



## 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;

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| <b>OPSB Specific Questions</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the evidence of success of the academic model you are proposing?</li> <li>2. Is the model being used elsewhere? If so, where? What have been results?</li> <li>3. You may include, as <b>Attachment 1</b>, any documentation supporting your curriculum and academic model.</li> </ol> |
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**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

#### Educational Model

InspireNOLA recognizes the need for additional high quality seats in public schools in the state of Louisiana overall, and particularly in New Orleans. Seventy-seven schools in New Orleans received School Performance Scores and letter grades issued by the Louisiana Department of Education for the 2015-2016 school year. Of those 77 schools, 27% achieved A or B status, while 38% earned a D, F, or T letter grade. When considering that this 27% also includes selective admissions schools, a problem is apparent: the students of New Orleans need – and deserve – additional high quality school options that will academically and culturally prepare them for their futures.

Almost 50,000 students now attend New Orleans public schools. The fact that only a quarter of students attend A or B schools means that there are approximately 37,000 students who do not – which is the very problem that InspireNOLA is working to address. InspireNOLA is committed to increasing the number of high performing schools in New Orleans in order to best serve the students and community.

InspireNOLA’s proven educational model is grounded in four main pillars: Positive Culture, Rigorous Academics, Continuous Growth, and Accountability. The educational model supports a holistic approach to child-adolescent growth and development as outlined in *Piaget’s Cognitive Development Theory (1936)* and *Bruner’s Discovery Learning Theory (1961)*. These theories posit that students learn best in “child-centered” environments where they are able to discover information, analyze evidence and

evaluate relationships through inquiry based experiences.<sup>1</sup> InspireNOLA students are engaged in programming that fosters intellectual preparedness and is associated with their individual strengths and needs. InspireNOLA's model integrates discovery learning opportunities that propel student exploration, interaction with one another, and problem solving with an emphasis on cultivating a positive attitude towards learning as a life-long process.

Effectively implementing the aforementioned four main pillars as a common thread within network schools provides a well-rounded education that is essential for future college, career and civic responsibilities. This model is currently implemented in all InspireNOLA schools, two of which received an A letter grade last year and one of which is a takeover and attained SPS growth of 29.2 within one academic school year.

### **Positive Culture**

The first InspireNOLA pillar that leads to outstanding results for students is the focus on the creation and maintenance of a strong, positive school culture. InspireNOLA schools focus on inspiring and motivating students in a variety of ways that excite and invest students in learning and success.

- InspireNOLA hallways have motivational quotes and purposeful pictures of students to promote student ownership.
- Schools have complete positive behavior incentive systems that promote student investment and recognize superior performance and improvement. Incentives include reward ceremonies, dress for success days, biweekly celebrations, and academic jackets.
- Students and teachers collaborate quarterly to set and update goals so that schools are constantly focused on growth and achievement. All team members work together to maximize individual student achievement.
- InspireNOLA provides wraparound services (including counseling, nursing, social work, and parent advocacy) to address social and emotional needs and to develop the whole child.

Because InspireNOLA creates a strong and positive school culture, InspireNOLA students feel safe and excited about coming to and being part of the family that is their InspireNOLA school.

### **Rigorous Academics**

InspireNOLA's rigorous academic framework and consistent instructional model, which encompass both teaching and learning, are key components of the second pillar that is crucial to current and future success in InspireNOLA schools.

- All lessons, regardless of grade level or content area, follow a common structure that gradually releases ownership from teacher to students.
- Each course has a pacing guide that outlines the content that students will master before the end of the year and a timeline for instruction to take place.
- Measurable learning objectives are the central focus of daily instruction and are posted in all classrooms for every lesson.
- Data from daily exit tickets, interim benchmarks, and summative assessments is used to direct instruction and determine areas for re-teaching and support.
- Students and teachers are consistently recognized for strong academic performance and growth.

InspireNOLA's structured and rigorous academic model is one of the keys to improving student achievement and proving that all students can and will learn at high levels.

### **Continuous Growth**

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<sup>1</sup>Bruner, J. S. (1961). *The act of discovery*. Harvard educational review.

As an organization, both at the school and network level, InspireNOLA is committed to continuous growth of all employees in order to develop and retain outstanding staff members.

- The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) is a model that InspireNOLA utilizes to provide ongoing professional development, upward mobility, instructionally focused accountability, and performance-based compensation for all teachers.
- In the Principal Incubation program, InspireNOLA currently employs a Principal-in-Residence to develop future principals who can assume leadership roles within the network.
- The Future InspireNOLA Leaders Program is a leader development program that staff members elect to participate in. Future leaders attend monthly Saturday professional development to acquire knowledge in a variety of topics including school finance, evaluations, culture, and decision-making.
- InspireNOLA's Tuition Reimbursement program provides assistance to employees who are working to obtain additional degrees or certifications.

InspireNOLA recognizes that its of our greatest assets are current staff members, and it is committed to helping them grow and develop so that they can best serve New Orleans students, both now and in the future.

### **Accountability**

In order to ensure that all members of InspireNOLA schools are striving for success and achieving at the highest level, accountability is an InspireNOLA pillar that promotes responsibility and ownership of success for all.

- InspireNOLA leaders are held accountable for setting the vision, expectations, culture, and goals of their school and providing support so that staff and students are successful.
- InspireNOLA teachers are held accountable for the academic success of students, positively managing their classrooms, and setting clearly defined goals and expectations.
- InspireNOLA students are held accountable for following classroom rules and procedures, meeting instructional goals, and developing persistence in the face of challenges.

By setting ambitious goals and expectations and by holding all stakeholders accountable to them, InspireNOLA can better ensure that it is collectively striving for excellence.

### **Academic Structures, Policies, and Practices**

In order to provide a high quality and exemplary education to all students, InspireNOLA utilizes and implements the following structures, policies, and practices in alignment with the four pillars.

### **Positive Culture**

- *Academic excellence incentive systems:* InspireNOLA utilizes academic incentives to recognize documented gains attained throughout the school year on formative assessments. We take pride in cultivating a culture of scholarly achievement and high expectations for learning through ongoing recognition of goal attainment by students and faculty. InspireNOLA rewards results through academic excellence ceremonies, monthly newsletter recognition postings, field trips and daily informal interactions with students and staff to provide verbal commendations.
- *Positive behavior incentive systems (PBIS):* InspireNOLA focuses on the positive instead of the negative for behavior, rewarding good choices and appropriate behavior through biweekly celebrations, out of uniform days, field trips, and other earned incentives. Giving attention to those who are going above and beyond instead of misbehaving, students are recognized during awards ceremonies and, in some cases, with senior scholarships.

### **Rigorous Academics**

- *Hire and retain exemplary staff:* In order to provide exceptional instruction that focuses on rigorous academics, InspireNOLA must hire and retain outstanding staff members and teachers who are prepared to deliver quality lessons and form lasting relationships with students. InspireNOLA focuses on recruiting and hiring staff who have records of proven success and who have the potential to grow and develop through regular coaching and development. Once team members have demonstrated that they achieve high results for students, InspireNOLA retains them through continuously providing development, internal growth opportunities, and a community that cares about them as employees and as people.
- *Focus on data and results:* InspireNOLA ensures that it is providing excellent instruction to its students by verifying it with data and results. InspireNOLA sets high yet attainable yearly and benchmark goals for each school, grade-level, and student, then measures progress toward them.
- *Serve all students and meet their individual needs:* InspireNOLA is committed to ensuring that every child receives an exemplary education at InspireNOLA despite diverse individual needs and disabilities of our students. As open-enrollment schools, InspireNOLA accepts every student who enrolls through the centralized enrollment system, OneApp. InspireNOLA employs certified special education teachers, gifted and talented teachers, and ELL teachers, as well as interventionists, in order to provide the necessary supports that all students deserve.
- *CTE pathways:* To ensure that InspireNOLA are aligned to the state’s goal for college and career readiness, it provides career pathways to broaden post-secondary options for high school students. The CTE pathways allow students to explore the appropriate trainings and additional education for the following careers: retail, hospitality-tourism, culinary, STEM, and information technology. Students complete high school with specific credentials for their chosen CTE pathway in addition to their diploma.

### **Continuous Growth**

- *Teacher Advancement Program (TAP):* InspireNOLA fully implements TAP in all of our schools, providing weekly professional development to teachers during cluster meetings and employing mentor and master teachers in a professional growth ladder that allows exemplary teachers to remain in the classroom but extend their impact.
- *Ongoing professional development:* All InspireNOLA employees engage in at least fifteen full days of professional development during the summer and throughout the year. Staff members also have opportunities to attend outside professional development sessions and conferences that are specific to their roles or that will advance their content knowledge.
- *Tuition reimbursement:* InspireNOLA offers a partial tuition reimbursement to current employees who are pursuing an advanced degree or certification, showing that we value our employees and their continuing education and development.
- *Stratified classes:* During innovation period, students are separated into small groups based on ability levels and specific growth areas. All students receive differentiated instruction during this hour, thus allowing teachers and support staff to ensure that every student is growing and being pushed to achieve their best – even our highest achieving.

### **Accountability**

- *School model with three academies:* InspireNOLA schools are each led by a Head of School, with the schools then broken down based on grade level into two or three smaller academies, each led by an Academy Principal. These administrators are ultimately responsible for the achievement of their academy grade levels, thus providing an additional layer of leader accountability for the success of the school.
- *Instructional Excellence Evaluations:* All faculty of core content areas are evaluated four times per

year utilizing the TAP Core Rubric for teaching excellence. Teachers are assessed on their knowledge, skills and application in three primary areas: learning environment, planning, and instructional delivery. Each faculty must participate in post-conference sessions after each evaluation to determine reinforcement and refinement areas for improvement. Growth is monitored in CODE system for all four evaluation cycles.

- *Performance reviews:* All staff members receive performance reviews two or three times per year, depending on their job function. These reviews focus on quantitative feedback related to their job performance and qualitative feedback on professional strengths and areas of growth. The reviews include individual conversations with school leaders and written feedback so that each member of the InspireNOLA team is constantly growing and being held accountable.
- *Quarterly goals review:* Leaders, staff, and students review goals and progress toward them during focused, quarterly meetings and reviews to analyze and understand where they have excelled and where they can improve.

### **Academic Framework**

All InspireNOLA schools and teachers follow a consistent instructional framework with common academic components of pacing guides, interim benchmarks, and learning goals. These features ensure that InspireNOLA teachers who are delivering content and facilitating learning that is based on grade-level standards. InspireNOLA holds students to a high academic bar and support them to achieve it.

- Backwards planning is a critical element of effective instruction, and InspireNOLA proactively assists teachers with backwards planning by providing teachers with a pacing guide for each subject. This document includes units with aligned grade-level standards, suggested time allotments, focused essential questions, and vocabulary terms that contribute to higher-level discussions.
- Aligned to the standards and units prescribed on the pacing guides, interim assessments are administered every six to eight weeks for students in 2<sup>nd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade to provide current data regarding student achievement and progress. Assessment data is used to create rigorous achievement goals in all core content areas, both for individual students and entire grade levels. Tracking data is posted in classrooms, hallways, and common areas to reinforce our focus on academic achievement and growth. Teachers participate in data meetings during which they, along with master teachers and leaders, to analyze new data, understand trends and areas of improvement, and create action plans to meet student needs moving forward.
- All InspireNOLA classes follow the same instructional order and framework by utilizing the research-based gradual release model, which promotes increased student accountability as the teacher shifts the ownership of learning to students during a class period.<sup>2</sup> The standard InspireNOLA instructional framework, which was developed based on the gradual release model, includes the following components:
  - “Do Nows” – Upon entering an InspireNOLA classroom all students are given a task to complete independently. These tasks serve as a way to spiral skills previously taught in the curriculum cycle. By constantly reviewing standards taught, students remain exposed to the curriculum and regression decreases. Teachers identify the skills used for “Do Nows” using assessment data from interim and universal screening data.
  - “I Do” – Teachers model their thought process when attempting to work with a new concept. Teacher modeling is completed in the form of a think-aloud, where teachers share the thought process they used to come to a particular answer. During the teacher

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<sup>2</sup> Fisher, Douglas and Nancy Frey. Better Learning Through Structured Teaching: A Framework for the Gradual Release of Responsibility. ASCD, 2014.

modeling, students are responsible for being active listeners to understand the presented content.

- “We Do” – Once students have seen the teacher work through a concept the teacher will then engage students in working with them and one another to explore, explain and justify responses using the steps highlighted by the teacher during the model as a foundation for providing exemplary responses. Teachers will use different questioning techniques to solicit input from students. Students will be asked to collaborate during this guided practice session. The student collaboration time allows the teacher to move to the role of facilitator to gather anecdotal information about student understanding of the taught concept. Teachers also use this time to remediate students needing additional support and address misconceptions in student understanding.
- “You Do” – Students work individually to show the teacher understanding of the lesson concept. During independent practice the teacher is collecting qualitative and quantitative data on students’ understanding of the concept introduced for the day. Questions formulated for the independent practice mirror items that may be on upcoming assessments.
- “Exit Tickets” – At the end of every instructional session, teachers assess for student understanding of the taught concept in multiple ways. Exit ticket items are used to connect the day’s learning to the curriculum unit goal. Teachers use a combination of the independent practice and exit ticket data to make adjustments for upcoming instruction.

## **Curriculum and Assessments**

### **Curriculum**

InspireNOLA utilizes Louisiana Student Standards for all core K-12 curriculum. The Louisiana Student Standards are based on the Common Core State Standards, which are a rigorous group of standards that help to prepare students for college and career readiness. The materials below were selected because they were most aligned to the Louisiana Student Standards and the learning objectives contained therein. Internally made Year-long Scope-and-Sequence course guides are designed to increase rigorous instruction that aligns with both state and college and career ready standards. LDOE ELA Guidebooks 2.0 serve as a basis for all English/Language Arts K-12 curriculum. In addition, the following resources, along with other supplemental materials, are being used to implement Louisiana Student Standards at additional schools as well:

- Math:
  - Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grades: Go Math
  - 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grades: Prentiss Hall Math
  - 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> Grades: Internally created units, lessons, and materials that align to EOC and ACT assessments
- Reading:
  - Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grades: Reading Street
  - Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: Guided Reading: Reading A-Z
  - Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade: ELA Guidebooks 2.0
  - 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> Grades: Internally created units, lessons, and materials that align to EOC and ACT assessments
  - Additional resources include and Achieve 3000
- Social Studies:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grades: Harcourt Social Studies
  - Additional instructional components include document based writing, integration of literacy analysis, and inquiry based thinking

- Science:

- 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grades: Harcourt Social Studies
- Additional instructional components include focus on the scientific method, including inquiry, experimentation, and analysis

**Interim Assessments**

In addition to external assessments, InspireNOLA also administers internal, formative assessments throughout the year in order to ensure that each student, each grade-level, and each school is on track to meeting the rigorous yet attainable goals that have been set. Interim assessments are given every six to eight weeks in first through twelfth grades, providing teachers frequent data in order to adjust instruction immediately to meet the needs of their students, and coaches and administrators information on which teachers may need additional coaching or support in order to best serve their students. Each interim assessment is aligned to Louisiana Student Standards, LDOE Guidebooks 2.0, and internally created Year-long Scope-and-Sequence course guides.

