



Proposal Narrative

SECTION I: SCHOOL

Please include an executive summary 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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">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.
--------------------------------	--

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

(1) Underlying theory for educational model

Louisiana Education Superintendent John White supports the notion that we must restore the dignity of career education and recognize that a four-year college isn't the only path to success for students. As such, the United Scholars teams proposes to create a school that supports multiple pathways to success. The United Scholars School will help New Orleans students achieve success in school and in life by preparing them for college **and** providing an option in Career Technical Education for those who do not wish to attend college. The school will utilize a blended learning approach that emphasizes self-directed learning in collaboration with classroom teachers. Blended learning provides educators the opportunity to deliver the array of academic and social experiences that allows students to learn as well as develop social skills they will need to succeed in life.

Blended Learning:

United Scholars will provide every student with a personalized education program, tailored to their unique learning needs and challenges. To do this, the school will use an innovative, personalized blended-learning model that combines online learning with high-quality, small group instruction provided by highly effective teachers. Specific components of this self-directed learning model will include:

- *Mastery-based learning*: Students progress as they achieve success in a subject area. This approach encourages students to be self-motivated as they understand that they can move as quickly as they want to as they master their work.
- *Teachers as coaches*: Rather than standing in front of a class and lecturing at one level, teachers focus on the needs of each individual student, aided by their personalized learning plans. Students are not boxed into a one teacher-to thirty student environment, which often hinders the progress of students at the top and the bottom of the class.
- *Individualized curricula*: With the help of an online learning platform, United Scholars students will move at their own pace through individualized curricula.
- *Use of technology* that will provide individualized content to students while providing teachers with timely data on student progress and performance.
- *Project-based learning*: Rather than focusing on isolated subjects, students will approach learning through projects that will require mastery of several integrated subjects.

The school will take advantage of some of the latest breakthroughs in online content provision. Online content has improved so much that it is gradually becoming capable of serving as a backbone for learning in some courses and for some students. As more content is delivered through online platforms, teachers are left with more time and energy to devote to creating positive, interactive learning experiences for their students, and are able to invest more time in one-on-one mentoring and creating personal, nurturing relationships with students.

Online content can also accelerate students' mastery of basic skills and decrease the amount of time they need to spend on such skills, leaving more time for activities, such as projects and Socratic discussion, that help to develop critical thinking and are more engaging for students.

CTE:

United Scholars will also offer career technical education (CTE) options. CTE is a formalized program of study in a specific industry area that prepares participating students for seamless transition into postsecondary opportunities in two-or four-year degree programs, further training, apprenticeships, or entry level work. CTE students' education includes rigorous and integrated instruction of academic and industry-specific content as well as workforce readiness training and applied work-based learning experiences (internships). Students completing a CTE program are expected to successfully pass a technical assessment, including industry-recognized certification or licensing examinations that lead to credentials, as evidence of their college and career readiness.

United Scholars will phase in CTE options over a period of three years.

Endless Shadow Program (ESP):

Studies have found that, for teens at risk of failing to graduate high school, having a caring person in their life can make a difference. Providing student and adult mentors and tutors is one effective strategy to prevent dropping out, and has been promoted by the National Dropout Prevention Center (Dropoutprevention.org). Youths who are struggling can benefit substantially from having an adult show interest in them.

United Scholars' Endless Shadow Program will involve a variety of supportive relationships among students, and between students and adults. Such relationships have been linked with positive outcomes such as improved connection to school and adults, lower dropout rates, and higher achievement. Mentoring programs have also been shown to improve attendance.

However, the United Scholars Endless Shadow Program will involve far more than just mentoring. It is critical that each student feels connected and cared for at United Scholars. With parents under a ton of other pressures and teachers and school officials focusing on hundreds of different issues each day, the Endless Shadow Program will add a layer of support for the school's most at-risk students.

(2) Concrete structures, policies, and practices school will implement

United Scholars will provide instruction through individualized online content, supplemented by teachers providing one-on-one coaching to ensure a solid understanding of all material. Additionally, staff will nurture and implement a culture based on restorative principles, which will focus on building community and relationships students need to learn and thrive.

(3) Curricula and interim assessments school will use

Curricula:

United Scholars will implement a blended learning model curriculum. The concept of ***blended learning*** has been variously described by terms like **hybrid**, **mixed**, or **integrative** learning, and the idea has only caught on in the last decade and a half.

In 2000, only an estimated 45,000 K-12 students were learning through online courses. However, within a decade more than 3 million students were taking courses this way, many of whom were using computers in their schools and classrooms. This rise of online learning will help United Scholars continue to adjust to, and change, the ways in which today's students learn, and to use the tools that they learn best with.

Students will navigate courses on a comprehensive digital curriculum called [Summit Learning](#). Summit Learning is a platform that includes a comprehensive curriculum developed by teachers, for teachers. The curriculum is aligned to the Common Core, and each course includes meaningful projects, playlists of content and assessments, all of which can be customized. Teachers are able to create new playlists and projects to meet their students' needs.

United Scholars teachers will use Summit Learning, in conjunction with a face-to-face coaching model, to deliver high-quality instruction tailored to each student's unique needs. Some students may spend more time utilizing the e-learning tools, while others may spend more time receiving direct instruction from teachers. The educational approach for each student will be differentiated, allowing teachers to fully meet the needs of each and every student.

Assessments:

Moreover, as a computer-based test, the MAP assessment is aligned with United Scholars' use of online learning materials, and will help to demonstrate how the curriculum is helping students learn.

The Summit Learning system will also gather formative and summative student data daily, and store it on Summit's dashboard, providing both teachers and parents with 24/7 access to information on students' progress.

1. Evidence of success:

Blended learning is becoming an increasingly well-regarded form of e-learning, as it allows teachers to combine direct instruction with innovative technology tailored to the unique needs of individual students. Blended learning has been successful as a method of credit recovery for students, and is also taking the place of more traditional methods based on the overall success these models have already achieved. In recent years, studies have indicated that some blended learning programs show modest gains on student academic achievement¹.

2. Is the model being used elsewhere?

Online learning is one of the fastest growing sectors of education. It is estimated that over four million k-12 students participate in some kind of online schooling, including blended learning programs². United Scholars will be able to learn from the many examples of blended learning models that have already achieved success across the country, including:

Thomas Russell Middle School, Milpitas Unified School District, Santa Clara County, CA: This school's population displayed several indicators common to underserved areas, including: 36% of the students received free and reduced lunch; 29% were English Language Learners; 9% were certified for Special Education.

Thomas Russell students experienced higher growth rates in both reading and math compared with other schools in California. Their blended learning program had three implementation components:

- Helping students set goals and work to achieve them
- Professional development to support Implementation
- Immediate, accurate, actionable feedback.

Cesar Chavez Elementary School, Norwalk, CA: This school's population was severely underserved, with 92% receiving free and reduced lunch, 32% English Language Learners, and 19% certified for Special Education.

The school worked to implement a truly student-centered learning environment, focusing on students' social and emotional development, and ensuring that children had fulfilling learning experiences.

Components of their blended program included:

- Comfort with technology and data

¹ http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/DigitalEducation/2015/04/blended_learning_research_the.html

² <https://www.edreform.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/DigitalLearningToolkit2014.pdf>

- Creating a culture of success: Through their use of personalized instruction facilitated by their online learning curriculum (known as i-Ready), the school was able to get students involved in their own learning by making data available and helping them craft goals based on the outcomes they wished to achieve.

Round Rock Independent School District, Texas: A 2009 study found that math and reading test scores for third and fifth grade English Language Learners increased following implementation of blended learning and use of interactive whiteboards.

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.

OPSB Specific Questions 1. Provide, as **Attachment 2**, School Calendar and Schedule.

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

(1) A Day and a Year in the life of a student:

United Scholars students’ days will be split between basic learning—completed with the help of online content—and practical applications. Students’ schedules may also vary with their own interests and needs. However, the team anticipates that schedules will follow this general pattern:

Morning: half hour: Work on personalized learning plan

4 hours: Project time, split between STEM (math and science) and English/ History.

1 hour: Personalized learning time, through online content.

1 hour: PE or sustained reading time/ more personalized learning time.

Moreover, United Scholars anticipates that, as the school becomes more of a community center, students will elect to remain at the school after hours to continue working on project assignments, expand personalized learning time, or participate in other aspects of the school.

As students move through the school year, their project work will become more complicated and rewarding. At the same time, they will be able to build and cement nurturing relationships that help to motivate them to achieve through the Endless Shadowing Program, and as a by-product of the school’s nurturing culture.

