

ExCEED Network Schools Charter Management Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

In 2005, after Hurricane Katrina dismantled the city's schools and the school system's infrastructure, many of our educators returned with the determination to assist in the rebuilding and restructuring of the New Orleans Public School (NOPS) system. Some found their way back to NOPS, now the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), and opened six district run schools. There is no denying the successes that were accomplished in rebuilding the much smaller traditional school district during the first decade after the storm. Some of those accomplishments include the preservation of its district run schools' historical significance; and embracing the autonomy of its charter schools which converted upon their reopening. However, in the first ten years of restructuring, the remaining Orleans Parish district run school leaders had limited access and decision making authority with regards to funding, resources, direct support, and focused professional development. Although assumed, a clear and unified vision was not consistently acted upon, leaving school leaders to work in isolation without the benefits of team decision making and collaboration. Now in the second phase of restructuring, a few of those educators who found their way back to OPSB remain; and are now joined by many new educators whose goals are to unify what Hurricane Katrina divided and to bring higher quality school options to every neighborhood in this great city. The Orleans Parish School Board began to reorganize its current system to include the oversight of its now five district run schools. In March of 2015, the position of Executive Director of Network Schools was created to support and form collaborative processes among these five school leaders. During the course of that first networked school year, it became evident that working in isolation and dependence on central office decision-making was a hindrance to sustainable success. Monthly collaborations with school leaders revealed much about the dysfunctional and outdated processes which restricted leader autonomy and capacity for growth. To combat these dysfunctional processes and provide additional support, the position of Chief of Network Schools was created in March of 2016 and filled by Nicolette London in July 2016. Under the leadership and direction of Ms. London and in collaboration with school personnel, supports were created for the following areas: (1) instructional accountability, (2) teacher, leader, and family supports; (3) efficient fiscal and operation processes; and (4) consistent technology. Insufficient resources restricted full scale implementation, yet network schools posted impressive gains because of what was implemented. Beginning in summer 2016, Ms. London and school leaders began a process to provide an identity for the district run schools in the hopes of bringing them to the table of city-wide initiatives typically reserved for charter schools. Enter the network created "School

Management Organization”. Its messaging intended to create a charter management organization look and feel with consistent processes and school leader collaborative decision-making. Just as the Office of Network Schools (a four-member team) was formed, this small support force and the historically distinctive five unique schools banded together in agreement with the guiding principles and meaningful moniker, ExCEED, highlighting the schools’ individuality yet oneness of vision. **ExCEED Network Schools** - where **Ex**pectations for **C**hildren and **E**ducators are to **Ex**cel **D**aily as we strive to improve future options for today’s youth.

ExCEED Network Schools CMO (“ExCEED”) wants to build on the recent success and leverage the established moniker, cutting ties with the bureaucracy of traditional run schools, becoming a truly independent network of schools. The theory of change of the ExCEED CMO is simple: when five schools that have been historically operating separately from each other have the opportunity to band together as charters, they can reach their goals more effectively and efficiently, when supported appropriately. While the schools currently receive supports from the Orleans Parish School Board central office, those supports are not necessarily tailored to the specific needs of the schools, and as such, often leave school communities, teachers, parents, school administration and most importantly, students, with unmet needs. The ExCEED Network Schools CMO is designed to intentionally meet the needs of all of the stakeholders, with students first. The organizational design is lean, yet powerful, focusing on the roles and responsibilities that will most transform the inefficiencies of the central office into strategic advantages of the CMO.

ExCEED as we present ourselves today is a group comprised of experienced, local educators who have bonded to build an organization that will leverage the charter model, affording principals the opportunity to make decisions for their schools in a supportive environment. ExCEED’s mission is to *redefine* excellence in education by *empowering* school communities to *prepare* students for future opportunities while *honoring* our traditions. As a conversion charter network comprised of the five remaining OPSB district-run schools, our plan is to collaboratively create the city’s absolute best charter management organization, as measured by the growth outcomes of our students, all attending “A” and “B” rated schools as measured by Louisiana’s Department of Education School Performance Score (“SPS”). It is time to put these schools on a heightened trajectory of success equal to their counterparts.

