behavior intervention specialists to ensure the best socio-emotional services possible. The school will also have a Family Support Center, staffed by a licensed social worker/counselor, which will help RCCCS families access socio-emotional services provided by a variety of qualified agencies in our community.

Program Evaluation: As described in the Assessment Systems section, RCCCS will systematically analyze data, which will allow the school to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs employed to support special student populations. More specifically, the use of eDoctrina® will allow the school to disaggregate data by a variety of measures. As such, we will be able to monitor all special student populations to ensure that we are meeting all goals set forth for these particular groups, including retention targets and AYP. We will use this information to evaluate our progress, make any programmatic changes in areas where gaps are defined, and ensure that the school is meeting the needs of these students.

C. Achievement Goals

Incoming Student Population: As noted in Section I.D., RCCCS will recruit and serve students from the RCSD, which has the highest poverty rate among the NYS Big 5 districts. Twenty-two percent of schools in the RCSD have a poverty rate of 90% or higher. The current student population in the RCSD¹³ is as follows: 60.1% African American/Black, 25.6% Hispanic, 10.2% White, and 4.1% Asian/Native American/East Indian/Other; 84% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch; 16.5% with special needs, and 10% with limited English proficiency; and 87 different languages are spoken. RCCCS anticipates serving a similar student population, one that mirrors the community.

Academic Data: RCCCS intends to serve students in grades K-8; as such, academic data for the most recent academic year for RCSD for students in grades 3-8 is provided. Of 54 schools, only nine are in good standing, 29 are focus schools, and 16 are priority schools. Furthermore, the 2014-2015 State tests¹⁴ indicate that overall proficiency for students in grades 3-8, or students who scored at levels three and four, is 5% in ELA and 7% in mathematics.

Grade	2014-15	
	ELA	Math
3	7%	13%
4	5%	9%
5	4%	7%
6	4%	7%
7	3%	4%
8	4%	1%
3-8	5%	7%

Goals for Student Achievement and Overall Educational Program: The mission of RCCCS is to provide a world-class education to Rochester students so that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in both college and family-sustaining careers. Therefore, our goals for student achievement and the overall educational program are as follows. In order to determine whether the school is meeting these goals, RCCCS will utilize the indicators and measures set forth in Benchmark 1 of the Performance Framework¹⁵. In achieving these goals, RCCCS will be well on its way to achieving our mission. RCCCS recognizes that the indicators and measures from the Performance Framework are based upon the state assessments (which are only administered once per year); as such, we will monitor progress towards these goals using our own robust internal assessment system, which is further described below.

- **Goal 1:** RCCCS students in all grade levels will demonstrate proficiency in ELA.
- **Goal 2:** RCCCS students in all grade levels will demonstrate proficiency in Mathematics.
- **Goal 3:** RCCCS students in all grade levels will demonstrate proficiency in Science.
- **Goal 4:** RCCCS will achieve an Accountability Status of “In Good Standing” each year.
- **Goal 5:** RCCCS students will participate in at least 4 college and career touches each year.

Methods and Timeline: Given that the indicators and measures set forth in Benchmark 1 of the Performance Framework are based upon the NYSTP and these are measured on an annual basis, it will be essential to have benchmark assessments in place to evaluate whether students are progressing toward meeting the student achievement goals. As indicated in [Section D. Assessment System](#), RCCCS will implement a robust student assessment system, which will allow the board and school leaders to regularly monitor student performance and determine whether the school is on track to meet the goals in the Performance Framework. More specifically, RCCCS leadership and teachers will utilize eDoctrina® to both assess students and track student performance/evaluate student progress towards the objectives. eDoctrina® will

¹³ <http://www.rcsdk12.org/domain/8>

¹⁴ <http://data.nysed.gov/assessment38.php?subject=ELA&year=2015&instid=800000050065>

¹⁵ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/SectionIIIPerformanceFramework.html>

allow RCCCS leadership and teachers to run reports at the individual student, class summary, item analysis, class comparison, and student standards (discussed in more detail below), which will then enable the school to determine whether student performance is on track to meet the goals, indicators, and measures. On a weekly basis, the Leadership Team will review these reports to determine school wide trends and areas for staff PD. On a monthly basis, the school leader will report this information to the board, focusing on whether the school is progressing toward meeting the student achievement goals set forth in the Performance Framework.

Best Method of Evaluation: As noted above, RCCCS will generate benchmark assessments for all grade levels at the outset of the year, which we will use to align the grade level curriculum maps in each subject area (described more fully in the [Curriculum and Instruction](#) section). These benchmark assessments will be administered at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year to track student growth and ensure that students are on track to master grade level standards, and that our instruction is aligned to the State exams and CCSS. Since our curriculum and instruction will be driven from these benchmark assessments (and the benchmark assessments will be based on CCSS and the NYSTP), we will have a solid understanding of student progress, including deficits and strengths. School leaders and teachers will have intimate knowledge of where each student, class, grade level, and the school overall stands; as such, we believe this approach is the best method of evaluation.

Communicating Goal-Specific Data: In order to keep all stakeholders, including teachers, support staff, students, parents, and the community abreast of the school's progress toward achieving its goals, school leadership will regularly communicate assessment data through the following mechanisms:

- **Monthly board meetings:** As noted above, school leadership will report progress towards achieving the school's goals during each board meeting. Board meetings are open to the public. This will allow school leadership to regularly communicate data with the community.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** RCCCS will hold quarterly parent-teacher conferences, during which time the school will distribute report cards to parents. Further, school leadership will use this as an opportunity to provide progress reports on the school's academic achievements.
- **PLCs/PLHs:** School leadership will utilize time, as appropriate, to discuss assessment data and progress towards goals during PLCs or PLHs. This will be done at least monthly.

Monitoring Progress: Please see above for how RCCCS intends to monitor progress toward meeting the achievement goals and the Charter School Office Performance Framework. RCCCS does not intend to adjust its goals; instead, RCCCS will modify its instructional approaches, curricular resources, student supports, etc. should student progress not be sufficient.

D. Assessment System

Assessment System and Mission, Objectives, and Key Design Elements Alignment: RCCCS will implement a robust assessment system that will allow the school to assess student performance on a regular basis. As noted previously, the Leadership Team will create three common benchmark assessments that are aligned to the curriculum maps for each grade level; they will be administered at the beginning, middle, and end of each year. These assessments will be created using eDoctrina®, which has a database of NWEA questions, past state test questions, and questions from the *Core Knowledge Sequence* and EngageNY resources. The benchmark assessments will be used to measure standards mastery but also to inform progress, growth, and areas for reteach and review throughout the year. In addition, each PLC will create unit assessments using questions from *Core Knowledge Sequence* (for ELA and social students),

EngageNY resources (for ELA, math, and social studies), and the Elementary Science Program (for science). Further, RCCCS will administer Fountas & Pinnell’s benchmark assessments in grades K-5, Core Knowledge unit assessments in K-2, teacher created/ESP science assessments in 3-8, and informal, formative assessments. Finally, the school will administer all assessments as required by the NYSTP (please see below for more information about each assessment). By implementing these assessments, we will have multiple and frequent data points about student progress.

This approach to assessments is directly tied to our mission, objectives, and key design elements. Since our mission is to prepare students for college and career, we need to provide our students with a strong foundation in elementary and middle school so that they thrive in the high school of their choice. Without being able to identify and measure student progress towards their grade level standards and objectives, we will not be able to equip our students with that foundation. We will require teachers to provide multiple opportunities to master grade level standards, and we will expect our teachers to reteach and reassess the content until all students have done so. Similarly, we will have a “no zero” policy, as this diminishes student investment, and indicates that a teacher has not provided sufficient opportunities for the student to engage with and demonstrate their knowledge of the standards. eDoctrina® is essential to our success in fulfilling that obligation to our students.

Determining Progress toward Achieving Goals: Once assessments are developed and administered, the data will be tracked using eDoctrina® as well. The school will be able to use this data to generate detailed data reports, with a multitude of ways for displaying student outcomes at the group and individual level. Examples of these reports¹⁶ are listed below:

Report Title	Insight Provided
Individual Student	These reports are designed to be given back to students when they complete an assessment. Each displays student progress on the assessed learning standards.
Class Summary	These provide teachers with a summary of class (or grade level) performance. Customizable color codes allow for quick identification of students in need of extra assistance. Also included is a table that provides the data necessary for educators to make more measurable and accurate goals for themselves.
Item Analysis	This report breaks down student performance by question and reveals information about what learning standards need to be stressed (and, possibly, re-taught) and question quality.
Class Comparison	This report compares different classes/sections to each other and can be run to show results by assessment question or learning standards.
Student Standards	This report allows users to see which skills individual students are mastering and/or struggling with. With a click, results can be reordered to highlight those youths whose results fall below a specific benchmark and may be in need of intervention. Customizing dates allows a range of insight, from short-term data for immediate differentiation, to long-term trends in progress.

These reports, coupled with teacher observation, will serve as the heart of how we evaluate student progress towards our goals. Teachers will use these reports daily when they meet with their PLCs to plan and determine interventions. The Leadership Team will review these reports weekly to determine school wide trends and areas for staff PD.

Reliable and Valid Assessments: RCCCS will utilize the following reliable and viable assessments for screening, diagnostic, and proficiency information. The initial assessment will serve as screening and diagnostic purposes. The following assessments will provide data to allow us to measure student progress and benchmark student growth. Further details about each assessment are included in the table below.

¹⁶ <http://www.org/assessments>

Assessment, Grades, & Dates (Timetable)	Purpose/Rationale	Ensuring Reliability and Validity	Who Administers	How Results are Collected, Analyzed, & Used by Staff
Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, K-5, Quarterly	Assess student's reading ability, including fluency, accuracy, and comprehension.	Curriculum coordinators will observe administration to promote quality control amongst teachers; results will be compared to other reading data to ensure reliability.	All teachers	Teachers will grade students and enter results in tracking tool; data is used to track student reading level growth throughout the year and inform instruction.
Kindergarten Screening, Grade K, Fall	Assess fine motor, gross motor, basic number and literacy concepts, vocabulary, and hearing.	Kindergarten teachers will receive training on proper administration and evaluation of this assessment during August PD; the school leader and the curriculum coordinator will observe implementation to make sure that teachers are normed.	All kindergarten teachers	Teachers will score assessments and use to inform instruction and any necessary intervention with kindergarten students.
NYSITELL, K-8, Fall and Spring	Identify ELL students	The test will be administered in accordance with all state mandated requirements.	Teachers who have received training in NYSITELL administration	Results are submitted to NYSED; used internally to reflect on curriculum, alignment, and areas of growth.
Common Formative Assessments, Ongoing	Evaluate student progress towards standards mastery, evaluate different teaching strategies, and improve instructional approach.	Grade level teams will collaborate to create common formative assessments aligned to the standards, pulling from a bank of researched based (NWEA) questions, Core Knowledge, and EngageNY end of unit module assessment questions.	All teachers	Teachers will collect and organize assessment data, relative to student goals and generate reports by standard, subject, grade level, school and district. These assessment will be used to inform how well aligned our teaching and learning is to the NYS CCLS and exams.
eDoctrina® Common Benchmark Assessments, K-6 and 7-8, Beginning, Middle, and End Of Year	Evaluate student progress towards standards mastery, evaluate different teaching strategies, and improve instructional approach.	Grade level teams will collaborate to create eDoctrina® common benchmark assessments aligned to the standards, pulling from a bank of researched based (NWEA) questions, Core Knowledge, and EngageNY end of unit module assessment questions.	All teachers	Teachers will collect and organize assessment data, relative to student goals and generate reports by standard, subject, grade level, school and district. These assessment will be used to inform how well aligned our teaching and learning is to the NYS CCSS and exams.
Informal Fountas and Pinnell Testing, K-5, Ongoing (At least monthly)	To assess students' reading fluency, growth, and comprehension and make sure they are progressing towards their reading level targets.	School leader and curriculum coordinators will select a student to read with at random to ensure that his or her stated reading level is accurate. If the principal or curriculum coordinator notices a discrepancy, he or she will observe the teacher during a re-administration of the assessment to make sure the teacher is administering properly.	All teachers	Teachers grade the assessments and enter them into a student growth tracker; data is submitted to the curriculum coordinator each month and reviewed to make sure students are on track to reaching reading level targets.
NYS ELA and Math Assessments Grades 3-8, Spring	Understand how students are learning and retaining the NYS ELA and math standards.	The test will be administered in accordance with all state mandated requirements.	All teachers, grades 3-8	Results are submitted to NYSED; used internally to reflect on curriculum, alignment, and areas of growth.
NYS Science Assessment, Grade 4, 8 Spring	Understand how students are learning and retaining the NYS science standards.	The test will be administered in accordance with all state mandated requirements.	All fourth and eighth grade teachers	Results are submitted to NYSED; used internally to reflect on curriculum, alignment, and areas of growth.
NYS Alternate Assessment, All Eligible IEP Students, Spring	Understand how students are learning and retaining the goals set forth in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).	The test will be administered in accordance with all state mandated requirements.	All special education and intervention staff	Results are submitted to NYSED; used internally to reflect on curriculum, alignment, and areas of growth.
NYS English as a Second Language	To assess students' English language acquisition	The test will be administered in accordance with all state mandated requirements.	Teachers who have received training in	Results are submitted to NYSED; used internally to reflect on curriculum,

Achievement Test, Grades 3-8, Spring			NYSESLAT administration	alignment, and areas of growth.
Core Knowledge Unit Assessments, K-2, Ongoing	To gauge progress on listening and literacy skills	Teachers will receive guidance on how to administer the assessment and will norm in grade level teams on scoring and interpreting results.	All teachers, grades K-2	Tests are graded and tracked using eDoctrina®.
Teacher Created and ESP Science Unit Assessments, 3-8	To gauge mastery of unit objective	Teachers will administer each unit assessment at the end of each unit.	All teachers, grades 3-8	Tests are graded and tracked using eDoctrina®.

Process for Administering Assessments, Making Data Available, and Developing Action Plans: Please see the tables above for the process for collecting assessment information and how staff will utilize the data. Given RCCCS’s focus on data and data analysis, RCCCS will ensure all stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, the board of trustees, students, parents, and the community are able to view assessment data on a regular basis. As described throughout this section and in the PD section, teachers will utilize eDoctrina® as the primary vehicle for compiling assessment information. The school will share results through board meetings, parent teacher conferences, and report cards to ensure all stakeholders are aware of student progress. In the event assessment information reveals the need to make an action plan, the principal will work with the Leadership Team and develop a plan to rapidly increase student achievement. The Leadership Team will discuss the action plan at least monthly during Leadership Team meetings, and will make adjustments as necessary based on the most recent data. Further details about the types of assessment, what information we hope to obtain, and how this information will be used are discussed below.