(2) Structures, policies, and practices essential to operationalizing the mission and vision:

These will include:

- Mechanisms for recruiting and training mentors to maintain the Endless Shadow Program;
- Intensive professional development to help teachers optimize the potential presented by the blended learning model, and to implement the school’s unique culture;

- A mechanism for constant feedback between the school’s faculty and leadership, to ensure that the faculty has the support it needs to function successfully in the school’s unique environment, and to ensure accountability among all United Scholars staff.
- A robust internship program to fulfill the requirements of the CTE track.

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.

(1) Systems that will reflect on school’s progress toward achieving its goals

United Scholars will monitor performance for each group of stakeholders through the following data sources:

- Students: Attendance and absenteeism rates, dropout rates, incidents of serious misconduct, percentages of students who earn the appropriate credits and achieve grade-level advancement, percentage of students performing at grade level for each subject area, rates of proficiency on state assessments, graduation and college attendance rates, percentage of students enrolled in the CTE track who complete the requirements and graduate with job opportunities in their fields.
- Teachers and school leaders: Teacher attendance/retention rates, participation in collaborative decision making and planning time, desire for, and use of, targeted professional development, focus on student learning based on content and time on task, assessments of student progress, use of data to improve teaching quality, amount of principal’s time spent on coaching teachers to improve teaching and learning.
- Parent satisfaction: Parent participation in meetings and other school-sponsored events; parent satisfaction surveys.
- Community engagement: Number of community partnerships, funding raised from philanthropy, community satisfaction surveys.

Guided by periodic analysis of these metrics, United Scholars will create a School Improvement Plan (SIP) to outline indicators of concern, and discuss how they will be addressed. The SIP will also focus on ideas for strengthening and replicating areas of success. At the classroom level, teachers will meet weekly to monitor student progress and determine a plan to adjust instruction and reteach standards that students may not have mastered.

1. Assumptions about student baseline performance

In Louisiana, a score of “Basic” has been the standard for years. However, as part of its plan to raise standards, the State Department of Education is planning to elevate the acceptable level to a score of “Mastery,” which is the fourth out of the five levels.

Of New Orleans students in grades k through 8, less than 68% met mastery or higher in reading, and in math. Therefore, United Scholars anticipates the need for extensive, tailored interventions to meet students at their current level, allowing the school to rapidly elevate students to meet or exceed the state standard.

2. Verifying these assumptions

United Scholars will conduct a deep analysis of PARCC scores for incoming students, ensuring that the educational program is perfectly tailored to their needs.

3. High school graduation requirements

United Scholars fully expects that our students will reach levels of academic achievement above the standards required for grade promotion and graduation in Louisiana. However, to ensure that students are performing as they should, the school will use Common Core State Standards, as follows:

Graduates will have satisfactorily completed minimum requirements for either the Jump Start TOPS Tech (Career Diploma) or TOPS University Diploma. Graduates of the TOPS Tech (Career Diploma) must complete 23 credits, including:

- English: 4 Units
- Math: 4 Units
- Science: 2 Units
- Social Studies: 2 Units
- Health/Physical Education: 2 Units
- Jump Start: 9 Units

Graduates of the TOPS University Diploma program must complete at least 24 credits, including:

- English: 4 Units
- Math: 4 Units
- Science: 4 Units
- Social Studies: 4 Units
- Foreign language: 2 Units
- Art: 1 Unit
- Health/Physical Education: 2 Units
- Electives: 3 Units

Following requirements, students will also be expected to pass end-of-course tests in the following categories: English II or English III; Algebra I or Geometry; and Biology or American History. (Orleans Parish School Board Elementary and Secondary Handbook, <http://opsb.us/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/2014-2015-Handbook-for-Elementary-and-Secondary-Schools.pdf>.)

United Scholars will also develop career readiness standards in accordance with its CTE offerings. These will be completed during the planning year leading up to the school's opening in September 2018.

4. *Pupil performance standards*

5. *Continual measurement of student performance*

Performance assessment: The school will use Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments to monitor students' performance and assess their instructional levels. MAP creates personalized assessments by adapting its questions to each student's learning level, precisely measuring progress and growth for each individual. Within 24 hours after the assessment, educators will be able to access information about what each student knows and is ready to learn.

Using the MAP system, students will be assessed on their reading and math levels at three points during the year.

Content Benchmark Assessment: To gauge their progress with academic content, students will be assessed at three points during the year on academic skills in English, science, social studies, physical education, health, Spanish, arts, and humanities.

Data from all assessments will be analyzed during full-day staff professional development days and used to adjust and guide unit and lesson planning to strategically target students' academic needs.

Finally, the Edgenuity program also includes daily lesson and unit tests to assess students' mastery of the material. Teachers will monitor these assessments through the Edgenuity dashboard to ensure that students are performing at grade level.

6. *Training teachers to perform interventions:*

United Scholars teachers will receive extensive training to prepare them to teach a blended learning model, as this may be a new skillset to develop for some teachers. As such, teachers will attend a school-based blended learning professional development program, prior to the start of the school year.

Teachers will also be trained through ongoing professional development opportunities to provide support to struggling learners.

7. *Plan for pupil progression/retention:*

Students who learn and grow in a safe and secure environment will thrive. As students at the United Scholars school begin to thrive academically through the blended model, they will have more incentive to stay with the school, avoid dropping out, and continue to work harder.

Students will earn promotion by demonstrating mastery of the essential knowledge, skills, and behavior expected of each grade level. Promotion decisions will be based on students' performance in class, on project work, and on assessments related to the online platform, as well as standardized test scores. Students who are not performing at grade level may be retained.

Promotion decisions will also take attendance into account; students with excessive absenteeism may not be promoted. The school will comply with general requirements for students in New Orleans public

schools, which dictate that high school students must attend school for a minimum of 83.5 days per semester.

Students who have IEPs will be promoted to the next grade based on successful completion of their IEP goals. However, if they have significant attendance or behavioral issues, they may be retained. Promotional decisions will be determined by the IEP team.

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.

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

(1) Values that will define student culture

United Scholars will strive to create a school culture that nurtures students' physical and mental health and resilience as much as their academic development. To that end, the school will cultivate a culture based on Restorative Practices, that is focused on building healthy communities, increasing social capital, decreasing crime and antisocial behavior, repairing any harm done through past actions and restoring relationships. Essentially, Restorative Practices "seek to develop good relationships and restore a sense of community in an increasingly disconnected world."³

The Restorative Approach posits that relationships are central to learning, growth and a healthy school climate for students and adults, all of which results in positive educational and health outcomes.

Necessary inputs include adult support, belonging to a positive peer group, commitment to education, and a positive school environment. Elements of the model include:

- **School Connection**: Adults in the school strive to foster the students' belief that they care about their learning and about them as individuals.
- **Restorative language**: Students and adults will be encouraged to use language that invites and encourages curiosity, empathy, respect, trust, accountability, repairing of any harm caused by past actions, and collaboration.
- **Tools** for community building will include restorative dialogue, peer mediation, problem-solving circles, resolution circles, and restorative conferences.

The United Scholars team is confident that this approach will help the United Scholars School community build the strong relationships and connectedness between students and adults that will lead to an improved school climate, stronger communication, and a better environment for learning that

³ Restorative Practices Handbook, B. Costello et al., 2009

discourages conflicts and violence. When misbehavior does happen, the restorative approach provides an effective form of discipline, encourages accountability, fosters important student learning, and helps to maintain and repair relationships rather than weakening them. Students who are highly connected to others in their communities are also less likely to be perpetrators or victims of aggression. (Wilson, Dorian. The Interface of School Climate and School Connectedness and Relationships with Aggression and Victimization. Journal of School Health, Vol. 74, No. 7, Sept. 2004.)

An important component of a Restorative Community is the Community Circle, which provides a safe place to process problems, build relationships, and resolve conflicts. Circles encourage “authentic dialogue” and provide an opportunity to build trust and respect among all members of a school community. Circles can be used in a variety of contexts, including community building, check-ins, quick surveys on opinions and questions important to the community, providing a non-confrontational way to address issues in class, democratic decision-making, and problem solving.

The Restorative Approach to school culture also provides a specific definition of accountability, which includes:

- Owning mistakes;
- Understanding the impact of actions on others;
- Repairing any harm that has been done, or “making it right”.

The overall intent is for students to become accountable to the greater school community for behaviors that distract from a harmonious learning environment.

(2) Policies and practices school will implement for setting and maintaining student behavior expectations and norms:

Student behavior expectations and norms will be outlined in a student handbook, written specifically for United Scholars and to comply with our school culture and the Restorative Approach. This handbook will be distributed to all students at the beginning of each school year, and will include specifics on student rewards, consequences, and behavioral expectations.

At the beginning of the school year, and periodically thereafter, students will be coached on the elements of the restorative approach, including appropriate language and behavior, community circles, and other topics. Trainings will be reinforced by staff, particularly in situations of conflict or dissatisfaction with other students.