**Success of Academic Model**

InspireNOLA foundation schools, Alice M. Harte Charter School (prekindergarten through eighth) and Edna Karr High School (ninth through twelfth) both received “A” letter grades in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, dramatically outperforming city and state proficiency averages. Edna Karr’s 2015 and 2016 senior classes both achieved a graduation rate of 100%, with millions of dollars in scholarships earned. 100% of Alice Harte eighth graders who were enrolled in Algebra I scored “excellent” on the End-of-Course assessment for the past two years.

In the 2015-2016 school year, InspireNOLA took over Andrew H. Wilson Charter School, the second-lowest performing elementary school in New Orleans. Andrew Wilson received “F” letter grades for the previous two years, and less than 40% of students scored proficient on Louisiana state assessments in 2014-2015. After only one year of operation, InspireNOLA has seen dramatic increases in parental involvement and academic progress, and a decrease of behavioral incidents. Andrew Wilson’s school performance score grew an incredible 29.2 points, the largest increase of any school in the city, to the equivalent of a C letter grade.

InspireNOLA’s academic model is currently being implemented at all three current InspireNOLA schools, and, as noted above and as demonstrated in *Figure 1* and *Figure 2* below, the results have been tremendous. This proven model that results in success for students will be implemented at the proposed school, McDonogh #42 Elementary Charter School.

Figure 1: 2015-16 LEAP & iLEAP Results for ELA, % Basic or Above

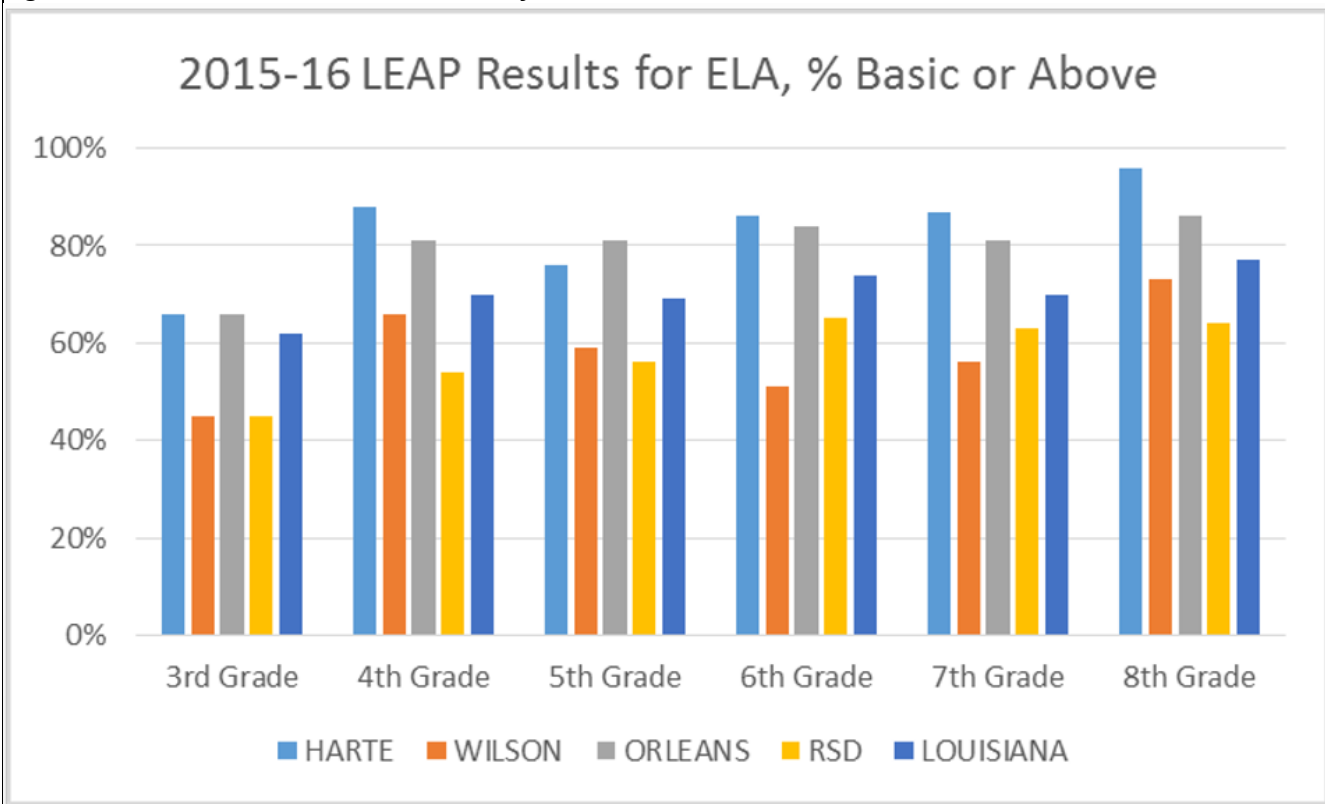
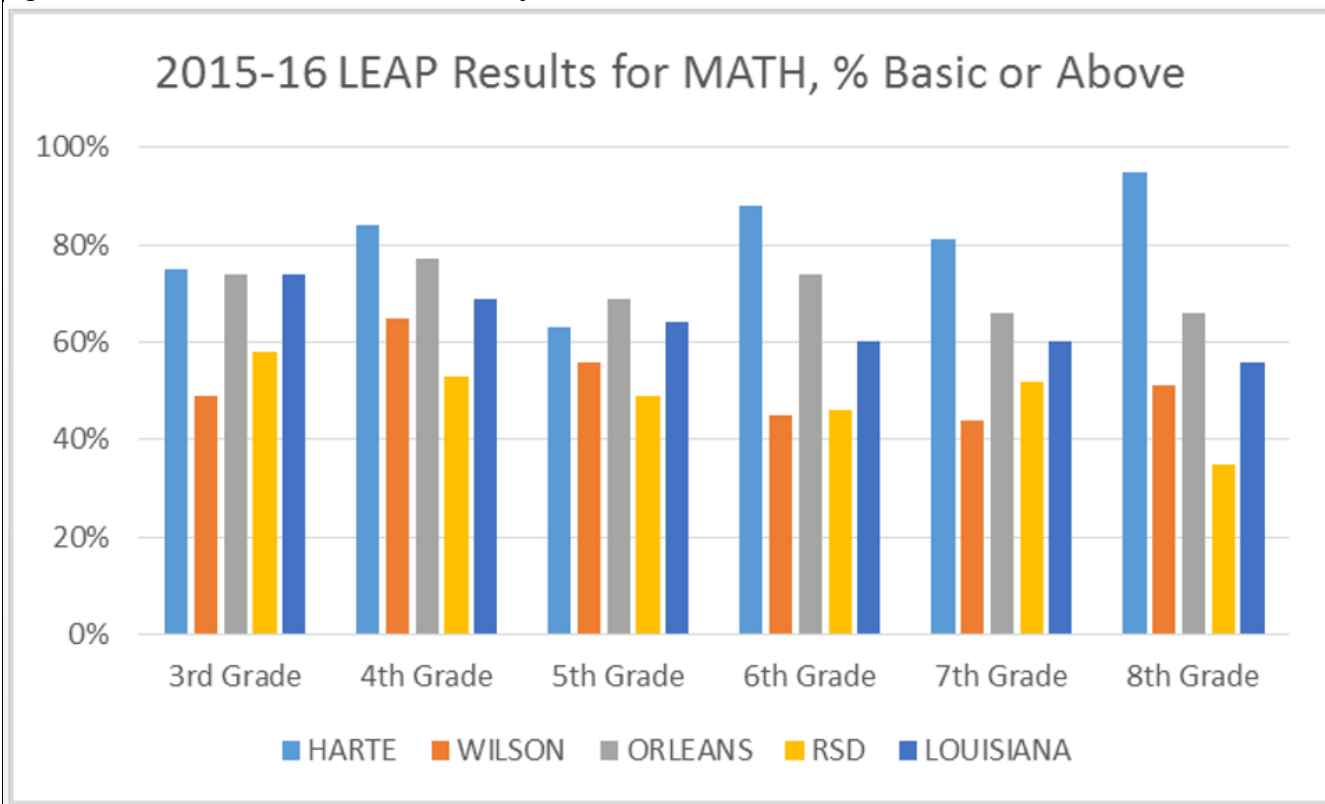


Figure 2: 2015-16 LEAP & iLEAP Results for Math, % Basic or Above





## 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.**

### Day and Year in the Life of a Student

Elementary students track their behavior throughout the day and week, either through a color chart (prekindergarten through third grades) or a behavior card (fourth through eighth grades). Color charts are visual reminders posted in each classroom, helping students internalize acceptable behavior, learn from mistakes, and improve choices through an external and visual representation. Unlike negative disciplinary systems that focus on misbehavior, InspireNOLA students earn teacher or staff recognition for making positive choices related to the school values. Through the use of these systems, students earn invitations to biweekly celebrations, during which students engage in fun activities and continue learning appropriate social behavior in unstructured time.

Students in third through eighth grades begin each day with an innovation period: an hour-long block in which students are stratified into small groups based on what skills, strategies, and subjects that they would benefit most from receiving additional intervention in. All instructional staff members teach during this time, so small groups are no more than 15 students – and often much smaller. Students at every ability level receive instruction that is tailored to their growth areas and need, from the most struggling to the most advanced students. Students continue their day with their classroom cohorts, with every grade level attending a daily enrichment class. This class rotates among physical education, art, foreign language, technology, and band.

*Figure 3: Elementary Weekly Schedule (Example: 4<sup>th</sup> Grade)*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday		Friday
7:45–7:52	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	7:45-7:52	Homeroom
7:55–8:55	Innovation Period	Innovation Period	Innovation Period	Innovation Period	7:55–8:55	Innovation Period
8:55–10:28	Math	Math	Math	Math	8:55-10:08	Math
10:30–12:00	ELA	ELA	ELA	ELA	10:10-11:20	ELA
12:00-1:00	Enrichment	Enrichment	Enrichment	Enrichment	11:20-12:20	Enrichment
1:00-1:40	Lunch/ Recess	Lunch/ Recess	Lunch/ Recess	Lunch/ Recess	12:20-1:00	Lunch/ Recess
1:40-3:10	Science & SS	Science & SS	Science & SS	Science & SS	1:00-2:10	Science & SS
					2:10-3:10	PBIS Celebration

*Figure 4: Elementary Calendar of Special Events*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Thursday, August 3	Family Orientation Day	Family & Community
Wednesday, August 9	1 <sup>st</sup> Day of School	Academic Excellence
Tuesday, August 15	Open House & Parent Night	Family & Community
Friday, August 18	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Friday, September 8	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Thursday, September 14	Movie Night	Family & Community
Wednesday, September 20	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter Progress Reports	Academic Excellence
Friday, September 22	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Tuesday, September 26	Family Literacy Night	Family & Community
Friday, October 9	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Wednesday, October 18	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter Report Card Conferences	Academic Excellence
Friday, October 20	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter Breakfast of Champions	Academic Excellence
Thursday, October 26	Community Night of Inspiration	Family & Community
Friday, October 27	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Tuesday, October 31	Fall Fest (for Halloween)	Family & Community
Wednesday, November 8	Future Student Open House	Family & Community
Friday, November 10	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Friday, November 17	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter Progress Reports	Academic Excellence
Thursday, November 30	Academic Excellence Ceremony	Academic Excellence
Friday, December 1	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Friday, December 15	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Wednesday, December 20	Holiday Performances & Program	Family & Community
Wednesday, January 10	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter Report Card Conferences	Academic Excellence
Friday, January 12	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter Breakfast of Champions	Academic Excellence
Friday, January 19	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Friday, February 2	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Friday, February 9	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter Progress Reports	Academic Excellence
Friday, February 16	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Monday, February 19 – Friday, February 23	Scholastic Book Fair	Academic Excellence
Tuesday, February 20	Future Student Open House	Family & Community
Friday, February 23	Black History Program	Family & Community

Friday, March 2	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Tuesday, March 6	Literacy Night	Family & Community
Friday, March 16	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Wednesday, March 21	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report Card Conferences	Academic Excellence
Friday, March 23	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter Breakfast of Champions	Academic Excellence
Friday, March 30	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Friday, April 13	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter Progress Reports	Academic Excellence
Friday, April 13	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Friday, May 4	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Friday, May 18	PBIS Celebration	Positive Culture
Tuesday, May 22	Kindergarten Promotional Ceremony	Academic Excellence
Wednesday, May 23	End of Year Celebration	Positive Culture

**Structures, Policies, and Practices**

In order to provide a high quality and exemplary education to all of our students, InspireNOLA utilizes and implements the following structures, policies, and practices to support the mission and vision of the InspireNOLA schools.

- *Small academies and operational support:* Dividing the larger school into small academies of no more than 250 students each allows students, teachers, and parents to access more individual and targeted support from school leaders, particularly the Academy Principal. In addition, each InspireNOLA school employs a School Operations Manager who leads the operational functions of the school, including transportation, food service, procurement, and vendor relations. This allows the school leaders and teachers to focus on the most impactful components that lead to student success: instruction, culture, and family relationships.
- *Sports and extracurricular activities:* InspireNOLA schools build student investment by offering sports and other extracurricular activities according to student interest, which include football, basketball, volleyball, baseball, track, cheerleading, majorettes, band, student government association, drama, arts and ecology, digital media, robotics, and others.
- *Involve parents and families:* Parents and families are invited to participate in and attend events at the school, and to become involved and invested members of the school family. Parents are encouraged to join their school’s parent-teacher organization and to attend the parent-focused events that occur at each school at least once a month, including breakfasts, award ceremonies, and showcases.
- *Host community events:* InspireNOLA promotes community involvement in our schools by hosting community events and extending invitations to neighbors and community organizations. These events include canned food drives, holiday toy drives, open houses, and arts showcases.

In addition, InspireNOLA employs a clear division of responsibilities between the network and school that allows schools to focus on key aspects of education within the school building that are most impactful on their students.