Using Data to Inform Key Decisions: The assessment system is designed to have multiple units for analysis and application at the class, grade, and school levels. Explicit training and instruction will be provided to teachers during RCCCS 101 and PLHs around data driven instruction. Specific details on how various stakeholders in the RCCCS community will utilize academic achievement data to improve student outcomes are listed below.

Teachers: Teachers will use formative and summative assessment data on a regular basis, during their PLC meetings each day. Specifically, teachers will be expected to use assessment data to summarize, and plan for intervention and reteach and personal and team PD (observation, more collaborative planning, soliciting feedback on a new teaching strategy, etc.).

Students: Teachers will share student performance with each student. Students, in turn, will be expected to engage in self-reflection and analysis to identify what actions (both positive and negative) led to the outcomes and what actions that they will take to improve. These reflections will take place during written self-reflections and individualized student conferences. Teachers and students will log reflections and refer back to them as a means for monitoring progress and building student investment.

Parents: Staff will use eDoctrina® to generate reports to parents indicating student progress and noting areas of strength and growth. Teachers will couple these reports with strategies for parents and families, so that they can provide targeted support in helping students attain standards mastery.

School Leadership: The Principal and Leadership Team will be expected to use assessment data to summarize and plan for school wide trends that indicate staff wide PD or support is needed, grade level teams in need of greater support during common planning hours, and/or individual teachers who may be struggling. Similarly, the Leadership Team will use these reports

to generate positive trends around school wide, group, and individual strengths, in order to leverage and continue those best practices.

Board: The RCCCS board will use student achievement data to hold school leadership accountable for progress toward achieving academic goals; please see the “Reporting” section below.

New York State Testing Program: RCCCS is committed to administering all assessments required of all public schools. Please refer to the Assessment System Table to note the timeline and administration details for NYS mandated assessments.

Measuring and Reporting Educational Performance: Educational Performance, and other sources of critical data (e.g., enrollment, retention, behavior), will be entered into eDoctrina®. The variety of reporting tools embedded within this software promotes data driven decision-making at all levels of the school program. The wide variety of data reports encourage all users, including administrators, to monitor student growth and the effectiveness of classroom instruction on a regular basis by analyzing performance on standards-based assessments. Instructional leaders will be able to disaggregate outcomes by standard, subject, and grade level, as well as student groups. These types of desegregated reports will serve as the basis for conversations among teachers and administrators and will be an integral part of monitoring performance within the school(s).

Individual Students, Cohorts, and Charter School: As indicated previously, school leadership and teachers will utilize assessment results to measure all levels of student learning, including individual students, cohorts, and the charter school as a whole; additionally, school leadership will frequently report on this progress at various times throughout the year (indicated above). We will also use a quarterly report card system to inform parents of their individual child’s academic and behavioral performance. Report cards will be distributed during designated parent teacher conference days throughout the year, as indicated on the proposed “First Year Calendar” in Attachment 3c. The report card template will be shared with, and explained to, parents at the outset of each year, so they know the expectations for their child and the learning goals for that year. In addition, parents of students receiving special education services will be kept abreast of student progress towards short term and long term IEP goals. A performance summary will be distributed quarterly with the student’s report card. All parent communication will be in the family’s home language, and every effort will be made to meet with parents one on one to discuss the child’s performance.

Methods for Obtaining Valid and Reliable Measures of Student Outcomes: We will ensure that our assessment implementation and evaluation is valid and reliable, as indicated in the assessment tables above. Teachers will receive in-depth training on each assessment, and school leaders will observe implementation for quality control. Checks, such as informal school leader assessment of reading level, are in place to ensure that teachers’ evaluation of student performance is reliable, and, in the event that it is not, additional monitoring and PD will be provided. Further, we have included the NWEA MAP questions in the eDoctrina® question bank because of its validity and reliability and the significant size of the norm group that it draws upon when providing norm-referenced scores. If necessary, we will also contract with an external partner to help us administer and evaluate assessments, particularly since so many elementary school assessments require one on one administration, in order to yield reliable results.

E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

Promotion Standards and the School’s Mission, Educational Program, and Assessment System: The mission of RCCCS is to provide a world-class education to Rochester students so

they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in both college and family sustaining careers. To achieve this mission, we must ensure that our elementary and middle school students are leaving on or above grade level, excited about learning and the opportunities that await them. Our “no zero” policy, college and career touches, and use of real time assessment data will ensure students have sufficient opportunities to engage with the standards, invest and excite students in learning, and provide leadership and staff with ongoing student data. Since our school will be K-8, there are no graduation standards, but the promotion policy is detailed below.

Proposed Polices and Standards for Promotion: Because RCCCS will have a “no zero” policy, RCCCS will expect students to master grade level standards in the core subject areas of ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies in order to be promoted to the next grade level. Examples of these standards are listed below. The same promotional criteria will apply to students with special needs and ELL students. However, if a student’s IEP indicates that he or she will be held to an alternate standard for promotion, the school leader will incorporate the criteria listed in the IEP when making any retention or promotion decisions. Similarly, student performance on the NYS English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) will be taken into consideration as well, when applicable.

At the end of the year, principals will receive a list of students for each grade level, who did not meet the requisite performance standards for promotion, as referenced above. RCCCS anticipates that this will be a small group of students and will work to ensure all students receive the instruction they need to be promoted to the next grade level. However, the Principal will make the final decision about whether or not to promote the student, based on the following variables: performance on the NYS ELA, mathematics, and science exams; performance on summative assessments, such as unit tests; performance on beginning, middle, and end of year benchmark assessments; reading growth made throughout the year, as measured by the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark assessment; performance on homework, projects, and other material assignments, as measured by holistic rubrics, throughout the year; behavior and maturity, provided that the student does not have an Individualized Education Plan; attendance; the interventions provided to the student throughout the school year; and teacher reflections about the student and his or her academic needs and performance.

In order to ensure that students are promoted and retained on an objective basis, teachers will be expected to track the items listed above using eDoctrina® throughout the year. Students at risk of retention will be flagged in eDoctrina® quarterly and sent to the Principal for review. As soon as any issues or concerns in student performance arise, parents will be notified immediately. We will ensure that we have communicated these concerns effectively throughout the year, so that parents are fully aware of concerns before the time comes to make a decision about retention. Interventions will be made throughout the year to support students at risk. In addition, we will make every effort to support these students throughout the summer months by possibly providing tutoring or 1-1 support and into the following school year through small group instruction and 1-1 support to ensure that they ultimately reach grade level proficiency, if they are retained.

Furthermore, for students in grades K-2, where a student may be meeting some of the standards, but not yet quite on grade level, the recommendation will be to promote that student and make every effort to support him or her during the summer months. However, in cases in which a first or second grade student is severely behind grade level expectations for literacy, we would likely retain that student, since research indicates that third grade students who are not

reading at grade level are four times more likely to drop out of high school than proficient readers.¹⁷

Sample Promotion Standards: In order to be promoted, students will be expected to master the CCSS. Following are sample standards for students in grades 2 and 5:

	Grade 2	Grades 5
ELA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can apply phonics rules to spell grade level appropriate words. I can identify the elements of a story. I can use correct capitalization, punctuation, and grammar in my writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. Write routinely over extended time frames or shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can create and analyze a graph. I can measure the length of an object using inches, feet, centimeters, and meters. I can count a group of coins and dollars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use equivalent fractions as a strategy to add and subtract fractions. Represent and interpret data. Classify two-dimensional figures into categories based on their properties. Understand the place value system.
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can use digital tools to produce and publish my work. I can participate in research projects with my classmates. I can use provided sources to find information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can use digital tools, including the internet, to interact and collaborate with peers, publish my work, and demonstrate keyboarding skills to type two pages in a single setting. I can use media and technology to display research and information in a presentation.

F. School Schedule and Calendar

Student’s Typical Day: Following is a description of a first grade student’s typical school day. School will begin at 8:00 am with homeroom from 8:00-8:10 am. Homeroom will be a time for students to participate in daily morning meetings. Morning meetings will be a time where teachers discuss college and the “career path of the month” to ensure that this message is reinforced. The student will then move to an ELA block where s/he will spend 90 minutes participating in ELA instruction. During the ELA block, students will participate in readers’ workshop. They also will receive 30 minutes of core ELA intervention using various whole and small group differentiated learning techniques. The Consultant Teachers and the Teacher Aides will work to support and facilitate small group sessions with the lead teacher; they will be with the students in their grade level or homeroom class at all times throughout the day and will support students during specials classes as determined by IEPs or student need. Core intervention will occur each day during the ELA and Math blocks for 30 minutes per block. There will be at least one Consultant Teacher per grade level, whose involvement will be determined during the common planning periods, based on student progress and need, as agreed upon by the PLC. The Consultant Teacher will provide support throughout the day and will work to support students from his or her grade level team.

Following this, the student will participate in an elective/specials course for 50 minutes (art on Monday, technology on Tuesday, Spanish on Wednesday, Technology on Thursday, and music on Friday). Then the student will receive 60 minutes of writing instruction (10:30-11:30 am), followed by a 30-minute lunch. After lunch, the student will participate in a 90-minute math block (12:00-1:30 pm) where they will receive core instruction, as well as 30 minutes of core intervention as described above for ELA. This will be followed by 50 minutes of physical education (1:30-2:20 pm). The student will receive 60 minutes of either social studies or science instruction (alternating days) next (from 2:20-3:20 pm), and then will end the day with a 30-minute intervention/enrichment period (3:20-3:50 pm). This daily half hour block is set aside exclusively for supplemental intervention and enrichment, as we recognize the importance and

¹⁷ See http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-Early_Warning_Full_Report-2010.pdf

the effectiveness of small group and individualized instruction opportunities in attaining our goal of standards mastery. The AIS Teacher will develop and provide evidence-based and data-driven academic intervention services for students enrolled at RCCCS and will collect ongoing performance and progress data to inform instruction.

Teachers’ Work: As indicated by the proposed school calendar and the Sample Weekly Teacher Schedule, teachers will begin school on August 14, 2017. The last day of school will be June 29, 2018. Students will begin school on August 21, 2017, and will attend school for a half day the first school week. Since we are beginning with kindergarten, first, and second graders, many of whom may never have been to school before, we believe that it is important to have half days to help them transition properly. Even though students will have an early dismissal during the first week, teachers will be expected to stay for the full school day (i.e., until 4:00 pm), which will allow for additional individual and common planning time.

As noted in the schedule, full time teachers will teach from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday, with at least 100 minutes of common grade level planning time and/or PD (discussed further below) and 30 minutes for lunch. Part time teachers (i.e., art and music teacher) will teach from 8:50 am until 12:30 pm, Monday through Friday, and will receive at least 50 minutes of common planning time.

Teachers will lead or attend PD from August 14-18 from 8:00 am - 5:30 pm. All teachers will attend the pre-service training, as outlined in the PD section, from 8:00 am - 2:00 pm. From 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm, new teachers will attend RCCCS 101, modeled off of CSAT 101, as discussed further in the PD section, either in Rochester, led by veteran teachers or the Principal, or in Buffalo, led by CSAT veteran teachers there. Veteran teachers, who are not leading RCCCS 101 sessions, will begin evaluating and modifying grade level curriculum maps during this time.

With the guidance and support of the Leadership Team, the majority of PD will be teacher identified and teacher led, as described further in the PD section. PLHs will take place during common planning time, and the Principal will provide coverage for teachers who wish to attend and are not already free at that time. Outside of daily PLCs and monthly PLHs, there will be seven full PD days for staff, as indicated on the proposed first year calendar in Attachment 3(b). The first five will take place at the outset of the year for RCCCS 101 and common planning, and the remaining two will take place after the first and second (out of three total) benchmark assessments are administered. Teachers will hold a “Data Dive” and action plan from the benchmark assessments, after reflecting on school wide data trends.

Differences in Teacher Schedules: Teachers in grades K-5 will have a 10-minute morning meeting with their classes; Teachers of students in grades 6-8 will not have morning meeting.

Length of School Day and Year: The RCCCS school day will begin at 8:00 am and end at 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The school year will begin on August 14, 2017, and continue through June 29, 2018. RCCCS will have 199 instructional days, with seven full school days of the 199 allocated exclusively for PD. We will not hold summer school programming during our first charter term. PD time throughout the year, and during the school day, is discussed in more detail below.

School Calendar and Schedule: The weekly student and staff schedules and proposed school calendar are in attachments 3(a) and 3(b) respectively. The table below illustrates the daily and weekly total instructional time in each subject area:

Subject	K-5 Subject Areas		6-8 Subject Areas	
	Total Daily Instructional Time	Total Weekly Instructional Time	Total Daily Instructional Time	Total Weekly Instructional Time
ELA	90 (includes 30 minutes of intervention)	450 (includes 150 minutes of intervention)	90 (includes 30 minutes of intervention)	450 (includes 150 minutes of intervention)

Math	90 (includes 30 minutes of intervention)	450 (includes 150 minutes of intervention)	90 (includes 30 minutes of intervention)	450 (includes 150 minutes of intervention)
Writing	60	300	N/A	N/A
Social Studies	30	150	50	150
Science	30	150	50	150
Physical Education	50	250	50	250
Art	50	50	50	50
Music	50	50	50	100
Technology	100	100	50	250
Spanish	50	50	50	100
Supplemental Intervention Services	30	30	30	30

G. School Culture and Climate

Approach to Student Behavior: We will use a Positive Behavior and Intervention System (PBIS) to manage behavior for all students, including students with special needs (described in more detail below). PBIS is focuses on reinforcing positive behaviors as opposed to being punitive in nature. PBIS is particularly effective for students with special needs, as it sets clear, explicit expectations, provides modeling of those expectations and an opportunity for practice, and consistent feedback for students on implementation. For groups of students who require more intervention, a small group or individual PBIS plan may be necessary. And, for those students with special needs, all supplemental PBIS plans will be created with the Special Education Coordinator and/or the Consultant Teacher, keeping the student’s Individualized Education Plan in mind.