The school will also schedule regular check-ins, built into the school day, to ensure that all conflicts or issues are in the open and being dealt with appropriately.

Additionally, United Scholars’ Endless Shadow Program, with its focus on building nurturing relationships among students, and between students and adults, will provide a cornerstone for the relationships that will be at the center of the school’s restorative culture.

(3) Investing staff in these values and norms:

The United Scholars team knows that building school culture and investing staff in values and norms

takes work and won't happen naturally. Staff investment will be an immediate priority as United Scholars works to hire its founding teachers. When hiring, United Scholars will seek teachers whose educational philosophy is directly aligned with the Restorative Approach. Additionally, United Scholars will hold a schoolwide professional development prior to the first day of school, focused on building staff and student culture.

Under the guiding principles of our mission, United Scholars will focus on empowering our community through advocacy and youth leadership development. With regard to student culture, the staff and leadership will use a normative approach to culture in order to create a positive school climate. The vision will be built around student ownership and accountability. The school will dedicate resources to student safety and culture, and implement staff professional development and systems to support the overarching values of the school's unique culture.

Staff and school leadership will consistently remind students and stakeholders of the goal of being positive and productive United Scholars students, and norms and expectations for every individual inside the building will be incorporated into these messages. The expectations and norms discussed above will help to create a culture of positive behavior rather than a system of rules dictating acceptable behavior.

Additionally, training in the restorative approach and the Endless Shadow Program will be incorporated into staff professional development offerings.

(4) Norms that will shape interactions between administrators and teachers and among teachers

These norms will include:

- Constant positive reinforcement;
- Culture of coaching and growth;
- Open lines of communication;
- A policy of valuing all voices;
- Collaboration;
- Committee-driven decision making (where appropriate).

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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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?

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

(1) Special education plan

United Scholars is committed to supporting all students and providing them with an equitable, rigorous education. United Scholars will not discriminate against students having or expected to have disabilities.

Students with disabilities will participate in all school-related activities, with appropriate accommodations being made, either based on the student's IEP or on faculty knowledge and understanding of the child's needs.

United Scholars will comply with all state and federal statutes regarding students with exceptionalities, including Title II of the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1074. As required, United Scholars will educate students with exceptionalities in the Least Restrictive Environment, and with their non-disabled peers as appropriate, following each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Students requiring special education services who do not already have an IEP in place will have one developed to identify academic, social and vocational goals. Annual IEP evaluations will be conducted, and students will take standardized achievement tests, to monitor growth; achievement test scores will be included in the IEP evaluation. Moreover, the United Scholars school's self-paced online instruction will provide specific support for students with disabilities and allow them to learn at their own pace, assisted by focused faculty attention.

The effectiveness of the special education department's interventions will be demonstrated through yearly assessment of progress against students' IEP plans, and the team expects this progress will be higher than other neighborhood schools in Orleans Parish. Additionally, state assessment scores will provide a baseline for anticipated growth during the academic school year. Across all tested subjects, Special Education students at the United Scholars school will have demonstrate a higher percentage of proficiency compared with their peers across the majority of neighborhood schools.

Finally, the school's constant monitoring and use of online instruction data will facilitate identification of students who may need additional assistance.

1. Programs/ services to address each population:

- ***Special Education Tier 1-2***
- ***Special Education Tier 3, 4, 5***
- ***Gifted & Talented Students***

All activities concerning special education students, including ongoing monitoring and reporting to general education teachers and parents, will be the responsibility of a Special Education Coordinator. These will include:

- Providing a list of all students with IEPs or 504 plans to their teachers at the beginning of the school year;
- Ensuring that teachers provide periodic reports on the progress of all students with IEPs;
- Ensuring that all students' IEPs are reviewed annually, in a meeting with parents, general

education teachers, and the special education team.

United Scholars will incorporate resource blocks during and after the school day to address literacy, mathematics, and behavioral needs across tiers. These intervention blocks will utilize adaptive interventions and curricula to help remediate academic and behavioral deficits. Data will be collected each week and analyzed at weekly meetings to assess progress and allow teachers and the Special Education Coordinator to cycle students that have made the necessary progress from the intervention block, or toward Tier 3 if their progress remains limited.

United Scholars will utilize two methods for identifying students with special needs. First, the school will provide an initial psychoeducational evaluation, administered by a Licensed/Certified psychologist, whenever a parent requests it. United Scholars will respond to every parent request to initiate and complete a psychoeducational evaluation.

Students will also be referred for psychoeducational evaluations through the tiered Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII) process that United Scholar's multi-disciplinary teams will recommend during weekly meetings to plan and evaluate interventions. Utilizing an online platform that houses and collects student data, with an algorithm that takes student metrics of grades, behavior, and attendance into account, as well as norm-based assessments, at-risk students will be referred, identified, and supported.

Supports will be provided through classroom based, as well as targeted interventions, which will be the responsibility of the content specific instructor or alternate support staff.

Our RtII approach will utilize a multi-disciplinary team of school counselors, administrators, and classroom teachers to support students' academic, behavioral, and mental health needs. Students who continue to struggle will also be offered small group interventions, as well as targeted pull out programming provided by the school's multidisciplinary team. If students still fail to make adequate progress, teachers will then seek parental permission to have a school-based psychologist administer further testing.

Students who are identified as Gifted and Talented will be also benefit from the self-directed learning environment we will cultivate at the United Scholars school. The blended curriculum is already set up to accommodate self-paced learning, so Gifted and Talented students will be able to accelerate their academic work.

All students who qualify will be given the opportunity to participate in Honors and Advanced Placement courses, and to take advantage of other accelerated programs that we will create as needs are identified.

United Scholars will also seek to partner with local organizations already serving intellectually gifted students and providing educational services and opportunities not available within the school itself. Students will also be encouraged to join, or start, after-school clubs and activities that cultivate their special strengths and interests.

2. Assumptions regarding cost/ revenue:

United Scholars is aware that special education services require significant funding. The average cost of educating a special education student is an additional \$9,369⁴. While United Scholars’ costs will vary based on the individual needs and interventions required for their specific population of students, the school will be financially prepared to provide all necessary services and programs. United Scholars will work diligently to properly identify students in need of Special Education services, and will be consistently responsive to their needs, adjusting support as their needs are assessed on a continual basis.

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

OPSB Specific Questions

1. What programs/services will be required to address English Language Learners?
2. What assumptions do you have regarding cost/revenue to implement these programs?

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

(1) English Language Learner plan:

As discussed, United Scholars’ goal is to prepare all students to meet high academic standards and be well prepared for success in school and in life. For English language learner (ELL) students, we will offer sheltered English instruction, content-based instruction with co-teachers, and occasional push in/pull out support, as necessary.

After all students who will be attending the United Scholars school have been identified, they will complete an enrollment packet that will include a home language survey. If students indicate that a language other than English is spoken at home, we will review their transcripts and attempt to contact previous schools to determine whether he/she is eligible for ELL support.

If we cannot determine eligibility from contact with the previous school, or from standardized test scores or grades, or if this is the student’s first school experience in the United States, the W-APT (WIDA-Access Placement Test) will be administered. If students are found to qualify for ESL services, parents/guardians will receive an entry letter indicating that the student qualifies for services and his/her current proficiency level. Parents/guardians will also be informed of the criteria for exiting the program.

Students of limited English proficiency will receive the same academic content as students who are native English speakers, but will receive additional help from instructors. As appropriate, they will receive push in and pull-out services for specialized English Language instruction. United Scholars will also provide translators as necessary and appropriate.

The school’s use of an online curriculum and blended learning model will be beneficial to ELL students, as

⁴ <http://www.nea.org/home/19029.htm>

they will be able to progress through online content at their own pace and ensure that they understand the material.

To communicate with the parents of English Language Learners, United Scholars will, as much as possible, send written notifications home in the parents' native language, and provide support services at school meetings and other activities that will encourage parents who are not proficient in English to participate with other parents.

English language proficiency will be re-tested annually until the student is designated proficient, and instructional plans will be modified accordingly.

1. Programs/ services that will be required to address ELL:

Programs, services and resources for English Language Learners provided by the United Scholars School will include:

- ELL teachers;
- ACCESS testing;
- Push in/pull out services;
- Translators;
- Technology based support.

2. Assumptions regarding cost/revenue:

The scope of needs, and our ability to sustain necessary programs, will be based on ELL participation within the school. English language learner student education typically requires extra funding weight of approximately twice that of regular education students. Therefore, United Scholars will plan for these costs accordingly, ensuring that students' needs are met⁵.