Removing the layered decision-making process by which traditional schools tend to operate affords our five schools the opportunity to succeed. ExCEED believes that by putting decision making, funding, and resources closer to students there is a heightened sense of accountability, therefore ensuring high quality educational experiences for every student in each of our schools. With the track record of leadership and operational success at each of the schools, and the expertise of the

proposed Network professionals, we have the unique opportunity to transform inefficiencies into economies of scale and disparate efforts into coordinated success. Our schools are generally at scale, and as such, our Network will launch at scale. Our Network leadership has been working with the School Leaders from each of the five schools for several months, identifying areas which require improvement, developing plans to address the identified needs, and providing a set of supports and services to execute those plans. It is the work we have done, despite incongruent budgeting and red tape, that we plan to amplify as our own network.

We understand and respect the unique opportunity before us – to set a national example of how to transition existing, historical schools from a cumbersome traditional school district to a high functioning, autonomous, and accountable charter school network. We have the opportunity to work with the community, students, and families to create a culture that embraces *tradition* and demands *excellence*, all achieved through a singular *commitment*.

Strategic Advantage

ExCEED is best positioned of any applicant to leverage the academic momentum and drive to becoming a network of great schools. It is our goal to achieve an “A” rating within 5 years. The task of growth begins with the planning and processes created from a focused, academic, and culturally centered plan. ExCEED is striving to alter historical obstacles and increase student growth mindset. We have learned what works for our schools with the intention of leveraging those programs/processes to maximize success across all schools. ExCEED will continue to formalize this collaboration and build a cohesive academic model from Pre-K through Secondary, correcting inherited misalignment in curriculum overtime.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<i>ExCEED Network Schools</i>	**86.1 (Extracted from OPSB state data)	90.04	93.06	96.74	100.64	103.8

Table 1: *ExCEED Network Schools total annual average SPS over first charter period.*

To mitigate any threats to our recent successes, ExCEED leadership began formulating processes to ensure academic accountability, an effective cycle of data analysis, academic and behavioral interventions, and consistent progress monitoring. It is this type of support we look to continue and build upon. Our School Data & Academic Quarterly Review provides ExCEED Schools with the tools and support necessary to gather and analyze current and trend

data from a variety of sources. This presents a full picture of the school's academic progress and subsequent prescriptive corrective measures. The purpose of this ongoing review process is to ensure that the leadership teams engage in an effective Data & Academic Review. A rubric and initial set of guiding questions were developed to assist with the facilitation of this process, which occurs immediately following each assessment period. These reviews result in deliberate and intentional planning that addresses student, teacher, and leader needs. The rubric assesses the effectiveness and practicality of the school leadership team's thought process and actions during a Data & Academic Review relative to data analysis, school procedures, classroom level practices, and leadership decisions, and how this process will drive student achievement. We will evaluate and monitor our schools' performance by engaging in a continuous school improvement process with the major components of creating the vision, gathering data related to that vision, analyzing the data, planning the work of the school to align with the vision, implementing the strategies and action steps outlined in the plan, and gathering data to measure the impact of the intervention.

Our Approach

ExCEED's initial focus will be on building the back-office infrastructure and establishing operational and financial excellence. The historical infrastructure that supports the operation and finances of these schools lacks systems to support responsiveness to the needs of the schools. Eliminating inefficiencies and discovering cost savings is paramount to supporting school principals in their efforts to maintain successful programming and enhance or create programming where needed. ExCEED is poised to begin this work and has outlined the path to fiscal, operational, and instructional accountability. Critical to ExCEED's infrastructure design is the creation of targeted support at the school level, utilizing a School Operations Manager for each site and increased responsibility for site-based Data Managers. Additionally, we will add a Special Education Coordinator at each site. This coordinator will ensure the continuance of excellent services to our students with special needs. Extensive training and development of these key roles will be coordinated with the vision and philosophy of placing the greatest resources closest to the students. Expertise at the Network level will ensure organizational compliance and fiscal responsibility in a consistent and efficient system of processes ExCEED-wide. Though ExCEED's initial focus is ensuring solid infrastructure and operational systems remove barriers to school progress, the work toward improving academics and creating instructional strength through our partnerships and internal collaborations continues.

