



# ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

## Proposal Narrative Template

### Proposal Narrative

#### SECTION I: SCHOOL

Please include a narrative of no more than 60 pages addressing the following questions. Proposal Narrative must address both the LDOE Common Charter Application as well as supplemental OPSB questions.

#### Academic Model

- (1) Identify your educational model. Describe the underlying theory that explains why your educational model will address the problem you have identified.
- (2) Describe the concrete structures, policies, and practices that you will implement in order to operationalize the theory you described in (1).
- (3) For all core content and mission-related subject areas:
  - Identify the curricula that your school will use and your reasons for these choices;
  - Identify the interim assessments you will use and how these align to the curricula;

#### OPSB Specific Questions

1. What is the evidence of success of the academic model you are proposing?
2. Is the model being used elsewhere? If so, where? What have been results?
3. You may include, as **Attachment 1**, any documentation supporting your curriculum and academic model.

#### **By focusing on growth, Collegiate Academies has created an academic model that serves all scholars**

Collegiate provides an excellent high school education to every student, regardless of their previous experiences or current abilities. Our staff, board, partners, and scholars are united in an unshakeable belief in the potential of schools to transform a child's life. We gratefully serve every scholar that enters our schools and have a student population with higher rates of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and 2+ Years Over Age compared to the city as a whole. Our success in generating transformational growth among traditionally underserved student populations is grounded in a theory of growth mindset. The research has increased in prominence from the scholarship of Professor Carol Dweck at Stanford University.

Central tenets include:

- Growth and improvement is always possible for every child and adult
- Intelligence can be developed through hard work and constant practice
- The right setting and supports can lead to intellectual growth for all people
- Adults can model this belief to students by acting as adult learners

#### **Operationalizing the Collegiate Academies academic model requires structures for both adults and children**

The success of the academic model relies on creating consistent practices that make the growth mindset theory a reality. At one level, this philosophy encourages consistent recognition of student success to reinforce the benefits of hard work and perseverance. Extended academic time gives students and teachers time to practice and refine

new skills and enhance intellectual growth. Tracking the progress of all members of the Collegiate Academies community is central to building deeper understanding of the distance remaining to accomplish our shared goals. This data is analyzed and integrated into the structures, policies, and practices that support our academic goals. Additional structures include:

- Designing roles to implement Collegiate Academies' academic model:
  - The Central Support Team (CST) ensures that School Leaders and Academic Leaders have the time and resources available to implement the academic model.
  - The Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI) provides extra academic expertise and capacity to individual schools and teachers.
  - Teacher leaders and deans provide coaching to ensure continuous pedagogical learning and improvement by all instructional staff.
- Universal screening and frequent data analysis are used to ensure all students are placed in the most appropriate, rigorous setting to accelerate their academic growth
  - "Double blocks" of Math and English/Reading are typically scheduled for all 9th and 10th grade students to accelerate academic progress and remediate skill gaps.
  - A robust set of specialized programs, detailed later in this proposal, are designed for students with diagnosed disabilities and more complex needs.
- Professional Development (PD) is offered to all instructional staff in the following forms:
  - Four weeks of PD prior to each school-year that focuses on content-specific standards and pedagogy training.
  - School-based PD every other Friday that focuses on school-wide instructional trends identified through regular classroom observations.
  - Professional Learning Communities every other Friday that provide teachers with the opportunity to learn and grow from peers throughout the CA network.
  - Network-wide, content based PD four times per year that focuses on developing content-specific knowledge and pedagogy.
- Assessments and checks for understanding are used frequently to benchmark progress towards larger goals
  - Exit Tickets are used to check for daily growth. Teachers are expected to achieve between 80 and 100 percent mastery of objectives every day, even if they must use time outside of class to individually reach all students.
  - Each school administers CA-designed interim assessments every 5-6 weeks on a coordinated schedule. Data is analyzed to create action plans to improve progress towards objective mastery.

**Curricula and assessments are created in-house and based on national and state standards**

Coursework at Collegiate Academies schools is focused on college readiness. To ensure that curricula meets this expectation, CA uses a variety of highly rigorous standards and materials.

- Standards differ between subject areas, but include:
  - Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English and Mathematics
  - National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)
  - Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)
  - ACT College Readiness and Advanced Placement standards, where appropriate
  - For all subject areas, an emphasis is placed on reading grade-appropriate text, especially non-fiction
- When interventions are required, CA doubles or triples the amount of time a student spends with the

material. A variety of materials and methodology are used for interventions, depending on the needs of the student:

- Really Great Reading
  - Read Naturally
  - Wilson
  - SRA Reading Skills and Strategies
  - ST Math
  - Eureka Math
- Collegiate Academies designs interim assessments aligned to CCSS and Louisiana state standards. Each school administers CA-designed interim assessments every 5-6 weeks on a coordinated schedule. Following testing, the network has a professional learning day devoted to analyzing the data and determining an action plan to address the root causes and gaps found. Data action plans ensure teachers are analyzing on the question and standard level as well as on the student level so that they can inform planning and intervention moving forward. Teachers also look at performance of students without IEPs and compare it with students with IEPs to ensure a small differential and adjust instruction as necessary.

**Evidence of success can be seen through a variety of indicators**

CREDO, the Center for Research on Education Outcomes at Stanford University, has performed rigorous, quasi-experimental analysis of academic growth at every New Orleans charter school since 2010-2011. Each student's academic improvement in Reading and Math is compared to that of "virtual twins": actual students in traditional public schools in Louisiana who share demographic similarities with CA students. The measure that CREDO utilizes is "days of learning", with higher figures indicating stronger average academic growth across an entire school population:

- In 2012, Collegiate Academies was determined to have 221 additional "days of learning" vs. their statewide peers
- In 2013, Collegiate Academies was determined to have 101 additional "days of learning" vs. their statewide peers
- In 2014, Collegiate Academies was determined to have 331 additional "days of learning" vs. their statewide peers
- In 2015, Collegiate Academies was determined to have 290 additional "days of learning" vs. their statewide peers

For every year of the CREDO study, Collegiate Academies ranked first in growth over every open-enrollment high school in New Orleans.

Collegiate Academies has consistently outperformed its charter peers and traditional public schools on the EOC exams:

END-OF-COURSE EXAM	COLLEGIATE			RSD NOLA			EBR			STATE OF LA		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
<b>Algebra I</b>												
Econ Dis	80	65	71	44	51	49	40	37	33	46	47	44
Afr Amer	79	64	71	44	49	48	40	37	34	41	42	39
<b>Biology</b>												
Econ Dis	67	66	51	35	52	44	34	44	38	46	51	46
Afr Amer	66	67	51	35	50	44	35	43	39	37	43	40
<b>English II</b>												
Econ Dis	76	68	66	47	53	52	63	57	55	67	64	63
Afr Amer	79	70	69	47	49	53	63	58	58	62	58	59
<b>English III</b>												
Econ Dis	55	63	64	26	41	43	40	40	46	46	50	52
Afr Amer	57	66	65	27	41	44	41	41	47	40	DNA	47
<b>Geometry</b>												
Econ Dis	74	67	69	33	46	53	34	35	39	44	45	50
Afr Amer	75	68	71	34	45	53	32	34	40	37	45	45
<b>U.S. History</b>												
Econ Dis	90	82	64	38	49	52	39	48	59	42	54	56
Afr Amer	93	81	66	39	48	52	38	48	60	37	48	51

Collegiate Academies has consistently outperformed its charter peers on the ACT exam and has consistently improved in comparison to state performance:

<b>ACT Composite Score Averages 2013-2015 District ACT Results</b>			
District Name	2013	2014	2015
Collegiate Academies	17.9	18.2	19.6
RSD-NO	16.3	16.4	16.6
State	19.5	19.2	19.4

In addition to test scores and academic growth data, Collegiate Academies uses college acceptance, matriculation and completion data to evaluate the success of the Academic Model:

College Acceptance Rate	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Collegiate Academies	100%	95%	98%
College Matriculation Rate	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15

Collegiate Academies	90%	69%	83%
RSD-NO	43%	47%	DNA

Collegiate Academies leaders participate in a wide range of national learning opportunities to experience and adapt the most successful elements of programs elsewhere to our school and community context. These include, but are not limited to:

- Achievement First - Charter Network Accelerator
- The Broad Center - Superintendent's Academy
- Charter School Growth Fund - visits and feedback among members of CSGF portfolio

**Operations and Schedule**

- (1) Describe a day and a year in the life of a student at your school. Provide a weekly student schedule and a calendar of special events that will happen throughout the school's inaugural year.
- (2) Aside from the academic structures you have already addressed, describe the structures, policies, and practices you will implement that are essential to operationalizing the mission and vision that you identified.

<b>OPSB Specific Questions</b>	1. Provide, as <b>Attachment 2</b> , School Calendar and Schedule.
--------------------------------	--

### **Typical “day in the life” demonstrates the joyful, achievement-oriented culture at Collegiate schools**

*The following is a fictional narrative based on the day in the life of a typical Collegiate Academies student in 11th grade. A weekly student schedule and calendar of events can be found in below the following narrative.*

I'm Joy and I'm an 11<sup>th</sup> grader at Abramson Sci Academy—the first school opened as part of Collegiate Academies. What's a typical day at Sci? Well, I usually catch the bus to school in the morning and when we arrive, we are greeted by name by our principal. From there we go through a uniform check—at first, back when I was a freshman, I didn't really understand why it mattered what we wore, but now that I'm older, I get it. Abramson Sci Academy is teaching us about respecting others but also about respecting ourselves. Looking presentable and taking pride in how I look helps me be confident and take on the day.

After uniform check, we head down our respective hallways and pick up breakfast. There, I'm greeted by our Junior Culture Dean. A Culture Dean is a teacher who is in charge of rules and class wide activities. They also work with our class representatives and head up our leadership team—twenty chosen Juniors who go through special leadership training.

When I finish up with breakfast, I head to homeroom. Our homerooms are split by our advisory groups (I'll tell you about those later), and in there we pick up our scholar slips. The slips are pretty helpful. They have all your grades from all your classes the day before on there, so it's easy to keep up with how you're doing. Our school also uses a points system for rewards and stuff, and the slips show you if you had any merits or demerits.

Morning meeting is next. It's basically where we get announcements for the day. It's cool because we can also give each other and teachers shout-outs. It's typically led by the class president, but sometimes other students will do it.

From there, we launch into our six periods. As a Junior, I have ELA, math, science, history, Spanish/ACT Prep, and computer literacy as my classes. Each period is a little less than an hour (57 minutes to be exact). People ask me what my favorite class is, and it's definitely computer literacy. In there, we learn all kinds of things about computers, like typing and how to code, but we also learn other important stuff, like how social media and technology are changing the world. It's really fast-paced, but I enjoy it because I walk out of there every day, having learned something new that I can apply immediately in my life.

One of my other favorite things about school is that after 4th period and before lunch, we have Junior Book Club. It's 30 minutes of uninterrupted reading time. We have a goal that every Junior will read 20 books by the end of the year. I'm already on 15! It's probably because at lunch, we can eat in the cafeteria or out in the courtyard, and sometimes if my book is a real page-turner, I take it out in the courtyard to keep reading.

At the end of the day, we have Advisory class. Advisory is sort of like a study hall/bonus class/mentoring time. When you arrive at Abramson Sci Academy, you are assigned an advisor and they follow you until you graduate. Your advisor is a mentor who helps you work through problems and keeps your family up-to-date on your progress. For example, when I first got to Sci, I wasn't really into school. I was pretty far behind, and I felt embarrassed. Plus, they kept talking about pushing ourselves to achieve our goals, but I was kind of lost and didn't even know what I might want to do when I grow up. My advisor really helped me focus in on the areas where I was struggling most (math and science), and we came up with a plan. She connected me with after-school tutoring and also showed me some online sites where I can practice even more. But, I think what was most important was she helped me figure out a direction for my life. I've always been really good with little kids, and I like helping my nieces and nephews. My advisor asked me if I had ever considered becoming a teacher. I hadn't because I knew that it required you going to college, and no one in my family has ever been to college. She helped me realize that college is within reach for me; I just have to work hard and plan well. I've gotten my grades up and now I'm prepping to take the ACT. My advisor is even

there to help me talk about stuff going on at home.

After school, if you want, you can stay for up to two hours to do a bunch of different extra-curricular things. Usually, I stay for tutoring, but recently I've also joined our basketball team, so I stay for practice too. Luckily, there's an after-school bus that takes me home, so I don't have to worry about how to catch a ride home. I love Abramson Sci Academy. You can check out my school's class schedule below.

Bell Schedule (M-Th)			Bell Schedule (F)		
	9 & 10	11 & 12		9 & 11	10 & 12
7:50 - 8:18	Arrival	Arrival	7:50 - 8:15	Arrival	Arrival
8:18 - 9:15	1st	1st	8:18 - 8:50	Period 1	Period 1
9:18 - 10:15	2nd	2nd	8:53 - 9:25	Period 2	Period 2
10:18 - 11:15	3rd	3rd	9:28 - 10:00	Period 3	Period 3
11:18 - 12:15	CP & Lunch	4 <sup>th</sup>	10:03 - 10:35	Period 4	Period 4
12:18 - 1:15	4 <sup>th</sup>	CP & Lunch	10:38 - 11:10	Period 5	Period 5
1:18 - 2:15	5 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	11:13 - 11:45	Period 6	Period 6
2:18 - 3:15	6 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	11:48 - 12:15	Lunch	Celebrations
3:18 - 3:45	Advisory	Advisory	12:18 - 12:45	Celebrations	Lunch

**“Year in the Life” highlights a balance between instructional rigor and vibrant school culture**

Please see Attachment 2 for annual school calendar and a characteristic annual calendar of a Collegiate Academies school. While each school develops its own unique culture, traditions, and community life, we anticipate our new high schools in New Orleans will adopt similar structures.