And, as described in the attached Student Discipline Policy, we recognize that it may be necessary to suspend, remove, or otherwise discipline students with disabilities to address disruptive or problem behavior. To that end, we are mindful of the procedural protections that our students with special needs may require. We are committed to ensuring that the procedures for suspending, removing, or otherwise disciplining students with special needs are consistent with the applicable laws and regulations, as described further in the Attached Student Discipline Policy.

Student Discipline Policy: Please see Attachment 4 for a detailed version of our Student Discipline Policy, or Code of Conduct. RCCCS will adhere to all federal, state, and local laws in connection with enforcing student discipline and maintaining a safe and productive school culture.

Culture of the School: The culture of the school will be a positive one, centered on setting and maintaining high academic and behavioral expectations for all students. When walking through the schools of RCCCS, a culture of high expectations and warmth will be tangible. Students will engage with each other, with adults, and with guests cheerfully and politely, and it will be evident that they enjoy their school and take pride in being a part of it, similar to their peers at CSAT. Excellent student work will decorate the hallways and classrooms, and pictures of various careers and inspiring quotes will be posted on the walls throughout the building. The building will be bright, clean, and well maintained, and students will take part in keeping it that way. Students will wear uniforms, and teachers will be dressed professionally at all times. (For more information about how the school will create this culture, please see [below](#).)

This culture will serve as the centerpiece of our college and career focus, and we will ground our high expectations for students in this ultimate goal. As such, we will expect students to demonstrate the behaviors that they will one day embrace in their professional careers, as demonstrated in the Student Rights and Responsibilities table included below.

Student's Rights	Student's Responsibilities
To a free public education in the least restrictive environment.	To attend school every day and be in class on time and prepared to learn unless legally excused.
To a classroom atmosphere that is conducive to learning.	To conduct themselves in a manner that contributes to the ability of the class to learn.
To be treated with respect by all members of the school community.	To treat themselves, others, and property with respect and dress appropriately for school and school functions.
To competent instruction that deals with the individual needs of the learner	To meet the goals and objectives of the curriculum and ask questions when they do not understand.
To feel secure in their personal safety and integrity.	To respect the rules, regulations, and procedures of the District, and to seek help in solving problems that might lead to disciplinary action.
To experience professional, ethical relationships with all staff.	To conduct themselves in an appropriate manner toward staff and contribute to a respectful school environment.
To express themselves in a socially acceptable manner.	To react to direction given by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner, and work to develop mechanisms to control their anger.
To a co-curricular and extra-curricular program that is based on student interest.	To become involved to the fullest level of their interest and ability; to seek help in solving problems that might lead to disciplinary action; conduct themselves as representatives of the District when participating in or attending school-sponsored extracurricular events; and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.
To know the school rules and their consequences.	To familiarize themselves and abide by school rules, regulations, and procedures, and all District policies, rules, and regulations dealing with student conduct.
To a clean, well-maintained educational facility.	To contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning, and to show respect toward other persons and property.
To experience the democratic process.	To abide by the decisions made in the democratic process.
To be able to report violations to the Code of Conduct without fear of retaliation.	To respect the rights of others and act in an honest and civil manner.

Strategies for Implementing the Discipline Policy: To implement the discipline policy, the Leadership Team will collaborate with the teaching staff to design and implement a School Wide Positive Behavior Implementation and Supports (SWPBIS) system. “SWPBIS refers to a systems change process for an entire school or district. The underlying theme is teaching behavioral expectations in the same manner as any core curriculum subject.”¹⁸ A SWPBIS team will be established and led by the Leadership Team of the School to determine three to five central behavioral strands that are stated positively and easy to remember. The school will focus on what students should be doing, as opposed to what they should not. Once the team creates these expectations, they will be taken back to the entire staff in order to gather feedback and invest staff in the chosen expectations. From there, the team will create a matrix for what the expectations look like, feel like, and sound like in all areas of the school, including the time spent outside of the classroom. A sample matrix¹⁹ is included below:

Respect Property			
Bus	Keep feet and hands where they belong.	Throw unwanted items in wastebasket.	Keep food and drinks in backpack.
Cafeteria	Place tray on kitchen window shelf after scraping leftovers into wastebasket.	Wipe table with sponge provided.	Clean food spills off floor.
Restroom	Flush toilet after use.	Use two squirts of soap to wash hands.	Throw paper towels in wastebasket.
Playground	Report any graffiti or broken equipment to adult on duty.	Return playground equipment to proper area.	Use equipment as it was designed.

The Leadership Team and the SWPBIS team will work to align the chosen three to five positive behaviors to the culture of the school and our expectations around Student Rights and Responsibilities. From there, the SWPBIS team will norm around how the behaviors will be explicitly taught to students at each grade level. To do so, they might create sample lesson plans to ensure consistent implementation of the program. We will expect teachers to teach these

¹⁸ <https://www.pbis.org/school/swpbis-for-beginners>

¹⁹ <https://www.pbis.org/school/swpbis-for-beginners>

lessons in a realistic manner. So, for instance, if they were teaching a lesson around how students are to behave in the cafeteria, they should bring the class there, and encourage students to practice the behaviors as they would implement them during lunchtime the following day. Students will be rewarded both individually and collectively (i.e., as a class), for demonstrating the positive behavior expectations.

The ultimate goal of the program, therefore, is that all staff that interact with students throughout the school day, including the bus driver, will hold students to the same high behavioral expectations and will reward the same positive behaviors. Students will gain immense clarity around behavior expectations and the consistent positive reinforcement will lead to positive behavior outcomes both individually and school wide.

To ensure effective and consistent implementation of PBIS, we will include a PBIS training at the outset of the year, during RCCCS 101, so that teachers understand how to lesson plan and teach behaviors and when and how to issue students a reward. From there, we will engage in ongoing reflection and norming exercises with teachers and staff to ensure that rewards are being issued consistently and accurately throughout the school during common planning time and PLH. We will ask staff to engage in a self-reflection about implementing the SWPBIS expectations, in order to identify trends and areas of support.

Methods by Which the School Will Evaluate the Environment Is Safe and Conducive to Learning: In order to ensure that we are creating and maintaining the positive and productive school culture that we are striving for, we will track student behavior using eDoctrina®. The Leadership Team will reflect on this data each month, and will follow up with individual teachers, or with the staff as whole on any trends. For instance, if the staff notices that the rewards or consequences are being issued inconsistently amongst the staff, we will suggest that staff meet to review implementation during PLH. We will also work with our partners at CSAT to conduct ongoing walk-throughs of the school to elicit their feedback on the school culture. At the outset of the year, we will create a rubric with them around school culture, which they will use for these walk-throughs each time, in order to gauge progress or continued areas of growth.

Encouraging Family Involvement and Gauging Satisfaction with School Climate: We will host a family night at the beginning of each year to share PBIS and our Student Discipline Policy with our families and students. Parent attendance will be required, and we will make every effort to meet with parents who are not able to attend at the scheduled time, in order to ensure that families have a full understanding of the behavioral expectations at RCCCS. To the extent possible, we will encourage parents to implement the positive behavior expectations and reinforcements at home to ensure consistency for students. We will also include questions about the school climate in our parent survey. For instance, we want to ensure that parents feel welcome in the school at all times and that they believe students are thriving both socially and academically.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN

A. Applicant Group Capacity

Applicant Group: The current employment, relevant experiences, and qualifications of each Applicant Group member is summarized below. More detailed information about each Applicant Group member can be found in Attachment 5a.

- **Sarah Armignacco, Board Chairperson:** Sarah Armignacco is the Director of Educational Initiatives at Wegmans Food Markets, Inc. in Rochester, NY, where she has worked in management and human resources for 20 years. In her current position, Ms. Armignacco ensures alignment of Wegmans' educational initiatives to workforce objectives. She oversees

the Wegmans' partnership with Hillside Children's Center and is responsible for strategic development of sustainable philanthropic sources of funds. Ms. Armignacco's previous experiences include senior level roles in management, strategy, and human resources. Ms. Armignacco began her career as an early childhood teacher and currently serves on the board of Discovery Charter School.

- **Mark Brewer, Chair, Finance Committee:** Mark Brewer currently serves as the Chief Financial Officer of the Loyola Recovery Foundation in Pittsford, NY. Mr. Brewer has over 20 years of experience in non-profit management, accounting, and finance, and he is currently responsible for managing \$5-6 million annual budget. Mr. Brewer also has counseling and human development experience, including direct service work with counseling teenagers through times of trouble.
- **Rosemary Hodges:** Rosemary Hodges is currently the Co-Head of the Norman Howard School in Rochester, NY. The Norman Howard School (NHS) is an independent, state approved, day school for students in grades 5-12 that provides a quality education program for students with special learning needs including those with classifications of Learning Disability, Other Health Impairment, Speech and Language Impairment, or Autism. Ms. Hodges is working towards a Ph.D. from the University of Rochester, Graduate School of Education and Human Development, in Psychological Development, and is currently ABD. Ms. Hodges has published several works on various learning needs, child development, and teacher education and regularly presents on these topics locally and throughout the country.
- **Jeffrey Miceli:** Jeffrey Miceli has owned and operated his own home appliance service company, Appliance Service Works, Inc., since 2003. In this role, he is responsible for all operations, strategic planning, corporate compliance and daily management of the company. Mr. Miceli brings over 30 years of experience in organizational management, finance, human resources, marketing, development, training, and customer service.
- **Darren McCarty:** Darren McCarty has served as a Social Studies Teacher at East Ridge High School since 1997. Mr. McCarty has been the Curriculum Leader and an Advancement Via Individual Determination²⁰ (AVID) Trainer, since 2012. Mr. McCarty brings a wealth of experience in innovative teaching strategies, implementing technology in the classroom, and creating a positive school culture. Mr. McCarty developed the online review tool, Bubbabrain.com, for grades K-12 and is currently developing another interactive website for schools.
- **Norman West:** Norman West is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of West Advisory Group, where he partners with community organizations, non-profits, schools, and corporate clients to promote financial literacy and college attendance in urban learning environments. Mr. West has extensive experience coaching individuals of all age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds with career services, financial literacy education, and life skills.

Identifying Board Members: In order to select each proposed Board member, we evaluated our mission and academic program, and identified individuals within the community who had the knowledge, skills, and relationships to help achieve our mission with students in the Rochester community. Each member of the applicant group, listed above, is a proposed board member. We

²⁰ AVID is not only a college-readiness system focused on raising achievement for all students, it is also a professional learning organization providing training and resources to both AVID member and non-member districts, schools, and educators. Ongoing professional learning is critical to supporting student and teacher success. Each year, AVID Center offers numerous professional learning opportunities. <http://www.avid.org/professional-learning.ashx>

selected Ms. Armignacco as our Board Chair because of her vast management, human resources, and education experiences. Similarly, we selected Mr. Brewer to Chair our Finance Committee because of his expertise and extensive experience successfully managing financial and accounting systems for non-profit organizations.

Each member of the applicant group brings a rich variety of experiences to the table, but we all share the common ground of wanting better educational outcomes for students in our City. As such, we have ensured that all members of our founding team have adequate time to commit to the rigorous process of starting a new school. We have not yet identified a Principal for the school, but the Board is currently conducting a search process, which will be followed by a highly rigorous interview and selection process, to ensure that we have found the best individual to lead our school's efforts.

How the Applicant Group Came Together: The founders of RCCCS share professional contacts in Rochester and joined together based on our desire for and recognition of the need for an effective school to career program in Rochester.

Planning and Writing Process: The RCCCS applicant group met at least once per month collectively, and then individually, as needed to complete their respective tasks in the school planning process. In addition, individual Board members met with Efrain Martinez, CSAT Superintendent, and with the CSAT Board of Trustees regularly to ensure understanding and faithful implementation of the CSAT model. The full applicant group reviewed all parts of the application in the development and submission stages.

Primary Author and Paid Consultants: Machael Sherry and Sarah Rapa, of SchoolWorks, were paid consultants on the application and worked as the primary author and content reviewer, respectively. Steve Gleason, of Education Success Network, wrote and provided support with the operational aspects sections of the application.

B. Board of Trustees and Governance

Administrative Relationship between RCCCS and the Board of Regents: Our Founding Board understands the responsibility of governing a public charter school. The Board will have a performance contract with the Board of Regents that provides the school with the autonomy to design and operate its academic performance, organizational viability, and fiscal soundness.

Proposed Governance Structure: The Board of Trustees will govern the school. A list of our proposed Board of Trustees, whether they will be a voting member, and the length of their initial term is summarized in the following table.

Trustee Name	Voting	Position	Length of Initial Term
Sarah Armignacco	Y	Member	3
Mark Brewer	Y	Member	3
Rosemary Hodges	Y	Member	3
Jeff Miceli	Y	Member	3
Darren McCarty	Y	Member	3
Norman West	Y	Member	3

The Board of Trustees brings a wealth of experience from both the public and the private sector, including knowledge about management, operations, budget procurement and oversight, performance evaluation, human resources, fiscal operations, including finance and accounting, organizational management, in both the public and private sector, school culture, school staff development, community and parent engagement, teaching and entrepreneurship. Sarah Armignacco is currently serving on the board of Discovery Charter School in Rochester. For a more detailed summary of the Board qualifications, see the previous section, Applicant Group Capacity.

As indicated in the By-Laws, except for the Initial Board of Trustees, every Trustee shall be

approved and elected to the Board of Trustees by the Board of Trustees, and before being seated as a voting member of the Board of Trustees, the new Trustee shall complete and submit a Trustee Questionnaire for approval by the NYSED.

Organizational Structure of the School: RCCCS is organized in a way that will promote efficiency and academic achievement. The Board of Trustees will hire the Principal, who will report directly to the Board and be responsible for day-to-day management of the school. The Principal will be the leader of the school and will manage the Assistant Principal, who will assist the Principal in managing all teaching staff and instructional aides. The Principal, in collaboration with the Board of Trustees, will also hire and manage a Director of Finance and Operations, who will oversee all Technology Specialists, maintenance, and food service staff members. The staff structure for each year of the charter term is detailed further in the Management and Staffing section. We have not yet identified a leader for the school. Key qualifications include high expectations for learning and behavior, demonstrated success in raising student achievement with low-income urban students, experience with start-up environments, experience with a PLC model, and management skills. Responsibilities/qualifications for other key positions are provided in Attachment 8a.