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).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| OPSB Specific Questions | 1. How will you share information with Parents and Community Members?
2. How will you receive feedback?
3. What is the process for grievances? |
|--------------------------------|--|

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

(1) Evidence that parents and guardians have committed to enrolling their children:

United Scholars has not yet identified a site for our school. Once we have received a charter and identified a location, we will begin recruiting students and soliciting commitments for enrollment from parents.

1. Sharing information with parents and community members:

⁵ http://www.edweek.org/media/nyic_ellbrief_final.pdf

Parent communication and involvement: Information will be shared with parents and other community members through flyers, a school newsletter, the school's Facebook page and web site, and media outlets. Parents will be invited to attend Governing Board meetings; dates and times will be publicized and meeting minutes will be made available after each meeting.

However, it will be clear to parents from the beginning that they should not wait to hear from United Scholars if they have any need to communicate with the school. United Scholars will maintain an open-door policy with parents, who are considered vital partners in their children's education, and they will be encouraged to call, e-mail, or visit staff at any time with any concerns or questions.

United Scholars will establish a Parent-Teacher Association, with equal participation from parents/guardians and school staff, to provide parent and community input on school policies, implement special projects and host parent events on campus, help recruit new students, help to fundraise for student events, field trips, and other needs, and organize parent workshops on issues important to their children's education (such as new curriculum requirements, college admissions, etc.).

In keeping with the overall school culture, parents/guardians will also be invited to participate in community circles relevant to their children, particularly when their children are involved in a conflict that needs to be resolved.

Community Involvement: United Scholars is keenly aware of the importance of community support in all the school's endeavors. We look forward to forging alliances and partnerships with community-based organizations that can help us enhance the school experience for our students and parents.

2. Receiving feedback

We expect to receive feedback through round table discussions, surveys, and family meetings. The Parent Teacher Association will also serve as an important source of feedback on school policies and performance.

3. Grievance procedures:

United Scholars will ensure that all members of the school community, including students, parents, and staff, are treated fairly and honestly in resolving complaints and grievances. Due process requires that the school administration follow fundamentally fair procedures to determine whether misconduct or other improper action has occurred before taking any disciplinary action, unless there is imminent danger to a student or other member of the school community.

The formal procedure for filing a grievance will be detailed in the student handbook disseminated to students and their families at the beginning of the school year. Any member of the school community has the right to file a formal grievance, but the handbook will provide a detailed chain of command for who is responsible for receiving and investigating complaints.

Grievances against all school personnel, including teachers and administrators, will be presented to the Principal, while complaints against the Principal will be filed with the Governance Board. The school will create and maintain a formal grievance form that will direct the complainant how to present the facts of alleged misconduct, outlining all the information necessary.

The responsible party (either the Principal or the Board) will then investigate the grievance and recommend a course of action, with full consideration of due process for all parties involved. Timelines and evidence gathering may differ based on the nature of the complaint, but the school will resolve all grievances within a maximum of 60 days.

Once a grievance is filed, the party responsible for investigating it must decide whether a formal meeting is warranted. As much as possible, grievance meetings will take place within the restorative structure outlined under “culture”. The intent of the formal meeting is to reach a resolution acceptable to both parties, within the overall structure of relationship and community building. However, if formal disciplinary action is found to be necessary, it will be carried out.

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 responses:

Need to look at these questions again. They ask about the last organization in which the Board Chair and school leader had a leadership role in.

3. Vision and goals for organization with which I most recently held a formal leadership role:

My goal as the leader is to increase the number of students served. When dealing with an at-risk student population, it is imperative to capture as many of the most in-need youth as possible. The goal is to ultimately inspire students to love learning and carry that love throughout the rest of their lives.

4. Most important strategies implemented to ensure organization met its goals:

The most important strategy would be data driven decision-making using the MAP assessment. Everything that occurs will be based on data to ensure that we are meeting our students where they are and moving them forward effectively.

Each school year also begins with a plan of action, developed by administration in collaboration with school stakeholders. This team develops expectations and indicators of success. A monthly meeting takes place to check in on growth and compliance to ensure that we are meeting the agreed upon indicators of success

5. Setting up the team to help in understanding their role:

Administrators, teachers, and all other key staff will participate in professional development before the beginning of the school year. This will serve as time essential to norming as a team and establishing expectations across the organization.

6. How organization monitored progress and remained on track to meet its goals:

We will very clearly establish our goals for achievement and/or growth. We will meet consistently to ensure that we do not lose focus, which will allow us to have all our decisions are always focused on growing the students we are charged to serve.

7. Relationships cultivated both in and outside the organization:

Anyone that knows me know that I work tirelessly to accomplish key goals and initiatives. The work is never complete, because there are so many children that would benefit from what we are looking to provide to students.

School leader responses:

1. Vision and goals for organization with which I most recently held a formal leadership role:

At my current School, we will be committed to establishing and preserving an empowering, uniformed, and supportive educational setting where rigorous teaching and learning is the foundation of high expectations for all. We inspire our students to become global thinkers and conscious leaders who actively and proudly persevere towards excellence.

2. Most important strategies implemented to ensure organization met its goals:

Strategies included:

- High quality professional development;
- A quality metric to measure student levels and growth (MAP);
- Clear school plan with measurable goals and expectations for growth;
- Danielson framework for strategic growth and structural analysis;
- Check-ins from Board to ensure accountability;
- Roundtable discussions with parents and stakeholders to ensure that we are meeting their expectations and keeping our word on what we deliver.

3. Setting up the team to help understanding their role:

To create a strong team, it is essential to also provide clear checks and balances to ensure that every team member understands and is capable of performing and managing the duties they will be responsible for. There will be daily check-ins on the school level to constantly ensure that everything is moving in the right direction. Additionally, in education you never know how students are going to respond to a particular curriculum, intervention, etc. Therefore, it is essential that each team member own the data that falls within the scope of their area to ensure that we are either consistently growing or modifying what is not working early on to ensure that growth consistently occurs.

4. How organization monitored progress and remained on track to meet its goals:

Education leaders need an effective intervention planning and progress monitoring process that is practical for implementation schoolwide. United Scholars plans to work with our school(s) and preservice teachers on how to effectively monitor and provide intervention plans and take down data, and we have developed an intervention planning process that schools can use with any struggling learner. This process works for students who don't qualify for special services; it also layers seamlessly over an existing IEP or RTI structure. Having systems like these in place will ensure that we remain on track and we will consistently monitor our growth and effectiveness through these metrics for success and growth.

5. Relationships cultivated both in and outside the organization:

United Scholars believes that many of the best outcomes will be generated when our stakeholders are able to build close trusting relationships with our United Scholars team. This enables a strong interaction between local knowledge and networks of community trust, and external knowledge and wider

networks. Where volunteering works well, volunteers are able to get closer to the inside because they are able to embed themselves more readily within communities.

This component is key because the locals are presumed to know best. One thing that we know is that no change is sustainable without local acceptance and adoption, but there are many examples of where this change has happened nonetheless, either through force, incentives, or by creating a belief in the cultural norms of your organization. There are better ways to stimulate sustainable change.

Change happens when something new interacts with the status quo. This process can lead to the adoption (and/or adaptation) of the new, or, its rejection.

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.

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

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

(1) Role that each board member will play:

All Governing Board activities will be guided by the school's bylaws, which will be voted on and accepted by the board. Board members will meet monthly and their responsibilities will include:

- Making governing decisions pertaining to budget, staffing, instructional resources, etc., always focusing on what is best for our students;
- Attending monthly meetings, which will be open to the public and publicized specifically to school parents/guardians and the community at large.
- Overseeing the school's start-up process and implementation of the overall vision, and ensuring that the school has the resources to carry out its mission.
- Providing financial oversight, monitoring the school's finances, reviewing audit reports, and ensuring sound fiscal management through supervision of the external financial manager.
- Directly supervising the school Principal, through the Board Chair. While the Principal will be responsible for hiring, firing, and supervising all other administrative staff and faculty, the Board will have final say in all hiring decisions.

In addition to the Chair, the Board will elect individuals to the following positions: Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. While the by-laws will not specify a required number of board members, it will be understood that the Board will expand as necessary to include individuals with expertise that the school needs, such as legal expertise, knowledge in specific kinds of education, or other skills. Board recruitment will be the responsibility of all Board members, with the goal of ensuring that the majority of board members live in Orleans Parish.

Committees will be established as necessary to oversee academic accountability, overall governance, fiscal responsibility, fundraising for ongoing school needs, etc.

(2) Board member information form

Please see attachment 3.

(3) Identifying potential conflicts of interest

The Board will adopt a formal Conflict of Interest policy to guide decisions about potential conflicts of interest. In general, when entering into a transactional relationship, all Board members will be required to reveal whether they have a pre-existing relationship with the establishing person or organization. If any Board member is found to have the potential to profit in any way from a relationship the Board is considering entering into, he or she must recuse himself from all conversations and decisions related to that transactional relationship.