**Operationalizing the vision of a success CA school requires a range of effective structures**

While each School Leader has the autonomy to design structures, policies, and practices that are best suited to their vision for a vibrant and successful school community, a core set have proven effective across CA schools:

- **Advisory:** At the start of their tenure at CA, each of our students is randomly assigned a small, single-sex advisory group of 10-12 scholars, named after the advisor's alma mater. Over the four-year career of each scholar, advisory serves as a space for students to express and address their needs and learn the social and personal skills necessary for college success. Advisory also provides a connection for CA families to a single staff member at CA to guide their education, and all advisors are required to make regular phone calls home to parents, ensuring that parents are informed of key events on campus, understand their child's progress, and can make necessary suggestions and provide feedback as needed.
- **Mental Health Programming:** We employ at least two social workers at each of our high schools and receive additional mental health support from partner organizations including Communities in Schools and Children's Bureau. Through individual and group counseling and whole-school initiatives through our

Advisory program, we are committed to supporting every scholar through trauma and any other mental health needs. In far too many impoverished communities around the country, funding for mental health services is low or nonexistent. Therefore, CA provides students with counseling services through its Journey program. Journey is a therapeutic program for students with behavioral and emotional needs. Students supplement classes with group therapy, social and emotional learning and individual counseling. Students also receive transition services through internships.

- Extracurricular Programming: All of our schools offer a range of extracurricular, art, athletic, and other programming, including sports, photography, tutoring, debate, music, band, choir, and more. We provide a second round of after-school buses to ensure that all students have the ability to take advantage of this programming. Additionally, partnerships with organizations including 100 Black Men of Metro New Orleans, Bard Early College, and NOCCA help our scholars take advantage of arts, mentorship, and academic programming outside of the courses provided by our schools. We are always striving to develop new partnerships, find resources, and seek out new programs in our community so that our scholars may benefit from a range of opportunities.
- CARE is a network program that focuses on non-traditional discipline methods to increase the time that students spend in schools and to decrease suspensions across the network. Suspension rates decreased to 12 percent network wide, compared to 56 percent in 2013–14. We consider this a remarkable early success, but know that there is more work to be done to quickly resolved conflicts and misbehavior so that learning is disrupted as little as possible for the entire school community. All Deans and Behavior Interventionists receive regular intensive coaching from network experts and outside partners to grow their professional skills. School Leaders receive clear, actionable data reports on a weekly and monthly basis to track progress to goals on discipline, attendance, and GPA, with an eye to ensuring equitable outcomes between students with disabilities and the overall school data.
- College Counseling and Advising: Nearly all CA scholars will be the first in their family to complete higher education. They face a confusing, opaque landscape of requirements and choices after they leave CA schools. To equip them to confront this challenge, CA schools have 1-2 college counselors on staff to lead programming beginning in 9th grade. The most intensive support begins late in the 11th grade year: coaching through essays, applications, college choice, visits, and other critical steps. After graduation, our CA Next alumni advising team steps in to support with complex registration and financial aid requirements. Each student is assigned to a CA Next advisor who keeps in regular contact with them and provides a range of academic, social, logistical, and financial supports. CA's college counseling and alumni advising structures and programs are critical complements to the strong academic work happening in classrooms every day in our schools.

## Measurement and Remediation

- (1) Describe the systems you will use to reflect on your school's progress towards achieving its goals and to make course corrections as necessary.

**OPSB Specific Questions**

1. What are your assumptions about student baseline performance?
2. How will you verify these assumptions?
3. (If applicable), describe your high school graduation requirements.
4. What pupil performance standards will you use?
5. How will you continue to measure student performance against standards?
6. How are teachers trained to perform interventions?
7. What is the plan for pupil progression/retention?

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**Data allows us to assess our progress in reaching goals, identify gaps in student learning, and create action plans to guide our next steps**

College success is the ultimate goal for every scholar attending a Collegiate Academies school, and it is vital that we analyze and address all data so that we can better understand our progress towards reaching this goal.

The network sets learning standards by instituting network-wide interim assessments and establishing network-wide goals for academic success, college readiness, and college matriculation. The network facilitates school collaboration to support the analysis of data and the sharing of best practices.

Within each school, data will guide the curricula in every classroom and the creation or individualized education plans for each scholar. CA uses the following methods to acquire student data on a regular basis.

- Interim exams
- Classroom exit tickets
- ACT preparatory exams
- Diagnostic tests

Frequent assessment of instructional quality and student content mastery allows for the adjustment of curricula on a regular basis.

**Data from diagnostic exams informs our understanding and verification of student baseline performance**

Diagnostic exams are administered most frequently to entering ninth graders. They serve as a tool for assessing and monitoring the progress of reading, math and content area skills and knowledge.

- All students take the English and Mathematics MAP assessments to determine functional grade level and appropriate interventions. Regardless of incoming level, students are placed into a grade based on number of credits earned. Based on our existing student population, we anticipate serving a significant number of students with reading levels between 3rd and 6th grade and comparatively few entering 9th grade fully prepared for full high school coursework.
- Upon receiving the results of diagnostic exams, interventions are designed for scholars who require intensive reading and mathematics support. While some scholars attend an intervention course, others are targeted for guided instruction within their daily courses.
- Collegiate Academies schools have robust intervention programs seeking to close gaps in English and Math performance of incoming students. Goals are below:
  - Reading Goals: All students will make 2+ years of growth within one year of schooling, or reach a 12.0 grade level.
  - Math Goals: All students will take and earn a Good on the Algebra I EOC by the end of tenth grade. All students will score a 19+ on the Math section of the ACT by the end twelfth grade.

**The Collegiate Academies Pupil Progression Plan (PPP) abides by general requirements for a high school diploma as found in §2317 of Bulletin 741, in addition to new Jump Start Diploma policies in §2319**

The Director of Curriculum and Instruction will review promotion and placement decisions and their compliance with the local plan on a yearly basis along with the Chief Academic Officer and Director of Scholar Support, as needed. Any board member, superintendent, or parent/guardian may request a review at any time. The review will take place with the school-based team in addition to representatives from the network team. CA's Pupil Progression Plan (PPP) lists detailed and specific LEA Carnegie unit requirements and promotion requirements by grade level for grades 9-12. These are reviewed annually to ensure they are compliant with current state policy and best for our student population.

Collegiate Academies adheres to Louisiana Department of Education pupil performance standards. Baseline standards for pupil performance at all Collegiate Academies schools are based on LDE, OPSB and BESE expectations. In addition, CA incorporates ACT college readiness standards and Next Generation College Standards into classwork where appropriate.

**Scholar performance is measured through regular interim assessments and subsequent data analysis**

Each school administers CA-designed interim assessments every 5-6 weeks on a coordinated schedule. Following testing, the network has a professional learning day devoted to analyzing the data and determining an action plan to address the root causes and gaps found. Data action plans ensure teachers are analyzing on the question and standard level as well on the student level so that they can inform planning and intervention grouping moving forward. The teacher also looks at performance of students without IEPs and compares it to performance of students with IEPs to ensure a small differential and adjust instruction as necessary.

**Collegiate Academies has developed programs to train teachers to perform interventions**

CA believes in the unique potential of every one of our scholars and strives to ensure that each scholar achieves their maximum potential so that they are able to obtain their maximum opportunity. CA has developed the Intervention Leadership Fellowship (ILF) program as a tool for reaching these goals. The Intervention Leadership Fellowship is dedicated to enhancing and enriching mindsets and further develop knowledge and skills that ensure every child can achieve his or her most rigorous post-secondary outcome in our existing CA schools.

- The ILF is 4-month program that leads fellows to lead programs to achieve one big goal: ensure that every scholar will achieve his or her most rigorous post-secondary outcome.
- There are two big goals for this program:
  - To increase capacity within and outside of CA schools in Intervention Leadership
  - To build a pool of potential Directors of Intervention for CA as we grow
- Fellows spend their time focused on four key areas:
  - Mission, values, and background knowledge for Intervention Leadership. Mission and values of intervention team at CA; the history of Special Education in the US; CA mindsets for intervention; the relationship between intervention, special education, and scholar support; important policies in Louisiana that govern how we plan, organize and report on the services we provide.
  - The Continuum of Services: from Academic and Behavioral RTI to Evaluation. Example PDs include: how to develop strong RTI process for scholars to enter evaluation; how to write high quality IEP goals and run strong IEP meetings; how to motivate teachers to be present for evaluation dissemination meetings.
  - CA Outcomes Matrix and progress monitoring towards scholar outcomes. Example PDs include: defining what "most rigorous post-secondary outcome" means in practice; learning the CA

Outcomes Matrix; best practices for how intervention teachers and teams use data to drive their programming and results.

- Specialized programming and related services. Example PDs include: what makes a high-quality reading and math intervention; high quality programming for scholars with significant disabilities; high quality programming for scholars with emotional/behavioral disorders; how to lead a team for align speech services, OT, PT, to your overall program goals.
- There are three major program components:
  - Full Day PD: We will host two full day PDs, one kick-off and one follow-up
  - Evening PD: Between full day PDs, there will be evening sessions from November through February on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays from 6 - 8 pm
  - Excellent School Visits (travel required): The fellows will go on excellent school visits during the Mardi Gras break

In addition to the ILF, all instructional staff participates in bi-monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) groups. These content-based teams work together to improve classroom learning.

## School Culture

(1) List and describe the values that will define your student culture. Provide your plan for establishing and maintaining student behavior expectations that correspond with these values.

(2) Describe the system of policies and practices your school will implement for setting and maintaining student behavior expectations and norms.

(3) Describe the steps that you will take to invest staff in these values and norms and the steps you will take to sustain their investment.

(4) Define the norms that will shape the interactions between administrators and teachers and among teachers, the reason each norm is important, and the steps that you will take to establish and reinforce these norms.

### **Collegiate schools establish a vibrant culture of growth among scholars, families, and staff**

We believe our goals can only be achieved if we approach our work with a growth mindset: a belief that growth and improvement is always possible for every child and adult. This core belief acts as a foundation for our community culture.

- We build a culture of high expectations and sweating the small stuff. In practice, this culture is evident in practices such as:
  - Extended academic time: In addition to an extended school year, all CA schools have an extended day and operate with an intense focus on maximizing class time. For example, the average time between the end of one class and the start of another in most high schools is close to nine minutes; at CA, it is two and a half. Our scholars arrive to school early, leave late, and benefit from the proven success of an extended school year.
  - Celebrations of growth: One of the pillars of our programming is the consistent recognition of student successes. Research proves that rewarding students for positive behavior is the best system for classroom management. At CA, we focus on recognizing scholars for academic growth and improvement that demonstrates the benefits of hard work and perseverance. We offer students incentives along with praise, including: trips to colleges and universities across the country, meals

off campus with teachers and staff, free books, and free clothing.

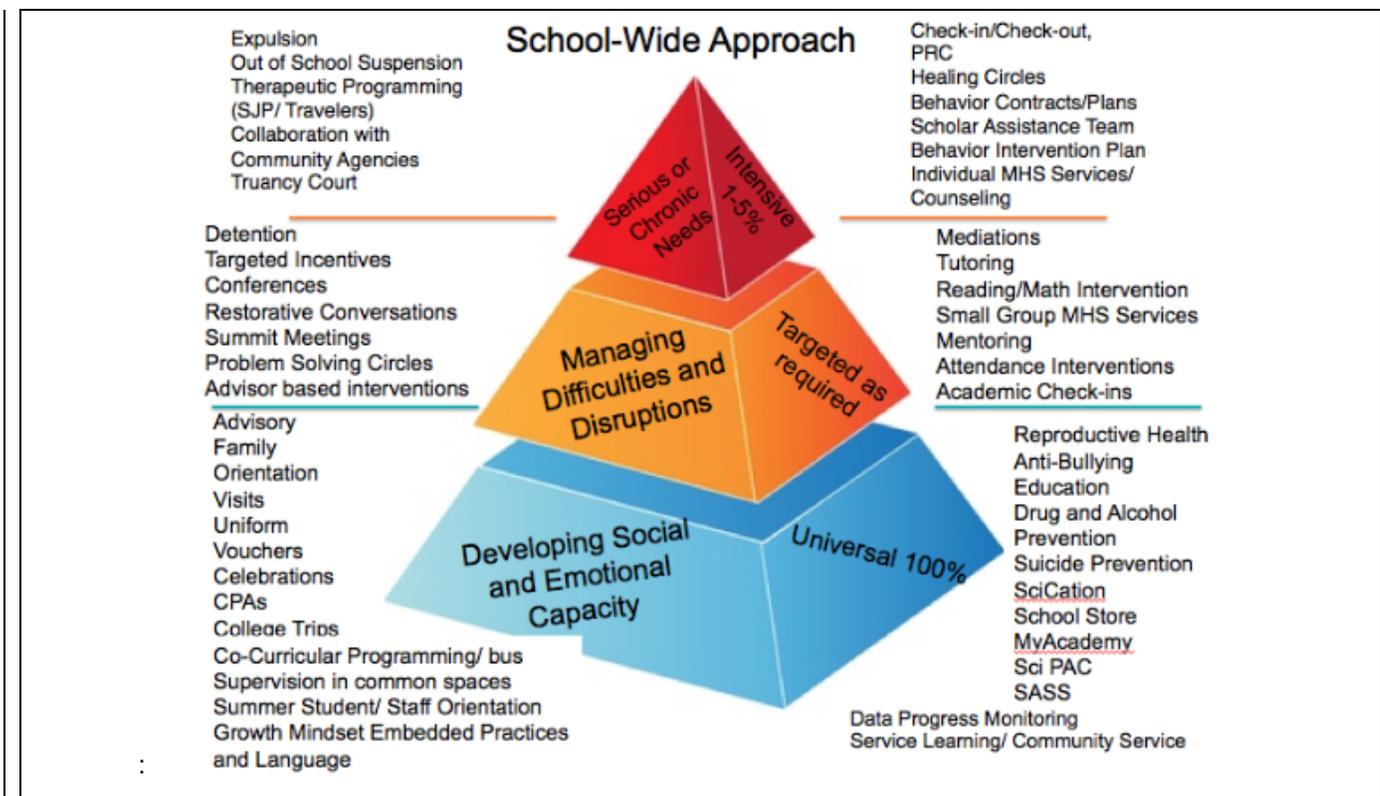
- We leverage relationships to remove barriers to learning. Teaching is not just about the delivery of curricula. It requires a connection with students founded in mutual trust and respect. We build relationships with students and families through the following programs and structures:
  - Advisory: Advisory is the nerve center of student life at CA. At the start of their tenure at CA, each of our students is randomly assigned a small, single-sex advisory group of 10-12 scholars, named after the advisor's alma mater. Over the four-year career of each scholar, advisory serves as a space for students to express and address their needs and learn the social and personal skill necessary for college success. Advisory also provides the opportunity for CA families to connect with a single staff member who will guide their scholars' education.
  - Family Visits: Preparing scholars for college success requires our team to be intimately involved in their lives both at school and at home. Our schools are different from other schools, and we realize that it is important to be transparent about these differences from the beginning of a scholar's time with us. For this reason, every scholar and their family will receive a visit from representatives of the CA team before the school year begins.
  - Parent groups and events: CA maintains and develops relationships with families of our scholars through regular parent/staff meetings and frequent events throughout the school year. These meetings and events provide the opportunity for families to provide feedback, for parents to receive information, and for staff and families to spend time together.