Conducting and Publicizing Monthly Board Meetings: The Board will meet no fewer than 10 times per year; all meetings will be properly noticed as required by the Open Meetings Law of the State of New York. The agenda will be developed by the Chairperson in consultation with the School Director and will include a written or oral report by the Principal, a report of the Finance Committee, other committee reports as appropriate, and opportunity for public comments. Minutes will be taken at all Board and committee meetings, copies of which will be posted on our website and archived in the school office.

Promoting Parental and Staff Involvement in School Governance: The Trustees and the Principal will actively encourage parents to attend Board meetings and will recruit an interested parent during the first school year. We will collaborate with the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) to advertise Board meetings, and ensure that parents are notified of the dates, times, and location. A position on the Board will be designated for a Parent Trustee, who will be responsible for attending all PAC and Board meetings, in order to relay parent feedback and concerns to the board each month. Similarly, the Principal will notify staff of Board meetings, and encourage their involvement and participation. The Principal will rely on the Director of Finance and Operations when compiling her report on the school for the Board meeting each month. In addition, RCCCS will create ways for parents to address governance issues via the website and developed a parent portal.

The Board will also encourage parent and staff input into the governance of the school. Board meetings will adhere to the Open Meetings Law and include an opportunity for public comment; representatives from the Parent Advisory Council will be invited to attend and report on their work. The Board will enact and publicize a complaint policy that contains a clear process for bringing issues to the attention of the Board and for the Board to respond in a timely fashion. Board members will also regularly visit the school and attend school community events to ensure that we are engaging parents both formally and informally.

Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members: As indicated by our By-Laws, our Board will consist of at least five and no more than 11 voting members, 10 of whom will be At-Large Trustees, and one of whom will be a Parent Representative Trustee. The At-Large Trustees will be community leaders and will be representative of the Rochester community at large. The Parent Representative Trustee will be a parent or guardian of a student(s) enrolled in RCCCS.

This individual will be identified at the end of the first year of the charter and, after that, there shall be no less than one Parent Representative Trustee. The Principal will serve as a non-voting ex officio member of the Board of Trustees and will serve as a liaison with the staff of the school. All Trustees must be at least 18 years of age, strongly committed to improving public school educational opportunities for all children, and fully supportive of the RCCCS mission statement, goals, and objectives. Board of Trustee roles and responsibilities include:

- Implementing the school's mission and school design
- Ensuring adequate resources for implementation of the school program
- Approving the school's annual budget
- Recruiting, hiring, and evaluating the Principal [and Director of Finance and Operations]
- Approving major policies and regularly reviewing and revising them as necessary
- Preparing for and attending Board and committee meetings
- Making informed decisions to support the success of the school
- Monitoring program implementation and compliance with the charter agreement and relevant laws and regulations
- Facilitating long-term strategic planning
- Recruiting and orienting new Board members and assessing Board performance
- Recruiting partner organizations that will actively support the school's mission and academic approach
- Participating as appropriate in the grievance process
- Enhancing the school's public standing

Trustee Qualifications include:

- Belief in and support of the mission and design of the school
- The expectation that all children can, and will, achieve academic excellence
- Demonstrated understanding of Board duties
- Willingness to attend Board and committee meetings and volunteer for Board work
- Experience and expertise in a relevant field, such as: education, human services, business, management, finance/accounting, law, government, personnel, marketing/public relations, fundraising, and/or community relations or organizing
- The capacity to examine performance data, financial documents and management reports, and make informed decisions in the best interest of the school
- Be at least 18 years of age

Board of Trustee Roles: As noted in our By-Laws, the Board will have at least five members and include the following officer positions: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. The various positions on the RCCCS board of trustees are listed below. The Board will select members to fill these positions based on their interest, prior experiences, and qualifications.

- **Chairperson:** The Chair is the senior volunteer leader of the Charter School who presides at all meetings of the Board and other meetings as required. The Chair is an ex-officio member of all committees of the organization, oversees implementation of Board and school policies, and ensures that appropriate administrative practices are established and maintained. Among the duties, the Chair works with the school leaders, other Board officers and Trustees, and committee chairs to develop the agendas for Board meetings, and presides at these meetings. In approval from other Board members, the Chair appoints volunteers to key leadership positions, including positions as chair of Board committees, as well as cultivates leadership succession; and works with the Board of Trustees in accordance with the school's By-Laws

and mission, to establish and maintain systems.

- **Vice Chairperson:** The Vice Chair is the secondary volunteer leader of the charter school and as such, discharges the duties of the Chair as required in the Chair's absence. The Vice Chair supports the activities of the Chair, including sharing responsibilities as appropriate. The Vice Chair advises and assists the Chair on all matters relevant to the Board.
- **Treasurer:** Provides direction for the financial management of the school and facilitates the Board in meeting its financial oversight responsibilities. The Treasurer will serve as Chair of the Finance Committee, provide direction for the oversight of the school's record keeping and accounting policies, and ensure the presentation of timely and meaningful financial reports to the Board.
- **Secretary:** Provides direction for the keeping of legal documents, including minutes of all meetings of the Board. The Secretary will certify and keep at the school office the original, or a copy of the By- Laws, keep a book of minutes of all meetings of the Trustees and meetings of committees; and shall record time and place of meeting, whether regular or special, how called, how notice was given, the names of those present or represented at the meeting and the proceedings.

Board Committees: Committees of the Board shall include Executive Committee, Audit and Finance, Academic Accountability, and Human Resources, consisting of a chairperson and at least two other Trustees. The Executive Committee will likely meet more frequently than the full Board and will consist of no less than five Trustees. The Executive Committee will have the power to act on behalf of the entire Board, so long as it does so within the designated scope of its authority, as determined in the bylaws. The Audit and Finance Committee will be responsible for the fiscal health of the school. The Academic Accountability Committee will oversee student achievement data and monitor progress towards the school's annual achievement goals. The Human Resources Committee will be responsible for all human resources/personnel issues. The Board of Trustees will, by resolution, designate from its members other committees, as it deems necessary.

Recruitment, Selection, and Development of Board Members: As indicated above, RCCCS Board members maintain great ties to individuals throughout the City of Rochester. Board members will be expected to leverage these relationships, as needed, to engage other community members in the RCCCS work and to fill Board seats as needed. Board members are currently engaging in this process in order to find an attorney, which we believe is a critical seat that needs to be filled on our Board in the near future.

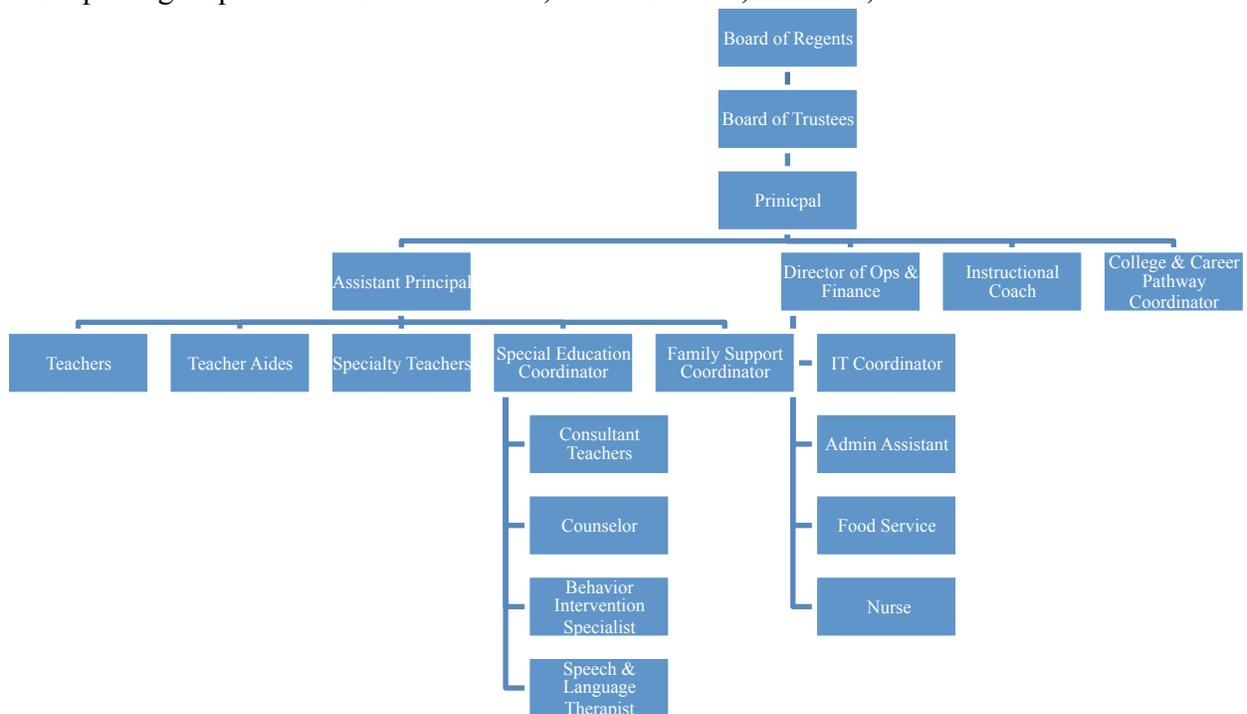
In addition to the regular Board meetings, the Board will meet annually for a retreat, where they will discuss best practices, as indicated by the NYS charter school authorizers, the Northeast Charter Schools Network, The New York City Charter School Center, and CSAT Board of Trustees. During this retreat, the Board will set the strategic plan for the school year, with input from the Principal. The strategic plan will align with the academic and fiscal measures set forth in this application.

Further, when new Board members join the Board, they will be expected to attend a New Board Member Orientation; we will share the vision and strategic plan for the school. If the new Board member will be joining a specific committee, or serve in a specific role, we will also outline and discuss the ways in which the new member can best contribute, in order to achieve the goals set forth in the strategic plan.

C. Management and Staffing

Organizational Chart: The RCCCS Organizational Chart, indicating our staffing structure

and reporting responsibilities for the board, administration, and staff, is as follows:



Organizational Structure of the School: As indicated on the above organizational chart, and further described in Attachment 8(a), the RCCCS Board of Trustees (BOT) will report to the Board of Regents. The BOT will be directly responsible for the goals set forth in the charter agreement with the Board of Regents. The Principal, who will be hired by the BOT, will implement and manage progress towards these goals each day. The Principal, therefore, will be the instructional leader of the school, but will also manage the Assistant Principal, Director of Finance and Operations, the Instructional Coach, and the College and Career Pathway Coordinator. The Director of Finance and Operations will oversee finance, IT, food service, school enrollment, and facilities and maintenance. The Assistant Principal will support the principal in managing the Instructional Staff, including the teachers, the Special Education Coordinator, and the service providers. The Special Education Coordinator will support the Assistant Principal in managing the service providers more directly.

Management Roles and Responsibilities of Key Administration: Following is a high level summary of the management roles and responsibilities of key administration. For a complete description, please refer to Attachment 8(a), Section III.

- **Principal:** The Principal will report to the Board of Trustees and exercise educational and managerial leadership of RCCCS, in accordance with Board policies and charter provisions necessary to ensure the success of the school. The Principal organizes, administers, supervises, and evaluates all aspects of the school design for the building under his/her charge. The Principal is responsible for the continuous improvement of the school, its staff, and for increased student achievement. The Principal's job duties are explicitly outlined in Attachment 8a, and are broken down by four main areas of oversight: (1) Instructional Leader, (2) Site-Based Manager, (3) Builder of School Culture, and (4) Professional Responsibilities. The Principal will be a member of the Leadership Team.
- **Assistant Principal:** The Assistant Principal will be responsible to the Principal, and, in collaboration with the Principal, is responsible for planning improvements that directly

address student achievement, school design, and family and student satisfaction; achieving outcomes requiring strong leadership as an instructional leader, site-based manager, and as builder of school culture. The Assistant Principal's role is largely to support the Principal; this position will be added in year three in order to support additional enrollment and staffing. The Assistant Principal will be a member of the Leadership Team.

- **Director of Finance and Operations:** The Director of Finance and Operations will be responsible to the Principal for directing, supervising, regulating, and implementing a full and accurate set of accounting and financial transactions reflective of the school's. The Director of Finance and Operations will create and implement systems and procedures that ensure daily school operations run smoothly and efficiently, thereby removing these concerns and allowing instructional staff to focus on student outcomes.
- **Instructional Coach:** The Instructional Coach will be responsible to the Principal for providing non-evaluative coaching, feedback, and support to teachers on a regular basis. The Instructional Coach will work closely with teachers to develop curriculum, unit and lesson plans, and assessments. The Instructional Coach will be a member of the Leadership Team.
- **College and Career Pathway Coordinator:** The Career Pathway Coordinator will be responsible to the Principal for ensuring that the college and career focus is implemented with fidelity. The Career Pathway Coordinator will be a member of the Leadership Team and will work with the Leadership Team and the Board to identify key college and career pathways, and then will work with teachers to help integrate college and career pathways into the curriculum, form partnerships with local businesses, and ensure college and career touches happen regularly for students.
- **Special Education Coordinator:** The Special Education Coordinator will be responsible to the Principal and the Assistant Principal. The primary role of the Special Education Coordinator is to ensure that appropriate services are provided to students with IEPs, 504 Plans, or any student who falls under the protection of IDEA, so that they succeed in school. These responsibilities will include ensuring compliance with regulations and reporting, supporting the PD of staff so that they can better serve all students, and parent communication and advocacy. The Special Education Coordinator will be a member of the Leadership Team.

School Leader Identification: RCCCS has not yet identified a school leader; however, several qualified candidates have emerged and have shown interest in leading the school. In order to attract and identify a school leader, RCCCS will employ the recruitment plan described in Attachment 8(a), with minor modifications since it will be the selection of the school leader. More specifically, the RCCCS Board will work collaboratively with CSAT leadership and will recruit nationally and regionally to identify the best candidates. Given that many of the RCCCS Board members are current and former educators, we will engage our personal networks and connections to recruit high quality candidates. For a complete description of the qualifications, job requirements, and job duties, please reference Attachment 8(a). Our ideal candidate, however, will have the following qualifications and skill sets:

- B.A., B.S. degree and a Master's degree (or within three (3) years)
- Appropriate teacher and building administrator/school leader/principal certification(s)
- Evidence of educational experiences after college desirable (fellowships, summer study, or graduate course work to pursue greater depth in a subject area, specific instruction methodology, curriculum development, special education, technology, etc.)
- Eight (8) to ten (10) years of successful teaching experience with performance ratings that indicate a high level of proficiency

- Previous experience as a building administrator desirable
- In addition, the school leader will have the following skill sets:
- Demonstrated leadership ability
 - Highly organized and independent worker with excellent oral, written and interpersonal skills
 - Extensive background in classroom instruction and pedagogical skills
 - Ability to maintain confidentiality
 - Superior skills to work with diversity of individuals and the ability of being a team player
 - PLC model experience (Professional Learning Communities)
 - Computer experience with proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite

Staffing Plan: Please refer to our staffing plan below, which indicates our staffing needs for the pre-operational year and throughout the charter term. Note that this draft staffing plan will be revised, particularly in terms of special education and ELL/ESL staffing once we know the needs of our enrolled students.