*Figure 5: Division of Responsibilities*

	<b>Network</b>	<b>Schools</b>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Set overall yearly goals for the region and schools</li> <li>-Create performance standards and hold leaders accountable to meeting them</li> <li>-Create grade and content level interim assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Progress monitor and report progress toward goals</li> <li>-Set and measure individual staff and student goals</li> </ul>
<b>Academics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Develop an academic framework that is consistent across all schools</li> <li>-Establish instructional rubric and pacing guides</li> <li>-Create high-level professional development plan and provide shared session materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Implement instructional framework and develop teachers in effectively doing so</li> <li>-Differentiate instruction to meet population needs</li> <li>-Train and develop teachers and support staff</li> </ul>
<b>Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Set preliminary budget and approve final budgets, monitoring compliance throughout year</li> <li>-Set policies and procedures and monitor adherence</li> <li>-Process payroll</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Provide input into budgetary needs</li> <li>- Monitor budget on a monthly basis</li> <li>-Adhere to policies and procedures</li> </ul>
<b>Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Oversight of and identification of current and new facilities</li> <li>-Soliciting RFPs and negotiating vendor contracts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-School site facility and operational management</li> </ul>
<b>Human Capital</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Recruit and hire school leaders, and assist with hiring school staff</li> <li>-Determine benefits providers and offerings</li> <li>-Process initial hiring paperwork</li> <li>-Handle all legal and insurance matters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Recruit school staff</li> <li>-Conduct school staff performance reviews and handle employee grievances</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Set enrollment targets</li> <li>-Establish and continue promotion of the InspireNOLA network</li> <li>-Anticipate and plan for future expansion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Establish local presence and build community relationships</li> <li>-Plan and carryout student recruitment initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Solicit national funding, including researching and applying for national and government grants</li> <li>-Provide compliance guidance and monitoring for all grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Research and apply for local foundation grants</li> <li>-Organize local giving campaigns and fundraising events</li> <li>-Adhere to policies and compliance of grants received</li> </ul>

## 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.**

### Reflecting on Progress Toward Goals

In order to achieve its goals, InspireNOLA schools will utilize systems of continuous school improvement processes, goal progress assessments, results analysis and reflection, as well as plan and strategy revisions as needed to continue and accelerate growth. Though a primary focus is on academic goal attainment, InspireNOLA recognizes that academic success is intrinsically related to other components within a school, and therefore measures these also. Included are student disciplinary incidents, positive behavior incentives, as well as student and staff retention, attendance, and satisfaction.

Goals for each indicator will be set at the beginning of the year after a systematic analysis of the previous year's state testing data as well as internally and externally made beginning-of-year diagnostic assessments is performed. Goals that are set will be rigorous, thus motivating teachers and students to achieve at their highest levels and push beyond what they might believe is possible.

InspireNOLA utilizes information and data from internal and external academic assessments in order to fully understand the strengths and weaknesses of students, academic programming, and instruction.

InspireNOLA will administer the following external assessments to elementary students:

- TS Gold: prekindergarten
- DIBELS: kindergarten through third grades
- LEAP: third through eighth grades
- MAP: kindergarten through eighth grades

The results of these external assessments will allow InspireNOLA schools to assess overall student growth, progress, and goal attainment on a yearly basis. Each assessment provides information with which the quality of academic and instructional programming can be gauged. These results will also be examined and reflected upon after each administration in order to adjust network pacing guides, teacher support, and student Response to Intervention (RtI) strategies. The results will be analyzed holistically and by subgroup, ensuring that the methods, strategies, and practices at InspireNOLA are meeting the needs of every group in order to provide all students a quality education that produces positive and measurable outcomes.

In addition to external assessments, InspireNOLA will also administer internal, formative assessments throughout the year in order to ensure that each student, each grade-level, and each school is on track to meeting the rigorous, yet attainable goals that have been set. Aligned to the Louisiana State Standards and units prescribed on network pacing guides, interim assessments will be administered every six to eight weeks for students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade to provide current data regarding student achievement

and progress.

Data from these assessments will be analyzed and used to create rigorous achievement goals in all core content areas, both for individual students and entire grade levels. Tracking data will be posted in classrooms, hallways, and common areas to reinforce the focus on academic achievement and growth. Teachers will participate in data meetings during which they, along with master teachers and school leaders, analyze new data at the classroom and student levels, understand emerging trends and areas of need for improvement, and create action plans to meet individual student needs moving forward.

InspireNOLA will produce “dashboards” each quarter that show a school-level summary of progress and achievement. When reflecting on progress toward and achievement of goals, InspireNOLA will analyze both holistic school-wide data and subgroup data, ensuring that all students are growing and on track to meeting or exceeding goals. The dashboards usually display high-level, school-wide data so that progress overall can be measured, but a greater focus is placed on subgroup data when reflecting and creating action plans in order to react to and actually use trends derived from data.

### **Assumptions about Baseline Performance**

InspireNOLA assumes that by the end of each academic year, all students will demonstrate academic progress by at least one grade level. This includes students who enter into a grade in which they are performing at a level or levels behind or above their peers. InspireNOLA believes this is possible at its schools by setting rigorous goals for teachers and students, tracking progress of individual students throughout the year, and providing Rtl supports such as strategic grouping and academic, student-centered strategies.

Given the known data regarding performance of McDonogh #42 Elementary Charter School, InspireNOLA assumes that most students will need significant remediation and academic support. In the 2015-2016 school year, only 38% of students scored “Basic” or above on ELA and math state assessments, with only 11% scoring “Mastery” or above. InspireNOLA has past experience with supporting and improving similar baseline performance, as InspireNOLA’s existing turnaround school, Andrew Wilson, had comparable baseline performance before InspireNOLA began operation.

InspireNOLA’s assumptions about student baseline performance will be verified by systematically measuring student growth. Students’ past performance scores will be examined, and beginning-of-year diagnostic assessments will be given. This data will provide InspireNOLA schools with a baseline measure of student performance as well as individualized reports that target specific student areas of need and strengths. Because these weaknesses can be precisely pinpointed for each student, essential remediation can occur. Student progress will be monitored throughout the year with the use of internal and external formative assessments. InspireNOLA uses network-made quarterly assessments as well as DIBELS and MAP to track student growth and make any necessary remediation throughout the year. At the end of each academic year, value-added growth will be measured by viewing summative assessment data gained from DIBELS, MAP, and LEAP. The data will be extensively analyzed to verify student performance assumptions and plan for summer and future remediation needs.

### **Pupil Performance Standards**

InspireNOLA schools use Louisiana Student Standards to measure pupil performance in grades K-12. The standards define the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn in English language arts (ELA), math, science, social studies, foreign languages, physical education, and health. They state what knowledge and skills students must learn so that they are on track to become college and career ready.

### **Measure Performance Against Standards**

Students take state-required end-of-year summative assessments that formally assess the Louisiana Student Standards in grades 3-8 in ELA, math, science, and social studies. By administering network-wide beginning-of-the-year and quarterly assessments in core content areas that are directly aligned to the Louisiana Student Standards, InspireNOLA schools will be able to continue measuring student performance against them.

InspireNOLA's network-wide achievement bands, by which student performance throughout the year is measured, are also directly aligned to the state test bands. Because of this alignment, we are able to accurately predict and track student performance against the standards by determining student scores of Advanced, Mastery, Basic, and Below Basic.

InspireNOLA will produce "dashboards" each quarter that show a school-level summary of progress and achievement on assessments that measure student performance with state standards. When reflecting on progress toward and achievement of goals, InspireNOLA will use the Louisiana Student Standards to guide the analysis of both holistic school-wide data and subgroup data, ensuring that all students are growing and on track to meeting or exceeding goals. The dashboards display high-level, school-wide data so that progress overall can be measured, but a greater focus is placed on subgroup data when reflecting and creating action plans in order to react to and actually use trends derived from data.

### **Teacher Training for Interventions**

InspireNOLA teachers are trained to perform tiered interventions through various means within the RtI model. By being data-driven schools, all staff at InspireNOLA schools are trained to analyze and track student data to guide their instruction in whatever tiered level of instruction they are teaching. In network-led data meetings, teachers and leaders are trained to group and subgroup their students to determine what level of intervention they need.

Teachers of students in tier 1 are trained in instruction of the core curriculum in new teacher summer training workshops and beginning of year professional development sessions. The workshops and sessions are run by network content specialists who guide teachers in understanding, utilizing, planning, and assessing students on the curriculum. This training is reinforced and continued within the schools by master teachers.

Because schools participate in the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), master and mentor teachers provide content specific professional development during the day each week. It is in these cluster meetings that student data is analyzed, specific student needs are identified, and tier 2 strategies are developed, field tested, taught to teachers, and applied in classrooms. Student performance is deeply analyzed and tracked each week so that improvements can be made to instruction, student growth can be monitored, and student intervention groups can be adjusted as needed. As needed, some tier 2 program facilitators are hired to provide specialized training for school staff.

Intervention teachers of students in tier 3 are trained in the same manner with the addition of specialized professional development workshops that are specifically meant for these teachers. District-led workshops are provided and tier 3 program facilitators are hired as needed to train teachers in intervention methods. The school special education coordinator will also provide needed training based on observations and monitoring of intervention programs.

### **Pupil Progression and Retention**

InspireNOLA follows the pupil progression and retention plan of its LEA, Orleans Parish School Board. The

district plan details guidelines from Bulletin 111 with regards to progression, promotion, retention.

## 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.**

### Values

InspireNOLA's student culture is defined by the network's values:

- *Inspiration*: InspireNOLA exists to inspire the children of our city through education to maximize their potential and transform society.
- *Dedication*: InspireNOLA staff is continuously striving to make sure every child is successful.
- *Aspiration*: We are committed to helping all of our children bring their dreams to fruition

InspireNOLA's mission is to create an educational movement that invests students, families, and community leaders to inspire students to achieve their best, both in and out of the classroom, in order to positively impact the city of New Orleans' economy and society. Across the InspireNOLA network, all staff is dedicated to fulfilling this mission. Together, they work collaboratively with stakeholders to create a culture in which students' aspirations come to fruition.

A strong, positive student culture is established from the first day of the InspireNOLA school year, when school and network leaders outline student behavior systems and expectations to staff, who will then implement those systems with students. These include:

- *Positive behavior incentive systems (PBIS)*: InspireNOLA focuses on the positive instead of the negative for behavior, rewarding good choices and appropriate behavior through biweekly celebrations, out of uniform days, field trips, and other earned incentives. Giving attention to those who are going above and beyond instead of misbehaving, students are recognized during awards ceremonies and, in some cases, with senior scholarships.
- *Positive academic incentive systems (PAIS)*: InspireNOLA also encourages positive achievements in academics, with rewards similar to those given for positive behavior. Throughout the year, students are recognized during academic awards ceremonies that culminate in the distribution of academic jackets to those students who demonstrate outstanding performance or growth on LEAP exams.

The PBIS and PAIS systems align to InspireNOLA's values of inspiration, dedication, and aspiration in the pursuit of creating a safe learning space in which all students are ready and willing to learn effectively.

### Policies and Practices for Behavior and Culture

InspireNOLA believes that outstanding academic results are dependent on the creation and maintenance



of a strong, positive school culture. The PBIS and PAIS systems are the foundation of this culture but InspireNOLA schools also focus on inspiring and motivating students in other ways that excite and invest students in learning and success:

- *Beginning of Year Student Induction:* InspireNOLA’s behavior expectations are outlined for students on the first day of class and practiced in every class during the first two weeks of the year. Teachers set aside ten minutes of each lesson to drill a specific action – including sitting in *SLANT* position, practicing accountable talks, lining up and walking in *HALLS* position, entering and exiting the classroom. These expectations are repeatedly reinforced throughout the school year, in class, culture-specific assemblies, or ceremonies to reward outstanding behavior, attendance, or academic success. Positive achievement is regularly celebrated in InspireNOLA schools to further invest students in their own growth and success.
- *School model with multiple academies:* InspireNOLA schools are each led by a Head of School, with the schools then broken down based on grade level into smaller academies, each led by an Academy Administrator. These administrators are ultimately responsible for the culture and achievement of their academy grade levels, thus providing an additional layer of leader accountability for the success of the school.
- *Motivational visuals:* InspireNOLA hallways have motivational quotes and purposeful pictures of students to promote student ownership.
- *Sports and extracurricular activities:* InspireNOLA schools build student investment by offering sports and other extracurricular activities according to student interest, which include football, basketball, volleyball, baseball, track, cheerleading, majorettes, band, student government association, drama, arts and ecology, digital media, robotics, and others.
- *Growth mindset:* Goals are set and updated quarterly with teachers and students so that schools are constantly focused on growth and achievement, with all team members working together to maximize individual student achievement.
- *Support for the whole child:* InspireNOLA provides wraparound services (including counseling, nursing, social work, and parent advocacy) to address social and emotional needs and develop the whole child

Schools in the InspireNOLA network use common policies and practices to establish a uniform culture. Visual reminders of these policies are clearly posted in every InspireNOLA classroom. These include:

- General school systems
  - “Give me five”- To get students’ attention, teachers raise their hands and say “Give me five!” Students are expected to immediately put their eyes on the speaker, sit quietly, be still, put down whatever they are working on, and listen carefully.
  - Hand signals – Students are expected to use silent hand signals for common requests, such as supplies, tissues, bathroom, or asking a question.
  - *SLANT* position - In order to maximize students’ ability to pay attention, InspireNOLA students sit in a position called *SLANT*: Sit up, Listen, Ask and answer questions, Nod your head, and Track the speaker.
  - *HALLS* – Students are expected to walk quietly in the halls at all times. During transitions, they are also expected to stay in their line and maintain *HALLS* position as they move directly to their next class. This includes:
    - H- head forward
    - A- arms at side
    - L- low speed
    - L- Level 0
    - S- straight lines

- Volume levels - Different times and activities during the school day require different voice levels for students and teachers. The following numbers are how InspireNOLA staff will convey the appropriate volume level to students:
  - Level 0: silent (no talking or sounds)
  - Level 1: whisper
  - Level 2: partner talk
  - Level 3: speaking voice
  - Level 4: outside voice
- 20/20 Rule – Teachers often communicate important information during the very beginning or end of class. Therefore, students are not allowed to leave class during the first 20 minutes or last 20 minutes of the class period, except in case of emergency.
- School uniform policies – Students are expected to maintain a proper uniform with all required components. These policies are posted throughout the school and in each classroom.

At InspireNOLA schools, the goal is to create a safe, caring, and productive environment where all students will learn. InspireNOLA understands that, though there are rules and expectations, students will sometimes make mistakes and act in opposition to these rules, and will therefore often be issued a consequence. We believe that consequences should create helpful learning experience, and help students develop responsibility and accountability for their actions and behavior. The following practices guide staff response to behavior infractions:

- **PreK – 3<sup>rd</sup>:**

Lower elementary teachers will use a color system, from positive colors to negative: green, yellow, orange, red, and blue. When a student makes an incorrect choice or misbehaves, the teacher will move the individual student name down to a lesser color.

If a student reaches red on the color chart, the teacher must enter an infraction into the OnCourse System as a warning. If the student reaches a blue on the color chart, the teacher must enter an infraction into the OnCourse System as a consequence. After 3 blue entries into the OnCourse System are issued (by anyone) for an individual student, the Dean or Academy Administrator will assign an afterschool detention.

- **4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>:**

When a student in the upper grades makes an incorrect choice or misbehaves, the teacher or staff member will first issue a verbal warning to them, serving as a reminder of the expected behavior. If the student misbehaves again, the teacher will issue a 1<sup>st</sup> written acknowledgement by writing their name on the board. If the behavior continues again, the teacher will issue a 2<sup>nd</sup> written acknowledgement by putting a check next to the student's name.

If all of the above has been done and the behavior still occurs, the teacher must enter an infraction into the OnCourse System. After 3 entries into the OnCourse System are issued (by anyone) for an individual student, the Dean or Academy Administrator will assign an afterschool detention.