Leadership

ExCEED is a collaborative group of local school leaders whose educational experience and passion for the children of New Orleans is surpassed by no CMO currently in this landscape. ExCEED will be led at the Network level by the CEO, Ms. London. As the former Chief of Network Schools at OPSB, Ms. London has proven her ability to rally the school leaders and create cohesion across the schools. ExCEED is poised to leverage the momentum gained during the evolution and advancement of this unified network of schools during the 2015-2017 school years. Until now, our five schools have existed in a unique isolation that has invited opinion,

judgement, and criticism of both the worlds of charter and district run operating structures. This provided opportunity to see and hear from the community the pitfalls, challenges, and perceptions of both standards. More importantly, this created the opportunity to hear what the community values in their schools, for their children, and surrounding their rich New Orleans traditions. From these community voices, ExCEED formulated the following values: **Excellence**, **Commitment**, and **Tradition**.

Excellence: Leading the City's schools in re-defining excellence.

Commitment: Making the commitment to the students, parents, and the New Orleans community that our children will have knowledge and skillsets to compete globally, and a commitment to our teachers and support staff that they will be supported, empowered, and valued.

Tradition: Making today's youth into tomorrow's leaders and innovators through inspiration drawn from the rich traditions of our five schools.

Partnerships

Our partnership with the Algebra Project is designed specifically to address the decrease in student growth in mathematics across all grade levels. Professors from Dillard and Xavier Universities, teacher leaders at each of the high and elementary schools, and proposed Network professionals will form a cohort to ensure positive student outcomes. Their work will include:

- Exploring and practicing teaching strategies specifically aimed at giving students the level of critical thinking skills required of them today;
- Planning professional development activities for teachers to provide them with proven strategies and to demonstrate how those strategies connect from grade level to grade level, Pre-K to post-secondary;
- Planning tutoring and enrichment activities connecting college students with high school students and high school students with elementary students;
- Developing a seamless Pre-K to Secondary mapping of the math curriculum and aligned assessments;
- Identifying supplemental materials for teachers, students, and families; and
- Planning family engagement activities to assist parents with understanding what is required of students and how these schools are working in a collaborative effort to provide their children with a seamless experience from grade level to grade level in an effort that will result in post-secondary success.

To address a culture that has lacked instructional accountability, effective and consistent teacher evaluation, appropriate on-going teacher support and career paths, we partnered with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching ("NIET"). Schools will receive master and mentor teachers, as well as professional development from proposed Network professionals

and each school's leadership team. The NIET rubrics for Instruction, Environment, Planning, and Professionalism will provide the basis for holistic improvement across all ExCEED Schools. This work will include the Teacher Advancement Program ("TAP") System's four key elements of success and the tools necessary to develop excellence in teaching. Features of our ongoing implementation include:

- Extensive Training for Evaluator Certification, Instructional Rubric, Cluster, Instructional Leadership, and Field Testing for Best Practice in Action Research;
- Multiple career paths for teachers;
- Ongoing applied professional development;
- Instructionally focused accountability;
- Performance-based compensation;
- NIET Best Practices Center services;
- Best Practices portal providing real-time access to individualized trainings and support for improving educator effectiveness; and
- Data Management System ensuring fair and meaningful educator evaluations.

These partnerships will support meaningful collaborations among the ExCEED School communities, and are important for scale and continuity for families as their children matriculate from Pre-K to high school graduation and beyond. Through the use of the NIET Rubrics, participation in the Algebra Project, collaboration among the five network schools, and focused support from the Network leadership, ExCEED will ensure that teachers receive the targeted support that is so necessary.