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
		Pre-Ops	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	Enrollment	0	190	249	360	460	560
STAFFING:	Classes	0	9	12	16	20	24
Principals, Directors, Coordinators							
	Principal	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Assistant Principal				1.0	1.0	1.0
	Director of Ops & Finance	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
	College and Career Pathway Coordinator		0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Special Education Coordinator		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Instructional Coach		0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Subtotal	1.0	4.0	4.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Administrative Staff							
	IT Coordinator		1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	2.0
	Admin Asst	0.5	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Subtotal	0.5	2.0	2.0	3.5	3.5	4.0
Teachers - Regular							
	Classroom Teacher		9.0	12.0	16.0	20.0	24.0
	Subtotal	0.0	9.0	12.0	16.0	20.0	24.0
Substitute Teacher							
	Building Substitute		1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Subtotal	0.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Teaching Assistants							
	Teacher Aides		2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Subtotal	0.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Specialty Teachers							
	Technology		0.5	1.0	1.5	2.0	3.0
	Consultant Teachers (Spec Ed certified)		3.0	5.0	6.0	7.0	8.0
	AIS Teacher		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
	English (Gr 6+ only)						1.0
	Math (Gr 6+ only)						1.0
	Science (Gr 6+ only)						1.0
	Social Studies (Gr 6+ only)						1.0
	ELL/ESL		0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Spanish		1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Media Specialist		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Media Aide		0.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
	Art		0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Music		0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Physical Education		1.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	4.0
	Subtotal	0.0	8.5	11.5	16.5	20.0	27.0
Therapists / Counselors							
	Counselor		1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0

	Behavior Intervention Specialist		0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Speech & Language Therapist		1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Family Support Coordinator		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Subtotal	0.0	3.5	4.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Other (Non-Instructional)							
	Food Service		1.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0
	Nurse - <i>n/a (RCSD-provided)</i>						
	Subtotal	0.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0
	TOTAL	1.5	31.5	38.5	55.0	63.0	74.0

Budget and Staffing for ELL and Special Education Students: RCCCS will engage an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) teacher who will work with staff to provide appropriate instruction to students, as well as work 1-1 or in small groups to help students acquire English. The ESL teacher will be 0.5 in years one and two and 1.0 FTE beginning in year three (this will be adjusted should the ELL population be higher than anticipated). RCCCS will employ a Special Education Coordinator, who will primarily be responsible for ensuring that appropriate services are provided to students with IEPs, 504 Plans, or any student who falls under the protection of IDEA, so that they succeed in school. RCCCS will also employ a Consultant Teacher (certified special education teacher) for every grade level team in grades K-5, a certified special education teacher who will be assigned to each of the grade level/subject area teams in grades 6-8, and a certified special education teacher for students who will receive instruction in a resource room setting.

Hiring and Personnel Policies: Please refer to Attachment 8(a) for a detailed description of our hiring and personnel policies and procedures, including the qualifications that will be used in the hiring of teachers, school administrators, and non-certified personnel and other employees. Attachment 8(a) also includes a detailed description of staff responsibilities.

Strategies for Recruiting and Retaining Teachers and Staff: RCCCS will have several recruitment and retention efforts in place to ensure that we are finding and retaining the most talented teachers for our students. We plan to develop a Human Resources Committee on the Board that will strategically advertise for open positions and establish partnerships with top teacher graduate programs in the area.

We believe that our key design elements are our most effective strategy for recruiting and retaining teachers. To illustrate, we will hold our teaching staff to the highest of expectations, but, in doing so, require them to deliver the student achievement results promised in our school mission. In addition to ongoing PD, planned time throughout the day for collaboration, and support staff, we believe that our competitive compensation package will assist in recruiting and retaining our teachers. Teacher salaries will be benchmarked against similar schools in the region and will include the following benefits: paid time off, holidays, health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, retirement plan, section 125 plan, short term disability, and long term disability. Furthermore, RCCCS will recognize staff for their dedication and hard work and will prioritize work life balance, particularly for teachers. For instance, we will include public recognition for teachers who are going above and beyond; we will highlight effective teacher practices and innovative solutions; and we will invite teachers who are doing well to take on more leadership roles. At the same time, staff retention will be a focus area for our school, as we know the longer we keep teachers on staff, the greater their opportunity for continued development and increased student impact. Therefore, we will make sure that our teachers are supported sufficiently by leveraging our operational staff, teamwork and collaboration, and the Leadership Team, so that they do not feel overwhelmed and burnt out.

Staffing Needs Aligned to the Mission, Key Design Elements, and Educational Plan: In

order to determine the staffing needs at RCCCS, we evaluated the key positions and management structures necessary for implementing and attaining the mission and key design elements of our program. While we believe that each staff member and position is integral to implementing our key design elements, following is a description of how our staffing needs support the implementation of our key design elements:

- Because of our **focus on learning and standards mastery**, we included an IT Coordinator, who will be responsible for assisting our Leadership Team and teaching staff in generating ongoing, real time student achievement reports, indicating which students have mastered a grade level standard, and which students have not. To help teachers ensure mastery, we have included Consultant Teachers and Teacher's Aides, who will provide targeted, small group reteach and remediation. The Consultant Teachers will also ensure that students with special needs are receiving the individualized support that they need to achieve grade level standards and IEP goals. Further, we have a principal, assistant principal, and instructional coach who will assist teachers will developing curriculum and assessments, and ensuring that teachers provide high quality instruction so that all students are able to master grade level standards.
- Because of our commitment to **PD in the Context of Teamwork**, our staffing plan includes both a principal, assistant principal, and instructional coach. These three roles will ensure teachers are provided with frequent and ongoing observations, feedback, and professional development. They will attend and provide support for PLCs, so that teachers can effectively collaborate and learn from one another.
- Because of the **school to career focus**, we included a College and Career Pathway Coordinator, who will oversee the college and career touches, business partnerships, and integration of college and career pathways into the curriculum. We also have a technology teacher, who will ensure students master foundational technological skills that will not only prepare them for success in their core classes, but also for future careers that will undoubtedly require the use of technology. The technology teacher will also collaborate with the College and Career Pathway Coordinator to ensure technology is integrated into the core classes.

Staffing Needs Aligned to Budget and Anticipated Enrollment/Growth: Our staffing plan will ensure that there is adequate leadership in place to implement and oversee our key design elements, allowing students to meet grade levels standards, ensuring ongoing collaboration and PD for teachers, and exposing students to a variety of college and career touches that align with their skills and interests. Our approach for staffing towards each of these goals is described more fully above. We expect students will need additional support so we invested significant financial resources into our staffing plan to ensure students had ample opportunities to receive support and more individualized instruction. Specifically, by including several special education teachers and service providers for both counseling and behavioral support, we will ensure a safe and positive school culture that will be essential in allowing students and staff to reach their goals. Similarly, our Family Support Coordinator will take the lead in engaging and supporting our families, making sure that our entire school community is thriving. Additionally, the operational staff will ensure that our instructional faculty can focus on student achievement outcomes, rather than operational issues, which often become a distraction. As indicated in the table above, as our student enrollment grows, we will add members to each of the teams to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of our students in all areas.

Plan to Attract and Retain Effective Staff: Please see above for our plans to attract and retain effective staff. We believe our school's working conditions and culture, in particular, will be instrumental in retaining staff members. RCCCS will offer competitive compensation in order

to attract and retain effective staff.

Salaries: Salary increases will be determined on an annual basis, and we will take several variables into consideration when determining whether or not a staff member is eligible for a raise, including, but not limited to, effectiveness in his or her role, as measured by our annual evaluation and student achievement data (as applicable); tenure with the organization; ability to collaborate with a team and increase the team’s effectiveness; and specific roles and responsibilities (i.e. leadership positions, involvement in extracurricular activities, etc.).

Addressing Human Resource Challenges: Despite our efforts, we recognize we may face human resource challenges down the line. In the event that occurs, we plan to employ the following strategies:

HR Strategies	
CSAT Support	We will rely on the talent pipeline locally, but we will also use the human resources support provided by CSAT.
College and University Partnerships	We will establish relationships with various graduate and undergraduate programs throughout Rochester in order to reach recent graduates.
Flexible Scheduling	As indicated in our PD section, we will prioritize retaining our top talent. If needed, and on a case-by-case basis, we will implement flexible scheduling policies to ensure our teachers are not forced to resign.
Investing In The Current Team	During times of shortage, we may be able to leverage the strength of our current team by providing them with different or greater opportunities that will allow them to grow and develop.
Recruitment Director	If the budget permits, we may employ a part time recruitment director to conduct ongoing outreach and recruitment in order to make sure that we have an established talent pipeline.

Using Student Assessment Data to Drive Key Human Resource Decisions: As further outlined in the Evaluation and PD sections, RCCCS will use student assessment data to drive key decisions aimed at the recruitment, evaluation, retention, and support of the leaders and the teaching staff. We will specifically seek to recruit and hire high achieving individuals with a track record of achieving academic success with students from low-income communities. Finally, student achievement data will be tied closely with our evaluation plan and will guide ongoing teacher coaching and support.

C.1. Charter Management Organization

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

C.2. Partner Organization

Name of Organization and Contact Info: As referenced throughout, RCCCS is modeled upon the Charter School for Applied Technologies, in Buffalo, New York. In order to fulfill our mission and objectives, and successfully implement our key design elements, RCCCS will partner with the Charter School for Applied Technologies Board of Trustees and Superintendent. The contact information for the Superintendent of CSAT, Efrain Martinez, is as follows: Mr. Efrain Martinez, Superintendent, Charter School for Applied Technologies, 2303 Kenmore Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14207. Mr. Martinez can be reached by phone at 716.876.7505 ext. 5102.

Nature and Purpose of Partnership: As further outlined in Attachment 7, CSAT will support RCCCS during the pre-operational year and throughout the initial charter term in curriculum development and implementation, including training and use of eDoctrina® software; talent recruitment and teacher and leadership development; and establishing and maintaining a positive and productive school culture, where students feel motivated and inspired about college and career opportunities.

The RCCCS Board, inspired by the excellent work of CSAT, is using them as a partner and resource in refining and implementing a similar program themselves. The attached MOU clearly lays out the partnership and the services CSAT will provide to the RCCCS Board of Trustees, including access to CSAT’s key leadership, all documents and tools necessary to guide the design the academic program, participation by the CSAT superintendent and Elementary

Principal on the search team for the RCCCS principal, PD, in addition to many other areas. The MOU also stipulates “any and all associated costs of the partnership are expected to be de minimus. However, RCCCS explicitly agrees that it will compensate CSAT staff for any time spent providing services to RCCCS that is outside of their regular work schedule and for any and all travel expenses incurred during visits to Rochester” (pg. 2). As described below, the RCCCS board will evaluate, on an annual basis, the quality of the partnership with CSAT.

D. Evaluation

Programmatic Audit: In order to ensure that RCCCS is being true to its mission and key design elements, on at least an annual basis, RCCCS will engage in a programmatic audit. This process will be conducted by CSAT. As articulated in the MOU, “Periodic monitoring and site visits from CSAT senior leaders to evaluate the academic program, school culture, and student achievement results, and faithful implementation of the model;”

School Leader Evaluation: The Board of Trustees will conduct a formal performance evaluation of the Principal annually. The purposes of this evaluation are: (a) to improve administrative effectiveness; (b) to encourage and promote self-evaluation by the Principal and the Leadership Team; (c) to provide a basis for evaluative judgments by the Board; and (d) to make decisions about continued employment with the School. The Board will work with the Principal to establish formal procedures used to complete the evaluation, which will be filed in the school office, and made available to any individual who wishes to review them. The formal performance procedures shall include written criteria, a description of the review procedures, provisions for post-conferencing, and methods used to record results of the evaluation.

Since the Principal will be responsible for planning improvements that directly address student achievement, school design, financial management, and student and family satisfaction, and achieving outcomes requiring strong leadership as an instructional leader, site-based manager, and as builder of school culture, the Board will align the evaluation tool to these competencies, and the sub-goals associated with each competency, at the start of each school year. Once the tool is completed, all trustees will review the tool at an executive session meeting to ensure understanding of the items assessed by the rubrics.

The Board will then have the opportunity to complete a review individually and forward the completed document to the Human Resources/Personnel Committee Chair. The Board will use qualitative (student surveys, staff surveys, observations, etc.) and quantitative (student achievement data, etc.) to rate the Principal’s leadership performance in each competency as (4) Exceeding Standards; (3) Meeting Standards; (2) Working toward Standards; and (1) Not Meeting Standards. The Committee tabulates the results, transcribes the comments, and reviews the results with all trustees in a second executive session. Once all trustees are satisfied that the evaluation results reflect the most accurate assessment possible, the Chair will meet with the Principal and review the evaluation.

Teacher Evaluations: The Principal will be responsible for evaluating all teachers and support staff formally on an annual basis. RCCCS will be committed to supporting the development of effective teachers and administrators. Plans for Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) of teachers and administrators will be developed in accordance with applicable laws, Commissioner’s Regulations, and the Rules of the Board of Regents. To that end, the primary purposes of the evaluations are as follows: (a) to encourage and promote improved performance; (b) to guide PD efforts; and (c) to provide a basis for evaluative judgments by applicable school officials. Informal evaluations, including observations, 1-1 coaching opportunities, or PLC support, will be ongoing and driven by the eDoctrina® data

reports, as discussed above.