#### **Our behavior norms and structures are grounded in restorative practices**

We take a school-wide approach to prevention and intervention in order to create a learning environment that is structured and supportive of all scholars. We implement restorative practices and a behavior continuum to ensure that scholars are receiving the individual support necessary for success. Our continuum of academic and behavioral support includes:

- Tier I: School wide rituals and routines for learners. These are our school-wide approaches with provide the most elemental and simplest forms of structure. They include all of our rituals and routines, expectations, rules, procedures, classroom structures along with universal screeners and diagnostics for academics and behavior.
- Tier II: Specialized interventions for certain learners and for learners who are at-risk for academic and/or social struggle due to academic or behavioral challenges. These are the extra supports, structures and services that we provide to targeted groups and/or those students who aren't being completely successful with just the foundational services. They include: mentoring, restorative activities, behavior plans, academic recovery systems, etc.
- Tier III: Individualized interventions for students with intense/chronic behavior and/or academic challenges. This includes the intensive interventions we must make on an individual basis to help students be successful and to maintain order and safety in our school environment. They include: special education assessments, small group skill building, individual mental and behavioral therapy and referral to community support services, etc.

The following graphic outlines some of the programming that we implement at each tier



**Staff investment in our culture is critical to organizational success**

An aligned team is a necessary condition for meeting ambitious goals around student learning. We believe our goals can only be achieved if we approach our work with a growth mindset: a belief that growth and improvement is always possible for every child and adult in our buildings. Investing staff in these values and mindsets involves:

- Hiring processes that are infused with CA values: While School Leaders have autonomy to hire the team that they believe will collectively achieve targets, CA hiring processes generally follow the same structure and philosophy. Conversations, tasks, and group interviews gauge candidates’ desire for growth and ability to implement feedback quickly and effectively. The process ensures candidates value deep trust across teammates and demonstrate a willingness to have candid conversations in service of scholars. Finally, the hiring process tests candidates’ flexibility and excitement about pivoting on a dime in service of shared team-wide goals. Notably, candidates are provided clear and uncomplicated ways to drop out of the interview process if the work environment at Collegiate does not match their educational philosophy or professional needs. The interview process itself serves to build and sustain a vibrant organizational culture by showing clearly what it looks like to be successful at CA.
- Whole group orientation to deepen practice of CA values: Once hired, the first expectation of new teammates -- and returning teammates -- is participating fully in a 3-4 week orientation. For new teammates, this is a critical moment to understand the principles and values by which CA operates: they see the commitment to growth in practice, they experience the openness and trust across teammates, they feel the weight of personal responsibility to bring their best self to the building every single day. For returning teammates, they are expected to reground themselves in these behaviors and demonstrate leadership by bring new teammates along. The content of the orientation also reinforces these norms and mindsets: we read articles and discuss as a group, we spend considerable time digging into our school’s vision, and we practice scenarios that will test our collective commitment to the norms that we agree will

make us successful. At the end of the three weeks, CA teammates are deeply invested in the principles that bind us together as a team and skilled in putting them into practice.

- Constant attention to sustain strong alignment of values: School Leaders embrace that a major component of their leadership is sustaining the vibrant alignment that they helped to foster by hiring well and by running an intentional orientation process. With support of network leadership, School Leaders build their understanding of the “macro” (structures, routines, annual events) and “micro” strategies (interactions, ways to praise, things to notice) that help them to shepherd an excellent team culture. Examples abound of successful leadership moves on both macro and micro levels -- frequent coaching meetings that reinforce both skill development and values alignment, daily “Value Village” morning routines to infuse the day with joy, “Sunshine” emails to spotlight exceptional team performance and student growth, and so on. While formal evaluations with 360-degree feedback are a critical structure, the hard work of building and sustaining an organizational culture happens on an ongoing basis. CA School Leaders embrace that work and demonstrate exceptional leadership in their work to create an aligned team that stops at nothing to meet the complex needs of our New Orleans scholars.

### **Culture of “Servant Leadership” ensures administrators remain focused on meeting the needs of staff in order to maximize student learning**

Collegiate Academies leans heavily on our core values, which drive every interaction, every decision, every program component, and every staff hire. These values guide Collegiate in consistently building the best instructional and support staff, the highest quality school leaders, and the most dedicated central network team:

- **Excellence:** We seek perfection in everything we do
- **Action:** We execute with urgency and never hesitate to do what needs to be done
- **Growth:** We pursue new and greater achievements always and eradicate beliefs in the limitations of children, adults, and all people
- **Teamwork:** We put collective pursuits above individual pursuits and prize success through collaboration
- **Love:** We rejoice in putting our scholars, our teammates, and our schools above ourselves and the conventions of our jobs
- **Joy:** We are thrilled to do what we do and believe that the constant demonstration of our positivity is critical to our success

As noted elsewhere, we believe our goals can only be achieved if we approach our work with a growth mindset: a belief that growth and improvement is always possible for every child and adult in our buildings.

The norms that best shape interactions to this end are best described as “Servant Leadership” -- the idea that leaders should seek to meet the needs of the people that they lead. In practice, this organizing principle pushes leaders to set clear goals, identify the legitimate barriers to staff reaching these goals, and partnering with staff to succeed despite inevitable challenges. Leaders must operate in a way that builds deep levels of trust from their team. They must communicate their decisions clearly and transparently, seeking input where appropriate to reach the best possible decision for CA scholars. They must demonstrate a true openness to feedback of all variety -- including constructive feedback -- in order to model what growth mindset looks like in practice. They must consistently make and communicate decisions that are in the best interests of scholars, never hesitating to do what is right for the families served by Collegiate Academies schools.

The norms among teachers take on the same ethos of Servant Leadership: build trust, communicate clearly, put the team first, gratefully and actively accept feedback from anyone in the building. The norms are reinforced in formal

ways outlined above, but the most powerful way to cultivate them is personal dedication and commitment to exercise them each day. This daily dedication to CA's core values and to Servant Leadership is the surest path to a strong team culture and transformational academic results for New Orleans scholars.

## Special Education

(1) Provide a detailed special education plan describing how you will ensure that all special education students succeed at your school. Describe plans for identifying, evaluating, and serving special education students. Include your staffing plan for special education.

### OPSB Specific Questions

1. What programs/services will be required to address each special education population:
  - Special Education Tier 1-2
  - Special Education Tiers 3, 4, 5
  - Gifted and Talented Students
2. What assumptions do you have regarding cost/revenue to implement these programs?

### Collegiate offers a full continuum of innovative programs to serve students with disabilities

The mission of Collegiate Academies' Scholar Support Department is to redefine what is possible for diverse learners by preparing every scholar to achieve his or her most rigorous post-secondary outcome. That means that all of our schools are maximizing the services they provide to each scholar to help them realize their potential. To ensure an equitable continuum of services, all CA schools must ensure foundational systems and structures are in place for students with disabilities. These structures include:

- Universal Screeners: At the beginning of each school year, we gather baseline data on literacy and numeracy levels through MAP, Stanford 10, Fountas and Pinnell and Key Math testing. This data is used to indicate the need for students who are: Exceeding expectations and need enhanced curriculum; On track to access academic content; Not on track, but are close to the median target for coursework and need to be monitored over time; Not on track, and need further screening and intervention,
  - Students who qualify for reading intervention take a mix of decoding, fluency, and comprehension coursework to quickly close reading gaps.
  - Students who qualify for math intervention take a pre-algebra booster course to ensure readiness for Algebra I.
- Individual student plans (IEPs) are created for students who are not on track and need further screening. These plans include the following:
  - Research based interventions for targeted academic skills
  - A notification process for students and families regarding placement in intervention
  - Appropriate progress monitoring instruments and the dates for further data collection
  - A team (SAT) that will meet regularly to review data and update the plan to meet the needs of the individual student.
- Specialized Programs to effectively serve diverse learners, particularly those qualifying for Tier 2, 3, 4, and 5 funding in the citywide differentiated formula. These include:
  - Opportunities Academy (OA): Scholars in OA have taken part in social graduation from a Collegiate Academies high school after completing their traditional 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade year, and are between the

ages of 18-21. Opportunities Academy offers individualized services to target scholars' independent living, community access, and vocational skills. Upon entering OA, the scholar and his/her IEP team meet to develop the scholar's person centered plan, or PATH, which includes his/her desired employment outcome. All services are then aligned through experiential learning that is heavy on internships to best prepare the scholar to reach the goals outlined in the PATH.

- The Journey Program (JP): The JP is a targeted program for scholars with disabilities who have the most intensive social-emotional needs, and who have not yet responded to less restrictive interventions. The goal of the program is to utilize a therapeutic setting to maximize scholar ability to achieve similarly to peers in general education classrooms, and ultimately transition successfully back to the general education setting to the maximum extent possible.
- Essential Skills: The Essential Skills program is designed to support scholars with lower incidence disabilities that require intensive supports to reach their goals and achieve maximum independence. Scholars in Essential Skills work to increase their levels in three major domains of instructional experience: literacy, numeracy and transition skills. With the support of teachers, paraeducators, Speech Language Pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, and adapted physical educators, the Essential Skills team works to create a holistic plan that addresses each area of need and ensure scholar growth through individualized and small-group service delivery.
- Strong Speech Language Pathology services for students whose exceptionality falls with Tier 1 parameters on the differentiated funding formula.
  - Network- and school-level experts collaborate to design and deliver the range of services to build scholars verbal and literacy skills.
  - Thorough progress-monitoring and use of data to drive programming
  - Collaboration and coordination with instructional staff, including Reading Intervention teachers and other content experts.
- Gifted and Talented programming that is responsive to the identified needs for accelerated work and an array of programming opportunities for students designated as gifted and/or talented (including in the performing or visual arts).

In short, our comprehensive curricula, programming and services reach all learners. Our work with students with disabilities draws in instructional experts and school leaders from across the country to observe how a public charter high school can truly serve all kids. As Collegiate begins to open additional schools in New Orleans and elsewhere in Louisiana, we will be able to further refine these programs to improve quality and academic and life outcomes for our scholars with disabilities.

### **Collegiate has refined a special education staffing plan to maximize student growth**

Support scholars with diverse learning needs requires a team of highly skilled professionals who are committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure all scholars are advancing towards rigorous post-secondary options. The following staffing plan is typical of a Collegiate Academies school. We anticipate a similar process to build an exceptional team for new charters in New Orleans:

- ~9 months before school launches: School Leader Fellow and Talent Team begin sourcing candidates for all roles, with a special focus on the founding Director of Intervention (DI) and founding SpEd teacher(s).
- ~3 months before school launches: DI is in place and begins work to build systems and teacher development programming for founding staff.
- Year 1: Team is staffed with DI (overall leadership of intervention programming), 1-2 special education teachers on staff (depends on scholar needs, which are inherently difficult to predict in New Orleans' choice system), and 0-2 special education paraprofessionals (again, depending on scholar needs). Additionally, 1 math interventionist and 1 reading interventionist, who serve both students with disabilities and students

who are academically behind from their middle school years. This level of staffing is considerable, given the size of the student population in Year 1 (140-165).

- Year 2: Typically 2-3 teachers and 1-3 paras. Teachers collaborate with DI, network leadership, and other schools to replicate successful programs that originated at Abramson Sci Academy and/or G.W. Carver (e.g., Essential Skills, REACH, Journey). Math/Reading interventionists grows to 3 total.
- Year 3: Typically 2-3 teachers and 2-5 paras. Core intervention programs (Essential Skills, REACH, Journey) continue to expand and add services. A 4th interventionist is added.
- Year 4: Same as Year 3. Prior to this point, all related services have been provided by network personnel shared across CA schools. By Year 4, a school's student population typically demonstrates enough need for a full-time Speech Language Pathologist.
- Year 5: Same as Year 4. With the school's first graduating cohort gone, school will open a "campus" of Opportunities Academy, CA's rigorous post-secondary option for students with moderate to intensive disabilities.