If a student continues to make incorrect choices and is issued multiple infractions in OnCourse, the following consequences can apply:

- 1st offense – Verbal warning, Phone call home, detention
- 2nd offense – Conference with parent

- 3rd offense – Saturday School/In-School Intervention
- 4th offense – Suspension

### **Investing Staff in Values and Norms**

InspireNOLA’s values are introduced to staff on the first day of the academic year and continuously reinforced until the last day through the following:

- *Beginning of Year Teacher Induction:* InspireNOLA teachers and staff participate in a two-week induction program at the beginning of the year to introduce, reinforce, and practice the values and systems that make up our cultural model. Network and school leaders introduce the network’s universal practices – *SLANT*, hallway expectations, and attention-getting signals like “give me five” or “PRIDE!” – in the first few days and model their use. Teachers repeatedly practice correct implementation of the model in additional trainings over the next week.
- *Teacher Advancement Program (TAP):* InspireNOLA fully implements TAP in all of our schools, providing weekly professional development to teachers during cluster meetings and employing mentor and master teachers in a professional growth ladder that allows exemplary teachers to remain in the classroom but extend their impact. InspireNOLA’s values are embedded in the TAP instructional rubric’s focus on creation of a positive learning environment by all teachers.
- *Ongoing professional development:* All InspireNOLA employees engage in over three weeks of professional development during the summer and throughout the year. Several of these days are devoted to reinforcement of the network’s academic and behavior culture.
- *Staff achievement celebrations:* InspireNOLA celebrates the success of its teachers through an ongoing series of achievement celebrations. These events recognize individual and school-wide academic growth and behavior improvement. Top teachers are chosen, in part, on their ability to promote InspireNOLA’s positive behavior culture.
- *Performance reviews:* All staff members receive performance reviews three times per year. These focus on quantitative feedback related to their job performance and qualitative feedback on professional strengths and areas of growth, including maintenance of the school and network’s culture. These reviews include individual conversations with school leaders and written feedback so that each member of the InspireNOLA team is constantly growing and being held accountable for their contribution to students’ learning.

### **Interactions Between Administrators and Staff**

InspireNOLA’s instructional and cultural norms are intertwined. They are established and reinforced concurrently through professional interactions among administrators and teachers, among teachers, and between teachers and students. They include:

- *InspireNOLA staff is committed to students and their learning.*
  - o InspireNOLA teachers and administrators base their work on the belief that all students can learn and meet high expectations – related to both behavior and academics. They are dedicated to making knowledge accessible to all students and passionate about building meaningful relationships with young people so students can improve their knowledge and experience success. Because all staff members – from leaders to teachers, support staff to paraprofessionals – know that their team members are committed to students, there is a level of mutual respect and a mindset of positive assumptions between all staff members.
- *InspireNOLA staff is responsible for managing and monitoring student behavior and learning.*
  - o InspireNOLA teachers and administrators maintain high expectations for all students. They facilitate the educational process by designing and managing systems for learning – creating a safe learning environment, presenting inspiring lessons, promoting student participation, supporting substantive discourse, and sustaining long-term engagement by

collaboratively working with students.

- InspireNOLA teachers and administrators carefully monitor student success within the learning environment – observing student interactions, evaluation academic performance, assessing student growth, and measuring learning outcomes relative to objectives – and reward positive student results. This expectation extends beyond the bell, as staff maintains positive relationships in and out of the classroom.

*InspireNOLA staff thinks systematically about their practice and learn from experience.*

- InspireNOLA teachers and administrators work tirelessly to expand their repertoires, deepen their knowledge and skills, and refine their practice. They are willing to incorporate new ideas and methods to support their primary goals – namely, the advancement of student learning and the improvement of their practice. Feedback is constant, and staff members appreciate it because its purpose is to improve outcomes for students, the school, and the community that it serves.

These norms are established through the hiring of strong candidates, ongoing training programs, and concerted retention efforts. By developing its own workforce, InspireNOLA aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout New Orleans.

## Special Education

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

### OPSB Specific Questions

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

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

### Special Education Plan

Inspire NOLA will employ a Special Education/504 Coordinator at each school site who will be responsible for the oversight of the delivery of services for students with disabilities, students identified as gifted/talented, and students with a 504 Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP).

Child Find regulations will be used to locate, identify, and evaluate students with disabilities. Child Find brochures will be displayed in the school office and other prominent locations in the school. These brochures will be distributed to parents at least twice a year and information will be included in parent newsletters and parent meetings. School personnel are responsible for implementing Child Find regulations.

InspireNOLA employs a three tiered intervention process, Response to Intervention (RtI), will be used by InspireNOLA to identify students with disabilities. Members of the RTI team may include a RTI coordinator, administrators, special education staff, general education staff, parents, nurse, social worker, and other pertinent instructional staff.

Upon review of current data/documentation and a student's IEP, a team that will include an administrator(s) and special education coordinator will make the final decision about whether a student

can receive adequate services at the school or if the school will need to contract with another entity to provide the service for the student.

Inspire NOLA is committed to recruiting, training and retaining teachers that are "Highly Qualified" in accordance with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and appropriately licensed and endorsed to serve students with mild and moderate disabilities. InspireNOLA may employ or contract, on an as-needed basis, qualified and licensed providers, such as occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech therapist, appraisal personnel etc., to provide services as outlined on a student's IEP to ensure compliance and maximize student success. InspireNOLA will recruit talented individuals both locally and nation-wide.

Special Education teachers providing instruction in core academic subjects to students with mild/moderate disabilities (in a regular classroom, resource room or other setting) must meet the highly qualified teacher requirements for the subjects they teach and the state's special education certification requirements for the grade level they teach to be considered "Highly Qualified". Special Education teachers not providing direct instruction in core academic subjects are not required to meet the same highly qualified subject competency required by ESSA of teachers of core academic subjects. A current Mild/Moderate Special Education certification is required for Special Education teachers not providing direct instruction in core subject areas.

InspireNOLA will provide services for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible according to the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Bulletin 1706 and other pertinent regulations/legislation. A Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) will be provided for all students enrolled in InspireNOLA by providing and directing special education and related services that meet all State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (SBESE) standards.

Special education and general education teachers have opportunities to meet weekly in common planning time or TAP clusters to set goals for individual students, adapt lessons, learn instructional strategies, monitor student progress, and plan assessments. Special education teachers deliver instruction in the general education class, when appropriate, through "push in" services and co-teaching. Emphasis is placed on utilizing differentiated instructional practices and supportive technology. Paraprofessionals are also used to provide instructional support in the general education setting. After school and summer programs are available for students with disabilities to address targeted needs for academic success. At the elementary level, labs for remediation are provided for those students needed additional instruction in core subject areas. When an IEP team decides that the student would benefit from "pull out" services, strategic targeted instruction in skill deficit area(s) will be provided. Students with more significant disabilities are primarily enrolled in self-contained classes, but are integrated in regular education classes, when appropriate as outlined on their IEP, and included in school activities.

Prior to scheduling, a collaborative team, that may include but is not limited to school administrators, special education coordinator, special education teachers, grade level chairpersons, department chairpersons and related service personnel, meet to discuss strategic placement of students in accordance with the IEP/IAP to maximize student success and accommodate individual needs. Consideration may be given to time of day classes are scheduled, location of classes, delivery method of instructors, assistive technology needs and other factors. Students' progress is reviewed on at least a

quarterly basis and adjustments are made to schedules, as needed, to ensure the best possible placement for student success.

Interim assessments/benchmarks are administered to all students enrolled in core courses. The regular education teacher and the special education inclusion teacher collaborate to appropriately challenge and support each student as they progress through the curriculum. Students who are not enrolled in core courses are evaluated as they progress toward IEP goals by their elective and self-contained teachers.

InspireNOLA will provide multiple opportunities for professional development and training for teachers of students with mild/moderate disabilities. Special Education teachers will receive ongoing, continuing education through attendance at trainings sponsored by the Louisiana Department of Education, and other local, regional and national trainings/conferences. Prior to the start of the school year, professional development will be provided for all staff members. Weekly TAP Cluster meetings and monthly professional development sessions held at each school site will include topics pertinent to special education teachers including, but not limited to, differentiating instruction, RTI process, researched based strategies, Common Core State Standards, etc. Resources will also be available for teachers such as professional books, professional journals, Special Education forms, state bulletins (Bulletin 1508- Pupil Appraisal Handbook, Bulletin 1530- Louisiana's IEP Handbook for Students with Exceptionalities).

InspireNOLA is committed to recruiting, training, and retaining special education personnel that are "Highly Qualified" in accordance with ESSA and appropriately licensed to serve students with significant disabilities. Inspire NOLA may employ or contract, on an as needed basis, qualified and licensed providers, such as occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech therapist, *etc.*, to provide services as outlined on a student's IEP to ensure compliance and maximize student success. InspireNOLA will provide multiple opportunities for professional development and training for teachers of students with severe disabilities. Special Education teachers will receive ongoing, continuing education through attendance at trainings sponsored by the Louisiana Department of Education, facilities, and other local, regional and national trainings/conferences. Teachers will have the opportunity to participate in workgroups. Prior to the start of school, teachers will have an opportunity to participate in a variety of professional development sessions at their school sites. Resources will also be available for teachers such as professional books, professional journals, Special Education forms, state bulletins (Bulletin 1508- Pupil Appraisal Handbook, Bulletin 1530- Louisiana's IEP Handbook for Students with Exceptionalities).

Records concerning suspension, expulsions and other disciplinary actions for students are kept by the Special Education Coordinator, Disciplinarian and Principal. Copies of disciplinary action are also given to the Special Education teacher of record so that the records can be filed in the students Special Education folder and appropriate interventions can be implemented (writing or updating FBA/BIP, reconvening IEP, mentoring, Check In/Check Out, referral to other school personnel such as social worker, counselor, PBIS Coordinator, etc.) and documented to address the behavior(s) of concern. The members of the leadership Team including the Principal, Disciplinarian and Special Education Coordinator are responsible for a regular review of records to determine if significant discrepancies occur in the rate of long-term suspensions and expulsion of children with disabilities compared to the rates for non-disabled children.

#### **Cost/Revenue of Special Education Programming**

The introduction of MFP differentiated funding allows for additional resources for special education students. InspireNOLA will ensure the increased per pupil revenue follows the child in order to meet all IEP requirements. InspireNOLA also takes advantage of the City-wide Exceptional Needs Fund to provide resources for our most needy students. These additional revenue streams as well as IDEA funding allow

for the staffing of SPED teachers, paraprofessionals, and child specific paraprofessionals to ensure all children have the resources needed to succeed.

## 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.**

### Plan for English Language Learners

At the start of each school year, students will be given a Home Language Survey to be completed by the family. A student will be screened for English Language proficiency if the Home Language Survey identifies a language spoken other than English. The ELL teacher at each school site is responsible for overseeing the identification process.

Upon receipt of a Home Language Survey indicating a language other than English is spoken, an assessment is conducted. Students who are identified as being limited English proficient are mandated to be assessed yearly as required by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A student's English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening is assessed using The English Language Development Assessment (ELDA). Results of this proficiency assessment are evaluated by and communicated to the parents of the student by the ESL and/or classroom teacher after the assessment has taken place.

InspireNOLA's ESL program has been using the rigorous Louisiana English as a Second Language Standards to create lessons. The ESL teacher communicates with the ESL student's teachers frequently to become aware of any areas of concern about the ESL student's academics. ESL lessons are created from research-based TESOL online activities, Rosetta Stone technology activities, Targeted Reading Intervention that include integrated content and hands-on Reading and writing activities, Phonemic producing games, Oxford Picture Dictionary activities with social interactions, Strategic Writing practice activities, LEAP practice activities, Technology-based Starfall activities for Early Childhood, as well as Cultural and Choice Reading Activities involving the community. These resources assist in helping students reach various performance objectives such as building vocabulary, comprehending story elements, enhancing writing skills, gaining knowledge about different holidays around the world, summarizing the story, and comparing and contrasting school themes throughout the year.

Each quarter, a Santillana benchmark test is given to the ESL students to provide the ESL teacher data on what each child's strength and weaknesses are in their academics. However, the learning atmosphere of the ESL classroom is very student-centered to accommodate all of the different learning needs of the students. The Louisiana ESL standards are closely related to the Common Core standards because the standards are based off of national ELL standards. The ESL lessons are aimed to increase growth in the transition of the English language acquisition, prepare students with career-based activities that help students choose the best path ahead, and help inspire upper grade students to go to college by achieving their academic school goals each year. The ESL standards are separated by English language levels and by the four different domains, (Reading Writing, Speaking, and Listening.) The ESL standards of reading are designed to have students read, comprehend, analyze and respond to a range of materials using various

strategies for different purposes. The ESL standards for Writing are to have the students write proficiently in English for various purposes and audiences. The ESL standards for Speaking are to have the students demonstrate competence in speaking for effective communication in social and academic contexts. The ESL standards for Listening are to have students demonstrate competence in listening as a tool for learning and comprehension.

ESL teachers develop a curriculum that takes an overall approach to English study or focus on a specific aspect of language use, such as life skills, literacy, or vocational English. Both approaches involve teaching students basic English skills, such as listening, reading, writing and speaking. ESL teachers need to be knowledgeable of their students' culture and recognize differences that may affect a student's ability to acclimate to an English-speaking environment. The ESL teacher has to take approximately 4 days of district approved, ESL-related professional development courses, annually.

When a student is no longer identified as limited English proficient, he or she will not continue to receive specialized English services or be administered the ELDA. A student will be monitored for two years after exiting the program by his or her teachers and the Student Support Team. If a student continues to experience academic difficulties during the monitoring process, school personnel may again identify a student as being limited English proficient and provide specialized English services.

**Cost/Revenue of ELL Programming**

The introduction of MFP differentiated funding allows for additional resources for ELL students. InspireNOLA will ensure the increased per pupil revenue follows the child in order to have the resources needed to succeed. Many of the expenses required for a successful ELL program have to be funded by the general fund. However InspireNOLA utilizes these funds as efficiently as possible while obtaining our ELL goals.

**Parents and Community**

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

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

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

**Parent and Community Support for Enrollment**

InspireNOLA schools have seen high application numbers since its founding year in 2013. Alice Harte has consistently been one of the most applied to schools in New Orleans. Andrew Wilson and Alice Harte collectively received over 2,000 applications last year for only 200 available seats. Families trust the InspireNOLA model and are committed to enrolling their students in a quality program. In Andrew Wilson's first year under InspireNOLA leadership, the administration successfully retained 78 percent of current students and plans to meet that same bar at any other turn-around school. It is a top priority of InspireNOLA to maintain the majority of the current student population in order to develop and support students where they are academically.