The APPR for each teacher will result in a single composite effectiveness score and a rating of "highly effective," "effective," "developing," or "ineffective." The composite score will be determined as follows: (a) 20% - student growth on state assessments or a comparable measure of student achievement growth (increases to 25% upon implementation of a value-added growth model); (b) 20% - locally selected measures of student achievement that are determined to be rigorous and comparable across classrooms as defined by the Commissioner (decreases to 15% upon implementation of a value-added growth model); and (c) 60% - other measures of teacher/principal effectiveness consistent with standards prescribed by the Commissioner in regulation. The ratings scale based on composite scores has been established as follows: (a) Highly Effective = composite effectiveness score of 91-100; (b) Effective = composite effectiveness score of 75-90; (c) Developing = composite effectiveness score of 65-74; and (d) Ineffective = composite effectiveness score of 0-64. If a teacher is rated "developing" or "ineffective," the School will develop and implement a teacher improvement plan (TIP). Teachers with a pattern of ineffective teaching or performance, defined as two consecutive annual "ineffective" ratings, may be charged with incompetence and considered for termination.

Per the above protocol, RCCCS will use student achievement reports generated from the eDoctrina® software, performance on state assessments, and one formal and two informal observations throughout the year to complete the teacher evaluation. The observation component of the evaluation will be guided by the Framework for Teaching proposed by Charlotte Danielson. The framework is grouped into four broad dimensions: (1) planning and preparation; (2) environment; (3) instruction; and (4) professional responsibility. The first three aspects of the framework are directly observable actions and behaviors in a classroom or instructional context. The domains of planning and preparation, environment, and instruction are all included in the instructional observation. A rubric of expectations relating to each domain guides the instructional observation across the domains and can serve as a guide for the educator in targeted areas of professional growth. The fourth domain, professional responsibility, is not directly observable in an instructional observation, but is noted in a summative evaluation. The School will ensure that all evaluators are appropriately trained consistently with standards prescribed by the Commissioner and that an appeals procedure is locally developed.

Board of Trustee Evaluations: The Board will review the effectiveness of its internal operations at least once annually and will formulate a plan for improving its performance. The Principal and others who work regularly with the Board may be asked to participate in this review and to suggest ways by which the Board can improve its functioning as a decision making body. To conduct this evaluation, the Board will rely on the quantitative and qualitative evidence on the academic, fiscal, and operational health of the school. This evidence will include, but will not be limited to, student achievement data on internal and external assessments, financial audits, parent surveys, and evaluations of key staff and leadership.

Data and Process for Evaluating Educational Programs: As discussed in the Curriculum and Instruction section, the standards will be selected, unpacked, and mapped at the outset of each year, per the *Understanding by Design* approach. At that point, assessments will be selected or created, to align to these standards, and mastery will be tracked throughout the year using the eDoctrina® software. The teachers and administrators will use the student data generated from these reports to evaluate the educational programs, curricular resources, and strategies used at the school. The Principal and the Leadership Team will rely on student achievement outcomes based on these reports and direct observations to evaluate the educational program, including curricular

resources, schedule, intervention, instructional strategies and best practices, and PD. Reflection on the educational program will be ongoing, but the Leadership Team will debrief the program annually at the end of the academic year to note if any changes should be made moving forward.

Methods to Determine Progress Toward Achieving Objectives and Use of this Information to Increase Academic Performance: As discussed further in the [Assessment System](#) section, eDoctrina® can generate a host of different reports, disaggregating student achievement data by almost any known variable. As discussed in the [PD](#) section, the Leadership Team will use any trends from these reports to select topics for PLH and the full week of PD (RCCCS 101 and common planning time) that will occur for five days at the outset of each school year. The Leadership Team will also use these reports to glean best practices at the school, grade level team, and individual teacher level. Similarly, the Leadership Team will notice downward trends at these levels as well, and will provide supports during the common planning time, as needed. Since teachers will also be engaged in similar analysis on a daily basis with their PLCs (grade level teams), as described further in the [PD](#) section, they will be expected to be using these reports constantly to glean best practices around student learning and teacher performance, and to share those strategies with their PLC and the staff as a whole.

Information Used to Evaluate the School's Operational Effectiveness and Fiscal Soundness: Operational effectiveness will be judged via two broad categories of performance: (1) Successful support of the academic mission of the school within budget allocations, and (2) compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations pertaining to all aspects of school operations. The Board Finance committees will be responsible for establishing the measures and procedures necessary to effectively monitor performance with respect to these categories on a monthly and annual basis; the Board will assess and make any necessary modifications on an annual basis to support continuous improvement of operations.

The Principal and Director of Finance and Operations will be responsible for managing and reporting on school operations to the Board and relevant committees of the Board consistent with this framework. Any significant variances from expectations or other concerns identified in the review process will be assessed and reported to the Board for action as warranted.

In order to evaluate the school's fiscal soundness, the Principal and the Director of Finance and Operations of RCCCS will be responsible for developing and maintaining the annual budget and the five-year budget forecast. Each spring, an annual budget for the upcoming fiscal year and an updated five-year budget forecast will be developed for Board consideration and adoption. These documents will be based on current year-to-date actual data and year-end projections, as well as a careful assessment of anticipated changes in operations and the operating environment, which will impact revenues and expenditures in the upcoming budget and forecast period.

The budget construction philosophy will continue to be one of conservatism with respect to revenue and expenditure projections in order to protect the current and long-term financial sustainability of the school. The Finance Committee of the Board will review the budget and five-year budget forecast and recommend a final budget and forecast for Board adoption no later than May, prior to the start of the next fiscal year. The Finance Committee will review and report budget performance to the Board on a monthly basis. The review will include adopted budget vs. actual performance, projected year-end performance, and cash flow and balance statements. Key indicators to be reviewed will include: (1) Near Term Indicators: Current ratio; unrestricted cash on hand; and enrollment variance, and (2) Sustainability Indicators: Total margin; debt-to-assets (if applicable); cash flow; and debt coverage (if applicable). Any significant variances from budget or other concerns identified in the review process will be assessed and reported to the

Board for action as warranted. Materiality thresholds for budget amendment action will be established in the financial policies and procedures adopted by the Board.

Teacher Evaluation: Our plan for the evaluation of teaching that is aligned with the State’s approach to incorporating student status and growth data is described above.

Student and Family Satisfaction: Family and student satisfaction will be gauged in a number of ways. First, we plan to send out an annual survey to parents, which we will include with our “Intent to Re-enroll” form in order to encourage as many parents to participate as possible. The survey will ask about overall satisfaction in the following areas: school experience; quality of feedback on their child’s performance; principal and school leadership; teachers; communication and involvement; school transportation; equipment and facilities; safety and environment; and whether or not they would recommend RCCCS to a friend or family member. The results of the survey will be compiled and shared with the administration and the staff, in an effort to highlight and encourage areas of strengths and create a plan to address areas of growth.

We will also pay remain attentive to our wait list, as our enrollment is an excellent source of understanding parent satisfaction and demand, presuming that satisfied parents will express their satisfaction to friends and family, and encourage them to enroll. And, finally, we will encourage parents/families to be involved in the school as much as possible. We will ask teachers to make regular calls home each week to encourage parent involvement and solicit their feedback.

Publicizing Family and Student Results: Once we have collected the results from our family satisfaction surveys, they will be summarized, analyzed, and reviewed by the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team will draft a memorandum reflecting on the results, noting areas of strength, growth, and recommended next steps, based on the results and feedback. The Leadership Team will submit the survey results and the memo to the BOT. The BOT will review this information and make any necessary changes. From there, the Leadership Team will submit the survey results and a corresponding action plan to the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) for their review and comment. Once a final version is created, using the PTO input, the survey results and action plan will be distributed to families before the upcoming school year begins.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Organizational Partnerships: At the end of each academic year, the Board will evaluate the support received from CSAT, as outlined in the attached MOU, particularly as that support correlates with student achievement data, staff satisfaction and development, and Board and Leadership reflections and analysis. For instance, the Board and the Leadership team will highlight the areas that the partnership was most useful and the ways that it might improve in the future. To gather qualitative evidence, the Board and the Leadership Team will use surveys and written reflections for staff, and for the CSAT team, around areas of strengths and areas of growth. The RCCCS Board will communicate these results to the Leadership and the CSAT team to plan strategically for the upcoming school year.

E. Professional Development

PD at RCCCS will be grounded in our key design elements. During the initial charter term, we will rely on our colleagues at CSAT to support our PD design and implementation. They have graciously offered to share materials and best practices, and will participate in school visits, walk-throughs, and meetings to ensure successful implementation. Similarly, RCCCS staff will be able to observe and attend CSAT’s PD sessions throughout the year. Given their support, and the detailed plan that we have outlined below, we are confident that we will be on track to achieving the goals for our students set forth in our plan.

PD and Training Plan for All Instructional Staff: PD at RCCCS will include whole group, small group, and individual development. Whole group PD experiences will include all

staff and will take place at the outset of the school year for five full days and for two full days during the year. Small group PD experiences will occur daily during common planning periods and monthly during PLH. Individual PD will be ongoing and self-directed by each teacher's reflection and Leadership Team observation on his or her performance, as grounded in real time student achievement data, with the support of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Instructional Coach, or grade level team (PLC).

Effective implementation of our key design elements will allow us to achieve our mission. Therefore, the most critical component of our PD plan will be to ensure that our teachers and leaders are equipped to (1) lead all students towards mastering grade level standards; (2) effectively and efficiently execute a PLC meeting; and (3) align instruction and school culture towards a college and career readiness path. Each area is discussed more fully below.

1. Lead All Students to Grade Level Standards Mastery

This key design element is critical to our success. At RCCCS, we believe that the following components are essential understandings for our teachers as they lead our students to mastery of grade level standards. As a result, explicit PD will be provided in these areas:

- Establishing a long term, standards aligned plan that equips students for success on the state test or end of year assessment (as outlined in the [Assessment System](#) section);
- Aligning daily instruction to unit, benchmark, and summative assessments to ensure students are developing requisite content and skills and to ensure that all grade level teams have normed on how students will demonstrate mastery;
- Internalizing curriculum and content, including curricular resources and best practices;
- Following data driven instruction practices (tracking student progress using eDoctrina®, reflection on student and teacher level changes that led to student achievement outcomes, and discovering best practices and areas of growth based accordingly);
- Using tools and techniques to address any gaps identified at the teacher level;
- Using tools and techniques for reaching diverse learners, including students with special needs and ELL;
- Engaging, executing, and managing a classroom, so that students are positioned to understand and absorb content and teachers have the space to differentiate instruction; and
- Investing in students and families, by instilling the belief that the hard work completed at their schools this year will lead to eventual success in the college and career path of their choice.

As a result, whole group, small group, and individual PD experiences will be aligned to the essential understandings listed above, as described more fully below.

2. Effectively and Efficiently Lead Professional Learning Communities

As indicated above, grade level standards mastery for all students is a lofty goal. Our Leadership Team will provide teachers with the space and the tools for taking ownership over their own development through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), coupled with high leverage individualized and small group support from our Leadership Team.

PLCs will be comprised of grade level teams, including the consultant teacher, for grades K-5 and grade level and content area teams for grades 6-8. As indicated in our key design elements, student learning and achievement for *all* students in a grade level or content area will be the focus of all team interactions and meetings. The PLCs will be expected to work collaboratively in ongoing processes of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the

students they serve.²¹ The characteristics of effective PLCs are as follows: Shared mission, vision, values, and goals; Collaborative teams focused on student learning; Collective inquiry; Action oriented; Commitment to continuous improvement; and Results oriented.²²

An ideal PLC meeting, therefore, will begin with a reflection on real time student achievement data for all of the students in that grade level, as generated by eDoctrina® reports. These reports will contain disaggregated data breakdowns for a more in-depth analysis. Specifically, PLCs will be able to extract positive and negative trends in student performance. From there, they will explore teacher actions across the grade level or content area that may have contributed to student progress and student gaps in performance. Teachers will then be expected to note their own areas of strength and development, work with their PLC and the Leadership Team to improve in these areas, and tweak their instructional approach as necessary to yield improved student achievement results.

Implemented with fidelity, this approach will be a powerful tool in maximizing teacher performance to yield increased student performance. Therefore, the school wide PD initiatives will be based on providing the skills and knowledge that the staff needs to establish this community and continue to improve it over time. The Leadership Team will play a critical role in establishing the systems and space for this collaboration to take place and will work with individual teachers and grade level teams to constantly improve their PLC outcomes. Therefore, we will include the following components as essential understandings for our teachers to effectively and efficiently lead PLC meetings:

- Creating a shared mission, vision, values and goals for the school year;
- Best practices for reflecting on student learning (including data analysis);
- Best practices for collaborating and planning for next steps (with teacher and student level changes);
- Best practices for accountability; and
- Ongoing reflection on PLC effectiveness.

As a result, whole group, small group, and individual PD experiences will be aligned to the essential understandings listed above, as described more fully below.

3. Aligning Culture and Instruction to a College and Career Readiness Path

Our school culture and instruction must be aligned to college and career readiness standards in order to achieve our mission. As such, we will embrace the CCSS, which are designed to prepare our students for the rigors of high school. We will ensure that our instruction is rigorous and aligned by embracing the practices described more fully in sections 1 and 2 (above). It is also essential, however, that our teachers feel confident reinforcing a school culture of high expectations, grounded in a college and career readiness focus.

We will expect our teachers to understand how to incorporate college and career exposure to even our youngest learners and will focus PD efforts on the following essential understandings with our teachers: Establishing a culture of high expectations through PBIS; and Incorporating monthly college and career touch points into unit and lesson planning, while ensuring alignment to the CCSS and school curriculum. All teachers will be expected to perform these competencies with proficiency. They will receive direct support from the College and Career Pathways Coordinator on implementing these competencies.