The Board will create, with legal assistance as necessary, a governing manual that provides clear expectations for how choices should be made. Each Board member will be required to operate in compliance with this governing document, and will be asked to sign an agreement stipulating that they will. The Board Chair will be responsible for determining the Board's plan of action for any operations that fall outside of the expectations set forth in the governance agreement.

(4) Relationships with key stakeholders:

The United Scholars founders and selected board members all have extensive experience either operating or collaborating with community groups and community-based organizations. These backgrounds demonstrate that they have the capacity to interact with and engage key stakeholders in the target community.

(5) Ensuring the school leader keeps the school on track

The Board will be responsible for supervising the school Principal, and will monitor school performance accordingly. Moreover, in the case of grievances against the Principal, the Board will receive and investigate the complaint. The school leader will be expected to provide monthly reports to the Governing Board regarding school progress, student performance, and operations, following a prepared template designed to elicit information on all the topics the Board is concerned with.

The Board will hold the school leader responsible for realistic performance metrics, established at the beginning of each school year. If there is an area where agreed-upon metrics are not met, the Principal will be required to provide a data-based rationale for why this metric was not achieved, and to specify remedies that will be put in place to address deficiencies moving forward.

1. How Board will operate

The Board will meet formally once each month, and more often as necessary to deal with ongoing issues. Meetings will be open to the public and publicized through flyers sent home with students, on the school’s social media accounts, and by word of mouth. Decisions will be made by a majority vote.

Meetings will be led by the Board Chair, following a fixed agenda that will be shared with the public beforehand. Each meeting will also include an opportunity for open public discussion of items presented by community members.

2. How board will comply with key policy requirements

In cooperation with the Principal and community stakeholders, the Board Chair will be responsible for keeping informed of key policy developments affecting the operations and academic needs of the United Scholars School. When new policy decisions that affect the school are enacted, the Board Chair will work with the Principal to operationalize the directive into a guidance for school staff and students. Any changes to United Scholars operations or curricula resulting from the new policy should be voted upon by the entire Governing Board. The new guidance will be provided to the Principal, who will then be responsible for communicating changes to school faculty, administration, and students, and for overseeing its implementation.

Committees will be chaired by different members of the board, and members responsible for specific committees will also be responsible for policy compliance in all areas overseen by that committee.

3. Checks and balances that will be performed to ensure compliance:

Checks and balances among all school stakeholders will be outlined in the Board’s by-laws and the school’s organizational chart. In general, both the Principal and the Board Chair will be responsible for staying informed of policy developments. In the absence of the Board Chair, the Board Vice Chair will take over this responsibility. The Parent Teacher Association will also be tasked with monitoring policy developments, and will be encouraged to bring important items to the attention of the Board Chair and Principal.

The by-laws will require that all changes in school operations or guidelines, made either in response to policy changes or for any other reason, must be approved by the Board’s legal council.

OPSB 3, 4, and 5: See above.

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.

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

(1) Staffing plans and information regarding the leadership team’s qualifications.

Please see Attachments 5 and 6.

(2) Administrator and teacher recruitment strategy

While United Scholars will emphasize recruiting administrators and teachers that are currently based in the community, it will also conduct a national search for teachers and leaders with a track record of success. United Scholars will search for talented teachers and administrators who are passionate about improving the lives of children in Orleans Parish and ensuring that they help their students to reach their full potential. To that end, the school will also connect with mission-aligned organizations, such as Teach for America, as well as educational programs at local universities, that may be able to refer additional staff.

(3) Standards by which the school will evaluate teachers:

Teachers will be evaluated using the Charlotte Danielson Teacher Observation tool, which provides clear expectations around their performance as well as professional development to help them grow as educators. Teachers will receive extensive training on the Danielson tool, allowing them to gain a full understanding of how they will be evaluated and encouraged to develop over the course of the school year.

The Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching is a research-based set of components of instruction, aligned to the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium. The framework divides the complex activity of teaching into 22 components (and 76 smaller elements), clustered into four domains of responsibility:

- Planning and preparation
- Classroom environment
- Instruction
- Professional responsibilities

The framework provides evaluation tools that the Principal can use to evaluate each teacher's performance. Evaluations will occur twice each year, and results will be discussed in formal meetings with the Principal. The goal of these meetings will be to ensure that teachers clearly understand their evaluation results and have an action plan for addressing their areas of strength and weaknesses.

Teachers will also receive frequent monitoring and informal feedback from the Principal, Vice Principal, and other staff as necessary.

(4) Steps to evaluate the school leader:

The full procedure for ongoing monitoring and annual review of the Principal will be detailed in the school's by-laws. The process will be overseen by the Board Chair, but all Governing Board officers will participate.

Before the school year begins, the Board and Principal will set meaningful goals around schoolwide performance. Throughout the year, the Board will collect information on the school's ongoing operations and performance through a monthly report provided by the Principal, which will include information on HR matters, fiscal status, school performance, staff issues and concerns, etc. The Board will provide a template for this report at the beginning of the school year, to ensure that the Principal is held accountable for reporting on all the items the Board deems important. In addition to operational items, this template will include questions about school performance data. The Principal will be required to provide the report to the board at least three days prior to the monthly meeting, so Board members have a chance to review it before it is discussed publicly.

In these annual reviews, the board will consider student performance metrics, as well as teacher performance evaluations, and will also examine the coaching and professional development teachers receive to ensure that they have the support they need to do their jobs. The Board will examine indicators of the quality of school operations against goals agreed upon by both parties at the beginning of each academic year. Finally, they will survey a select group of parents chosen by the Parent-Teacher Association regarding their satisfaction with the school.

All performance data will be analyzed by the Board officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer), who will come to agreement on the Principal's areas of strength and areas for improvement. The full evaluation results will be communicated to the Principal in a closed-door meeting with Governing Board officers.

1. Role that each leadership team member will play, how their background suits the role, or how leaders be identified:

Everyone holding school leadership positions will meet state requirements or be eligible to meet requirements for any position they hold within the school. The team will include the following positions:

Principal: Key responsibilities will include:

- Shaping a vision of academic success for all students;
- Creating a climate hospitable to education;
- Cultivating leadership in others;
- Providing a profile in leadership;
- Managing people, data, and processes;
- Improving school leadership;
- Consistently attend professional developments and growth opportunities to improve his/her leadership skills.

Assistant Principal: Assistant Principals will share the duties of evaluating and documenting staff performance with the Principal. Annual evaluations of proficiency and goal accomplishment will be key to the school's success, with the Assistant Principal charting progress and offering feedback to staff members.

In this way, the Assistant Principal will act as a mentor to teachers who need guidance or direction, and will also provide reinforcement and praise to those who meet or exceed expectations. If he/she performs this task well, he/she will be able to significantly decrease the need for formal reprimands or other disciplinary action.

Many people consider the Assistant Principal's role as more of a disciplinarian. Certainly, there may be days with the Assistant Principal's schedule is filled with investigations, inquiries, and phone calls to concerned or upset parents. Additionally, the Assistant Principal may need to console some students while disciplining others.

Given his/her role in communicating information among students, teachers and parents, the Assistant Principal will be a socially skilled individual, capable of maintaining calm and reason even in the most difficult situations.

Special Education Coordinator/Supervisor: The overall role for the Special Education Coordinator/Supervisor will be to interpret for the rest of the school issues relating to the following: special education due process procedures; compliance with state and federal laws; educational programming for students with disabilities; identification of students with disabilities, inclusion; web-based special education forms; etc. Specific responsibilities will include:

- Plan and carry out in-services to meet staff development needs and provide technological support for computerized IEP program;
- Consult with school personnel and parents of children with disabilities regarding appropriate programming and/or follow-up services; ensure appropriate reporting to parents;
- Attend building/district-wide Child Study Committee Meetings as requested;
- Attend information meetings and participate in Service Cooperative Coordinators' meetings to share information on a regional level;
- Work with Child Study Committees in developing, implementing, and evaluating proper child study procedures;

- Act as liaison between local districts and various service agencies within the service area.

Lead Educator/Teacher Coach: The chief professional responsibility of an instructional coach is to work with teachers and other school leaders to bring evidence-based practices into classrooms. At United Scholars, the school will provide one-on-one and small group support for teachers, coaches, and school leaders that focus on evidence-based literacy strategies and the instructional coaching process, with the goals of increasing student engagement, improving student achievement, and building teacher capacity. Growth will be measured through the MAP assessment and adjustments will be made accordingly.