Our Schools

Our network is founded by the current principals of Benjamin Franklin Elementary, Mahalia Jackson Elementary, Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary, Eleanor McMain Secondary, and McDonogh 35 High School. Forming the founding Board of Directors mindful of the school leaders' intention that members be local, have school ties, or have a vested interest in ensuring the success and sustainability of these schools is critical to ExCEED's success. From a school level, as a collective network, these school communities will benefit from the opportunities to plan, engage, collaborate, and build the academic and cultural protocols with other teachers, teacher leaders, administrators, and proposed Network leaders. From a family perspective, these school communities will benefit from the continuity between the elementary and high school levels with regard to curriculum sequencing and academic and social expectations. There will be clear and deliberate linkages, Pre-K through Secondary, with close attention to the needs of the elementary, middle school, and high school student needs. For example, this opportunity will allow for a central academic focus such as Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) to be woven throughout all grades and subjects, allowing an ExCEED student the ability to transition seamlessly to any ExCEED school from one grade level to the next. All ExCEED Schools are

open admission schools and will continue to participate in the OneApp process for enrolling students. Once students complete the eighth grades at their elementary schools, parents will have the option to choose the best high school for their child. Students who have a sibling that attends McMain and/or McDonogh 35 and students who attend one of the network elementary schools will have admission priority to McMain and/or McDonogh 35. The multi-levelled experiences between the campuses within the network will provide exposure for our families allowing them to value the options within our network.

Each of our schools is unique, and holds a distinct historical, cultural, and social space in the City's educational landscape. As we know, where you go to school in New Orleans is a source of great pride and provides social cohesion and cultural connection. As such, we will not only keep our school's names intact, but have already and will continue to embrace alumni communities, specific school educational, arts, and sports programming, and diverse school identities. Leading up to and upon the opening of the 2017-2018 school year, ExCEED will demonstrate to parents and the community that their voices were heard and that programming supports for children with exceptional needs, processes for remediation and acceleration, ensuring a family friendly atmosphere, and engaging parents and alumni are not only intact but enhanced. A parent/alumni advisory committee will be formed to provide the Network with feedback and insight from a parent/community perspective. As a Network, we distinguish ourselves by working within the context of historical and present community while streamlining and creating consistent academic and operational processes that lift burdens off school leaders, and create efficiencies that allow our students and teachers to "ExCEED" expectations.

These five founding school principals have envisioned an ExCEED Network that eliminates the isolationism of their district run status, and embraces new opportunities to engage in the bigger picture developing in the City--opportunities for a stronger collaboration with other leaders within a common ExCEED network working toward common goals; opportunities to provide teachers with a sense of community and belonging to the changing New Orleans landscape; opportunities to engage in educational experiences more readily available for a streamlined, efficiently run ExCEED office; and opportunities to build capacity by housing some of the ExCEED leadership in the schools where they can provide direct support. It is also critical to note that the unique identities of these schools are valued and nourished.

Below, please find our individual school missions, visions and key partnerships for success.

Benjamin Franklin Elementary Mathematics and Science School ("Ben Franklin ES" or "BFE")

Mission: *We will excel academically and individually.*

Vision: *Accelerating the learning of all students through data driven inquiry, reflective teaching and powerful learning.*

Student-centered learning, facilitated by highly skilled teachers, continues to be the center of Ben Franklin ES’s instructional efforts. Teachers routinely engage in collaborative procedures to enhance the learning process and continuously build knowledge in all levels of students. Academic procedures that include monitoring student learning, identifying areas of need, crafting plans to address needs, and implementation of nuanced and necessary strategies are responsible for providing students with classroom experiences that foster learning. Teachers continually reflect on their professional practice and are committed to staying current in their knowledge and skills as they relate to building student knowledge.

In addition to using excellent academic processes and procedures in the core content areas and in the non-core areas, Benjamin Franklin ES is committed to engaging students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (“STEM”) related processes that foster an inquisitive and investigative nature in all students in an effort to build capacity and understanding of math, science, and their impacts on society. The ongoing and expanding math and science program has permitted students to interact with the scientific community in the areas of environmental science and earth and space science with hopes to expand to include the biological and physical sciences as well. A commitment to programs such as Project Lead the Way that provide students with sound instruction in an organized curriculum fitting for their stages of development has enhanced the school community and increased learning. In addition to fostering curiosity in the applied sciences such as learning how to care for organisms (especially plant life), the school has tapped into students’ awareness of how the natural sciences connect to human life in our modern society. Mathematics skills transcend the math classrooms and students are encouraged and led to use the sorts of strategic thinking and mathematical reasoning that are requisite of analytical thought in all classrooms. By the eighth grade, students will have extensive knowledge and understanding of mathematics and the sciences, including career options, enabling them to choose pathways and course offerings for college and career readiness, while selecting a high school that fulfills the passions for learning developed in the “BFE way.”