Our approach since 2008 has been to do whatever it takes to meet the needs of students with diverse learning needs. We will not hesitate to deviate from this staffing plan if unanticipated scholar needs emerge, or if our school community identifies an opportunity to develop programming that is better suited to supporting student growth.

#### **Our financial model makes conservative assumptions around specialized programs**

Alongside other New Orleans charter operators, nonprofits, and authorizers, we supported the creation of a multi-tiered differentiated funding formula to provide resources for the array of special programs needed to ensure all scholars receive rigorous instruction and grow each day. Our financial model assumes the formula continues in its same form and that funding levels remain largely flat over the next five years due to state budget shortfalls. Our cost assumptions are based off the actual expenses in our three current high schools, including average salaries, materials, and transportation costs. We have adjusted these expense assumptions as we have grown more experienced in building and operating educational programming for students with disabilities.

### **English Language Learners**

(1) Provide a detailed English Language Learner plan describing how you will ensure that all English Language Learners succeed. Describe plans for identifying, evaluating, and serving English Language Learners. Include your staffing plan for special education

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>OPSB Specific Questions</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What programs/services will be required to address English Language Learners?</li><li>2. What assumptions do you have regarding cost/revenue to implement these programs?</li></ol> |
|--------------------------------|--|

#### **TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

#### **Our programs for English Language Learners have developed rapidly over the last several years**

Collegiate Academies is committed to serving English Language Learners at the highest level. Over time, the proportion of CA's scholars who are non-native English speakers has increased significantly. In order to best meet their needs we have implemented the following programs:

- Every new student is given a translated orientation visit where language-minority students can be identified. The Director of Intervention is notified when a child is identified and diagnostics are given for placement in general education courses and for recommending ESL support and course placement.
- All students are given a Home-Language Survey upon entrance to a Collegiate Academies school. If a child was indicated by the Home-Language Survey as coming from a home where English is not the first language, they are given the Language Acquisition Scales to determine the current level of proficiency in

listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending English.

- We create individualized Language Acquisition Plans (LAP) for all ELL Students and provide comprehensive case management to monitor their progress, including follow-up testing three more times throughout the year. Students testing below a level 3 on the ELDA or a level 4 or 5 on the LAS Links receive instruction in ESL courses and transition out as their English proficiency improves.
- All critical documents are translated into students' home languages and all Collegiate schools maintain contracts with a variety of translation services including document translation (Bilingual Resource Group), phone translation (Language Line), and in person translation (Bilingual Resource Group). Translators are a part of major parent and family events on campus, including report card night.
- Staffing is tailored to meet the needs of each school's population. Each school employs an ELL chair, certified translators and ESL teachers. The number of teachers and translators and their language expertise is dependent on the needs of the scholars.

### **Our financial model makes conservative assumptions around specialized programs**

Alongside other New Orleans charter operators, nonprofits, and authorizers, we supported the creation of a differentiated funding formula that responded to the significant influx of ELL scholars. Our financial model assumes the formula continues in its same form and that funding levels remain largely flat over the next five years due to state budget shortfalls. Our cost assumptions are based off the actual expenses in our three current high schools, including average salaries, materials, and transportation costs.

## **Parents and Community**

(1) Provide, as **Attachment 3**, any evidence that you have collected that demonstrates that parents and guardians have committed to enrolling their children in your school (e.g. surveys, intent to apply lists, letters of commitment).

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>OPSB Specific Questions</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. How will you share information with Parents and Community Members?</li><li>2. How will you receive feedback?</li><li>3. What is the process for grievances?</li></ol> |
|--------------------------------|--|

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

### **Collegiate Academies communicates regularly with families and community members to receive feedback and ensure that stakeholders are aware of all instructional services and school programming**

It is the duty of Collegiate Academies to report to parents/guardians the social and academic progress of their children. We use a variety of methods to make sure that all pertinent information is successfully disseminated:

- Our advisory system creates strong interpersonal bonds between members of our faculty and the families of our scholars. These bonds serve as a foundation for all other communication.
- Regular phone calls between advisors and parents/guardians are a faculty requirement. Faculty members log all contact in our SchoolRunner system and are held accountable to meet their communication expectations on a quarterly basis.
- Parents provide critical input on all areas of the school through the parent organization, My Academy.
- Students receive a daily report on their academic and behavioral performance generated by the SchoolRunner system.

CA seeks feedback and partnerships from community organizations and the public, including through board meetings in compliance with state Open Meetings Law. CA employs a team of individuals tasked with communicating all initiatives and interventions to stakeholders, parents, and community members

- The Chief of Staff and Director of Communications meet regularly with these stakeholders to communicate the goals and actions of the schools as well as opportunities for stakeholders to participate in school programming.

- Collegiate Academies staff also meets regularly (at least monthly) with various members of the community.

**Collegiate Academies addresses all grievances in order to ensure a well-functioning school community**

Any student, parent/guardian, employee or employment applicant who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, creed, color, age, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, disability, or marital status may discuss and/or file a grievance with the appropriate compliance.

- A student or parent/guardian of a student who has a question or concerns may choose to seek the help of the building administrator or another adult with whom they trust, such as a teacher, counselor, nurse, psychologist. If satisfaction cannot be achieved through this discussion, the adult sought by the student should assist the student in reporting the incident, in writing, to the appropriate compliance officer.
- Reporting should take place, in writing, within forty (40) calendar days of the alleged discrimination.
- The compliance officer will commence an effective, thorough, objective and complete investigation of the complaint within ten (10) working days after receipt of the complaint. The compliance officer will consult with all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the complainant and the alleged violator, any witnesses to the conduct, and victims of similar conduct that the investigator reasonably believes may exist. The investigation shall be free of stereotypical assumptions about either party. The investigation shall be carried on discreetly, maintaining confidentiality insofar as possible while still conducting an effective and thorough investigation. Throughout the entire investigation process, due process rights will be upheld. No reprisals will be taken or permitted for truthfully asserting a complaint.
- The compliance officer shall make a written report summarizing the results of the investigation and proposed disposition of the matter, and shall provide copies to the complainant, the alleged violator, and, as appropriate, to all others directly concerned within fifteen (15) working days after receiving the complaint.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the compliance officer, an appeal in writing may be made to the Collegiate Academies Board of Directors within ten (10) days of receipt of the decision.
- The Collegiate Academies Board of Directors, within thirty (30) working days, will investigate the complaint and may conduct a hearing to gather additional information.

## SECTION II: PEOPLE

### Founders' Submission

*For the prompts in the Founder's Submission section, both the board chair and the school leaders should answer each question separately. The purpose of this section is to assess whether the proposed school leader and the board chair have demonstrated success in leading others towards meeting goals.*

- (1) What vision and goals did you have for the organization in which you most recently held a formal leadership role?
- (2) What were the most important strategies that you implemented in order to ensure that your organization met its goals?
- (3) How did you set up your team to help them in understanding their role in helping the organization meet its goals?
- (4) How did your organization both monitor progress towards its goals and remain on track to meet its goals?
- (5) What relationships did you cultivate both in and outside of the organization for which you worked? How did they help you achieve your goals?

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

#### Board Chair

*What vision and goals did you have for the organization in which you most recently held a formal leadership role?*

I am currently the board chair of Collegiate. My vision for the organization included:

- Outstanding academic outcomes for HS students reflecting high value add and growth
- Exceptional services to students with exceptional needs
- A scalable and financially sustainable model
- Growth over the medium term (5 to 7 years) to a 9-12 CMO with 7+ schools and serving 4000+ students.

Shorter term goals included:

- Creating a strong and diverse board
- Greatly improving community relationships
- Increasing teaching staff diversity
- Building a strong CMO central office
- Developing realistic and detailed 5 to 7 year financial/expansion plan

*What were the most important strategies that you implemented in order to ensure that your organization met its goals?*

1. Quickly brought on strong new board members with deep community ties
2. Worked with CEO and board to make sure all shared the same vision.
3. Set up a community relations committee on the board
4. Thought partnered with CEO and Board on need for very strong CFO, need to build strong CMO staff, of priority of training of future school leaders and for these needs to be reflected in financial plans, budgets, and fundraising efforts.
5. Held board retreat to do a deep dive on growth plans, finances, and governance
6. Refined and simplified CEO reporting to the board and the board's process for CEO evaluation, review, and goal setting.

*How did you set up your team to help them in understanding their role in helping the organization meet its goals?*

Boards are about governance, not management. This was made clear to all board members and candidates for board membership. The new board members do have particular knowledge of the community, finance, organizational structure and other areas that could be of help to the CEO /CMO. In such roles, the board endeavored to be a resource working as thought partners with the CEO. The board was very careful not to go directly to staff without the CEO's permission. The lines between board governance and management were tightly adhered to.

*How did your organization both monitor progress towards its goals and remain on track to meet its goals?*

Academic goals are perhaps the easiest to monitor through ACT scores, EOC scores, and school SPS. Further, we as a board, place high emphasis on effect size data from Center for Education Outcomes (CREDO) at Stanford University. All data is reviewed by the entire board, as we feel this is central to our mission to delegate to a subcommittee.

Other things are harder to measure, but we have reviewed them regularly as a board and in our governance committee. We also discuss them holistically at our board retreat.

Community relations measures include indirect data: % of students returning, One-App demand, in school and out of school suspension data, daily attendance, student and parent surveys. This is supplemented by direct discussions with community activist, and myriad individual interactions between board members and the community. Although it is hard to measure precisely, it is clear that community relations have markedly improved.

Financial planning, CMO staffing, the strength of the CFO, are again subjective. However, the board includes a number of members with deep experience in business and organizations and the improvement is quite evident. The five-year financial plan is robust and is reviewed at least quarterly by finance committee and about semiannually by the board as a whole.

Board Diversity is easy to measure. We have moved from 9 of 10 board members being white two years ago to a current board that is much stronger board and happens to be majority African American. As for board/CEO interaction, again, hard to measure, but it is extraordinarily better.

*What relationships did you cultivate both in and outside of the organization for which you worked? How did they help you achieve your goals?*

I personally and/or the board cultivated relationships with community activist, pastors, other community leaders, the RSD, the RSD superintendent, NSNO, and others. I feel that myself and other board members "leaning in" to meet with activist and community leaders was particularly effective.

### **Chief Executive Officer**

*What vision and goals did you have for the organization in which you most recently held a formal leadership role?*

I am currently the board chair of Collegiate. My vision for the organization included:

- To create and support schools that prepare all students for college success.
- To ensure every student that attends our schools achieves his or her most rigorous postsecondary outcome.

- To provide a stable and welcoming environment for our families and staff at all times.
- To successfully grow to serve over 4,000 high school students over the next 5-7 years.
- To eradicate beliefs in the limitations of children and adults and prove that extraordinary growth is possible no matter your age or previous experiences.

Shorter term goals included:

- To ensure our academic team has the leadership, skills, and resources to prepare all students for college success.
- To ensure we provide diverse programming at each of our schools that meets the needs of each student.
- To ensure the board is informed and has the data needed to make decisions.
- To partner with the community to provide transparency and opportunities for collaboration.
- To prioritize staff diversity and deeper understanding of racial equity.
- To create a strong executive team that can execute both the short and long term goals.
- To ensure that we have an actionable 5-7 year financial plan for expansion.

*What were the most important strategies that you implemented in order to ensure that your organization met its goals?*

1. Added academic experts at each school that provided supports to the school leaders.
2. Duplicated programs for diverse learners at each of our campuses so that every student has access to the resources and supports he/she needs.
3. Met regularly with my board chair and other members of the board to provide more information on the schools and seek their advice.
4. Discussed with school leaders the importance of strong community relationships, created actionable steps on how to accomplish this, and hired a community relations specialist.
5. Engaged our entire team training on race and equity and created steps towards concrete hiring goals centered on diversity.
6. Hired a new Chief Financial Officer and Chief of Strategic Advancement to ensure that we have the resources and can manage them appropriately towards our goals.
7. Recruited school leader fellows who are trained and ready to open schools in the planned time frame.

*How did you set up your team to help them in understanding their role in helping the organization meet its goals?*

Our Network Leadership Team includes all three school leaders and the managers responsible for academic success, operations, talent, development and community engagement. We meet weekly to ensure that all of our work streams are aligned and that we are meeting each goal in a timely manner. These work streams are tracked and discussed weekly so everyone is held accountable. In addition, we meet every week with the entire central support team to have tactical conversations about the goals that are being implemented and how their work fits into the bigger vision. We also discuss challenges that arise and track each solution so that each team member is held accountable to accomplishing their tasks.

*How did your organization both monitor progress towards its goals and remain on track to meet its goals?*

Our team monitors progress towards goals in several ways.

1. We have interim assessments. Collegiate Academies designs and administers CCSS aligned interim assessments every 5-6 weeks. Following testing, the network has a professional learning day devoted to analyzing the data and determining an action plan to address the root causes and gaps found. Data action

plans ensure teachers are analyzing on the question and standard level as well on the student level so that they can inform planning and intervention grouping moving forward.

2. We are clear about expectations for teachers and mission-critical partners. Teachers are expected to hit their end of year academic goals which are dependent upon the subject and grade level they teach. They are also expected to contribute to a grade-wide reading level goal according to the MAP assessment. Teachers submit weekly lesson plans and participate in weekly professional development sessions and professional learning communities to intellectually prepare the units and lessons they are about to teach. They also are required to analyze data on the daily, unit, and interim assessment level to ensure they are making instructional decisions rooted in student performance.
3. We are clear about goals for ACT, EOC scores and school SPS for each school. In addition, we closely monitor our data on growth from the Center for Education Outcomes (CREDO) as it is our job to take ensure that our students who, on average, enter on a 6th grade reading level, graduate from high school and enter a college of their choice.
4. We have scorecards for each work stream as well (operations, external affairs and community engagement, development, talent and school culture) and each person in our organization has bi-annual reviews to ensure that they are on track to meet their goals and are getting direct feedback. In addition, managers meet with their staff twice a month to ensure that their granular goals are being met so nothing falls through the cracks.
5. We have a five-year financial model and growth plan that is currently on track and being executed accordingly. We meet weekly to discuss our growth and work to solve challenges and ensure that we are making the appropriate progress.