**Sharing Information and Receiving Feedback**

Engaging and investing families and communities of InspireNOLA schools is critical to the success of InspireNOLA students, their siblings, schools, and the organization. InspireNOLA knows that parents and



community have a direct stake in school practices and outcomes and that their influence and support can be a significant factor in the perpetuation of a healthy culture and the academic success of students, and therefore involves parents by providing multiple options and venues for them to participate within the school. When InspireNOLA prepares to assume operation of an existing, low-performing school, the leaders host multiple parent and community information and feedback sessions. Current and prospective parents and community leaders are invited to attend sessions that are held at different times and on different dates, to ensure that all interested parties are able to attend. InspireNOLA leaders gather feedback on both positive aspects of the school that parents wish to see continue or be expanded and on negative aspects of areas that could use improvement or revision moving forward. InspireNOLA then uses this feedback when planning for the takeover of the school so that they are meeting the specific needs of the students, parents, and community of that school. Forms for feedback will be located at the school site and will go directly to the Head of School and Network office personnel.

InspireNOLA leaders and staff members invite parents to the school on numerous occasions throughout the year. Each school hosts a parent welcome session in the summer and open houses in the fall and spring. Report card nights occur once a quarter, with parents coming to the school to meet with teachers and discuss their child's progress. Families are invited to attend biweekly school celebrations, field trips, performances, showcases, and extracurricular activities. Parent-teacher organizations (PTOs) are formed at each school so that parents have an avenue to provide constructive feedback about their opinions and viewpoints on all aspects of the school. The school leader and PTO collectively work together to understand the challenges and successes of the school, co-planning events and strategies to continuously improve the environment and programming to best meet the needs of students.

Information is provided to parents through a variety of ways, dependent on the information being disseminated. Announcements and basic school information will be sent home in written form every week on the school's designated "Communication Day" so that parents know when they will receive flyers, letters, and similar written communications. When operating McDonogh #42, InspireNOLA will also use automatically calling and texting systems as well for more urgent and/or pertinent informational dissemination. Parents are informed of news, concerns, and achievements for their individual child or children via personal letter, phone call, text, or email from teachers, leaders, and support staff as well.

#### **Grievance Process**

All grievances will be taken with the utmost seriousness. Initial grievances from parents or community members will be directed to an Academy Principal or the licensed Social Worker at the school, dependent on the nature and severity of the grievance. The notified staff member will then investigate the grievance and take appropriate actions, communicating with the individual who filed the grievance throughout the process and at its resolution. (Communication regarding the grievance will be subject to information disclosure policies and procedures.) If necessary, the complaint will be relayed to the Head of School as well. If the matter is not able to be resolved at the school level, the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) will intervene and support the matter's resolution.

Each grievance is specific to the nature of the individuals and situation and thus requires an individual response instead of following a general format for resolution. InspireNOLA is committed to resolving all grievances in the matter that is best for students, the school, and the general community as a whole.

## 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.**

#### **Wayne Crochet, Board Chair**

The mission of InspireNOLA Charter Schools is to transform and inspire an educational movement, and it is our desire to expand this movement and our impact within New Orleans. Our CEO, Jamar McKneely, grew up in Louisiana and attended community public schools, graduating from Baker High School; his parents, brother, and nieces still live in Louisiana. Expanding to additional schools within Louisiana and being able to provide high-quality public schools for the students in the Louisiana community is personal for Mr. McKneely, and for many of our other staff members at InspireNOLA.

Regarding my own personal experience with setting an ambitious goal and overcoming obstacles to achieve it, one example of a time was in 1968 when I found myself as a young veteran returning to civilian life. I had always considered law school as a goal but my life was not headed on a track that would lead me there. With the encouragement of family and friends, and a new wife, I was able to complete my undergraduate degree and was fortunately accepted to law school. The challenge that law school presented turned out to be the most intellectual experience of my life, an experience that required a great deal of self discipline that I acquired because of the demands placed on a law student. My subsequent legal career is a good measure of the results derived in that I have been able to help clients over the years with their problems and have been able to provide for my family.

While I cannot relate a specific instance or time when I had to encourage another participant to accept my vision that might have been different to theirs, I know that in such a situation I would have employed the tactics necessary to sell the project or idea: 1) Show the benefit of what you are promoting; 2) Show that it is the best way to accomplish what you and they want to do; and 3) Show the benefit that they will derive as a result.

At the age of 73, I feel that in order to answer the question of continuously growing as a leader, I would have to describe growing as a leader to changing as a leader, for I feel it is one's ability to change and adapt that results in good leadership techniques. That ability to change covers many aspects of being a leader, from interpersonal dealings to adapting to new technology. As for InspireNOLA Charter Schools, our CEO, Mr. Jamar McKneely, co-founding it almost four years ago and now leading it. To ensure that our CEO is continuously growing while leading our organization, Mr. McKneely engages in multiple development and collaborative groups and programs, both locally and nationally. Mr. McKneely just completed the Pahara Institute NextGen Leaders program, a national leadership development program for senior education leaders, and is also a member of LA Superintendent John White's Visionary

Committee and a founder of the NexusCity program in New Orleans. Additionally, he was recently accepted to the prestigious Broad Academy.

### **Jamar McKneely, Chief Executive Officer**

The mission of InspireNOLA Charter Schools is to transform and inspire an educational movement, and it is our desire to extend this movement by opening more schools in New Orleans to educate students and work with families. Currently InspireNOLA charter schools is educating over 2300 students daily in three schools and has the highest parent demand in New Orleans. Two of our foundation schools have an A letter grade and Wilson our turnaround school had the largest academic gains in New Orleans during the 2015-2016 school year.

Currently, in my role of Chief Executive Officer our vision and goals center around providing a quality education and wrap around services for students who live in Orleans. Our vision stems from the belief that all students can achieve success when provided a structure environment for classrooms and rigor. We believe that it is our duty to provide students in New Orleans with access to rigorous classrooms that will propel them to have success in high school and in college. We also believe in providing wrap around services to our students to help them cope with traumatic experiences they see daily. We believe once we provide these services our goal and vision of providing a quality education can be accomplished.

In order to reach our goals, we have implemented strategies that enhance our accountability and monitoring of student and staff progress. Progress monitoring is a key tool we use to determine if our organization is on track to reach its goal. As an organization we use a benchmark tracking system to hold staff members and key central official members accountable. To encourage all employees to reach their goals we developed a structure that allowed central office leadership to hold all employees accountable to success. Our central office members meet with employees weekly to discuss weekly and monthly goals charts to make sure we are excelling in all aspects of our goals and vision.

To monitor our progress toward reaching and tracking our goals we used a monthly benchmark tracking form, weekly work plans and bi-weekly meetings. As an organization, fulfilling our goals is extremely important to help our students continue grow academically. We feel it is extremely important for the adults in our building and leadership to accomplish and make progress on all goals to help our students achieve success. Our benchmark tracking system and accountability talks make it easier to track progress and achievement of goals.

External partnerships have been critical aspects of helping InspireNOLA achieve its goals. As an organization we have cultivated numerous relationships such as 100 Black Men, Urban League of Greater New Orleans, New Schools for New Orleans, and the Charter School Growth Fund to help us monitor and evaluate our progress. These great external partners have provided critical consultancy sessions to help us monitor and track progress for success.

### **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**

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.**

**Role of Board Members**

The InspireNOLA Charter Schools board is currently comprised of nine members, seven of whom were a part of InspireNOLA's expansion to Andrew Wilson Charter School and two of whom are recent additions who have past experience and relationships with the Wilson school and surrounding community. Each board member participates on at least one board committee, in addition to attending and contributing to bimonthly board meetings.

The board has four officers: president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary. The board also has three committees: finance, legal, and strategy (which focuses largely on the academic status and progress of the organization).

The Board's responsibilities include the following:

- Formulate and supervise overall school policy
- Approve and execute the schools' annual budgets
- Appoint and evaluate the Chief Executive Officer
- Monitor and evaluate academic progress and consistency of quality across schools
- Ensure effective long-term financial and strategic planning
- Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability
- Recruit and orient new board members and assess board member performance
- Provide support for additional fund-raising, marketing and other services as needs arise
- Advocate on behalf of the school by working to establish partnerships with community organizations, institutions of higher learning, nonprofit foundations and corporate entities that support education through noncommercial relationships

The success of these responsibilities is contingent upon transparent participation of all board members, as it pertains to the organization's bylaws and ethics policies. Assurance of these responsibilities is for the best interest of the organization, and call on both officers and members of the board to carry out their roles, or be subject to removal of membership by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the members.

**Conflicts of Interest**

The InspireNOLA board requires that those with a conflict of interest pertaining to an InspireNOLA matter 1) disclose the conflict/potential conflict and 2) abstain from voting on any matter in which there is a conflict.

In the case that a board member discloses a potential conflict of interest, the board will enter into a discussion to determine whether a conflict exists, and will do so without the potentially conflicted member present. The board, based on material facts and appropriate data, will determine if a conflict

does exist. If a conflict of interest does exist, the conflicted board member will be absent from discussions, deliberation, and voting on the matter. In the case that conflict of interest does not exist, the board member will continue their full service and involvement on the board.

In the event of conflicts of interest, the board will be reminded that all decisions should be made in the best interest of the organization, and in compliance with the Conflict of Interest Policy noted in the board's bylaws.

### **Relationships with Stakeholders**

The InspireNOLA board is committed to Louisiana and the expansion of InspireNOLA to increase the number of high-quality seats available to students in New Orleans. All board members were part of the New Orleans expansion during the acquisition of Andrew Wilson, and therefore are experienced in the organizational expansion process.

The InspireNOLA board consists of individuals who have expertise in administrative, legal, medical, financial, and educational fields. Board members have strong community ties and have served on numerous community boards, committees, and organizations that contribute to the advancement of both local and state interests, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Louisiana Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, Southern University National Alumni Federation, Louisiana State Bar Association, and Algiers Economic Development Association.

### **Board Oversight**

The board regularly evaluates the performance of all the organizations' schools, as well as the organizational viability as a whole. Academic, finance, and strategic committees meet on a bimonthly basis with InspireNOLA chiefs and report summaries and findings to the rest of the board during board meetings. The board collects and evaluates information in all categories that are related to the overall success and achievement of the organization and its schools listed below. Once information is obtained, primarily from the InspireNOLA leadership team, and in some cases from the individual schools or the district or state, the board analyzes the data in comparison to the yearly and long-term goals of the organization.

- Student performance on the academic assessments including, but not limited to, the following:
  - o ACT (including EXPLORE and PLAN): ninth through twelfth grades
  - o End-of-Course state assessments: ninth through twelfth grades, plus eighth grade Algebra I students
  - o State standardized assessments: third through eighth grades
  - o National NWEA MAP assessments for reading and math: first through eighth grades
  - o Internal interim assessments in all core subject areas: third through eighth grades
  - o DIBELS for early literacy: kindergarten through third grades
  - o TS-Gold: prekindergarten
- Monthly financial reports showing budgeted vs. actual expenditures and financial statements
- Student recruitment and enrollment data, including the enrollment rates of targeted demographic sub-groups
- Student retention and attrition data
- Staff recruitment and retention data

In addition to evaluating organizational and school progress and achievements, the InspireNOLA board also evaluates the performance of the CEO on an annual basis, holding him accountable for the overall success of the organization and its schools.

### 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.

<b>OPSB Specific Questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What role will each leadership team member play?<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. If identified, how will their background suit the role?</li><li>2. If not yet identify, how will leaders be identified?</li></ol></li><li>2. What are evaluation, development, compensation designed to provide for quality leadership?</li><li>3. Describe your plans for leadership recruitment.</li><li>4. What qualifications will be required for each leadership position?</li><li>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.</li></ol>
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**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

### Recruitment Strategy

InspireNOLA’s recruitment strategy focuses on finding high-performing, experienced, and dedicated individuals who will be part of the InspireNOLA team. The InspireNOLA Director of Human Capital (DHC) leads recruitment efforts for the organization, and recruits applicants and potential leaders and teachers through the following strategies:

- Referrals: Approximately 50% of teacher and leader hires for the 2015-2016 school year came from referrals from current InspireNOLA staff members. InspireNOLA staff members are encouraged and incentivized to refer friends, past coworkers, schoolmates, and network peers who have experience and interest in education to the DHC. The DHC then reaches out to these potential employees to provide them information about opportunities and recruit them to apply and, hopefully, join the InspireNOLA team. InspireNOLA staff members are fantastic representatives of the InspireNOLA community, and are able to effectively speak about the work-life balance, professional development and growth, recognitions, and other unique aspects of working for InspireNOLA.
- Local and national outreach: InspireNOLA aims to reach as many potential applicants as possible, and thus engages in strategic and multi-faceted local and national outreach. This outreach involves multiple facets, including posting job opportunities on a large variety of job boards,

making connections through alumni programs and educator networks, print and online marketing campaigns, and social media promotion.

- Job and college fairs: InspireNOLA human capital team members and school leaders attend multiple job fairs each year, generally in the local and statewide area. Because InspireNOLA schools offer TRSL, experienced teachers currently working in district schools in other areas of Louisiana can retain this retirement program if working at InspireNOLA. In addition, the InspireNOLA DHC also attends college and university job fairs to meet and recruit recent graduates.
- Residencies and certification programs: InspireNOLA is a founding partner of the Norman C. Francis Teacher Residency at Xavier University, a newly created year-long residency for individuals who do not have an education degree or certification but are interested in becoming teachers. InspireNOLA will develop a long-term pipeline of qualified, new teachers from this residency. Furthermore, InspireNOLA partners with alternative certification programs, such as Teach for America and TeachNOLA, to hire novice teachers.

### **Standards for Evaluating Teachers**

Teachers will be evaluated in two ways: instructionally through the TAP system, and holistically through performance reviews. All InspireNOLA schools utilize the Teacher Advancement System (TAP) to develop and evaluate teachers and instructional staff members. Teachers are formally evaluated four times per year through the TAP system on twenty-six standards in the areas of instruction, learning environment, designing and planning instruction, and responsibilities. All teachers are made aware of these standards, expectations, and evaluations prior to the beginning of the start of the school year. TAP evaluations consist of a pre-conference, observation, and post-conference so that teachers are informed of expectations and evaluation results in a timely, personal, and developmental manner.

In addition to TAP evaluations, InspireNOLA also conducts performance reviews twice per year for all instructional staff members. These performance reviews provide feedback and evaluative scores to teachers on effective instruction, culture and management, professionalism, relationships, feedback and improvement, and student achievement. Teachers are provided these evaluation measures and standards prior to the start of the school year, so that they are aware of expectations in advance. Because of the multiple evaluations throughout the year, teachers and leaders are able to track progress and professional growth over the course of the year.

### **Board Evaluation of the CEO**

The InspireNOLA CEO is evaluated by the board on an annual basis on a comprehensive set of performance measures, organized into five main categories:

1. Strategic Planning: Meeting Organizational Goals/Objectives
2. Administration and Human Resource Management
3. Financial Management and Legal Compliance
4. Facility Management
5. Board of Directors

The board collects academic, cultural, human capital, legal, financial, operations, and facility information throughout the year from multiple sources, including directly from the CEO, from the CFO and CAO, from staff surveys, and from required reporting systems. Examples of specific information that are collected include: financial audits, grant approvals, chief evaluations, Louisiana Department of Education school report cards, InspireNOLA news coverage, and school budgets and fund balances.