Athletic Director: The school's Athletic Director is the administrator who oversees all school sports, including extracurricular and intramural. Though the Director/Coordinator may have been a player in the past, and should certainly be interested in sports, he/she typically will not need to interact directly with athletes. Instead, the Director will set the school's athletic policies and ensure that they are followed, and ensure that the school follows rules set by governing agencies for all school sports. Additionally, the Director will support the implementation and oversight of health and physical education within the school, and maintain accountability pertaining to facilities.

English Language Learners (ELL) Coordinator: Responsibilities will include:

- Coordinate and administer all aspects of the English Language Learner (ELL) program;
- Advocate for the needs of ELL students with teachers and school leaders;
- Coordinate and administer the WAPT and WIDA ACCESS;
- Ensure compliance with state and federal mandates for ELL students;
- Provide language instruction to English Language Learners in an inclusive setting, using a variety of instructional strategies;
- Provide colleagues with professional development focusing on the needs of ELL students;
- Understand scholars' development levels and appropriately differentiate instruction;
- Understand and use a variety of data and data sources for lesson planning;
- Modify and adapt lesson plans to meet the needs of all ELL students;
- Align instruction with Common Core Standards;
- Integrate public policy into coursework;
- Monitor student language progress;
- Build relationships within school community, including with parents, guardians, and community stakeholders;
- Keep current on trends, legislation and developments related to English Language Learners.

Community Outreach Coordinator (Truancy, Homelessness, community relationships):

Community outreach responsibilities will include:

- Supervise Community Outreach initiatives to develop, implement, and evaluate parent and community involvement;
- Support advocacy for parents, promote interest in schooling, and enhance sense of community and commitment;
- Manage the Coordination of stakeholder, parent, and community involvement activities and services with other agencies and organizations;
- Serve as a liaison between parents and community members and other agencies and

organizations;

- Serve as a resource to parents and community members regarding community agencies, events and activities;
- Identify students with credit deficiencies and make referrals to alternative programs;
- Establish provisions for students' and families' transportation to community resources to receive social services;
- Assess needs of parents and community members;
- Assist school staff in the development, implementation, and evaluation of educational activities and programs, including family literacy programs offered at the school for parents and other community members;
- Encourage parents of bilingual/bicultural students to upgrade their skills and knowledge of the educational process;
- Assist in the recruitment and training of school volunteers;
- Help school staff to develop and coordinate extended day, before and after school, and intersession programs;
- Promote school projects and programs to the community;
- Facilitate community involvement in school programs and activities;
- Assist in coordinating community use of school facility;
- Assist with recruitment, training, and monitoring of community members volunteering in student mentor program;
- Assist school with home visits;
- Serve as interpreter during parent-teacher conferences, special education meetings, disciplinary referrals, and other school-based meetings as needed;

Truancy Duties will include:

- Oversee the enforcement of compulsory school attendance laws by establishing counseling for parents who are in violation;
- Ensure consistent communication through school visits and home visits with families and provide ongoing support to students as needed;
- Network with school personnel to understand students' needs and identify resources available for students and their families;
- Provide home and school visits to students and their families to assess barriers to school attendance and case management needs;
- Monitor school attendance and compliance;
- Provide link to parent education groups for the families of truant students;
- Hold truancy information sessions for the advisory committee and develop a plan for the student, parents, and school to follow;
- Update school principals and staff and provide recommendations;
- Present truancy programs to the community and school groups;
- Participate in and collaborate with a variety of committees, professional associations, boards, and/or other related groups;
- Become familiar with and stay current with available youth services in the community;

2. How evaluation, development, and compensation are designed to provide for quality

leadership

Evaluation: United Scholars' evaluations for individuals in school leadership positions will be clearly defined in school documents and communicated to staff. Our evaluations will be based on a successful and widely-used framework (the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching) that has been shown to demonstrate both areas of strength and areas for improvement to school staff, allowing them to target specific areas of their performance for professional development or other improvement.

In addition to these formal reviews, the leadership will receive ongoing, informal monitoring and feedback from their supervisors, as well as the Parent Teacher Association, as appropriate.

Development: Areas for professional development will be based on these evaluations, as well as areas deemed important for achieving United Scholars' mission and vision.

Compensation: Everyone in a school leadership positions will receive a fixed salary. Policies for increases and other benefits will be spelled out in school documents, so that all individuals in leadership positions know that compensation policies are fair and equitable. These policies will avoid the loss of motivation and lowered performance when people feel they are being treated unfairly.

3. Plans for leadership recruitment

To recruit the best possible leaders for our school, United Scholars will follow the steps below:

Create a profile of a high-quality candidate that clearly articulates the skills and competencies the individual will need to help realize the school's vision. Specifically, the United Scholars team will look for candidates who:

- Demonstrate a strong drive to achieve outstanding results;
- Reach high performance standards despite obstacles;
- Set clear expectations and hold themselves and others accountable for performance;
- Demonstrate the ability to influence others using a variety of approaches;
- Use data to inform decisions, including developing logical plans and recognizing patterns.

Initiate competency-based recruitment, hiring, and placement processes: United Scholars will create and constantly improve their recruitment, hiring, and placement processes by continually asking questions to effectively recruit and hire high-quality teachers, such as:

- Where and how should we publicize openings? Do we search locally, across the state, or nationally? What sort of searches have yielded the best results?
- Do our recruitment materials include turnaround-principle actions and competencies?
- What incentives can we offer to aspiring leaders in our district to motivate them to get their administrative licenses?
- In what ways might behavioral-event interviews, where the candidate is asked to describe a situation or experience from a previous job, under the assumption that past performance predicts future performance, improve our hiring results? When we have used this technique, has it helped us identify high-quality candidates?
- What should be included in our competencies- and standards-based hiring criteria?
- What process should we use to choose among qualified candidates?

Consistently evaluate the effectiveness of past recruitment and hiring processes: When all positions are filled and the school year has begun, United Scholars will continue to reflect on the success of our recruitment and hiring efforts by gathering data that will help us determine if recruitment and hiring efforts are producing the quality of leaders and teachers they seek. Data will include:

- The types of applicants responding to our recruitment efforts and applying for these jobs, including demographic characteristics, training and/or licensure, and overall degree of experience;
- Number of applicants per opening;
- Number of candidates offered a job;
- Number accepting the job;
- Average rubric score for each candidate;
- One-, three-, and five-year performance evaluation data for hires.

4. Qualifications required for each leadership position

All qualifications for leadership positions will be consistent with state requirements. United Scholars expects chosen candidates to have achieved each requirement, or be eligible to obtain said requirements.

5. How school's leader will be evaluated:

When principals, administrators, and other building leaders empower and support teachers and promote a school-wide emphasis on students' academic growth, the quality of achievement for students, teachers, schools, and communities improves.

Our School Leader Evaluation Model will be designed to develop effective school administrators with an unwavering focus on student achievement. The evaluation model will provide the principal, administrators, and other leaders with strategies and tools to improve their own performance while empowering their teachers, so all school staff can focus on the ultimate objective: improving student learning. The model will:

- Be built on a foundation of sound research;
- Be integrated with our teacher evaluation model;
- Center on student achievement;
- Emphasize successful leadership and provide targeted professional development;
- Provide clear evidence to help the Governing board and the Principal evaluate school leaders fairly and consistently.

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.

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

(1) Administrator, partner, teacher recruitment strategy:

United Scholars will work with like-minded organizations and stakeholders, both locally and nationally, to recruit and identify potential teachers and administrators. These stakeholders will include education programs at area colleges and universities, as well as other charter schools, and education organizations such as Teach for America. The team will also place ads on professional job boards and in teaching journals. Members of the Governing Board will be expected to leverage their substantial networks of education professionals to publicize employment opportunities. Assuming that the school will open in Fall of 2018, the team expects to begin recruiting activities in January 2018.

A committee consisting of Board members and the Principal will select promising candidates from our pool of resumes. In addition to interviews, candidates will be required to showcase their teaching skills, either by allowing a member of the committee to observe them in their current classrooms, or through a presentation if the candidate is not currently employed.

When the hiring committee decides to make an offer, new hires will be asked to sign off on the offer of employment letter, which will include a commitment of at least two years.

No hiring process is without its challenges, and United Scholars understands that the sheer size of our endeavor in this first year—recruiting and hiring an entire staff of educators and administrators—will require a great deal of planning and logistical coordination. The United Scholars team will also need to carefully plan our recruitment strategy to ensure that they attract a sufficient number of candidates to complete the faculty, and ensure that they have enough time to schedule interviews and presentations with all the candidates. The team expects that the school Principal and his staff will be responsible for most of this coordination, and is confident that the individual chosen is up to the task.

(2) Expectations for teachers and partner organizations

Teachers have two roles in a self-directed learning environment. First, they act as academic coaches, ensuring that students have internalized the content and skills in each module, and checking up on project work. Additionally, United Scholars teachers will help to reinforce the school's restorative culture, guiding and advising students as they meet expectations and norms and participate in community activities.