*What relationships did you cultivate both in and outside of the organization for which you worked? How did they help you achieve your goals?*

I have worked hard to cultivate a relationship with our board chair and other members of the board. I want them to feel comfortable asking for information and holding me accountable to our goals. In addition, I have worked to cultivate relationships with other CMO and school leaders in our city and around the country to learn from best practices they implement. Collegiate Academies is a member of the first cohort of Charter Network Accelerators, which provides promising CMOs training on best practices cultivated by charter school colleagues around the country and provides opportunities to problem-solve with experienced charter and education leaders. I am a member of many selective professional associations that support my development, including the Pahara Institute and the Broad Superintendents Academy. I also have relationships with funders in the city and across the country so that I can accurately express how Collegiate is working towards our goals and what additional support is needed to help us meet those goals. Finally, I have met with community stakeholders to hear their thoughts on our schools and how they would like to be involved in ensuring their success. These relationships are shared with the school leaders who have the most direct impact on schools in citizens' communities.

## Governing Board

- (1) Describe the role that each board member will play on the board.
- (2) Include, as **Attachment 4**, a Board Member Information form for each board member.
- (3) Describe the process by which your board identifies potential conflicts of interest before making decisions.
- (2) Provide evidence of the board’s readiness to leverage and sustain relationships with key stakeholders.
- (3) Describe the steps the board will take to ensure that the school leader keeps the school on track to achieve its vision.

<b>OPSB Specific Questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How will board operate?</li> <li>2. Describe how the board will operate in order to comply with key policy requirements?</li> <li>3. What checks and balances will be performed to ensure compliance?</li> <li>4. Describe the roles and responsibilities involved in board operations, coordination, and compliance?</li> <li>5. Provide evidence of the board’s readiness to leverage and sustain relationships with key stakeholders.</li> <li>6. Describe the steps the board will take to ensure that the school leader keeps the school on track to achieve its vision.</li> </ol>
--------------------------------	--

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**An aligned, thoughtful Board of Directors is critical to Collegiate’s success**  
 Collegiate Academies will continue to develop an active, strong Board of Directors that is representative of our community and will play a crucial role in supporting our strategic growth. The Board will oversee the management of the business, affairs, and property of CA. Regular meetings will be held at times and places determined by the Board, and notice of meetings will be given in compliance with the Louisiana State Open Meetings law, La. R.S. 42:4.1 et seq. CA will maintain a Board of at least seven (7) individuals and will elect or appoint committees for focused discussion of critical organizational issues. No member of the Board will receive any salary or compensation for their services.

**Roles on the CA Board are designed to provide oversight and help the organization reach its goals**  
 To ensure efficient and effective carrying out of Board duties, the following positions will be designated:

- **Chairperson:** Preside at all meetings of the Board. Has general charge and supervision of the administration of the affairs and business of the CA. He or she shall have the power to sign all contracts authorized specifically by the Board, to execute and deliver other documents and instruments, and to sign checks, drafts, notes and orders for the payment of money. The Chair shall also have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may from time to time prescribe.
- **Vice Chair:** In the absence or disability of the Chair, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chair. The Vice Chair may have such powers and perform such duties as may be delegated by the Chairman or prescribed by the Board.
- **Secretary:** Responsible for the maintenance of an accurate record of all the minutes of all meetings of the Board and of any committees; serve or cause to be served all notices of the Corporation; be custodian of the records (other than financial); perform other duties as assigned. In the event of absence or disability of the Secretary, the Board of Directors may appoint an Assistant Secretary to perform the duties of the Secretary during such absence or disability.
- **Treasurer:** Assist the Board in the oversight of the CA's financial management but shall not participate therein. The Treasurer shall also serve as the Chair of the selection committee for the auditor engaged to conduct the annual audit.

- All other members shall attend all meetings to actively and thoughtfully oversee the management of CA.

Board members receive training and information from partners, such as LAPCS, in order to remain informed about key policy compliance goals and to equip them to ensure that schools are on-track to meet them. In rare instances where the organization learns it is out of compliance, the Board requests regular status updates and clear plans to resolve the situation.

**Board responsibilities are structured to help each CA school accomplish its vision**

Collegiate Academies' Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all schools and the central office meet their academic, fiscal and operational objectives. Collegiate Academies' Board of Directors responsibilities include:

- Bearing final responsibility for each school's academic success, organizational viability, and faithfulness to the terms of the charter
- Development and approval of the annual organization-wide budget
- Approval of all organizational policies
- Supporting the organization in fundraising, communications, and advocacy efforts
- Setting goals and reviewing strategy to continually guide the organization towards the fulfillment of its mission
- Hiring, termination and evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer

The board represents the diverse professional experiences and practical expertise necessary to support the startup and long-term viability of a charter network. Such experiences and expertise include education, finance, law, non-profit and community leadership, human resources and previous governance experience.

Each meeting the Board receives a CEO Report on academic performance and strength of student culture at each school. Specific data points and indicators are presented with comparisons to prior years or peer schools when available. To ensure that CA has the resources needed to execute its vision, monthly financial reports are provided. Discussion and questions about the allocation of resources to the highest priority areas follows.

**Board has strong processes to ensure conflicts of interest are identified and avoided**

Demonstrating ethical behavior at all times is a non-negotiable obligation to serve on the Collegiate Academies Board. Our processes begin with clear definitions and standards in our bylaws. Ethics training and conflict of interest disclosures are tracked. There is a mandate placed on all board members to disclose so that board can discuss the possible conflict fully and transparently; if disregarded, board is empowered to take disciplinary and corrective action. With these processes in place -- and with a strong Board culture around selection and transparency -- Collegiate has successfully avoided all real and perceived conflicts of interests since its inception. We are committed to maintaining that track record indefinitely.

**CA Board members represent the organization and build strong relationships with stakeholders**

Selection of CA board members is guided by the goals of adding trustees who are aligned to the mission of Collegiate Academies, who provide needed professional expertise, who help to achieve ethnic and gender diversity on the board, and who help to represent the communities we serve. Board members regularly tap their networks to identify qualified professionals to fill open roles in the organization, including a recent example of CA hiring a Director of Community Affairs who came referred by a long-time board member. Additionally, board members support the CEO and staff in collaborating with partners in New Orleans and Baton Rouge to identify suitable facilities for expansion. Members' technical expertise and deep professional networks help to ensure all CA scholars are able to learn in safe, modern buildings. Finally, CA board members help to connect staff with community and religious leaders in neighborhoods outside our traditional areas served in New Orleans. Building

these relationships helps to build understanding and support for our model.

As we expand and consider growing to new markets, we will alter our board composition, structure, and meeting schedule as necessary to comply with all state laws. We will also focus, as we have in the past, on recruiting board members who understand the community, are free of conflicts of interest (as defined in the Louisiana Code of Ethics), who are deeply engaged, and are relationship-builders. With this combination of characteristics, CA is confident that as we expand, our board can successfully launch and support new charter schools.

**Dedicated staff capacity ensures that the Board can operate effectively**

Assistant to the CEO provides the bulk of staff capacity for board operations, compliance, and coordination. The CEO and Board President set an appropriate calendar and delegate the administration to staff. This includes securing space; ensuring agendas are set and posted according to Open Meetings laws and authorizer policy; drafting minutes, finalizing, and posting to network website; coordinating the compliance responsibilities of new and returning board members, etc. The CEO provides a semi-annual job evaluation based in part on the Assistant's success in accomplishing the above goals in a timely and professional manner.

**School Leadership**

- (1) Include, as **Attachment 5**, and **Attachment 6**, staffing plans and information regarding your leadership team’s qualifications. Provide an organizational chart. Include job descriptions that summarize the scope of work for all staff on the school leadership team.
- (2) Describe the standards by which you will evaluate teachers, how you will clearly communicate these standards and ensure that teachers stay on track towards meeting these standards.
- (3) Describe the steps the board will take to evaluate the school leader. Specifically, describe:
  - The standards - including and in addition to student performance goals- the board will use to evaluate information it collects;
  - The information the board will collect;
  - The systems by which the board will collect information; and,
  - The process(es) by which the board will evaluate information and make decisions.

**OPSB Specific Questions**

- 1. What role will each leadership team member play?
  - 1. If identified, how will their background suit the role?
  - 2. If not yet identify, how will leaders be identified?
- 2. What are evaluation, development, compensation designed to provide for quality leadership?
- 3. Describe your plans for leadership recruitment.
- 4. What qualifications will be required for each leadership position?
- 5. How will the school’s leader be evaluated? Please explain who will evaluate, frequency of evaluations, consequences, and rubric materials that will be used.

**Exceptional school leadership is critical to the academic and college/career success of CA scholars**

School Leaders have the autonomy to construct a leadership team that complements their personal strengths and areas of growth in service of scholar learning. A typical leadership team at a CA school includes:

- **School Leader** -The School Leader is responsible for successfully fulfilling the academic mission of the school and ensuring the school’s fiscal and operational health. To achieve these goals, the School Leader

will manage a team of operational and teaching staff of their choosing. The School Leader will report directly to the CEO and is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring all scholars are on track for success at selective, four-year colleges
- Implementing programs and systems to ensure that all scholars and families are satisfied with their education
- Ensuring the school's student enrollment process is open and accessible to all rising 9th graders in New Orleans
- Selecting and prepare top human capital as instructional and operational staff
- Managing strong operational and financial systems to ensure sustainability
- **Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI)** - The DCI provides leadership and vision in the ongoing planning, implementation, development, direction, review and evaluation of the school's curriculum and instructional services, federal programs, career and technical education services, assessment, research and evaluation services. The DCI ensures that daily course objectives in all subjects are aligned to state frameworks and to instructional practices that yield the highest standards of student achievement and instructional excellence.
- **Director of Finance and Operations (DFO)** - The DFO is responsible for creating and maintaining the facilities, operations and financial viability of the school. The DFO's responsibilities cover a wide range of areas, but are all guided by the core belief that scholar success is enhanced by strong school operations and facility maintenance. The DFO is responsible for the following:
  - Facilities and Safety:
    - Ensuring that all classrooms and spaces are clean, safe, and reflect the school's core values.
    - Managing vendor relationships to ensure the highest quality services.
    - Leading all auxiliary staff and support staff in upholding the school's cultural expectations.
    - Ensuring that school buses run on time each day and are safe.
    - Maintaining facilities to meet the daily needs of students and teachers.
    - Ensuring that the campus is secure during the day and after hours.
    - Managing the campus security team.
  - Office and Staff Support:
    - Ensuring that equipment (copy machines, staff computers, student computers) are always available and maintained for use by teachers and staff.
    - Guaranteeing that all requested materials and educational resources are available in a timely manner for teachers and staff.
    - Establishing clear procedures for staff to request material needs; hold staff accountable to those procedures.
    - Leading staff in responsible use and care of resources.
    - Making student information available at all times to teachers and staff.
    - Maintaining the main office as a calm, welcoming space.
    - Giving operations team members regularly scheduled development and hold them accountable to cultural expectations across the school.
  - Financial Management and Sustainability:
    - Following internal control policies as written by Collegiate Academies.
    - Approving and submitting invoices to Collegiate Academies for payment.
    - Accounting for and submitting cash to Collegiate Academies for deposit.
    - Reviewing and monitoring school budget.
  - Student and Family Services:

- Creating a main office that exhibits strong organization and responsiveness to ensure student, parent, staff, and visitor satisfaction.
    - Ensuring that breakfast, lunch, and snack are distributed on time each day.
    - Ensuring that the school is fully enrolled by the first day of school and has a waiting list equal to at least 10% of its enrollment.
    - Maintaining up-to-date student records, including demographic and academic information for each student.
  - Compliance:
    - Keeping accurate enrollment files on each student.
    - Keeping accurate attendance daily and ensure that daily attendance is 95% or higher on average.
    - Completing all state reporting in a timely and accurate manner.
    - Collecting 100% of lunch forms from students and families.
  - Team and Operational Leadership:
    - Leading the school operations team and vendors in ensuring every detail and every part of the day is well-managed.
    - Coaching operations staff and vendors towards excellence.
    - Serving as School Leader should the School Leader be off-site.
    - Delegating operational responsibilities across the school team.
- **Director of Intervention (DI)** - The Director of Intervention is ultimately responsible for all interventions in place across the school. As the head of intervention, the Director fills two key roles: the traditional role of a Special Education Coordinator and the person in charge of Response to Intervention (RTI) across the school. The Director of Special Education and Intervention works with the Intervention Teaching Team, our School Social Workers, and outside partners to make sure behavioral and academic programming across the school is meeting the needs of our scholars. Our ultimate goal: to fulfill our mission and create a model for High School Special Education and Intervention for other high schools across the country. The DI is responsible for the following:
  - Pushing all teachers, scholars, and families to identify the most rigorous post-secondary outcome for their scholars given their strengths and growth areas.
  - Creating Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or non-IEP individualized plans for all scholars in need of Special Education and Intervention Services, respectively. For scholars within Special Education, all IEPs must be created within the scope of the law. For scholars in need of intervention services, individual plans must take the form that will most successfully lead to scholars' growth.
  - Supporting their school team in executing the plans created by pursuing every possible solution to meet the individual needs of our scholars. This includes and is not limited to: needs-based scheduling, contracts with outside agencies or providers, technology-based solutions, mentorship, and community partnerships.
  - Creating systems to support these plans to track data easily and transparently, hold teachers and scholars accountable, and determine what is not yet working.
  - Executing systems, policies, procedures, and interventions consistently, ensuring that every detail is accounted for and nothing falls through the cracks.
  - Holding school team accountable for maintaining a rigorous bar and for executing plans effectively
  - Remaining solutions-oriented, even when we think we've tried everything.
  - Maintaining compliance and best practice by ensuring that all paperwork is completed by the letter of the law and according to the needed deadlines. The DI uses internal and external systems and ensure systems are updated regularly and with quality (SER, google docs, SchoolRunner).