The process for evaluating the CEO includes a written performance evaluation that the board collectively

completes, which includes rating of 25 performance measures on a 1 to 4 scale and narrative comments describing performance positives and areas for growth. The board completes this evaluation in an executive session during a board meeting, and then meets with the CEO to provide oral feedback and explanation of the evaluation, as needed.

### **Role of Leadership Team Members**

The school leaders for McDonogh #42 have not yet been identified. For both the Head of School and Academy Principal positions, InspireNOLA will look both internally and externally to identify qualified individuals who have demonstrated success in leading a school or department, establishing a strong and positive culture, and achieving results for students. Through the leadership pipeline that InspireNOLA has established within its existing schools, one or more of the future school leaders may come from within current InspireNOLA schools, though the focus will be on hiring the most effective future leaders for the McDonogh #42 students.

The InspireNOLA network leadership team will support the school leaders at McDonogh #42, and consists of the following three chiefs:

- **Jamar McKneely:** Mr. McKneely serves as InspireNOLA's Chief Executive Officer and co-founded the organization in 2013. He oversees the entire InspireNOLA network, including setting the vision of the organization and ensuring the success of all schools and leaders. Mr. McKneely previously served as a teacher and Assistant Principal of Edna Karr High School and then as the Principal of Alice M. Harte Charter School. Under his leadership, Alice Harte increased its School Performance Score (SPS) by 25 points to achieve an A letter grade and became ranked in the top 10% of public schools in New Orleans. Prior to becoming an educator, he served as a budget analyst for two non-profit organizations in Baton Rouge. Mr. McKneely earned a Bachelor's degree in Finance from Southern University and a Master's degree in Educational Administration from Louisiana State University.
- **Charlie Mackles:** As InspireNOLA's Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Mackles oversees InspireNOLA's finance team, ensuring that the Central Office and all schools have the financial tools, information and resources necessary to meet InspireNOLA's mission while simultaneously adhering to all relevant compliance guidelines and industry best practices. He has worked in the non-profit and governmental sector specializing in the K-12 and post-secondary education arena for the past twelve years. Prior to his work with charter schools, Mr. Mackles worked in higher education and research managing multi-million dollar grants awarded by the National Institute of Health and various other universities and foundations, and is invested in the success of public education. Mr. Mackles is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), and holds a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and Economics from Louisiana State University.
- **Dr. Wylene Sorapuru:** Dr. Sorapuru, InspireNOLA's Chief Academic Officer, oversees student achievement across the InspireNOLA network through support and management of school and network academic leaders to implement rigorous academic programming, maintain positive school cultures, plan for continuous data driven school improvement, and provide development and accountability structures for teacher and leadership quality. Prior to joining with InspireNOLA, she served in several roles across Orleans Parish Charter School Systems as Chief Academic Officer, School Principal, Director of Reading Initiatives, Director of Early Childhood, Associate Professor of Educational Administration and Leadership, and first grade teacher. During her tenure, she led three low-performing Charter schools through the turnaround process, each earning Top Gains state results. She holds a PhD in Educational Administration and Master's degree in Educational Leadership from University of New Orleans and a Bachelor's degree in Education from Southern University at New Orleans.



### **Evaluation, Development, and Compensation for Quality Leadership**

The evaluation, development, and compensation systems for leadership are designed to provide leadership ongoing, frequent, and targeted feedback that will ensure they are growing and advancing as professionals and as school leaders, thus leading to improved positive outcomes for their students, staff, and school communities. Leaders have clear expectations and achievement goals that they work toward meeting, and evaluations provide them clear feedback regarding their progress toward meeting their goals. Leaders engage in various professional development opportunities that are tailored to meeting their individual growth areas, goals, and long-term plans. Though formal evaluations occur biannually, leaders are provided feedback and development on a weekly basis in individual and job-alike groups, thus providing leaders ongoing opportunities for growth.

InspireNOLA holds its leaders to high expectations, and thus recognizes that it must compensate its leaders commensurately. All InspireNOLA leaders receive salaries that are highly competitive with other organizations, and also receive annual bonuses based on their performance, goal attainment, and the achievement of their schools. This compensation provides leadership recognition for achievement and growth, and signifies appreciation and acknowledgment of performance.

### **Leadership Recruitment**

InspireNOLA will begin recruiting leaders for McDonogh #42 immediately upon approval of the charter and RSD choice of InspireNOLA as the new operator. InspireNOLA will post potential job openings for a Head of School and Academy Principals for those interested in leading an elementary school in January, without designating school site. This will allow InspireNOLA to begin collecting resumes of potential leaders immediately, with recruitment efforts intensifying and interviews beginning by the middle of February. InspireNOLA will utilize its national network and program partners to recruit potential leaders in addition to connecting with proven and emerging leaders from New Orleans and Louisiana.

InspireNOLA will also consider school leaders and mid-level leaders who are currently employed at InspireNOLA schools and the network office, thus utilizing its current leadership pipeline. It will recruit both internally and externally to identify the most effective and highest potential individuals who will thrive and produce results for students in an environment where a positive and strong culture must be established, where an academic system that supports struggling students and those at a vast array of ability levels must be instilled, and where teachers will need ongoing development and support while learning and implementing the InspireNOLA models will be needed.

### **Qualifications for Leadership Positions**

All InspireNOLA leaders must hold Bachelor's degrees and have prior experience teaching and leading in a school environment, with the desire that they have experience within urban, high-needs schools that have similar populations to those of InspireNOLA schools. Specifically, Heads of School must meet the following qualifications:

- Master's degree (required)
- Five or more years of teaching experience with proven success in improving outcomes for students
- Three or more years of instructional leadership experience
- Valid Louisiana teaching certificate and administrative credentials
- Knowledge of teacher evaluation, observation methods, various instruction, and teaching methodologies

Academy Principals must meet the following qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree (required); Master's degree strongly preferred
- Five or more years of teaching experience with proven success in improving outcomes for students
- Two or more years of instructional leadership experience
- Valid Louisiana teaching certificate and administrative credentials
- Knowledge of teacher evaluation, observation methods, various instruction, and teaching methodologies

**Evaluation of the School Leader**

InspireNOLA also performance reviews twice per year for all school leaders. These performance reviews provide feedback and evaluative scores to school leaders on six key competencies: InspireNOLA initiatives, culture and community, professionalism, relationships, feedback and improvement, and academic goals and achievement. Leaders are provided these evaluation measures and standards prior to the start of the school year, so that they are aware of expectations in advance. Because of the multiple evaluations throughout the year, leaders are able to track progress and professional growth over the course of the year. The CEO and CAO conduct performance reviews for school leaders, all of which are in-person meetings held individually between the parties. If a school leader is given negative feedback, they are given opportunities and strategies for improvement moving forward. In addition, if a school leader scores below a given score on their performance review, they are placed on a performance improvement plan that is designed to provide targeted improvement strategies and support for the leader. Additionally, school leaders are evaluated against and held accountable for their annual student achievement goals that are collaboratively set between the CEO, CAO, and school leader prior to the year beginning.

**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.

<b>OPSB Specific Questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What are the minimum qualifications required for teachers and other staff members? What is the average qualification that you anticipate for your staff?</li><li>2. What staff compensation model will be offered to instructional staff? How does this compare to benchmarks?</li><li>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.</li><li>4. You may include, as <b>Attachment 7</b>, any documentation supporting your personnel policies, recruitment plans, and/or evaluation plan.</li></ol>
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**TYPE YOUR RESPONSE IN THE BOX BELOW, IT WILL EXPAND AS NEEDED.**

**Administrator, Partner, and Teacher Recruitment Strategy**

InspireNOLA's recruitment strategy focuses on finding high-performing, experienced, and dedicated individuals who will be part of the InspireNOLA team. The InspireNOLA Director of Human Capital (DHC) leads recruitment efforts for the organization, and recruits applicants and potential leaders and teachers through the following strategies:

- Referrals: Approximately 50% of teacher and leader hires for the 2015-2016 school year came from referrals from current InspireNOLA staff members. InspireNOLA staff members are encouraged and incentivized to refer friends, past coworkers, schoolmates, and network peers who have experience and interest in education to the DHC. The DHC then reaches out to these potential employees to provide them information about opportunities and recruit them to apply and, hopefully, join the InspireNOLA team. InspireNOLA staff members are fantastic representatives of the InspireNOLA community, and are able to effectively speak about the work-life balance, professional development and growth, recognitions, and other unique aspects of working for InspireNOLA.
- Local and national outreach: InspireNOLA aims to reach as many potential applicants as possible, and thus engages in strategic and multi-faceted local and national outreach. This outreach involves multiple facets, including posting job opportunities on a large variety of job boards, making connections through alumni programs and educator networks, print and online marketing campaigns, and social media promotion.
- Job and college fairs: InspireNOLA human capital team members and school leaders attend multiple job fairs each year, generally in the local and statewide area. Because InspireNOLA schools offer TRSL, experienced teachers currently working in district schools in other areas of Louisiana can retain this retirement program if working at InspireNOLA. In addition, the InspireNOLA DHC also attends college and university job fairs to meet and recruit recent graduates.
- Residencies and certification programs: InspireNOLA is a founding partner of the Norman C. Francis Teacher Residency at Xavier University, a newly created year-long residency for individuals who do not have an education degree or certification but are interested in becoming teachers. InspireNOLA will develop a long-term pipeline of qualified, new teachers from this residency. Furthermore, InspireNOLA partners with alternative certification programs, such as Teach for America and TeachNOLA, to hire novice teachers.

### **Expectations for Teachers and Partner Organizations**

Expectations for teachers and mission-critical partner organizations will be clearly communicated both verbally and in writing before the beginning of the school year, and reinforced as needed throughout the year. All teachers sign a contract with InspireNOLA that details expectations, roles, and responsibilities of each party. Newly hired teachers also participate in a summer orientation, during which expectations are explained and discussed. All staff members attend and engage in almost two weeks of summer professional development and ten days of ongoing professional development throughout the year; expectations are thoroughly introduced and explained in the summer, and reinforced and revisited during the year. Finally, all staff members annually review and sign the InspireNOLA employee handbook that outlines all policies, procedures, and expectations of employment at InspireNOLA.

Before entering into a partnership with any outside organizations, InspireNOLA conducts an in-person meeting between all parties to discuss the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of each partner. InspireNOLA and the partner organization signs an MOU that details expectations and commitments of each party, as well as the scope of work, project timeline, and primary contacts for the work or program. Frequent meetings and check-ins are held throughout the year between the partner organization and the appropriate network or school team member, dependent on the project or work.

### **Professional Development Plans for Teachers**

Teachers are the most influential school-related factor with regards to student achievement. InspireNOLA recognizes that, in order for students and schools to succeed, InspireNOLA must prioritize

developing and retaining exceptional teachers, and it does so through implementation of the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). TAP is a comprehensive educator effectiveness model that aims to increase student learning by ensuring high quality instruction in each classroom and provides powerful opportunities for career advancement, professional growth, instructionally focused accountability and competitive compensation for educators. Through the implementation of these four interrelated key elements, teachers are improving their instruction and the achievement of their students. In addition to consistent development and growth, successful teachers have career advancement opportunities that allow them to increase their impact on students while remaining in the classroom.

One of the most critical components of TAP are the weekly cluster meetings during which teachers engage in grade-level and content-specific professional development. With support from the Academy Principals, the school-based master and mentor teachers will facilitate weekly cluster meetings and provide coaching and feedback to InspireNOLA teachers through the TAP program. By observing classes and analyzing student data, the TAP leadership team is be able to identify the specific needs that individual teachers have and trends that are occurring with multiple, tailoring professional development sessions and coaching sessions to address those needs. Data reviews and assessment analysis also take place during cluster meetings, with teachers and leaders creating action plans to address specific students deficits and needs. Cluster meetings take place every Wednesday while students are in enrichment class, with that time being a sacred hour every week when teachers collaborate, discuss, and share best practices, learning from one another and from the master and mentor teachers.

### **Staff Recruitment**

InspireNOLA believes that great schools are led and staffed by exceptional leaders and teachers, and it must ensure that turnaround schools must exemplify this. A potential threat in the expansion to additional schools is a lack of qualified leaders and teachers who are aligned with the mission of InspireNOLA. InspireNOLA must ensure that it has a quality pipeline of leaders and of teachers to sustain growth over multiple years.

InspireNOLA employs a Director of Human Capital (DHC) who leads recruitment and onboarding for the organization. The DHC will work closely with network and school leaders to ensure that they have a large pool of diverse applicants for all positions so that leaders can make hiring decisions that meet the needs of the students, school, and community. Current InspireNOLA staff members make a significant number of referrals each year for potential teachers, leaders, and support staff members, as they reach out to their existing and far-reaching networks of education professionals who they believe will be cultural and academic fits for InspireNOLA. InspireNOLA will continue partnerships with Teach for America and The New Teacher Project to find new teaching talent, and will partner with local colleges and universities, such as Holy Cross University of New Orleans, Dillard University, Tulane University, and Xavier University. Additionally, InspireNOLA will utilize the newly created Norman C. Francis Teacher Residency at Xavier University, a program designed to attract and train local talent to the teaching profession in New Orleans. InspireNOLA will also continue to host an annual teacher recruitment fair in the spring, advertising it in print and on the radio in surrounding parishes so that it reaches a large number of potential applicants.

Furthermore, all InspireNOLA schools participate in the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL), which sets it apart from most other charter management organizations. Because of this benefit that most charter networks do not offer, InspireNOLA is able to recruit and hire veteran teachers from around the state of Louisiana because they can continue to participate in the state pension system. InspireNOLA will reach potential veteran teachers through a variety of efforts, including print, billboards,

radio, and online.

### **Minimum Qualifications for Teachers and Staff**

At a minimum, all teachers must possess a Bachelor's degree, though 40% of current InspireNOLA possess a Master's degree or higher. Though certification is not required for teachers, it is strongly encouraged for teachers and leaders; 85% of current teachers are certified. The average number of years of experience for current InspireNOLA teachers is seven years. About 35% of teachers have between 0 and 3 years of experience, about 42% have been 4 and 14 years of experience, and the remaining 23% have over fifteen years of experience. InspireNOLA anticipates that staff of McDonogh #42, under the operation of InspireNOLA, will have similar qualifications.

### **Instructional Staff Compensation**

InspireNOLA offers a competitive salary for all staff members, in addition to a comprehensive benefits package and retirement plan. In addition, all InspireNOLA staff members are eligible for salary increases for each year that they return to InspireNOLA. Furthermore, teachers are eligible for annual performance stipends of up to \$2000 through TAP; these stipends are calculated based on evaluation scores and student achievement.

### **Evaluation of Instructional Staff**

Teachers will be evaluated in two ways: instructionally through the TAP system, and holistically through performance reviews. All InspireNOLA schools utilize the Teacher Advancement System (TAP) to develop and evaluate teachers and instructional staff members. Teachers are formally evaluated four times per year through the TAP system on twenty-six standards in the areas of instruction, learning environment, designing and planning instruction, and responsibilities. All teachers are made aware of these standards, expectations, and evaluations prior to the beginning of the start of the school year. TAP evaluations consist of a pre-conference, observation, and post-conference so that teachers are informed of expectations and evaluation results in a timely, personal, and developmental manner. Master teachers and Academy Principals conduct TAP evaluations.