By the end of the 2016-2017 school year, Benjamin Franklin ES is committed to increasing student proficiency in the areas of Mathematics and English Language Arts by at least 5%. Having committed to becoming an “A” rated school as defined by the Louisiana Department of Education (“LDOE”), meeting and/or exceeding this goal will support the school’s attainment of the desired letter grade.

Benjamin Franklin Elementary Performance Goals

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
BFE	95.4 - B	98.3 - B	100.4 - A	102.5 - A	104.6 - A	106.2 - A

Table 2: Ben Franklin Elementary annual SPS goals over first charter period.

Benjamin Franklin ES is a high poverty, high performing school with many parents working multiple jobs to make ends meet. Surveys show that families feel lucky to be a part of the Benjamin Franklin Family and are satisfied with the curriculum and programs offered at our school. An active Parent Teacher Organization (“PTO”) and impressively persistent “Dads” involvement in duty days, staff appreciation, and much needed attention to “all things BFE” fosters the expectation that families and the school community encourage children place a high priority on education and capitalize on their academic and social opportunities. The school maintains constant communication and messaging with families through the *Parent Power News* newsletter, automated calling to the homes, electronic and accessible classroom management and grade management software, and regularly scheduled PTO meetings. Collaboration with community stakeholders include a neighborhood group organized internally by the school, a campus beautification initiative led by a community member in the neighborhood, and business connections (CC’s Coffee, Langensteins, and Whole Foods).

A conversion to a Type 3 charter school collaboratively with the remaining direct run schools and organized as the ExCEED Network Schools, Benjamin Franklin ES will be afforded the advantage of a seamless transition to the charter environment, building on recent collaboration. We acknowledge the need for ongoing community involvement and inclusion of families in school processes. A key action upon entering the upcoming school year will be for the administration and teachers to effectively and clearly communicate the expectation that the school will continue on its current trajectory in regards to how students and families are treated, the value of the various educational programs on campus, the incorporation of expanded math and science offerings to students, and the school’s commitment to attain rigorous goals that will lead the school to an “A” status as determined by the LDOE. The school will continue to host community meetings and strengthen the presence of the PTO by crafting agendas that include adequate time for parent and teacher reflection of student learning and socialization. The school will also communicate its commitment to embracing and expanding upon the rich tradition of Benjamin Franklin Elementary Mathematics and Science School by honoring the past while building towards the future. Routine acknowledgements of where the school has been, what it has gone through, and where it is now will be part of gatherings and written communications to families and stakeholders.

Mahalia Jackson Elementary (“Mahalia Jackson ES” or “MJE”)

Mission: To provide meaningful experiences in order for students to become successful college and career ready individuals.

Mahalia Jackson Elementary is a community-based school in New Orleans’ Central City dedicated to providing a well-rounded education to the population served by the school. Students are provided with meaningful learning experiences in a values-rich environment where they learn the importance of hard work and treating others with respect. Students will

leave Mahalia Jackson ES equipped with the skills necessary to compete academically and socially in the 21st century landscape.

In addition, recent increases in English Language Learner (“ELL”) enrollment of native Spanish speaking families has created a unique growth opportunity. These families value the openness to addressing their specific needs and express the desire to participate in adult/family learning experiences. Creating a vertical and horizontal dual language approach, the school will capitalize on this group's unique cultural and language experiences, the rich history of New Orleans, and our positive growth in English language arts to build a Language Learner Center of Excellence at Mahalia Jackson ES. ExCEED proposes a highly innovative program that follows the curriculum designed by the Office of English Language Learners in the New York City Department of Education, while simultaneously continuing previous successes in English Language Arts using the Louisiana Department of Education Guidebooks. By eighth grade, all students will have extensive exposure to Spanish and English languages, while their families will receive language supports in the form of reading, writing, and speaking workshops.