- **Director of Mental Health Services (DMHS)** - The DMHS is responsible for providing and overseeing mental health-related services for students. In order to successfully ensure appropriate supports and services, the DMHS works with all members of the Collegiate Academies community. The DMHS's responsibilities include:
  - Student Support: Providing mental health-related services to students and overseeing the effective implementation of student treatment plans and mental health interventions.
  - Staff Support: Training teachers on effective classroom practices on mental health issues that affect students; Creating clear and actionable plans for teachers to implement; Providing feedback and support to teachers as they implement plans.
  - Family and Community Partnerships: Building strong family relationships and collaborate regularly on student plans and needs; Building strong partnerships with community agencies and secure resources for students and families.
  - Reporting and Compliance: Maintaining timely and accurate records for students and ensure compliance standards are met.
  - Leadership: Modelling excellence by showing belief in all students, exemplary relationship building skills with staff and students, clear communication, positive attitude and a strong work ethic.

### **School leadership tracks teacher progress towards their student performance goals**

The success of our growth-minded culture is supported by the constant progress of staff and scholars. To assess this progress, we review our staff evaluations and interim assessments.

- Teachers are observed and given feedback at least once a week and in many cases, more than once a week. Feedback is given during coaching sessions that occur weekly. Quick observations are followed up with an email synopsis of feedback so that the teacher can immediately implement.
- At least twice a year, teachers are rated using the CA Rubric for Excellent Teaching (See more on CARET in "Staff" section).
- Formal evaluations are written twice a year and are grounded in rubric performance and academic performance of students. Additionally, evaluations include qualitative data on how the teacher is doing with the core values of the school and the expectations for staff.
- Empower Talent: Finally, we believe that a critical component of empowered educators is a culture of development and constant support. Our schools are committed to providing every teacher we hire with consistent development and coaching so that they constantly improve and develop the skills and resources to identify holes in our model and suggest improvements.

Our schools remain nimble and responsive to any lack of assessment growth at any point in the year. We are always prepared to provide additional support for school leaders in need of strengthening staff and to alter curricula and teaching methods for scholars who do not progress at a steady rate. If we ever become aware of a program or system in need of improvement, we act quickly and efficiently to implement changes and support growth.

### **Collegiate Academies Board holds network leadership to high performance and growth standards**

As the governing authority for a network of schools, the CA Board focuses its evaluation of staff on the CEO, Ben Marcovitz. Each year, the Board holds Mr. Marcovitz accountable for five major areas, weighted by priority: academic performance; financial management; academic program fidelity; community satisfaction (includes students, parents, and teachers); and, fundraising/community relations. Within the five categories are benchmark goals—typically set a year ahead at our annual board retreats. The Board collects data from public and internal sources, including the Louisiana Department of Education and nonprofit partners.

The Governance Committee leads the effort to collect information and designs appropriate systems to ensure their approach is rigorous and data-driven. Depending on the number of benchmarks met, Mr. Marcovitz receives a rating of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) in each of the five aforementioned categories. Decisions about areas for improvement, salary, and termination are heavily influenced by this evaluation process. All board decisions require a majority vote by a quorum of the committee or full board, depending on the nature of the issue.

The CEO, in turn, evaluates and holds accountable each School Leader to ambitious goals for student achievement and other objectives. Additionally, the CEO evaluates network leadership, including the Chief Academic Officer, Chief Talent Officer, and Chief Financial Officer.

### **Leadership recruitment has largely focused on recruiting from within the CA community**

To date, our organization has primarily addressed shifts in administrative and instructional leadership roles by promoting from within. Collegiate Academies is dedicated to maintaining a model of continual staff development and frequent evaluation, processes that allow our organization to invest in staff and identify and train potential leaders in-house. As we expand, we are open to pursuing leaders with a strong record of student achievement and staff leadership in other organizations. Their hiring and selection process will mirror many components of teacher selection -- particularly the opportunity to observe candidates, provide feedback, and observe the candidates again as they implement necessary changes to their sample work. For non-instructional roles, we select on the basis of demonstrated performance, values alignment, and content expertise.

### **Leadership evaluation is ongoing and data-driven**

The CEO, Chief of School Leadership, and Chief Academic Officer collaborate to gather a wide range a data to inform the evaluation of new and existing School Leaders each year. In addition to clear goals around academics, discipline, and student retention, we have developed a rubric with nine (9) "strands" of effective CA school leadership. Within each strand are behaviors that were determined in partnership with CA School Leaders to be the critical capacities of a principal in a high needs high school. The nine strands and definitions are:

- Head and Heart
  - Self-Awareness: Reflects deeply on personal strengths, weaknesses, and leadership story, leading to confident leadership, a growth mindset, and the ability to show vulnerability
  - By Example: Serves as an exemplar of professionalism on staff by being consistently on-time, prepared, emotionally constant, high-performing, and trustworthy
  - Whatever-It-Takes: Takes responsibility for the success of the school at every level and is willing to do whatever it takes to see the school succeed. Consistently solution-oriented and refuses to externalize challenges or make excuses
- Mission, Vision, Values
  - Who We Are: Thoroughly articulates mission, vision, values, and core beliefs of all stakeholders about the school
  - Stakeholder Investment: Deeply invests adults, parents, community, and students in the narrative, mission, vision, and values of the school
  - Tenacious Reinforcement: Tenaciously reinforces narrative, mission, vision, and values at every level of the school. All school structures and practices are in support of school narrative, mission, vision, and values
- Driving Results: Culture Leader
  - Safe and Efficient: Establishes school-wide systems and structures that ensure a safe school environment that operates efficiently

- Culture Driver: Establishes, maintains, and evolves aspirational school culture. Regularly assesses school culture, sets culture goals, and establishes plans for achieving them
- Culture Lead: Consistently holds the bar for culture whenever necessary and models driving values-aligned expectations in any school environment
- Driving Results: Instructional Leader
  - Instructional Design: Establishes a clear vision and design for instruction that will achieve the school mission. Sets instructional priorities, goals, and strategies along with the necessary structures to achieve them
  - Development: Establishes and executes clear vision for developing instructional excellence in all classrooms and contents. Clear coaching and development structures exist to build content expertise, ensure intellectual prep for lessons, and provide practice and feedback on execution
  - Data-Driven: Establishes a vision for data-driven instruction in the school. Systems and structures are in place to ensure that teachers and students are looking at data to guide instruction and reach learning goals
- Developing Leadership
  - Leadership Expertise: Displays an extensive expertise in leadership practice and actively seeks opportunities to further develop leadership skills
  - Leadership Structure: Establishes a clear, ambitious vision for distributive leadership at the school including clearly defined leadership roles, teams, and methods
  - Leadership Development: Creates and prioritizes leadership development structures that ensure mid-level leaders are able to effectively drive school operations, culture, and student achievement
- Walk the Walk
  - Teaching Students: Models the vision of excellent teaching when engaged in instruction, including model lessons, push-in instruction, and assigned teaching responsibilities
  - Teaching Adults: Execution of PD and PLC sessions models the vision for excellent teaching in classrooms
  - Kids & Parents: Builds and models strong student and parent relationships through displaying genuine affection, building trust, and celebrating identity
- Fostering Adult Learning
  - Mindsets: Fosters a growth mindset in others through empowering, asset-centered development that celebrates accomplishments and embraces new challenges
  - Touchpoints: Keeps teacher development commitments sacred, including daily walk-throughs and weekly development meetings
  - Relationships: Deeply values staff, building strong adult relationships across the school through consistent support and collaboration
  - Team: Establishes and maintains a staff culture of trust, loyalty, and commitment to the school, students, and community that they have the honor to serve
- Staffing
  - Hiring: cultivate and hire great people
  - Performance Management: set goals, support growth, manage performance, fire
  - Retention: foster deep investment / commitment of talent
- Run the Business (with DFO)
  - Support Priorities: Allocates (and creatively reallocates) resources in alignment with school priorities and needs in order to drive performance
  - Manage Resources: Amid competing priorities, manages school resources to meet annual budget targets

- Stewardship: Demonstrates stewardship for all assets, particularly school facility

This level of buy-in is critical to our organizational culture of transparency and teamwork. The ultimate consequence for non-performance is termination, though to date all CA School Leaders have far surpassed that bar. When specific skills need remediation or problem areas emerge, CA's network team determines a set of development experiences and coaching appropriate to the situation, often drawing in other CA School Leaders for support and modeling of best practices.

## Staff

- (1) Describe your administrator, partner, and teacher recruitment strategy.
- (2) Describe the expectations for teachers and for all mission-critical partner organizations, how you will clearly communicate these expectations and ensure that teachers and mission critical partners stay on track towards meeting expectations.
- (3) For all core content and mission-related subject areas:
  - Describe your professional development plans for teachers and how they connect to the curricula and assessments.

### OPSB Specific Questions

1. What are the minimum qualifications required for teachers and other staff members? What is the average qualification that you anticipate for your staff?
2. What staff compensation model will be offered to instructional staff? How does this compare to benchmarks?
3. How will you evaluate instructional staff? Please explain who will evaluate, frequency of evaluations, how feedback will be delivered, consequences of negative feedback, and rubric materials that will be used.
4. You may include, as **Attachment 7**, any documentation supporting your personnel policies, recruitment plans, and/or evaluation plan.

### Recruiting the right teachers and staff is crucial to CA's academic success

Research indicates that teacher quality is the single strongest determinant of student success. Therefore, we take the recruitment process very seriously. The hiring process is lengthy – from start to finish, we average seven weeks – and requires multiple sample lessons and discussions with staff and scholars at the school. We believe that this rigorous process has directly contributed to our scholars' every-increasing academic performance. The hiring process that is used for all staff is detailed in the table below:

Hiring Step	Method	Purpose
Initial Screening	Telephone or in-person interview	Candidates must prove undaunted by the challenges of CA's mission and inspired by the potential fulfillment of CA's mission
Work Sample	For teaching staff, sample lesson	To provide evidence and data for step 3
Coaching	In-person or telephone review of sample	Provide feedback on sample work/teaching. Shows how candidate responds to feedback, informs step 4, and provides the candidate with an example of CA's development methods

Second Work Sample	For teaching staff, sample lesson	Second sample shows how/if candidate integrates feedback into work
Team Interview	In person, often in casual setting	Candidate is asked a series of scenario-based questions. Team evaluates candidate's adherence with core values
References	Via phone	To assess the implications of candidate's past performance for future performance

We assess the success of our hiring and staff development methods by analyzing student achievement outcomes. An increase in student achievement, as measured by interim assessment data during the year and state and national assessments at the end of each year, is the ultimate measure of team effectiveness.

**Teachers and mission-critical partner organizations are held to high standards**

Collegiate Academies teachers, like their students, are expected to work hard and continuously improve. We track the following areas to monitor progress, provide appropriate coaching where data is reviewed, and institute interventions when necessary:

- End of year academic goals
- Grade-wide reading level goal (based on MAP assessment data)
- Weekly lesson plan submission
- Participation in weekly professional development sessions and professional learning communities
- Data analysis that include daily, unit and interim assessments

While the actions tracked may differ, all partner organizations are held to the same high expectations that are rooted in our core belief in the power of the growth mindset.

**Professional development is an integral part of teacher performance growth and improvement**

Every Collegiate Academies teacher participates in over 250 hours of PD each year. The following list identifies the professional development opportunities for teachers and explains how each connect to curricula and assessments

- Summer PD: 4 weeks of content-based training to improve pedagogy
- School-based Friday PD: 4 hours every other Friday focused on school-specific pedagogy and content or behavioral trends, identified by regular classroom observations.
- Professional Learning Communities: 90 minutes every other Friday where course-alike instructional groups from across the network focus on collaboration and academic growth.
- Network-wide PD: Full staff PD several times per school-year that focuses on content-specific knowledge and pedagogy across all schools.
- Individualized Professional Development Plans: regular classroom observations by a teacher's instructional coach. Every teacher is observed at minimum once/week and has a development meeting at least once/week. Those meetings involve creating action steps to help the teacher reach larger PD goal for the end of a 6-week period.

**Collegiate Academies teachers are staff share similar foundational beliefs and qualifications**

Entering CA teachers have an average of 2 years teaching experience and measurable gains in student learning when they join the staff. In addition, they all have the following qualifications:

- Desire to work at a college-prep high school rebuilding urban education in the city of New Orleans
- Desire to grow as a teacher and person

- Positive attitude and strong work ethic
- Deep belief that all students, regardless of their backgrounds and educational pasts, have the potential to succeed in college and beyond, and that it is the responsibility of schools to help students realize that potential
- Strong knowledge in content area of choice

**For CA to attract the best people, it creates competitive compensation packages**

Collegiate Academies has three guiding principles that guide compensation decisions:

1. Getting and keeping the best people: our school model's success is driven by teacher and staff quality. We aim to ensure our leaders have every tool at their disposal to hire and keep the best people.
2. Staying competitive: we want to pay teachers at the top of the market. Our teacher salary level for someone with 2 years of experience is among the highest if not the highest in the city.
3. Valuing experience: we value experience in the classroom, setting the salary for a teacher with 2 years significantly higher than a teacher with 0 or 1 year of experience. At year 5 with Collegiate Academies, schools offer a "Master Educator" designation that comes with a ~15% salary increase. This structure is designed to retain rapidly growing teachers to ensure our scholars benefit from top instructional talent.