In addition to TAP evaluations, InspireNOLA also conducts performance reviews twice per year for all instructional staff members. These performance reviews provide feedback and evaluative scores to teachers on effective instruction, culture and management, professionalism, relationships, feedback and improvement, and student achievement. Teachers are provided these evaluation measures and standards prior to the start of the school year, so that they are aware of expectations in advance. Because of the multiple evaluations throughout the year, teachers and leaders are able to track progress and professional growth over the course of the year. The Head of School and Academy Principals conduct performance reviews, all of which are in-person meetings held individually the instructional staff member and the leadership team member. If a staff member is given negative feedback, they are given opportunities and strategies for improvement moving forward. In addition, if a staff member scores below a set score on their performance review, they are placed on a performance improvement plan that is designed to provide targeted improvement strategies and support for the staff member.

## **Partners**

- (1) Identify the stakeholders whose partnership you have determined is necessary to your school's success. Describe what your board has done already to establish these relationships and explain what your board will do to deepen and sustain these relationships.
- (2) For each mission-critical partner with which you already have a preliminary written agreement, provide a list of the services that are specified in the agreement. Describe why the partners you have selected are the best-fit organizations to provide the services you have listed.
- (3) Describe the expectations for all mission-critical partner organizations, how you will clearly communicate these expectations and ensure that mission-critical partners stay on track towards meeting expectations.
- (4) Include, as **Attachment 8**, any contracts or descriptions of relationship with Education Service Provider.

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

**Stakeholders**

InspireNOLA, though only three years in existence, has already garnered the support of local and national partners and supporters. InspireNOLA received a \$3 million commitment from the Charter School Growth Fund in 2014 to support expansion to additional schools, in addition to funding received and commitments promised from New Schools for New Orleans, New Schools for Baton Rouge, Educate Now!, the Stephen and Sandy Rosenthal Foundation, the GPOA Foundation, the Rex Pro Bono Publico Foundation, and others, totaling over \$5.5 million. In addition, we also partner with the following community groups and organizations, which provide a broad range of services that benefit our students and schools: 100 Black Men, Silverback Society, Broadmoor Improvement Association, Community Works, Xavier University, and University of Holy Cross.

100 Black Men and Silverback Society provide much-needed mentorship opportunities to students. Sessions from both organizations include career readiness and life skills. The Broadmoor Improvement Association supports InspireNOLA by bringing additional mental health professionals to work with the already licensed staff at our schools, so that more students that may be in need of these services are reached. InspireNOLA staff receive academic and cultural professional development from Xavier University and the University of Holy Cross. Community Works provides after-school enrichment programs in dance, animation, theater and yoga. All of these partners bring a unique perspective to the schools and helps expand the daily services outside of the classroom. InspireNOLA is committed to expanding and extending these existing relationships to McDonogh #42, if they meet the specific needs of the McDonogh #42 students, families, and communities. Additionally, InspireNOLA plans to evaluate the existing partnerships that McDonogh #42 is currently utilizing, and will continue the partnerships that are effectively supporting students and the school.

**Expectations of Partners**

The InspireNOLA Board and Network leadership have monthly and quarterly check in's to ensure that the expectation of providing high quality programming will have a positive impact on students. As the organization expands, these supporters are committed to assisting in any way possible and provide services as needed. All partners sign an MOU with InspireNOLA before any services begin, with expectations for both parties clearly identified and described, along with timelines and responsible individuals. In the event that there are concerns with any partner relationships or questions regarding the success of the programming, InspireNOLA and McDonogh #42 leaders will conduct a thorough analysis and engage in transparent discussions with the partners, creating action plans to remedy the concerns.

## 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.**

#### Student Population

InspireNOLA seeks to expand within New Orleans for the purpose of providing additional high quality educational options to at-risk and high-needs students who have traditionally been underserved or not offered the same opportunities as their peers, which is the case for the students of McDonogh #42. InspireNOLA currently serves a student population that is representative of the Orleans Parish student population as a whole and is similar to that of McDonogh #42. Like it has done in its existing schools, InspireNOLA is committed to proving that socioeconomic status, race, and address do not limit the quality of education or future opportunities that one deserves and has a right to receive.

The current McDonogh #42 student population includes 1.6% English Language Learners and 11% students who receive special education services. InspireNOLA is committed to serving the current student population of McDonogh #42, which is very similar to that of New Orleans as a whole.

Attachment 9: Enrollment Projection contains anticipated student counts for each grade level over a five-year period, as well as projected students counts for students who receive special services. These projections are based off of the February 1, 2015 student enrollment counts, which is the most recent available data for McDonogh #42.

#### Recruitment Strategy

InspireNOLA schools have seen high application numbers since its founding year in 2013. Alice Harte has consistently been one of the most applied to schools in New Orleans. Andrew Wilson and Alice Harte collectively received over 2,000 applications for the 2016-2017 for only around 200 available seats. Families trust the InspireNOLA model and are committed to enrolling their students in a quality program, which Harte is the exemplar model of. In Andrew Wilson's first year under InspireNOLA leadership, the administration successfully retained 78 percent of current students and enrolled a significant number of new students, thus demonstrating past support in a similar turnaround endeavor. InspireNOLA plans to meet or exceed that same retention bar at future turnaround schools, including McDonogh #42, as it is a top priority of InspireNOLA to maintain the majority of the current student population in order to develop and support students where they are academically.

InspireNOLA's recruitment strategy focuses on the following components and strategies:

- Retention of current students: InspireNOLA believes that the best student recruitment strategy is retaining the students who are currently enrolled in the school. As soon as allowable, InspireNOLA will engage with current McDonogh #42 parents and families to inform the of the

management change and the positive outcomes that it will mean for their students. InspireNOLA will host a series of in-person informational sessions so that parents will be informed about and aware of the academic, cultural, extracurricular, and community components of InspireNOLA schools; conduct a listening tour during which network and future school leaders will learn from parents and students about what they want in the school environment and education program at McDonogh #42; and offer individual meetings and calls with parents who wish to learn more about InspireNOLA at McDonogh #42 or share specific concerns or questions with network or school leaders. The individual outreach to, investment from, and involvement of current parents will engage them in the new future of McDonogh #42 and keep their students enrolled.

- Parent outreach and referrals: Because parents will be invested and engaged in InspireNOLA operating McDonogh #42, they will be encouraged to serve as ambassadors for the school and recruit additional students from their network of friends, family, and neighbors. InspireNOLA will provide parents with yard signs and informational materials that they can display and distribute. Parents will be offered incentives if they refer future student applicants.
- Community outreach: InspireNOLA will utilize community partners to share information about McDonogh #42 and InspireNOLA’s takeover of the school. InspireNOLA will present at local churches, community centers, and neighborhood meetings, and will conduct door-to-door canvassing in the neighborhood surrounding the school.
- External marketing: Because McDonogh #42 will be a new school addition to the InspireNOLA network, InspireNOLA will execute a marketing campaign to spread awareness and promote the transformed school. InspireNOLA will rebrand McDonogh #42 and ensure that it is closely tied to Alice Harte and Andrew Wilson, both of which achieved impressive results in the 2015-2016 school year. InspireNOLA will create, print, and distribute various marketing materials, including brochures, flyers, and push-cards, and will promote the school widely through the use of billboards and radio ads. InspireNOLA will also implement a social media campaign that will include weekly postings, student profiles, and school-specific video.
- Engaging events: InspireNOLA will host a variety of events designed to engage current and potential families and parents, including open houses, informational sessions, family festivals, listening sessions, and school tours. These events will allow parents and students to engage with network and school leaders and understand the positive changes that InspireNOLA will be implementing at McDonogh #42.

**Enrollment Numbers**

InspireNOLA’s budgeted and target enrollment for McDonogh #42 in for the 2017-2018 school year is 484, and increasing to 538 by 2021-2022, at which point the school will be fully enrolled. The minimum operating enrollment for McDonogh #42 is 460 in 2017-2018, and 511 in 2021-2022.

**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.**

**Start-Up Plan**

Please see Attachment 16: Start-up Plan for a detailed plan that includes specific tasks, timelines for completion, and owners for tasks within the following areas: staffing, student and parent engagement, operations, facility, technology, procurement, and professional development.



### **Recruiting Key Staff**

InspireNOLA's approach to recruiting key staff members is to find the most effective and dedicated leaders who will set the vision, culture, and expectations of the school while following the proven InspireNOLA model. To do so, InspireNOLA recruits locally and nationally through a variety of strategies. About half of InspireNOLA hires are made through staff referrals, as current InspireNOLA staff members are excellent educators who know likeminded individuals, and are the best representatives of what working at InspireNOLA schools is truly like. Thus, the recruitment of key staff members will be done in a comprehensive approach that utilizes current staff members' relationships and networks and also promotes extensive outreach to local and national arenas.

The recruitment of key staff members, including the Head of Schools, Academy Principals, and additional school staff, will begin in January 2017. Advertisements, that include detailed job descriptions and desired qualifications, will be posted and promoted widely so that InspireNOLA will have a diverse and large group of qualified individuals to consider for each position. The focus of the Director of Human Capital will be recruiting school and mid-level leaders for McDonogh #42, with the assistance of the CEO and CAO, and others on the selection committee, interviewing and vetting candidates from January through April 2017. By the end of April 2017, InspireNOLA intends to have all key staff members in school leadership positions hired so that the network and school leader focus can have shifted to teacher and additional school staff interviewing and hiring in March 2017 and beyond.

### **Recruiting Students**

Student recruitment will begin immediately upon the award of the school and charter for McDonogh #42 Elementary Charter School to InspireNOLA. The Recovery School District (RSD) has scheduled this decision to be made by February 17, 2017. Under the assumption that InspireNOLA will be chosen to assume operations of McDonogh #42, student recruitment will begin immediately.

Student recruitment will be two-fold: primarily retaining current McDonogh #42 students and secondarily recruiting new students to enroll. InspireNOLA focuses on engaging parents, families, and community members to ensure that they understand and support the academic and cultural model of the school, so that parents and staff can partner effectively in the education of students.

InspireNOLA's student recruitment timeline for McDonogh #42 will be as follows:

- **January:** InspireNOLA will engage and inform current families of McDonogh #42, providing them information about the educational model and programming that InspireNOLA will implement at McDonogh #42, as well as responding to questions and concerns that they may have. InspireNOLA will also design and print marketing materials and plan ongoing family and community engagement activities.
- **February:** InspireNOLA will continue engaging current families, but also begin external marketing campaigns and meeting with community and early learning groups. Targeted efforts that connect the positive brand and successes of InspireNOLA to McDonogh #42 will be executed.
- **March – April:** InspireNOLA will focus on retaining current students by hosting open houses and reaching out to individual families, coupled with external recruitment through marketing and community engagement and informing.
- **May:** InspireNOLA will have the OneApp Main Round student matches from EnrollNOLA, and will therefore begin registering and engaging matched students, parents, and families, while continuing recruitment efforts.
- **June – July:** InspireNOLA will continue to register students, as new matches are made in Round 2,

and recruit students and families as needed in particular grade levels.

### **Finding a Facility**

InspireNOLA will remain in the existing facility and campus that McDonogh #42 currently occupies. InspireNOLA will work with the RSD to determine the appropriate timeline and transition of the facility to InspireNOLA, with an exact date of no later than July 1, 2017.

### **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.**

InspireNOLA will remain in the existing facility and campus that McDonogh #42 currently occupies. InspireNOLA will work with the RSD to determine the appropriate timeline and transition of the facility to InspireNOLA, with an exact date of no later than July 1, 2017.

InspireNOLA is planning to reallocate the current facility space in order to implement our model of academic success. The facility will continue to house a pre-kindergarten to eighth grade school in order to support the educational needs of approximately 538 students. InspireNOLA's academic design is to create two small academies within the school facility: one a Pre-K – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade academy serving approximately 264 students and one a 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade academy serving approximately 274 students. The facility will accommodate 20 direct instruction classrooms, 9 specialty classrooms (special education, intervention, music, computer lab, etc.), and 6 small breakout rooms for individual and small group instruction. The facility will also accommodate administrative offices, cafeteria, gym, and teacher and parent meeting areas. The facility will be compliant with the American with Disabilities Act.

InspireNOLA's facility team consists of a Director of Operations (DOO), School Operations Managers (SOM), and Building Maintenance Technicians (BMT). The goal of the facility team is to promote the longevity of equipment and buildings, control costs, and respond to facility emergencies. The DOO is responsible for ensuring all maintenance and inspection requirements of the facility owner and authorizer are met in a timely fashion. The DOO also stays up to date with all contractual, local and state requirements as it relates to safety codes and occupancy regulations. These findings are communicated to school house staff via monthly professional development sessions. The SOM is located at the school facility and monitors any work being performed and is the point person for inspections. Facility preventative maintenance is managed through a combination of outsourcing and the in-house BMT staff. As an experienced operator in New Orleans, InspireNOLA currently manages a decades old facility, brand new facility, and a recently renovated facility. It is this experience that has helped InspireNOLA develop a comprehensive facility plan of action in order to respond to new and ongoing issues.

## 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.**

### **Systems and Practices to Maintain Awareness of Federal, State, and Local Policies**

InspireNOLA's Central Office keeps abreast of federal, state and local policy and changes to these policies through ongoing communication with the Louisiana Department of Education, the United States Department of Education and the Orleans Parish School Board. InspireNOLA's Central Office communicates current policy and any changes to leaders and staff members through email communication, and staff meetings.

### **Systems and Practices to Ensure Adherence to Policies**

As an experienced charter operator in Orleans Parish, InspireNOLA has an established policy library including financial, human resources, facility, etc. The InspireNOLA Central Office works in collaboration with school leaders and staff to adhere to policies. The school leaders are required to report to Central Office and outside agencies regarding ongoing practices of the school. InspireNOLA's Central Office meets with school leaders on a biweekly basis to follow up with any policy changes and reporting requirements. InspireNOLA holds leaders accountable for adhering to mandates by evaluating the leader's response time and effectiveness of the response. School leaders and staff are evaluated on a quarterly basis.

### **Adherence to Specific Policies**

#### **State and Local Reporting**

InspireNOLA utilizes a Data Manager at each one of its schools in order to compile, report, and submit data as required by Louisiana Department of Education and its authorizer, the Orleans Parish School Board.

The Data Managers (PowerSchool administrators) for student academic and demographic data, including attendance and credits earned, and reports to the district, state, federal agencies. They are supported by the many departments within the school house including the counseling and social worker teams at each school. The Data Managers work at each school to warehouse students cumulative folders, and determine credits earned of transfer students and eighth graders who have taken high-school-level coursework. Verification of attendance data documentation to determine whether an absence/tardy may be excused is conducted and reported by school social workers. This information is all verified and submitted to the proper agencies at appropriate submission points.