Teachers' second role in this environment is to provide academic interventions as needed. Some of these will be planned, for groups of students who may be struggling with the same material, but many will also

happen spontaneously as teachers notice that students are having trouble with a specific lesson.

Like school leaders, the most critical requirement for teachers and mission-critical partners will be a passion for helping all students reach their full potential, and a dedication to innovative methods for teaching that set them on a path to academic and social success.

Expectations will be clearly communicated in trainings that will be provided to all teachers before the school year begins, as well as through written school policies. These expectations will be reinforced through ongoing informal feedback from school leadership, and in evaluations.

For mission-critical partners, expectations will be set forth in a Memorandum of Understanding that will be signed by both parties. These MOUs will be reviewed annually, and part of the process will be to examine the results of relationships with all partners to ensure that they are meeting expectations.

(3) Professional development

Professional development opportunities at the United Scholars School will begin during the summer before school opens, as all faculty will participate in a summer curriculum development institute. During that time, faculty and school leaders will work together to fully integrate all of the unique components of the school, including blended learning, the Endless Shadow Program, CTE offerings, and the restorative culture, into a consistent model.

As the school year begins, all faculty members will have access to professional development offered throughout the year by the Louisiana Department of Education. In addition, faculty members will be afforded a variety of opportunities specific to United Scholars. The Principal, together United Scholars leadership, will create a plan for professional development for the first year, including, potentially, opportunities for consultant-based training in subject areas.

As with all professional development opportunities, faculty, administration, and staff members will be expected and provided the opportunity to present trainings they attend to their colleagues.

Other types of training, frequency, and depth will be determined by student academic performance and behavior data, which will show where there are areas of weakness that the entire faculty needs to improve.

United Scholars will provide scheduled days of professional development throughout the school year, which will address these areas of weakness, as well as provide trainings on issues specific to United Scholars' mission, including maximizing the impact of the Endless Shadow Program, maintaining a culture based on restorative principles, and coaching students in a self-directed learning environment.

Following each MAP assessment administered to the students, faculty will also spend a full day analyzing the results of these MAP assessments and discussing how to address areas of weakness.

1. Plans for staff recruitment

Please see above.

2. Minimum qualifications required for teachers and staff

Please see above.

3. Staff compensation model

Initially, instructional staff compensation will be comparable to average salaries for public school teachers in Louisiana: approximately \$47,000 annually. However, United Scholars will devise a structure for incentives and raises that reward exemplary work.

Instructional staff salaries will be reviewed annually, before the beginning of the new school year. High-performing teachers, as measured against their students’ performance, as well as their participation and leadership in the community life of the school, will receive salary increases beyond agreed-upon cost-of-living increases.

The entire process for reviewing and changing compensation will be based upon easily calculated indicators and clearly provided in school documents, so that the process remains transparent and there is no possibility for perceived bias.

4. Evaluating instructional staff

The school’s Principal will be responsible for evaluation of all instructional staff. Evaluations will be conducted twice per year, to help instructional staff identify their areas of strength and weakness, and to track improvement. Evaluation tools will follow a scoring model based on the Danielson Framework. Feedback will be delivered in a personal meeting, with frequent reference to the data and observations that were used to calculate the final score.

Feedback will be designed to be both actionable and provide an opportunity for reflection; negative feedback will be viewed, first and foremost, as an opportunity to grow. However, if instructional staff continue to score negatively on the same criteria for more than two consecutive evaluations, the Principal may need to re-evaluate their employment at the school. Employment termination could occur for instructional staff who fail to demonstrate either the willingness or the ability to improve.

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 partner₃ 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.

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

(1) Stakeholders whose partnership is necessary to school’s success, and what the team has done

to establish these relationships:

Community stakeholders—including parents, community-based organizations, and elected officials—will be invited to engage with United Scholars. Many of our Governing Board members and potential teachers are stakeholders invested in the success of our youth, and are excited by the potential impact of United Scholars’ unique approach to education.

(2) Services specified for partners with whom the team already has an agreement.

United Scholars will focus on recruiting appropriate partners when we have identified a facility and know our school’s target geographical area and the issues that are most important to the neighborhood.

(3) Expectations for mission-critical partners and how they will be communicated

Similar to staff, the primary requirement for all United Scholars’ community partners will be a dedication to students’ education and to helping them reach their full potential. When on campus, partners will also be expected to comply with the school’s culture, take part in community activities as appropriate, and generally comply with all the rules and guidelines followed at the school.

General expectations will be communicated to each new partner in discussions about the partnership. Partner organizations will then be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) detailing the partner’s Scope of Work as well as expectations for the conduct of partner organization staff members while on the United Scholars School campus.

Each of these partnerships will be reviewed annually, to ensure that partners are continuing to meet expectations and complete the work outlined in their MOU.

(4) Include, as attachment 8, contract or descriptions of relationship with Education Service Provider.

Attachment 8 is not applicable. United Scholars is not planning to work with an Education Service Provider.

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.

(1) Characteristics of student population

United Scholars will serve the population that is represented in the community where the facility is ultimately located. United Scholars has a very diverse team, with a capacity to serve all student demographics.

In general, the demographics of public school students in New Orleans is majority African American (87%), with 6% identifying as White, another 6% identifying as “Other”, and 5% of that total identifying as Latino. Moreover, the population is largely economically disadvantaged, with 85% of public school students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. (This percentage is higher than in many major American cities of comparable size.)

(2) Student recruitment strategy and plan:

United Scholars will reach out to the community they will serve and share United Scholars’ educational philosophy and information about the educational program. Local Governance Board members and the efforts of the school Principal will be particularly crucial to this effort.

The school will recruit students based on the needs of the population, setting clear goals and expectations to address the most important issues identified by the community. The school will also use media outlets, online resources, and word of mouth to publicize the new school and encourage families to enroll their children.

United Scholars will begin recruitment in December of 2017, in anticipation that the school will open in September 2018. They will begin with a public information campaign that will include social media, flyers, and direct mail, and will also work with local community based organizations to recruit students.

1, 2, and 3. Budgeted enrollment, target enrollment, and minimum operating enrollment

See Attachment 9

4. Attachment 9: Enrollment projection template

Please see Attachment 9.

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.

1. Plan for start up

Please see Attachment 10 for United Scholars' complete start-up plan.

2, 3, and 4. Timeline/ approach for recruiting key staff, recruiting students, and finding a facility

United Scholars will have a full year to plan for the school before it opens in the Fall of 2018, and they will put most of the school's administrative backbone in place during that time.

Planning: During the second half of 2017, after United Scholars has received a charter, the school's founders will begin meeting with the Principal to finalize plans for start-up. During this time, they will finalize the curriculum and forge agreements with the online service provider, and begin working with industry leaders to plan our CTE offerings. The team will also begin working on the practical components of school operations, including writing manuals and student handbooks, discussing fundraising needs, and planning our student outreach strategy. More details on this planning phase are available in Attachment 10.

Finding a facility: Once United Scholars has received the charter, they will work with the Orleans Parish school district and local stakeholders to identify an appropriate facility. Their search will focus on low-income neighborhoods and geographical areas that are experiencing high drop-out rates and low high school graduation rates, which the team believes will be improved by our unique model.

Staff recruitment: The recruitment and hiring process for all school staff will begin in February 2018, and will be completed by early May 2018. We will then spend the summer training staff on the primary components of a United Scholars education that will set the school apart:

- Instructional models in blended learning environments, including techniques for effectively coaching students who are not internalizing lessons and knowledge from the online curriculum;
- Information on the school's CTE component and guidance regarding coaching for students in the CTE track;
- Guidance on leading and implementing a school culture based on Restorative Principles, including training on leading community circles and focusing on nurturing meaningful relationships with students;

Student recruitment and enrollment: United Scholars will begin a public information campaign in December of 2017. Information on the school will be available on our web site, and they will also distribute flyers, direct mail post cards, and work with the local media (including radio stations) to promote the school and encourage families to discuss enrollment. Recruitment materials will be available in Spanish, English, and any other languages widely spoken in our targeted neighborhood. They will also work with local community-based organizations, including faith-based organizations and churches, to reach out to their participants and supporters.

The school will hold weekly information sessions for interested parents. Scheduled times for these meetings will be scattered throughout the day, allowing a wide variety of parents with varying schedules to attend when it is convenient.

United Scholars will participate in the citywide common enrollment system and match with students interested in the school.

Facility

OPSB Specific Questions

1. Include, as **Attachment 11**, a facility plan aligned to your school schedule.
2. Describe your plan for securing a facility?
3. What facility characteristics are required to serve your academic program?
4. What are expectations for facility maintenance and safety inspections?
5. Please address how your school will plan to adhere to occupancy and fire/life safety codes.