Acknowledging that questions of roles/decisions rights around compensation are complex, we try to strike the right balance between network-wide teamwork and school leader autonomy. We can only get (and keep) the best people if we're smart about when it makes sense to align on a single approach versus when letting great leaders lead will be most impactful.

**Just as scholars need benchmarks to track their progress, so do Collegiate Academies teachers**

Feedback is given on an ongoing basis. We expect feedback to be integrated in into future lesson plans, classroom management and data analysis.

- Teachers are observed and given feedback at least once a week and in many cases, more than once a week. Feedback is given during coaching sessions that occur weekly. Quick observations are followed up with an email synopsis of feedback so that the teacher can immediately implement.
- At least twice a year, teachers are rated using the CA Rubric for Excellent Teaching (CARET). Long term coaching goals and weekly action steps are aligned to rubric rows on the CARET.
  - CARET- rubric used to evaluate instructional staff. Developed internally and refined over the last four (4) years. CARET norming involves professional development and co-observations. All coaches participate in a norming professional development that involves viewing video clips of teachers and scoring the teacher. The group then shares their rating and talk through responses. There is a master CARET rater who shares the official score and the group can ask question to understand any nuance of the rubric. This is repeated several times. Homework involves viewing a new video and scoring to ensure the ratings are sufficiently normed. Any rater who is outside of the range will get follow up PD. In addition, the leader of the CARET-norming PD then does co-observations with each coach in person to ensure they can transfer the rating abilities to live teaching.
- Formal evaluations are written twice a year and are grounded in rubric performance and academic performance of students. Additionally, evaluations include qualitative data on how the teacher is doing with the core values of the school and the expectations for staff.
- Empower Talent: Finally, we believe that a critical component of empowered educators is a culture of development and constant support. Our schools are committed to providing every teacher we hire with consistent development and coaching so that they constantly improve and develop the skills and resources

to identify holes in our model and suggest improvements.

- Our principals are supported throughout the hiring and development process by our network office, but they are ultimately empowered to make critical hiring/firing decisions that will best support their schools and mission.

## Partners

(1) Identify the stakeholders whose partnership you have determined is necessary to your school's success. Describe what your board has done already to establish these relationships and explain what your board will do to deepen and sustain these relationships.

(2) For each mission-critical partner with which you already have a preliminary written agreement, provide a list of the services that are specified in the agreement. Describe why the partners you have selected are the best-fit organizations to provide the services you have listed.

(3) Describe the expectations for all mission-critical partner organizations, how you will clearly communicate these expectations and ensure that mission-critical partners stay on track towards meeting expectations.

(4) Include, as **Attachment 8**, any contracts or descriptions of relationship with Education Service Provider.

### **Community partnerships are an invaluable component of Collegiate Academies success**

Collegiate Academies believes that meaningful community and family engagement is of the utmost importance for the success of our students. Therefore, it is essential to partner with alumni, neighborhood leaders, and parent groups to guarantee that we are aligned in our efforts to transform student achievement in each region we enter.

- To ensure effective community engagement, we will leverage our schools, board members, and central office staff to reach targeted community members including, but not limited to, parents and families, donors, local businesses, potential board members, state and local politicians, and neighborhood community leaders.
- Our strategy is informed and supported by our governing board, key central office staff, and many local partners. To this end, we have cultivated and secured the ongoing commitment and support of the following partners in each region.
- We do not yet have agreements with these organizations for new charter schools. Upon charter approval, we will form agreements in the spring of the year before the school opens in the fall.
- We work consistently with each partner to ensure that the expectations are clear on the front end and both parties understand what is expected from each other. We will have regular check ins to keep the lines of communication open and work to address any challenges that arise immediately. As with our instructional teams, we use data regularly to track progress to goals and determine the appropriate course of action.

### **Existing Collegiate schools have strong existing partnerships that illustrate our approach**

1. 100 Black Men: Mentorship to our students and leadership opportunities. Our board works closely with 100 Black Men at our schools and a group of students meet with them and they provide outside support to ensure our students are successful. We will continue this relationship at our current schools and hope to build them in our future schools. 100 Black Men is the best partner to provide this service because they have experience successfully serving our students. Our students also see them out in the community doing good work and look up to these men.

2. Grow Dat Farm: Part-time student work to learn leadership skills and how to operate a farm. Our board is excited by the opportunities that Grow Dat provides and wants our students to have varied experiences. We will continue to go through the process to ensure as many of our students as possible apply for these opportunities. Grow Dat Farm

is the best partner to provide internships that teach our students how to farm because we want to make sure our students have varied experiences in life and this organization is closely aligned with our mission. They understand the work of Collegiate and we are able to work closely with them to ensure a successful partnership with our students.

3. Loyola Law Clinic: Legal services, advocacy and mental health services for families who speak Spanish. We appreciate the services Loyola's Law Clinic provides and want to make sure that all of our students continue to be served and will continue to reach out when we need assistance. Loyola's Law Clinic is the best partner to provide these services because they understand what challenges many of our families face and are there to help them.

4. Second Harvest Food Bank: Food and supplies for an on-campus food bank, volunteers. We want to ensure that our students and their families have enough food at all times and Second Harvest is very supportive of our mission and we will continue to work in partnership with them to serve our students. Second Harvest Food Bank is the best partner to provide this service because they are mission aligned, well organized and deliver on their promises of providing food to our families.

5. Tulane Earn and Learn: Career exposure and hands on internship opportunities. We want our students to have varied experiences and appreciate Tulane's program and will continue to encourage many of our students to apply and participate in the program. We will work closely with Tulane as a partner to ensure that it is successful from both vantage points. Tulane is the best partner to provide these services because they have spent a lot of time ensuring that the internship our students have is meaningful and can lead to better life outcomes for them. We want to make sure as many students as possible take advantage of this opportunity.

6. Liberty's Kitchen: Job training and readiness, resume building and proper interview techniques and internships. We want our students to be able to try our different careers in high school and afterwards and will continue to be a partner with Liberty's Kitchen to ensure our students are accepted and successful into their program. Liberties Kitchen is the best partner to provide these services because we want to make sure that students who are interested in the restaurant industry have the opportunity to learn and work in this environment. Liberties Kitchen works with our students on more than just learning restaurant skills, but also interview skills, resume building and anger management. They work to ensure our students meet their highest outcome.

7. Coaches Across America: Provide additional resources to add recreational coaches to staff. Extracurricular activities are important to our schools and we want to make sure to have the best personnel possible for these roles and working with Coaches Across America allows us to do this. Coaches Across America is the best partner to provide this service because they are able to provide funding for coaches that the schools can hire. It is important that we have high quality coaches for extracurricular activities and the schools are able to interview and choose these people. These coaches are important to our students and providing a well-rounded high school experience.

## SECTION III: OPERATIONS

### Recruitment

- (1) Describe the characteristics of the student population that your school will serve. The student population that you describe should be consistent with the enrollment projections that you provide in your proposal overview.
- (2) Describe your student recruitment strategy and provide your recruitment plan. Provide any evidence that you have collected that demonstrates that parents and guardians have committed to enrolling their children in your school.

### OPSB Specific Questions

1. What is your budgeted enrollment?
2. What is your target enrollment?
3. What is your minimum operating enrollment?
4. Include, as **Attachment 9**, completed enrollment projection template reflecting Orleans Parish differentiated funding weights.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

#### **Collegiate anticipates serving a similar student population to our current schools**

CA currently operates three high schools in New Orleans, serving approximately 1,500 students in grades 9-12. We value diversity in all forms and will continue to actively promote diversity through an inclusive, reflective organizational culture and recruit students and staff of all backgrounds, cultures, and abilities. We anticipate serving a similar student population to our current schools: more than 99 percent of our students are students of color, nearly 90 percent are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, approximately 15 percent are two or more years over age for their grade level, and 8-10 percent are English Language Learners. Perhaps most notably, fully 1 in 5 have a diagnosed disability. We are proud to serve all of these New Orleans students.

#### **Collegiate will build on successful recruitment strategies to meet parent demand for our schools**

The number of families listing Collegiate Academies schools on the OneApp has increased 98% from 2015-16 according to data shared by EnrollNOLA. Specifically, as of February 10, 1,375 families have ranked our schools for 9th grade seats compared to 700 at this point last year. We anticipate being fully enrolled for the 2017-18 school year across all Collegiate schools.

In Attachment 3, we have included a selection of letters from West Bank families expressing their support for CA opening additional schools, with the hope that a new neighborhood option would improve their high school choices. We would be honored to serve these families and their communities.

Many of these scholars have had the opportunity to visit our schools and interact with CA students during their middle school years -- a critical part of our student recruitment strategy. Each fall, our network operations team analyzes current enrollment patterns for trends and begins outreach to area schools with graduating 8th grade cohorts. Based on typical "feeder" schools and high density neighborhood, Collegiate prioritizes school visits and tours of our campuses by potential students. Each CA school has an Ambassadors program that provides coaching and collaboration for current students who want to spread the word about their positive experience at our schools. Throughout the fall and early spring, our team arranges for Ambassadors to visit middle schools to give a presentation and answer questions. More and more schools are also arranging half-day tours where they have the

opportunity to see all three of our campuses, ask questions, and reflect on their hopes for their own high school experience. From there, school representatives follow up with information and encouragement to list CA schools on the OneApp. Internally, we track touch points against benchmarks we have set in order to push our recruitment team to reach ambitious goals.

In previous years, we have also invested time and resources in advertising and canvassing. While we do not currently have plans to do that for the 2017-18 enrollment cycle, those tools could be part of a larger strategy as we expand in New Orleans.

**Our budgets reflect target enrollment of approximately 600 students per school**

While Collegiate’s initial high school model had a target enrollment below 500, in recent years we have demonstrated success with larger schools. By adapting the model, we have been able to offer our scholars a wider range of experiences and supports without sacrificing academy quality. Our target enrollment for new high schools in New Orleans is 600: this size provides the budgetary space to run our full academic program and integrate restorative, co-curricular, athletic, and college counseling elements as well. We are able to operate schools with as few as 500-525 students by making financial trade-offs around technology, co-curricular/athletics, teacher coaching, and operations support. This strategy reflects our commitment to investing in instructional programming first and foremost.

**Start-up Plan**

- OPSB Specific Questions**
1. What is your plan for start-up? Include detailed plan, as **Attachment 10**.
  2. Timeline/approach for recruiting key staff
  3. Timeline/approach for recruiting students
  4. Timeline/approach for finding facility

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**Collegiate has a proven strategy to successfully open new schools in New Orleans**

Postsecondary success for all scholars is our ultimate goal. This north star drives every choice we make, including the decision to expand. To maintain our focus on academic achievement and ensure that each of our new schools are equipped with the fundamental features essential to our model, we have developed a scale strategy that maximizes our odds of success. The key components are detailed in our Experienced Operator Addendum and Attachment 10 (School Start-Up Plan). They include:

- Selecting School Leader(s) and providing exceptional training
- Securing financial support
- Identifying adequate facilities
- Developing community partnerships
- Recruiting families and students
- Developing a thorough budget
- Building an aligned instructional team and support staff
- Providing intensive professional development

Collegiate has three prior experiences with scaling our model: Carver Collegiate Academy (2012), Carver Preparatory Academy (2012), and Livingston Collegiate Academy (2016). In fall 2017, we will open a fourth new site in Baton Rouge, further strengthening our strategies and protocols around scaling our organization.

--

**Facility**

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>OPSB Specific Questions</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Include, as <b>Attachment 11</b>, a facility plan aligned to your school schedule.</li><li>2. Describe your plan for securing a facility?</li><li>3. What facility characteristics are required to serve your academic program?</li><li>4. What are expectations for facility maintenance and safety inspections?</li><li>5. Please address how your school will plan to adhere to occupancy and fire/life safety codes.</li></ol> |
|--------------------------------|---|

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**Adequate public facilities are critical to the long-term success of Collegiate Academies scholars**  
As discussed in our “Experienced Operator Addendum”, CA has experienced myriad benefits to our school communities upon moving into a permanent long-term facility. While the School Facilities Master Plan is coming to completion and comparatively few public facilities options remain available, our ideal plan for securing a facility centers on being sited in OPSB-controlled buildings.

The steps that CA will take to pursue this path are no different than the components of our larger community engagement plans: we will dedicate time and organizational capacity to identifying leading voices in a range of New Orleans communities, learn about their aspirations for great high school options, build wider understanding of the philosophy and programming found in Collegiate Academies schools, and create partnerships to collectively reach goals for young people in New Orleans. Alongside this work, Collegiate will build our knowledge of possible facility options by meeting on a regular basis with OPSB staff.

The Operations lead on our central network team will maintain a carefully-considered list of facility characteristics that would allow for CA to offer our full array of programming to future scholars. These include a set number of classrooms, administrative offices, and specialized spaces, as detailed in Attachment 11 (Facility Plan). Of particular note is that prospective facilities need to have sufficient space for CA to run our set of programs for students with disabilities. This programming is core to our identity as a network.

CA has demonstrated significant flexibility in temporary arrangements to “incubate” a school before it reaches its full size. We remain open to these arrangements, as they expand the universe of possible options in the short- and medium-term. Our successful co-location with Foundation Preparatory in the Livingston building demonstrates our organization’s desire to partner with other nonprofit organizations to find creative solutions to vexing facilities questions.

Should appropriate public facilities not be available, Collegiate is committed to demonstrating similar creativity and partnership with OPSB to determine the best path forward to enable more New Orleans families to access joyful, rigorous, well-rounded high school options across the city.