**Citywide Common Enrollment**

All InspireNOLA schools participate in the citywide common enrollment system, EnrollNOLA, and this will be the same future InspireNOLA schools in New Orleans as well. To attend an InspireNOLA schools, students must apply via OneApp and be matched to an InspireNOLA school where there are available seats in the appropriate grade level. Matches are based on school priorities, all of which are compliant with EnrollNOLA guidelines and advertised through the parent and school guides. InspireNOLA schools follow common enrollment expectations during summer enrollment and throughout the year, complying with all procedures and policies regarding transfers within the district and outside of and regarding students who are newly enrolled within the district.

**Discipline and Citywide Common Expulsion**

All InspireNOLA schools participate in the citywide common expulsion system, EnrollNOLA, and this will be the same future InspireNOLA schools in New Orleans as well. If a student performs an action or behavior that is deemed to be an expellable offense as per Student Hearing Office (SHO). InspireNOLA submits all expulsion recommendation packets to the SHO within four days of the infraction, and participate in hearings with the goal of finding the best solution for the student. Once the SHO has made a decision regarding the proposed expulsion, InspireNOLA schools accept and follow the decision, including re-enrolling students after they have served their expulsion terms at alternative locations.

**Pupil Progression Plan**

InspireNOLA follows the pupil progression and retention plan of its LEA, Orleans Parish School Board. The district plan details guidelines from Bulletin 111 with regards to progression, promotion, and retention.

**Information to Parents**

Inspire NOLA Charter Schools believes that a strong partnership with parents maximizes the efforts the schools are making to raise academic achievement. The on-going support and participation of each student's family in the educational process is essential to the mission of our schools. We believe that, to the greatest extent possible, the school and family should form a team dedicated to educating the child to his or her greatest potential. An effective partnership between home and school allows the student to fulfill a greater portion of his or her potential. By garnering parent support for the activities and expectations at school and connecting school-based activities to the home, we make the most of this important relationship.

Throughout the year, InspireNOLA schools will, as they have been doing, ensure regular home communication through frequent phone calls, email updates, regular behavior updates, quarterly progress reports and quarterly report cards. Additionally, elementary parents will be responsible for signing students' homework on a daily basis to show they are aware of the student's progress. Each elementary parent is also required to sign their student's weekly behavior card, which tracks academic, as behavioral progress. At the high school level, parents attend quarterly report card conferences, open house, and class nights to receive grade-level specific information regarding their child's classes, expectations, and college requirements. These procedures and events help us to keep the parents continuously involved in their student's education. Teachers on all grade levels are in frequent communication with parents through phone calls, email messages, and regular conversation, as they work together to ensure success for students.

InspireNOLA ensures that all student information is protected in all internal and external communication.

**Transportation**

InspireNOLA provides transportation to all students using a contracted school bus service. InspireNOLA's Director of Operations reviews bus routes of all students with the bus service company to ensure that the routes are the most efficient and effective for the students and schools.

**Timeline Notifications to Authorizer**

InspireNOLA ensures that all deadlines and requirements of the school reporting calendar issued by OPSB are met in a timely fashion. The network office manager assigns a network owner (CFO, CAO, etc.) for all requirements at the beginning of the year and ensures appropriate documentation is submitted. The network owner works closely with the school managers of the data in order to make certain proper notification is provided of deadlines and communicate OPSB requests. The network office manager confirms submission with OPSB representatives as the authorizer deadline approaches.

## 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.**

### Financial Services

InspireNOLA uses a financial manager, Mr. Charlie Mackles, and will continue to do so following any expansion. Mr. Mackles serves as the Chief Financial Officer for all InspireNOLA schools and reports to the InspireNOLA Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Jamar McKneely as well as providing organizational updates the Board of Director's treasurer, Ms. Shawn Rogers. (See Attachment 13 for Mr. Mackles' resume.)

### Budgeting

The budget process is broken down into five phases beginning in the winter prior to the new fiscal year.

#### Phase I - The Budget Call

To start the process, the CFO delivers a preliminary budget to each school based on prior year actual and next year projections.

#### Phase II - Obtaining Input from Staff

Network departments (academics, strategy, communications, etc.) and school admin members have approximately one month to complete budget input forms and return them to the CFO. The CFO makes a complete analysis of the budget requests and assembles the financial information, goals and objectives, and statistical information into one document for the CEO to review.

#### Phase III - Review and Approval of the Budget by the CEO

The CFO meets with the CEO on several different occasions as each section of the budget is completed. Changes are sometimes made to the budget requests recommended and submitted by staff. Once the draft of the proposed budget is approved by the CEO, copies of the proposed budget are printed and a staff meeting is called to review the document before it is presented to the Board.

#### Phase IV - Public Meetings & Board Adoption of the Budget

At the board meeting in May, the proposed budget is presented to the Board. Board Members are encouraged to review the proposed budget and to attend the Finance Committee, which is approximately 2 weeks thereafter. This is also the first budget hearing that is held.

A brief review of the proposed budget is presented by the CEO and CFO at this hearing and is followed by questions and answers. The Board also holds one public hearing at its first meeting in June before a formal vote on the proposed budget is called. Any interested citizen can review the proposed budget and make comments and suggestions at the public hearing in June.

**Phase V - Monitoring and Revising the Budget after Approval**

Once the Board approves the proposed budget, the CEO has the authority to spend taxpayer's money. He does this by placing controls and assigning additional responsibilities to various staff members associated with a specific program or department.

Staff members are held responsible for seeing that budget expenditures stay within the budget boundaries; however, overall execution and oversight is assigned to the CFO. The budget is monitored and reconciled periodically to determine if formal Board action is required to amend the budget.

InspireNOLA is in a very sound financial position, having accumulated over \$8.0 million in reserves since formation. These reserves allow us funds for contingencies and unforeseen events, the ability to avoid interest expense for short term cash loans, the ability to generate interest revenue, and ensuring cash availability when revenue may be delayed by external agencies. The school has arrived at that position by relying on the following key principles, all of which will guide the financial management of the InspireNOLA network:

- Being Conservative: We avoid budgeting by being overly optimistic that everything will turn out as expected. We build in safety factors by underestimating revenues and overestimating expenditures. We also build a contingency into our budgets.
- Utilizing Cost Analysis: Each year, total cost numbers are broken down into per pupil units. This helps convert big numbers to per unit costs which can help convey relative magnitude, allow for the consideration of spending tradeoffs, and help analyze comparable costs among numerous schools.
- Team Work: We work to gather input from all school stakeholders. This includes both internal stakeholders such as the network level, school admins, school staff, and external such as community and parents. Gathering this input reduces the variance and unknowns that arise in the school year. It also allows for buy in to the budget process.

In the event that InspireNOLA schools are faced with a budget shortfall a team of the CEO, CFO, CAO and Head of School meet to discuss the budget shortfall and plan of action moving forward. If the shortfall is projected to be significant, InspireNOLA may implement the budget crisis plan. The most important point to consider in this challenge is to ensure that integrity of educational programs remain high.

The budget crisis plan consists of the following strategies:

- Use of projected school or network reserves
- Delay or deferment of large capital purchases
- Hiring freeze or consolidation of positions
- Purchasing slowdowns including but not limited all non-instructional expenditures such as professional development consultant and travel, capital maintenance projects, performance or retention stipends
- Across the board cuts
- Targeted reductions

This plan's foremost priority is to stop or at least slow down the momentum of spending. Semi-monthly monitoring of all revenues and expenditures is required until the budget crisis has been resolved.

### **Accounting and Control Systems**

InspireNOLA's governing board includes not only community members and former educators, but also finance professionals and attorneys. A number of these members sit on the finance committee and all participate in bimonthly meetings where the following financial reports are reviewed: budget to actual for each school site, trial balance for the entire organization, bank statements, and income statements. The finance committee exercises its oversight responsibilities by reviewing the monthly financial reports, asking for additional information as desired to fully understand the school's financial position and questioning any procedures or items on the financial statements. The finance committee reports to the Board of Directors who approves the annual budget and any large, non-standard purchases, and reviews the school's annual external financial audit.

InspireNOLA uses both school site personnel and Central Office staff to perform the financial and accounting functions for each school it operates. Each school has a School Operations Manager, who is in charge of a number of financial functions including new hire paperwork, purchasing, invoice approval, student activity fund management, inventory management, and certain aspects of data management.

The InspireNOLA finance department includes a CFO for financial strategy, budget management and financial reporting, a Director of Finance to manage month-end and year-end accounting procedures and support staff who handle purchasing, accounts payable, and Special Revenue. Charlie Mackles, the CFO, is a licensed Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and a Certified LA Charter School Business Administrator (CLCSBA) as awarded by the LA Association of School Business Officials (LASBO). Our Director of Finance also holds the Certified LA Charter School Business Professional (CLCSBP) designation as awarded by LASBO.

ADP, an international payroll company, has been hired to manage payroll tax calculations and filings, benefit deductions, garnishments, and paycheck/direct deposit generation.

InspireNOLA uses Blackbaud, a computerized enterprise accounting system, and a chart of accounts consistent with the Louisiana Accounting and Uniform Governmental Handbook. The school uses an Excel based budgeting and budget management tool that has already been developed and customized to each school. The tool is used for day-to-day budget management and approval, scenario analysis, financial reporting, and grant management. InspireNOLA utilizes the services of Hienz & Macaluso, LLC Certified Public Accountants for annual organizational audits.

### **Financial Stewardship**

The InspireNOLA finance team, led by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and supported by the Director of Finance (DF), handles the majority of financial operations for regions and schools in conjunction with a school site based Operations Manager. The School Operations Manager provides a direct link from the school to Central Office so that budgetary needs or financial issues can be addressed rapidly. This allows financial management of the school to be administered cohesively and smoothly so that academic instruction is always the top priority. The CFO and DF set preliminary budgets, approve final budgets, and monitor budgetary compliance throughout the year, with school leaders providing input regarding specific school needs and requests. In addition, the Central Office is responsible for all financial reporting, procurement, vendor payables, and payroll processing. Leadership working in tandem assures that students and their success is also the first priority.



**Meeting Financial Measures**

School leadership will review budgets, purchasing requisitions and reports of time and effort to ensure correct payment of salaries and wages to employees.

**Compliance with Key Financial Stewardship Requirements**

The School Operations Manager is required to learn, follow and uphold the policies and procedures established by InspireNOLA. The School Operations Manager is evaluated quarterly to determine performance and adherence to InspireNOLA policy. The InspireNOLA central office finance staff also performs quarterly internal audits to correct implementation of policy and procedures. This audit also provides the data for continuous professional development.

**Qualifications of the Business Manager**

InspireNOLA’s business manager is the Chief Financial Officer, Charlie Mackles. Mr. Mackles is both a Certified Public Accountant in Louisiana as well as a Certified Louisiana Charter School Business Administrator as awarded by the Louisiana Association of School Business Officials. These certifications allow InspireNOLA to meet the qualified and competent business professional requirement as defined by Charter School Bulletin 126 – Charter 25 Section 01.

**Additional External Support**

InspireNOLA currently employs an in-house finance team consisting of a CPA and two employees certified by the Louisiana Association of School Business Officials. InspireNOLA will not need any additional external support.

**Budget**

**OPSB Specific Questions**

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.**

InspireNOLA’s financial model places an emphasis on sustainability and as such performs our core business solely on public funding via per pupil state and local funding and federal entitlement programs (i.e. Title I, Title II, IDEA, etc.). Any philanthropic or competitive grants that are received are treated as supplemental in nature and are utilized to enhance services or programs offered. Annual budget goals and targets are built upon successfully implementing long lasting sustainable initiatives, not short-term “quick fixes” that must be abandoned in future years due to budget constraints. InspireNOLA focuses on providing high quality education while doing so efficiently and within its means. As our School Performance Scores and Net Asset balances demonstrate, we have been successful thus far.

InspireNOLA’s financial plan (Attachment 14) for McDonogh 42 consists of creating two academies, ensuring a safe and secure environment, and resetting the culture within the school house. InspireNOLA recently completed a Pre-K-8 school turnaround at Andrew Wilson Elementary school. This experience has allowed us to create a more in-depth spending plan for a new school turnaround. We will create a school admin team of a Head of School and two Academy Principals. Facility improvement is also an important factor in the transition. Students have to be prepared to reset culture once the new school year has begun. With limited funds the focus of any expenditure indirectly or directly has to remain

academic in nature. InspireNOLA averages 73% of all dollars expended on instructional needs. We work to keep operational overhead at a minimum to facilitate maximum resource dedication to students and learning.

Philanthropic dollars acquired are mainly used for new school start-up costs until enrollment demand reaches a point to sustain the school budget on per pupil revenue. The breakeven point typically runs through year three. Philanthropy and competitive grants are also utilized to fund innovative programs such as personalized learning, digital media, and career development focus programs. InspireNOLA has successfully garnered \$4.5 million to fund such requests from partners including the Charter School Growth Fund, New Schools for New Orleans, and Educate Now!.

**InspireNOLA’s Sustainability Plan has the following components:**

- Fiscal Management – The executive team at InspireNOLA, led by the CEO and CFO, is responsible for ensuring prudent and responsible fiscal management to sustain the school’s long-term success. Fiscal management consist of creating an annual budget for approval by the Board of Directors, review of financial statements at Board meetings, monthly meetings with the school administration team to review revenue and expense actuals and forecasts, and quarterly enrollment projections.
- Budget Process – In January of each year, finance staff will meet with the school administration team to review potential enrollment, staffing, and funding scenarios. It is also at this time that any new educational program initiatives that InspireNOLA or the school is considering are discussed at length. The budget model is comprehensive and school site based which allows for detailed budgeting. Based on that information along with historical accounting data, finance staff will prepare draft budgets for review by the school administration team and will continue to work on different scenarios in order to optimize spending on school priorities. The agreed upon budget will be presented to the board Finance Committee for review. The finance team will then make appropriate adjustments based on input from the board Finance Committee, and present a final version to the board, for the board’s approval and adoption in June. The proposed budget will also be made available for public input in compliance with applicable state laws.
- Financial Statement Review – The Finance Committee of the Board of Directors reviews financial statements at each meeting to ensure that the actual revenues and expenditures are aligned to the annual budget and long term vision of the school and InspireNOLA. In the event the actuals and forecast is below the budget, the finance team will work with the Head of School to identify expense reductions (e.g., non-replacement of any open positions, staff reductions, non-personnel expense savings, use of contingency) that would re-balance the projections. As part of this process, school educational priorities are always taken into account to minimize any negative educational effects from a budget shortfall. In the event that the forecast is above the budget, the CFO will work with the school leader to determine if the additional resources should be re-deployed on current year priorities or saved for future years.
- Fundraising – InspireNOLA has a dedicated fund raising team that seeks and applies for grants relevant to its programs and strategies. The team includes our Director of Strategy and Advancement who is supported by the C-Level team at InspireNOLA. InspireNOLA has attracted investment from a plethora of funders, including the leading educational foundations – the Walton Family Foundation, The Gates Foundation, New Schools New Orleans, and the Charter School Growth Fund. These investors recognize InspireNOLA’s success as well as its potential for educational and community impact. InspireNOLA anticipates attracting additional funding for McDonogh 42 to support the sustainability of the school initiatives.