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

1. Attachment 11: Facility plan

Please see Attachment 11.

2. Plan for securing a facility

Once United Scholars has been granted a charter, the founding board will work with Orleans Parish officials and local stakeholders to identify and secure an appropriate facility in a geographic location convenient to families in our target population, including neighborhoods with high dropout rates and low rates of high school graduation. The board expects to secure a site by mid-February 2018, leaving time for any necessary renovations before the school opens in September 2018.

3. Facility characteristics required for academic program

The United Scholars academic program will not require special facilities. The team does request, however, a secure a facility with ample electrical outlets for in-class computer use, as well as reliable Internet service.

4. Expectations for facility maintenance and safety inspections

United Scholars hopes to secure facilities and maintenance staff members from the community. All safety and security measures will be in compliance with local regulations.

5. How school will adhere to occupancy and fire/life safety codes

All state and local safety and occupancy regulations will be followed under the direction of our Chief Operating Officer.

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.

1. Systems and practices to maintain awareness of federal, state, and local policies

As discussed above, both the Board Chair and the school Principal will be responsible for maintaining awareness of changes in federal, state, and local policies, or of discussions that might lead to changes. Additionally, United Scholars plans to hire a business manager who will support compliance with all federal, state, and local policies.

2. Systems and practices to ensure school adheres to these policies, including school-level checks and balances

The Governing Board will ensure adherence to all policies regarding state and local reporting, citywide common enrollment, discipline and citywide common expulsion, pupil progression plan, information to parents, transportation, and timeline notifications to the authorizer. The Board’s bylaws will ensure full legal compliance, while the school’s staff and family handbooks will ensure adherence at the school level.

3. How school will adhere to the following policies

Detailed plans for policy adherence are provided below. The Principal will be responsible for ensuring that all of the relevant school staff and stakeholders are fulfilling their roles, per the following:

State and local reporting: The school principal will be ultimately responsible for conforming with all state and local reporting requirements, and will have the right to delegate these tasks to other administrators.

Citywide common enrollment: The school will participate in the citywide common enrollment system, and will design outreach materials to include deadlines for the common enrollment application, as well as detailed instructions on how to indicate a desire to attend United Scholars School.

Discipline and citywide common expulsion: The team understands that, throughout Orleans Parish, schools are adhering to common criteria for expulsions, school hearings, and other aspects of school discipline. The school will voluntarily adopt these standards; however, within the Restorative school culture, they plan to focus on preventing negative behavior by building community, and anticipate less need for punitive measures.

Pupil Progression Plan: All school leaders and administrators will be required to be familiar with the school district's Pupil Progression Plan, and to ensure that all United Scholars regulations and activities regarding student assessments are in compliance with these requirements.

Information to Parents: United Scholars considers parents as a vital, integral component of their children's education. They will use all techniques at our disposal to communicate with parents, including written communications, local media, and other channels, and will provide information in English, Spanish, and any other languages prevalent in our target community.

Transportation: United Scholars will ensure transportation to all eligible children, and will ensure that transportation options adhere to all relevant policies.

4. Attachment 12: Documentation supporting planned policy adherence

Not applicable.

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) Plan to use a financial manager or back-officer service provider:

United Scholars plans to use a financial manager. However, that individual has not yet been identified.

(3) Financial manager reporting:

The financial manager will work closely with the school Principal to ensure that all requirements are met, and will report to the Governing Board.

(4) Approach to budgeting

Annual budgets will be created by the Principal, in consultation with school staff, and approved by the Governing Board.

In the third fiscal quarter (January or February) of each school year, the school leadership team will meet to begin the budgeting process for the next year. The process will include a review of enrollment, staffing, and funding scenarios, and a discussion of the cost and need for proposed new educational initiatives. The school staff will then prepare a draft budget, which will be presented to the Governing Board's Finance Committee for review. It is our expectation that the budget will be approved by the end of the school year in June, but the team accepts that budget discussions may continue into July if necessary. The approved budget will then be made available for public input in compliance with applicable law.

Contingency plans will be built into budgets in case of unexpected expenses, such emergency repairs, or events that result in revenue loss, such as enrollment shortfalls. However, to ameliorate the impact of

these unexpected issues, it is our goal to build a budget reserve equal to approximately 5% of our overall operating costs.

The United Scholars team is cognizant of the potential for attrition over the school year, which would also result in a loss of revenue. Our budgets will, therefore, also build an assumed rate of attrition into our revenue projections. This rate which will be estimated over the first year or two as the team learn what attrition rates will be; after that, they will be able to base attrition assumptions on actual experience.

The school Principal, in cooperation with the Financial Manager and the Board's Finance Committee, will continually monitor the budget over the school year, to ensure that expenses and revenues remain in line with projections. Among other requirements, the Principal will be expected to provide a monthly, written report to the Board as part of regular month reporting.

In the event that the school is heading toward a shortfall, the Board's finance team will work with the Principal to identify expense reductions, which might include non-replacement of open positions, staff reductions, non-personnel expense savings, etc. During this process, educational priorities will always be taken into account to minimize negative educational effects.

(5) Accounting and control systems:

All accounting policies and procedures will be codified in a Policies and Procedures Manual, which will be approved by the Board, provided to all relevant staff, and made available to the public as requested. The accounting system used to monitor the school's finances will be chosen by the Financial Manager when one is identified.

In addition to the Principal's monthly reports, United Scholars will ensure financial transparency through the following procedures:

- United Scholars will set purchasing approval thresholds, stipulating that all expenditures above a certain amount must be approved by the Principal or the Board (for higher expenses, and for any expenses facilitated by the Principal that reach the approval threshold).
- The Board will set rules regarding the bidding process for contracted services, specifying the number of bids the school must solicit over a certain spending threshold.
- Staff will be reimbursed for expenses incurred while on school business, as long as these expenses were approved by the Principal beforehand.
- A member of the Board Finance Committee or the Board Chair will be responsible for approving reimbursements to the Principal.
- Payroll will be outsourced to a third party processor; all payroll records will be monitored by the Board Finance Committee in cooperation with the Finance Manager.
- The Board will be responsible for hiring an independent firm to conduct the school's annual audit, and for reviewing audit findings when they are complete. As necessary and appropriate, the Financial Manager will be expected to assist with this task.

1. How school will operate to maintain financial stewardship

As a public entity, the United Scholars school will strive to ensure appropriate financial transparency, and

will make relevant documents, including the budget and annual financial statements, public.

The United Scholars School will operate with a strict system of checks and balances to ensure that the school's finances are stewarded appropriately. These will include:

- The Financial Manager will be responsible for paying all expenses, monitoring bank records, and reconciling accounts each month. While the Financial Manager will be responsible for monitoring revenue as well, actual deposits will either be made by electronic transfer, or be the responsibility of a senior administrator supervised by the Principle. In this way, there will be safeguards built into the system so that no one person is overseeing all financial activity.
- All of the Financial Manager's work will be overseen by a Governing Board member with financial expertise.
- The Financial Manager and the Principal will be jointly responsible for monitoring expenses and signing off on monthly reports, so that they can check each other's work.
- As discussed above, school rules will stipulate spending thresholds that will trigger additional safeguards, such as spending limits for equipment purchases and contracted services.

2. Materials school leadership will review to ensure financial measures are met

The Principals' monthly reports to the Governing Board will include a Year-to-Date budget showing actual revenues and expenses vs. budget, as well as updated budget projections. The report will also include monthly bank reconciliation statements. Additionally, the Governing Board will be responsible for reviewing the final report on the school's annual audit.

3. How school will comply with key financial stewardship requirements

Principal will work with the Governing Board to develop budgets, coordinate with the external business manager, and provide all necessary information to the external audit firm. The external Business Manager will be responsible for day-to-day financial management, including monitoring cash flow, paying bills, and reconciling bank statements. The Business Manager will also be responsible for providing raw data for monthly reports that the Principal provides to the Finance Committee of the Governing Board.

4. Responsible parties and qualifications of business manager

The Governing Board, through the Finance Committee, will be responsible for general oversight and for ensuring responsible financial stewardship.

The Financial Manager will be required to have a CPA degree and significant experience in financial stewardship at a school or school district, as well as an understanding of the rule governing charter schools and non-profit organizations.

Budget

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

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

(1) Attachment 14: Financial Plan and Budget

Please see Attachment 14.

(2) Key elements of program; expected costs

Please see Attachment 14

(3) How the school will finance these costs to keep the school sustainable

In addition to expected per student payments, United Scholars will fundraise to cover additional school-related costs. The United Scholars team expect that the school will attract funding from local industry and businesses because of its CTE programs, as well as philanthropists interested in innovative education models.