**Collegiate’s Network Operations team supports schools to meet all safety/maintenance requirements**  
Keeping all members of the Collegiate Academies community safe is a foundational commitment of the organization. While this commitment impacts policy and practice in a range of functional areas -- including Human

Resources, Shared Services, and Risk Management -- it influences our Facilities work in notable ways. We have created a regular, structured cadence of facilities inspections that bring peer Directors of Finance & Operations and outside experts into each CA school twice each semester to evaluate the condition of each facility, give positive feedback from strong maintenance and safety practices, and spotlight areas that need improvement. We evaluate school facilities and maintenance against rigorous standards drawn from national best practices, our own experience, and administrative and policy guidance from the Recovery School District. Our network Operation lead is fully engaged in citywide conversations on how to continue to improve the expectations for safe and productive school facilities. As an experienced Director of Finance and Operations, he is also well positioned to understand and apply all occupancy and fire/life safety codes. In rare examples where a CA school is not fully in compliance, the issue is spotted during regular facility reviews, brought to the attention of school leadership, and put on a corrective action plan. Progress is monitored over the following weeks to ensure all action items are completed and that the facility is brought back to full compliance as soon as possible. As Collegiate moves into additional school facilities in Orleans Parish, we will continue to utilize these effective structures while remaining open to piloting new procedures as needed to ensure the network is upholding and safeguarding the safety of all scholars, staff, and visitors.

## Policy

### OPSB Specific Questions

1. Describe the systems and practices you will install in order to maintain awareness of federal, state, and local policies, including policy changes?
2. Describe the systems and practices you will install in order to ensure your school adheres to these policies, including school-level checks and balances?
3. Please address how your school will plan to adhere to the following policies specifically:
  1. State and Local Reporting
  2. Citywide Common Enrollment
  3. Discipline and Citywide Common Expulsion
  4. Pupil Progression Plan
  5. Information to Parents
  6. Transportation
  7. Timeline Notifications to Authorizer
4. You may include, as **Attachment 12**, any documentation supporting your planned policy adherence.

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

### **Collegiate has well-established structures to ensure awareness and adherence to current policy context**

In a dynamic educational context like New Orleans, schools must invest time and resources into maintaining compliance across all federal, state, and local policies. While there are numerous supports available to help charters accomplish this objective, Collegiate recognizes that ultimate responsibility lies with the school and, in particular, the organization's leadership.

Collegiate takes multiple steps to meet our policy obligations. First, on a semi-annual basis, a select group of network personnel convene a Policy Committee to review the current taxonomy of all policy obligations. The goals of that meeting are to record new obligations and to assign (or reassign) internal ownership over compliance. To

remain aware of policy changes, Collegiate looks to information compiled by third-party partners such as Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools (LAPCS) and Louisiana Association of School Business Officials (LASBO). Additionally, we have learned much from federal newsletters (U.S. Department of Education), fellow charter operators, and extensive role-driven professional development.

Adhering to known policy obligations benefits from strong systems, but is driven primarily by a mindset and adult belief that staying in compliance benefits our scholars and is a critical civic obligation placed on nonprofit charter school operators. Collegiate utilizes a weekly network leadership team meeting as the primary forum for discussing our organizational approach to policy compliance. This meeting is informed by weekly check-ins between the network office's functional experts (e.g., Operations, Data, Special Education) and their corollaries at each school. In those meetings, data is shared, unresolved policy implementation questions are clarified, and new policy obligations are introduced.

Regular data reports produced by the central network team can provide early warning when the organization has the potential to fall out of compliance. In those instances, the School Leader runs the risk of missing a goal on their annual scorecard, a key input into their performance evaluation. Finally, a model whistleblower policy is in place at Collegiate: any employee that suspects intentional violation of any policy can step forward through well-established channels to report their concern, regardless of position or implication for a teammate.

#### **Commitment to follow key federal, state, and local policies**

We will continue to refine successful internal systems that ensure all CA schools adhere to critical policies, including:

1. State and Local Reporting: Dedicated personnel at the network and school level with nearly a decade of experience in completing mandatory reporting obligations. Incoming DFOs receive a thoughtfully sequenced series of trainings to introduce them to the various reports and the systems CA has developed to streamline accurate reporting.
2. Citywide Common Enrollment: Dedicated personnel at the network and school level with significant experience in adhering to EnrollNOLA/OneApp procedures and policies. We will keep abreast of new developments with the move to unify schools under OPSB and anticipate being able to enroll cohorts of scholars with compliance and empathy for families for years to come.
3. Discipline and Citywide Common Expulsion: We have invested significant resources in data systems and training to ensure that potential discipline issues are addressed first and foremost with a restorative approach. We regularly convene School Leaders and network leadership to review discipline data and adjust to trends. At all times, we adhere to local, state, and federal policies around discipline. Our thoughtful, consistent participation in citywide common expulsion is evidence for our commitment to these procedures.
4. Pupil Progression Plan: Since we have operated Type 5 charters to date, we have developed a system to annually review, revise, and receive board approval for our LEAs' Pupil Progression Plan. New schools will fold into this process, with additional network staff being added to support the process as needed based on the demands of growth.
5. Information to Parents: Strong parent relationships are central to Collegiate Academies' mission of college success for all scholars and to our belief in ensuring a positive impact on all families and the communities in which we operate. All school leadership team receive network support to craft, receive input on, and distribute a family handbook to all parents and guardians of our scholars. During the course of a school year, each student is assigned an Advisory so that parents have a consistent source of information.

Additionally, CA schools utilize text and robo-call services to disseminate information.

6. Transportation: Since its inception, CA has provided full transportation services for all scholars in Orleans Parish. We run strong procurement processes to ensure our vendor achieves quality and efficiency, as well as flexibility in serving students with a range of housing situations.
7. Timeline Notifications to Authorizer: We will keep a comprehensive calendar of all authorizer timelines at the central network level, then utilize Directors of Finance & Operations, School Leaders, and central network staff to consolidate all required information to share with OPSB in a timely manner.

## SECTION IV: FINANCE

### Financial Readiness

- (1) Do you plan to use a financial manager or a back-office service provider?
- (2) If the entity that will provide your financial services has been chosen, please provide its name. If that entity is an individual financial manager, please provide his / her one-page resume as, **Appendix 13**.
- (3) To whom will your financial manager or back-office service provider report: the school leader or the board?
- (4) Describe your approach to budgeting, including an explanation of your approach to cutting costs if faced (as schools so often are) with a budget shortfall.
- (5) Describe the accounting and control systems you will install, including essential checks and balances. Please indicate how a culture of proper financial controls and reporting will become an essential component of your organizational culture.

#### OPSB Specific Questions

1. How will school operate in order to maintain financial stewardship?
2. What will the school leadership review to ensure financial measures are met?
3. Describe how the school will operate in order to comply with key financial stewardship requirements?
4. Who will be responsible? What are the qualifications of the business manager?
5. What additional external support will the school need?

#### TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.

1. We do not plan to use a financial manager or back-office provider.
2. n/a - We will manage all financial functions internally.
3. n/a - We will manage all financial functions internally.

#### **CA schools build and manage their budgets with a mindset of maximization**

As with any financially healthy organization, Collegiate Academies approaches budgeting with a mindset of maximization. Every cent is carefully allocated, with the large majority of dollars spent at the school level on our students and our teachers. We believe in paying our teachers a salary commensurate to their professional status, and we invest in their growth and professional development. Likewise, we invest significantly in student programming, especially those programs that support the students with the highest needs. When incoming revenues are not sufficient to fund our full program plan, we conduct detailed analyses to determine the most appropriate areas for cutting costs. When possible, we focus on making cuts at the central office level rather than at our schools so that our students do not suffer. This aligns with our overall financial philosophy: to always focus on and invest in what is best for the students of Collegiate Academies.

#### **CA will continue to operate with strong financial controls and a commitment to transparency**

Collegiate Academies is committed to developing and maintaining financial policies and procedures that ensure sound internal controls, fiscal responsibility, and accounting in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) rules and regulations. Strong financial policies and procedures enable us to meet our financial needs and obligations, ensure long-term financial stability and viability, and protect our tangible assets. As such, we implement the following financial systems and controls to ensure there are essential checks and balances to safeguard CA's finances:

- Appropriate accounting software with ability to grant differentiated permissions based on role (Blackbaud Financial Edge)
- Strong accounts payable system that ensures proper documentation of expenses and thorough approval routing across all appropriate levels of school and network management (Concur - SAP)
- Rigorous segregation of duties best practices (e.g., check signers cannot write checks; bank reconciliation not completed by check signer, multiple signatures for expenses >\$5,000)
- Payroll controls to ensure accurate and timely payment of employees (e.g., approvals of payroll preview with match to actual payment; multiple approvals to change employee pay; personnel files maintained)
- Disbursement policies to ensure controls are maintained at all times (e.g., no checks made to 'Cash'; blank checks not signed in advance; blank checks are locked).

Collegiate Academies does not tolerate any financial mismanagement, misappropriation, or fraud. We have built a strong culture of financial compliance that we will continue to advance with these new schools.

### **Embodying financial stewardship and meeting critical financial measures**

We define 'financial stewardship' as competent, disciplined, and student-centered use of financial resources to improve the academic and life outcomes for our scholars. From budgeting to controls to long-term planning, each financial decision must be evaluated in light of its capacity to advance our mission and allow CA to better serve our scholars. For this reason, we integrate our Finance function into the leadership team of every school and in the network office. We discuss key financial metrics and strategies collectively as a leadership team to ensure the full range of academic, social, and operational impacts are considered in decision-making. We collectively create an ambitious plan for long-term financial sustainability and check-in on it often to ensure we are on the path to continuing to provide excellent high school options for generations to come.

The network's CFO leads monthly budget meetings with the School Leader and DFO. In these meetings, Year-to-Date spending is compared to the latest budget and anticipated revenues/enrollment are checked against actual student figures. We run a formal reforecasting process twice annually (post 10/1 and 2/1 counts) to ensure each school is on track to meet financial measures set by our board and authorizer. The CFO leads monthly board reporting to identify any challenge areas and solve them. The annual "scorecard" for each School Leader contains data on their success in meeting agreed-upon financial goals: elevating these objectives ensures that the School Leader is identifying skilled teammates to lead this functional area and is tapping the support of network experts to resolve challenges.

CA schools receive ongoing central network support to ensure they are maximizing resources available to scholars and educators, while maintaining focus on the long-term metrics that are critical to demonstrating a commitment to financial stewardship. This support begins in budgeting, when clear targets and guidelines are set so that School Leaders innovate within the bounds of financial responsibility. As hiring and spending begin, SL and DFOs meet weekly (at minimum) to ensure programmatic decisions align to the annual and long-term financial plan of the school. The network CFO leads monthly budget meetings and biannual reforecasting to structure the analysis and decision-making around the use of financial resources. At all times, the expectations around transparency and proper application of CA's Financial Policies and Procedures are maintained. Each year, School Leaders reflect on the overall direction of their school and revisit their programmatic elements to provide better services to students and/or to meet key financial indicators.

### **Collegiate's external partners help to support our innovative and effective programming**

At full enrollment, Collegiate Academies will reach financial sustainability on recurring public funding from local,

state, and federal sources. Each school will break even in or before its fifth academic year, depending on geography and facilities costs. In the interim, CA has committed to raising philanthropic funds from local and national sources, as well as seeking competitive grants from local, state, and federal government agencies.

In October 2016, CA was awarded a federal Charter Schools Program - Replication and Expansion grant totaling \$4.9MM. This grant will serve as the bedrock of our external financial support, with a range of donors and grants supplementing it to ensure we are able to provide the full range of intervention, programming, mental health support, and alumni advising that have contributed to our results to date. Our approach is to maximize the return on investment from fundraising efforts by setting clear goals and hiring highly skilled development officers to bring in needed resources during the period where Collegiate Academies schools are growing to scale.

## Budget

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>OPSB Specific Questions</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Include, as <b>Attachment 14</b>, your Financial Plan and Budget.</li><li>2. Describe the key elements of your program. What are the expected costs of key program elements (including staffing model)?</li><li>3. How will you finance these costs to keep the school sustainable?</li></ol> |
|--------------------------------|--|

**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

### Thorough financial model

Please see Attachment 14 for our budget and five-year financial plan for start-up schools in Orleans Parish.

### CA invests in key program elements to improve student outcomes

We have refined our program with nearly a decade of experience operating open-enrollment high schools in New Orleans. The following elements are critical to scholar success (in parentheses, we note the typical costs incurred at existing CA schools, both in per-pupil \$ amounts and as a % of spending):

- Strong, well-supported teachers (31%, ~\$4,300)
- Operational excellence to allow educators to focus on instruction (22%, \$3,000)
- Innovative programming for scholars with diverse learning needs (18%, \$2,500)
- Network supports and coaching (11%, \$1,425)
- CARE + mental health + athletics/co-curriculars (10%, \$1,325)
- Exceptional school leaders, complemented by middle leadership with deep functional expertise (7%, ~\$1,000)
- Assorted other costs (2%, \$325)

More specific details about the programmatic approach within each element can be found throughout this application. Overall, our approach is to direct the maximum possible financial resources to instruction and student programming that data suggest are having a meaningful impact on scholar outcomes. This investment primarily takes the form of exceptional teaching, but has expanded over the years to include specialize programs for students with diverse learning needs and a to support robust restorative justice programming.

### CA will achieve financial sustainability on public recurring revenues

The differentiated funding formula in Orleans Parish directs critical public resources toward the students with the greatest challenges. CA's typical scholar population -- ~20% students with disabilities, ~15% 2+ years over age, among the highest ELL student populations in the city -- generates comparatively high per-pupil revenues. These dollars allow the school to operate sustainably at scale. Our proven model of growing one grade at a time, however,

extends the timeline to reaching sustainability. We depend on philanthropy and competitive federal grants like Charter Schools Program: Replication and Expansion -- much of it already secured or pledged for our proposed Type 1 openings.