²¹ DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker; 2007 PLC Institute

²² DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker; 2007 PLC Institute

As noted above, we will expect all teachers to attend PD at the outset of the year for five full days. During this time, teachers will attend the following sessions:

PD Session	Essential Understandings Addressed
Understanding by Design	Establishing a long term, standards aligned plan that equips students for success on the state test or end of year assessment (as outlined in the Assessment Plan section); Aligning daily instruction to unit, benchmark and summative assessments to ensure students are developing requisite content and skills and to ensure that all grade level teams have normed on how students will demonstrate mastery;
Core Knowledge Sequence; Balanced Literacy Framework; Instructional Strategies for Inclusion (i.e. explicit instruction, differentiation, and scaffolding); Understanding and Implementing Interventions; Strategies for Engaging and Supporting ELL	Internalizing curriculum and content, including curricular resources and best practices; and tools and techniques for reaching diverse learners, including students with special needs and ELL.
Data Driven Instruction	Data driven instruction practices (tracking student progress using eDoctrina®, reflection on student and teacher level changes that led to student achievement outcomes, and discovering best practices and areas of growth based accordingly); and tools and techniques to address any gaps identified at the teacher level.
Implementing PBIS at the School Wide and Class Level	Effectively engaging, executing, and managing a classroom, so that students are positioned to understand and absorb content and teachers have the space to differentiate instruction; Invest students and families, by instilling the belief that the hard work completed at their schools this year will lead to eventual success in the college and career path of their choice; and Establishing a culture of high expectations through PBIS.
Teach Like a Champion Strategies	Effectively engaging, executing, and managing a classroom, so that students are positioned to understand and absorb content and teachers have the space to differentiate instruction;
Establishing and Executing Effective PLCs	Creating a shared mission, vision, values and goals for the school year; Best practices for reflecting on student learning; Best practices for collaborating and planning for next steps (with teacher and student level changes); Best practices for accountability; and Ongoing reflection on PLC effectiveness.
Establishing a “College and Career” Focus	How to incorporate monthly college and career touch points into your unit and lesson planning, while ensuring alignment to the CCSS and school curriculum.

These sessions will be taught in whole group format during the five days of summer training and supplemented throughout the year as small group or individual support.

In order to ensure the summer professional development is sustained throughout the school year, teachers will receive small group PD during PLC time and during PLH which will occur monthly for 1-2 hours. PLH will address school wide gaps or trends in areas of development, as identified in the competencies listed above. We anticipate that PLHs for the first three months of school will provide continued training and support in PLCs and Understanding by Design, as these are foundation aspects to the success of our program.

In the spirit of “PD in the context of teamwork,” PLHs will be teacher led with the support of the Leadership Team. For instance, using school wide student achievement data, coupled with Leadership Team analysis and observation, the Leadership Team will identify gaps in teacher performance. If there is a teacher who demonstrates success in this area, that teacher will be tapped to design and implement a PLH for the other teachers in the building. The Leadership Team will support the design and implementation of the PLH, with the ultimate goal of empowering teachers and building teamwork. Similarly, the Leadership Team will work with teachers individually to develop them in the above competencies as needed.

Training Plan for New Instructional Staff: In addition to the training plan required for all

instructional staff, teachers new to RCCCS will be required to participate in a teacher developed, teacher-conducted pre-training called RCCCS 101, which will be adopted, modified, and implemented from the CSAT 101 training used in Buffalo. This development opportunity will effectively introduce the new staff to the RCCCS design, focus on learning, data analysis to inform instruction, special population needs, and general strategies for developing a culture of high achievement.

The RCCCS 101 training will occur during the first five August training days, for two hours each day. Similar to CSAT 101, RCCCS 101 will include foundational information, designed to orient new teachers to working at our school. It will include the following topics:

- **History and Landscape:** An overview of charter schools in NYS, including requirements to open and operate a charter school; the history of CSAT and RCCCS, including student populations and communities served;
- **Building Our Staff Community:** Staff introductions and ice breakers; professional etiquette; understanding the Professional Learning Community (PLC) structure; and overview of the employee handbook expectations;
- **School Operations:** Phone list, building map, and school logistics; protocols for field trips, extracurricular activities, and travel; master schedule; and student dress code;
- **Technology:** Computer policies and log on information; using technology securely; best practices; and understanding the eDoctrina® program;
- **Becoming the Best Teacher You Can Be:** Discussions and reflection on Harry Wong's *The First Days of School* and Doug Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion* texts; additional support on the "essential understandings" discussed each day during the school wide training sessions.

Evaluating and Reviewing PD: The most significant way to monitor the efficacy of our PD experiences includes the data analysis afforded by the eDoctrina® reports, participation in team planning and data meetings, continuous classroom walkthroughs using eObserve® protocols, and formal observations using the Danielson model. eObserve® is a component of eDoctrina®, which we will use to complete classroom observations and walkthroughs. This tool allows us to communicate electronically with staff regarding our visits in their classroom. All of the rated areas reflect portions of the Charlotte Danielson observation model. Through this program teachers and administration can have ongoing dialogue about the great things happening in the classrooms and also any areas that may need improvement. Similarly, the Leadership Team can collect trends from the tool to evaluate walkthroughs and observations. Surveys will be used to evaluate PLHs, full day PD days, and August training. The feedback gathered from these surveys will be shared with, and reviewed by, the administration and the staff presenters.

Ensuring We Address the Needs of All Students: All teachers, both new and returning, will be expected to attend a five day PD session prior to the start of the school year, where strategies for reaching all learners, including those with special needs and ELLs, will be addressed. These topics will be re-visited throughout the school year during PLCs and PLHs. The training will provide best practices for engaging all students in the curriculum, such as how to create a warm and welcoming classroom culture, and strategies for keeping all students engaged and on task from the *Teach Like a Champion* text. Teachers will review culturally responsive teaching practices to ensure that students can relate to the curricular topics, so that it is interesting and relevant for all students. Training will also include the Response to Intervention (RTI) model, the Committee on Special Education (CSE) referral process, IEP development and implementation, as outlined in the "Special Student Populations and Related Services" section. The training will review IEP report cards, progress monitoring and the

confidentiality of student records. During the course of each school year, teachers will be afforded the opportunity to receive PD, either on site or through outside in-service/conferences to update them on best practices for special education. Such training includes, in addition to other subjects, discipline, special education, and the intersection between the two.

Our Leadership Team will oversee this PD at the outset of the year, and will monitor teacher performance and implementation over the course of the year. During the school year, the Consultant Teacher for each grade level will be expected to support all teachers with effective strategies for differentiated instruction, and the Leadership Team will intervene if additional support or PLH are needed to address gaps in this area. Additional support will be determined by observations, teacher reflections, and student achievement data.

The Principal and the Special Education Coordinator will ensure full compliance with IDEA and state requirements regarding suspension (including manifestation and the determination requirements as coordinated with the relevant CSE), alternative instruction, and due process.

Establishing a Professional Climate: RCCCS will ensure that our training and PD programs leave teachers feeling prepared, supported, and equipped to meet the goals that they set for their students at the outset of the year. PLCs will provide an opportunity for ongoing collaboration and peer support, and they will support the establishment of a professional climate.

Teacher Planning and Collaboration: As noted above, teachers will have time to plan and collaborate in PLCs on a regular basis. This is further described above.

Building Organization Capacity, Sharing Resources, and Best Practices: Our key design elements embrace teacher driven collaboration and teamwork. To that end, we will expect teachers to own their development and be reflective about their practice. When teachers engage in ongoing data analysis, they are able to glean insights into what is most and least effective about their own practice. With the support of the Leadership Team, teachers will identify strategies for improvement. Similarly, teachers will be expected to identify and leverage their strengths with the team during PLCs or PLHs experiences. By empowering teachers, we will take a “bottom up” approach to PD, which we believe will increase teacher’s ability to self-assess and self-correct quickly and effectively, ultimately leading to more rapid improvements for students. Similarly, teachers will be deeply invested in this process, as they are generating and contributing to their individual and team development directly.

F. Facilities

During the first charter authorization period, we anticipate the following facility needs based upon our projected enrollment: 24 classrooms (three classrooms for each grade in Years 1 and 2, increasing to four kindergarten classrooms beginning in Year 3, and increasing to four classrooms for successive grades each year thereafter); gym and locker rooms; kitchen and cafeteria; 12 administrative offices, two computer labs; one art room; and one faculty break room. An assessment of potential sites in the City of Rochester has been conducted and two locations meeting the above criteria have been identified. The Board will continue to identify available space to ensure best quality and value, however.

1001 Lake Avenue: This facility consists of a 101,000 square foot building and has sufficient space and amenities to accommodate the needs of RCCCS. The facility has historically been used as a school, with a portion of the building currently being occupied by a parochial, elementary school for a student population of approximately 200. If selected as the site for RCCCS, there is ample space for the co-location of both schools.

180 Raines Park: This facility consists of an approximately 40,000 square foot building providing sufficient space and amenities to accommodate RCCCS through Year 4 as currently

constructed. The site has a long history of use as a non-public and parochial school serving grades K-12. It is currently unoccupied. Plans to expand the structure to meet the anticipated space requirements in Year 5 and beyond have been acknowledged by the building owner, and expansion opportunities have been identified by an architect.

For each of these sites the owner has agreed to make any necessary improvements to meet NYSED requirements. This includes making improvements necessary to provide appropriate access for students and adults with disabilities, plus renovations necessary to provide the facility requirements described above in a safe and fully-functional fashion consistent with NYSED requirements. In addition to those improvements, \$75,000 has been budgeted in the Pre-Operations Year for building renovations. We anticipate a lease cost, including the cost of renovations, of approximately \$17,000 per month in Year 1, which is reflected in the budget. For both of these potential sites, the owner is agreeable to an initial 3-5 year lease term, but is unable to commit to a lease until RCCCS has been granted a charter.

G. Insurance

RCCCS is able and prepared to secure the insurance coverage, which approximates the following, consistent with policies obtained by similar charter schools. The anticipated annual premium for such coverage is approximately \$40,000, and is provided for in the operating budget.

General Liability	\$1,000,000 per occurrence; \$3,000,000 aggregate	Automobile (non-owned)	\$1,000,000
Umbrella Liability	\$5,000,000	Workers' Compensation & Employers' Liability	\$1,000,000
Property	\$250,000	Student Accident	\$50,000
Business Income with Extra Expense	\$500,000	Catastrophic Student Accident	\$1,000,000
Directors & Officers Liability	\$1,000,000		

H. Health, Food, and Transportation Services

Health Services: The delivery of health services to the RCCCS's students will be largely accomplished through the provision of a nurse from the Rochester City School District (RCSD), as it is anticipated that RCCCS will be located in the City of Rochester and the vast majority of students will be drawn from this district. These services will include treating students who are ill or injured, dispensing medication, and maintaining student health records. The responsibilities will be performed consistent with policies and protocols established by RCSD to promote student well-being and ensure the security of confidential information. Below is a summary of important practices that will be implemented.

Parents and guardians will be required to submit current student health information, a HIPPA release and a photo release before the start of school each year as part of the annual school registration process. Student health records will be maintained in locked file cabinets accessible only by authorized staff. Secured information will include records concerning student visits to the nurse, medication administration authorizations, and proof of immunizations.

Compliance with NYS immunization standards for entrance into and throughout attendance at the school will be required. To ensure this is accomplished, parents and guardians will be obligated to submit current documentation of immunizations which meet state and federal immunization schedules. In those instances in which a physician certifies that an immunization may be harmful to the student's health or the parent or guardian holds a genuine and sincere belief against such immunizations, a waiver consistent with NYS Public Health Law may be granted. Many children who take medications require them during the school day. To ensure the safe and secure administration of medication to students, clear and strict policies will be maintained. In order to administer medication to a student the following conditions must be met:

- All prescription medications must be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacist or the physician.
- All over-the-counter medications must be in its original container and returned to the parent or guardian at the end of the school year or disposed of according to existing laws.
- The school must be supplied with a written order from a licensed prescriber.
- The parent or guardian must provide the school with written permission.

All medications will be dispensed by the school nurse or licensed practical nurse under the direction of the nurse. Other staff may be designated and trained by the nurse to assist self-directed students to administer their own oral, topical, and inhalant medication.

A minimum of two staff members will maintain certification in CPR and the use of an AED and Epi-pens. The Counseling Behavior Intervention Specialist will assume the responsibilities of the nurse when the nurse is not onsite.

Food Services: RCCCS plans to contract with an established non-for-profit food service vendor to deliver breakfast, lunch, and snacks to students. Selection of the vendor will be based on their ability and experience operating successful food service programs for educational institutions; the variety, appeal and nutritional value of their menus; their compliance with state and federal mandates; and the cost of the program. In addition, RCCCS will employ Food Service Workers with Level 1 and 2 Certifications onsite to serve meals. It should be noted that both of the facilities identified to potentially house RCCCS are equipped with a school kitchen and cafeteria.

RCCCS intends to participate in the School Meal and Milk Programs available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and State of New York. It is projected that the majority of our students will qualify for these programs through the direct certification process administered by NYSED. For those students who do not automatically qualify, applications will be sent to their parent or guardian. RCCCS anticipates that due to the high poverty population of the students to be served, the school may qualify for the universal lunch program through the Community Eligibility Provision.

In the event that all students do not receive free meals, families paying some or all of the cost of student meals will be billed in advance each month based on estimated participation. Adjustments for differences between estimated and actual participation will be accounted for in the following month's billing. The confidentiality of students' free and reduced price meal status will be maintained and the Meals Served Report form will be submitted monthly to the NYS Child Nutrition Program.

Transportation Services: Since RCCCS will be in the city of Rochester, RCSD will be responsible to provide transportation services to those students who provide proof of City residency and meet eligibility criteria for such services pursuant to NYS Education Law. Students who are non-RCSD residents and who meet eligibility criteria for public school transportation will be transported by their home school district; students who do not meet the criteria to receive busing will be responsible for arranging their own transportation.

Special education students will be provided transportation services in accordance with their individualized education programs. RCCCS will work closely with the Committee on Special Education on a case-by-case basis to ensure that appropriate transportation is available. RCCCS intends to utilize a school year that extends beyond that of traditional school districts', thus it is anticipated that RCCCS will have to provide transportation for its students for approximately 14 days annually when public school transportation is unavailable. These transportation services will be provided by a qualified vendor, which will be selected through a competitive

procurement process. An allocation has been incorporated in the budget for this expense based on projected student population and current industry rates. The school's Director of Operations & Finance will be responsible for coordinating all transportation services. This includes but is not limited to submitting the required eligibility forms to the appropriate school district transportation departments; coordinating communication with students' families concerning bus stop location and estimated pick-up and drop-off times; and educating and promoting bus safety to students.

I. Family and Community Involvement

Vision for Family and Community Involvement: The mission of RCCCS is to provide a world-class education to Rochester students so that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in both college and family sustaining careers. Our vision for RCCCS family and community involvement is directly influenced by our mission, in that we hope to involve parents as partners in furthering our primary objectives of ensuring that our students are on track and prepared to graduate from the high school of their choice, and ensuring that students are exposed to and engaged with a rich variety of college and career opportunities that will lead to personal and professional satisfaction and future leadership of our region. The vision, therefore, will be to engage each parent in our mission and objectives so that we will work in unison towards helping students reach these two goals.

Strategy for Family and Community Involvement: RCCCS will have a Family Support Coordinator to strengthen its students and families through school, community, and parent collaboration in order to promote student success and well-being. The Family Support Coordinator will facilitate and/or arrange a spectrum of services, such as: individual and family counseling; support groups; parenting groups; and referrals and information to outside community resources. This individual will assist the Director of Finance and Operations with other RCCCS services, including transportation, enrollment, and uniform purchases, making it easier for parents and families to take care of business in one trip.

Further, we will establish a PTO, which will plan events for parents and provide a means for ongoing and direct parent feedback and communication with the school. Additional strategies for partnering with parents in our efforts to prepare all students to be on track from the high school of their choice are as follows:

- Parents come to the school for registration, where we share information and an overview about upcoming program dates, the academic and behavioral expectations, and the college and career focus;
- In the fall of each year, all parents will be expected to attend a "Welcome Night," where food will be provided, and each grade level team will share the academic goals for the parents, expected means and times for communication, and the Student Handbook, with a particular focus on the SWPBIS behavioral expectations;
- Once the school year begins, all core teachers will be expected to contact the parents immediately to, once again, introduce themselves, and share the academic and behavioral goals for the upcoming school year. Teachers will emphasize the different ways in which they are available for communication such as classroom phone, voice message, email, and website portal. Teachers will offer opportunities during morning, afternoon, and evening for ongoing conferences throughout the year. Automated calls and multiple reminders using an automated system will also be utilized. If a parent fails to show up or to respond, the teacher will provide all needed information in a phone conference.
- Teachers will invite parents to partake in PTO meetings and extracurricular events offered at

various points throughout the year (student concerts, art exhibits, science fairs, etc.). Our strategies for partnering with parents as we seek to expose students to a rich variety of college and career opportunities are as follows:

- Invite parents into classroom to share information about their chosen career path, what they did to prepare for that career path, and how our students might do the same;
- Include parents on field trips to local colleges and universities, and on site visits that will allow students to observe various careers firsthand;
- Invite parents to join the class to read aloud or listen to a story about a particular career (particularly during the days leading up to a field trip or site visit); and
- Suggest readings, activities, and talking points for parents to implement at home or during the summer months about family sustaining career choices, and the importance of hard work at school.

Involving Parents: In our first charter term, RCCCS will focus our efforts on ensuring parent involvement from day one. Parents will be involved in planning, implementation, and program design of the charter school as described below.

Planning: We have solicited parent feedback on our programming through surveys and focus groups in order to help engage parents in the planning process. The feedback was very helpful as we think about the planning stages of our work and is described in the [Public Outreach](#) section.

Implementation: We will encourage the support of a PTO, who is responsible for planning social events, fundraising efforts, and encouraging parent involvement in the school through collaboration with teachers. In addition to the PTO, we will also have Parent Advisory Council (PAC), who will collaborate with the Principal and the Board on effectively implementing school policies. The Parent Trustee of the Board will attend all PAC meetings, and will direct all non-policy concerns to the PTO, to ensure that the PAC can focus their efforts exclusively on impacting school policy and governance. The Parent Trustee will attend all Board meetings and relay all feedback from the PAC meetings to the Board each month. In addition, RCCCS will create ways for parents to address governance issues via the website and develop a parent portal.

Program Design: As described further in the Public Outreach section, we solicited parent feedback on the elements of the program design, including college and career focus and the charter school option. Given the feedback, we have included the position of College and Career Pathway Coordinator; further, given the emphasis around smaller class sizes, attention, and emotional and behavioral support, we have ensured Teacher Aides are available for our younger students, that at least one Consultant Teacher, certified in Special Education, is staffed on each grade level, and that we have adequate staff to provide behavior intervention support within the building. Parents generally indicated great support for the college and career option, and students were excited about the potential to explore career choices.

J. Financial Management

The RCCCS Board of Trustees is comprised of several individuals who possess the financial and management skills and experience necessary to effectively structure, guide, and monitor the financial practices and performance of the school. These Board members include Mark Brewer, Chief Financial Officer of Loyola Recovery Foundation; Jeffery Miceli, President of Appliance Tec; and Norman West, Chief Executive Officer of West Advisory Group.

RCCCS will engage a qualified and experienced management consultant to provide the services identified below. The management consultant will operate under the oversight of the Board, the school Principal, and the Director of Operations & Finance. It is not anticipated that the school will hire staff to perform these functions.

- **Establish and maintain an accounting system compliant with generally accepted accounting principles.** This includes recommending financial policies and procedures for Board adoption, creating a chart of accounts, and implementing the adopted policies and procedures. Such policies and procedures will additionally provide for the appropriate safeguarding of financial data consistent with current data security standards
- **Establish and maintain an accounts payable and accounts receivable processes.** This includes establishing a segregation of duties to ensure funds are safeguarded and properly deposited, establishing controls to ensure that all receipts and expenditures are properly recorded, and identifying payments and receipts in sufficient detail to support preparation of monthly financial reports.
- **Establish and maintain a payroll system.** The consultant will implement a payroll system using a qualified payroll provider. Further, the consultant will include defining the payroll schedule and process, post and reconcile payroll, and fulfill year-end reporting and documentation requirements.
- **Establish and manage the purchasing process.** The consultant will recommend purchasing policies for Board adoption and will procure goods and services in accordance with the adopted the policies.
- **Ensure fulfillment of grant requirements.** This will include adherence to grant restrictions and reporting requirements.
- **Conduct routine daily and monthly accounting processes.** This will include but not be limited to processing deposits and disbursements, posting revenue and expenses, reconciling bank statements, and executing year-end closing of the books.
- **Manage monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting.** Relevant reporting will be delivered to all constituents including the Board, school Leadership Team, and NYSED as required.
- **Support annual independent audits.** The consultant will select and engage an independent certified public accounting firm to conduct annual audits of the school’s financial processes, records and activities, comparable in scope to those required of other public schools and in accordance with government auditing standards. The consultant will also establish necessary financial controls, prepare requested schedules and corresponding analysis, and coordinate with auditors to support accurate and timely completion of audit. The Board will review all audits, including meeting with the auditor in the absence of the consultant and school staff to assess the results. The Board will monitor all efforts by school leaders to address any deficiencies identified by the audit.

School staff (Principal and Director of Operations & Finance) under the oversight of the Board will be responsible for tracking and safeguarding student information including enrollment, attendance, performance, eligibility for free and reduced-price meals, and special education and ELL services. Education-industry computer software and other mechanisms currently utilized by other educational institutions for such purposes will be employed.

K. Budget and Cash Flow

Proposed Budget & Cash Flows. The RCCCS budget is informed by reviewing the budgets of several local charter schools as they relate to the specific requirements of RCCCS as well as by obtaining quotes from potential vendors when appropriate. Conservative estimates were employed throughout the budget development process to ensure the integrity and viability of the projections, as well as to incorporate an appropriate measure of financial resiliency in the event of unforeseen operating challenges. For example, the following conservative approaches were employed in constructing the estimates for the two largest revenue and expense categories:

1. **Per-Pupil Revenue:** No increase in the current (FY 2014-15) Rochester Central School District reimbursement rate is assumed over the five-year period.
2. **Personnel Costs:** Estimates include a 2% salary and wage contingency in addition to a 3% annual inflation assumption. The 2% contingency is available for annual performance incentives or to relieve budget stress as necessary.

At such time as charter status is conferred by NYSED, RCCCS will also pursue securing a line of credit as a standby mechanism for addressing potential liquidity issues.

Ongoing Budget Management: Going forward, the School Principal and Director of Operations and Finance of RCCCS will be responsible for developing and maintaining the annual budget and the five-year budget forecast. Each spring, an annual budget for the upcoming fiscal year and an updated five-year budget forecast will be developed for Board consideration and adoption. These documents will be based on current year-to-date actual data and year-end projections, as well as a careful assessment of anticipated changes in operations and the operating environment, which will impact revenues and expenditures in the upcoming budget and forecast period.

The budget construction philosophy will continue to be one of conservatism with respect to revenue and expenditure projections in order to protect the current and long-term financial sustainability of the school. The Finance Committee of the Board will review the budget and five-year budget forecast and recommend a final budget and forecast for Board adoption no later than June, prior to the start of the next fiscal year. The Finance Committee will review and report budget performance to the Board on a monthly basis. The review will include adopted budget vs. actual performance, projected year-end performance, and cash flow and balance statements. Key indicators to be reviewed will include:

1. **Near Term Indicators:** Current ratio; unrestricted cash on hand; and enrollment variance
2. **Sustainability Indicators:** Total margin; debt-to-assets (if applicable); cash flow; and debt coverage (if applicable)

Significant budget variances or other concerns identified in the review process will be assessed and reported to the Board for action as warranted. Materiality thresholds for budget amendment action will be established in the financial policies and procedures adopted by the Board.

L. Pre-Opening Plan

Domain	Action	Start Date	End Date	Lead Responsibility
Governance	Appoint board officers	Aug 2016	Sept 2016	BOT
Facility	Identify facility for school	Aug 2016	Sep 2016	BOT
Governance	Recruit Principal	Sep 2016	Nov 2016	BOT
Facility	Conduct facility negotiations and execute lease	Sep 2016	Dec 2016	BOT
Operations	Obtain 501c3 status	Sep 2016	Jan 2017	BOT
Finance	Approve fiscal policies and procedures	Sep 2016	Oct 2016	BOT
Governance	Ratify bylaws and code of ethics	Oct 2016	Dec 2016	BOT
Facility	Renovation: identify needs, secure contractor, establish timeline, complete punch list	Nov 2016	Jun 2017	BOT, P, DOF
Recruitment	Recruit students: develop and disseminate materials, host open-houses, door-to-door marketing	Nov 2016	Apr 2017	P, BOT
Finance	Contract with provider to establish payroll and other financial systems	Jan 2017	Mar 2017	BOT, DOF
Operations	Contract with provider for operations support (operations coordination [OC] human resources, IT, other)	Jan 2017	Mar 2017	BOT, DOF
Facility	Obtain Certificate of Occupancy	Jan 2017	May 2017	DOF
Staffing	Recruit school staff: draft job descriptions, post positions, interview candidates, check references	Feb 2017	Jun 2017	P, DOF
Staffing	Hire school staff: salary negotiations and offer letters	Mar 2017	Jun 2017	P, DOF
Academic	Research and secure PD	Mar 2017	Jun 2017	P
Academic	Research and secure curriculum resources	Mar 2017	Jun 2017	P
Academic	Research and secure standardized assessments	Mar 2017	Jun 2017	P

Technology	RFP for technology infrastructure	Mar 2017	Jun 2017	DOF
Recruitment	Hold lottery: secure system with preferences, conduct lottery, inform parents	Apr 2017	Apr 2017	P, DOF, BOT
Operations	Obtain student records: obtain permission from parents, contact previous schools, etc.	Apr 2017	Jul 2017	P, DOF
Finance	Approve budget for FY16-17	Apr 2017	Apr 2017	BOT
Operations	Secure food services: coordinate vendor evaluation of kitchen capacity, solicit proposals, select vendor	Apr 2017	May 2017	DOF
Operations	Secure transportation: contact RCSD and other districts of residence, provide required information, inform parents of options	Apr 2017	Jul 2017	DOF
HR	Finalize staff handbook and personnel policies	Apr 2017	Jun 2017	BOT, P, DOF
Operations	Develop and distribute student handbook	May 2017	Jun 2017	P
Technology	Install technology infrastructure	May 2017	Jul 2017	DOF
HR	Complete fingerprinting and background checks	May 2017	Jul 2017	DOF
Academic	Prepare school calendar and distribute to families	May 2017	May 2017	P, DOF
Recruitment	Conduct open houses for admitted students	Jun 2017	Jul 2017	P, DOF
Academic	Contract with Related Service Providers	Jun 2017	Aug 2017	P
Academic	Conduct home visits	Jun 2017	Aug 2017	P
Operations	Secure insurance policies	Jun 2017	Jul 2017	DOF
PD	Prepare Summer Institute materials	Jun 2017	Aug 2017	P
Finance	Complete Initial Statement of Financial Controls	Jul 2017	Jul 2017	DOF
HR	Complete staff fingerprints and background checks	Jul 2017	Jul 2017	DOF
Academic	Create lesson plans for first weeks of school	Jul 2017	Jul 2017	P
Operations	Secure IEPs and student records	Jul 2017	Aug 2017	P, DOF
Operations	Create a draft SAVE plan and submit it to SED	Jul 2017	Aug 2017	DOF
Operations	Purchase AEDs and train staff	Jul 2017	Aug 2017	DOF
PD	Conduct Summer Institute	Aug 2017	Aug 2017	P
PD	Develop staff growth plans	Aug 2017	Aug 2017	P

Key: BOT=Board of Trustees; P=Principal; DOF=Director of Operations and Finance

M. Dissolution Plan

In compliance with Education Law Sections 219 and 220, the school will work closely with appropriate NYSED representatives to develop and implement a dissolution plan that will ensure an orderly closure and dissolution process. We will utilize the matrix provided in the NYS Education Department’s *Closing Procedures Guide and Checklist for New York State Charter Schools*. The dissolution plan will include a process for transferring students and student records, including: IEPs, attendance records, student health and immunization records, and report cards. Prior to dissolution, the school will conduct a series of meetings for parents to provide information about the dissolution and to support them in making decisions regarding selection of educational programs for their children, including Rochester City School District schools, charter schools and non-public schools. The Board will designate one trustee and one school employee to oversee the closing of the school from an operational and financial perspective. After the employee termination date is established, the school will notify all employees of termination of employment and/or contracts, and notify benefit providers of pending termination of all employees. Employees will be notified of eligibility for NYS Unemployment Insurance pursuant to any regulations of the NYS Department of Labor. The dissolution plan will provide that all property, which the school has leased, borrowed or contracted for use, will be returned. The return of property will conform with contractual pre-arrangement, where applicable, or will be done with reasonable promptness. The school will accumulate a reserve fund of \$75,000 by setting aside \$25,000 each year for three consecutive years, beginning with the pre-operations year, to cover debts in the case of the school’s dissolution. In the event of dissolution of assets in excess of those necessary to meet liabilities, all remaining assets of the school shall be transferred to another charter school within the Rochester City School District as designated by the Board.