Mahalia Jackson Elementary Performance Goals

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
MJE	79.9 - C	85.5 - B	89.4 - B	94.8 - B	100.2 - A	104.1 - A

Table 3: Mahalia Jackson annual SPS goals over first charter period.

Mahalia Jackson ES serves families from throughout the metropolitan New Orleans area. To remain competitive in New Orleans and attract families, Mahalia Jackson ES will continue to have student achievement as our primary focus. An exploration of all options will take place in an effort to continue a quality after school program and possibly Saturday sessions that cater to the education and enrichment of the whole child. With the rapidly growing Hispanic population, there is an opportunity to build a program that meets the needs of English Language Learner (“ELL”) students. To support ELL students, they will be equipped with targeted instructional support necessary for their academic success. Mahalia Jackson ES will also look to develop relationships with the families of our ELL students and seek out ways to provide adult-learning opportunities to them as well. Mahalia Jackson ES has a reputation for carrying out business in a manner that had been branded the “MJE Way”. Families are regarded as customers and beneficiaries of the school and optimal customer service is prioritized while maintaining a rich family atmosphere. Parents and community members have come to expect frequent communications that allow for support to and from the school that enriches the students’ social, emotional, and academic experience.

In past years, Mahalia Jackson ES has collaborated with the Kellogg Foundation who was

instrumental in awarding funds to the after-school enrichment program, Super Saturdays and other enrichment activities. Mahalia Jackson ES will work to re-establish the collaboration as well as explore other resources. Currently, the school has a business partnership with the Raising Cane’s restaurant located in our Central City community. Support via donations has been received from the Brennan’s Restaurant Group, Academy Sports and Outdoors, and UPS. Through a collaborative effort with Start the Adventure in Reading (“STAIR”) Program and Prime Time Family Reading, Mahalia Jackson ES is currently providing after school literacy support to a number of our students and families. Mahalia Jackson ES joins the other ExCEED network schools in the Algebra Project, a collaborative initiative targeting improvement in mathematics in all five ExCEED schools.

The Mahalia Jackson ES leadership team will work together with the Network to develop a strategic marketing plan to increase interest in our school and the work we do. In addition, we will collaborate to attract additional business partners and improve the partnerships that currently exist within the Mahalia Jackson facility. For example, preliminary discussions with the St. Thomas Community Health Clinic currently housed at the school site are geared towards developing a more symbiotic relationship that would provide pediatric health and behavioral care for our students and general health care for their families and the community.

Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School (“Bethune ES”)

Mission: Increase academic success by promoting the educational development of all learners.

Vision: To provide teaching and learning experiences that challenge students to think critically, and problem solve.

Bethune ES students are trained to apply intense foundational and developmental skills necessary to function and compete in a global society. Simultaneously, our vision is to infuse the arts in our students’ educational experiences. By 8th grade our students will have extensive exposure and mastery in some area of vocal or instrumental music, visual arts, acting, or drama.

Bethune Elementary Performance Goals

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<i>MBE</i>	89.5 - B	92.7 - B	95.3 - B	98.4 - B	102.6 - A	105.2 - A

Table 4: *Bethune annual SPS goals over first charter period.*

Bethune ES will remain competitive by continuing to provide high-quality educational experiences implementing Louisiana State Standards to all students. Our school program additionally offers Music in the Brain which provides music theory and concepts integrated with classroom skills, KIDsmART, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish. Extracurricular activities include Start the Adventure in Reading (“STAIR”) tutoring, mentorship, and piano ensemble. Bethune ES is known for our family atmosphere. It is often said that when one enters the door there is a feeling of warmth and love that permeates throughout the environment. We will continue to ensure that all who enter our school experience the same feeling and know that they are loved and welcomed to join our family.

Bethune ES will continue to collaborate with all the ExCEED Schools as well as with business partners and universities throughout the city. We will maintain our relationships with various organizations and agencies around New Orleans to provide the best possible educational experiences for our students. Bethune ES has generated support from many organizations.

Over the years, Bethune ES has collaborated and established partnerships with several community organizations/companies to support student achievement. Our community connection includes a partnership through Dillard University which sponsors The Algebra Project. The Algebra Project has been implemented to address the decrease in student growth in mathematics across all grade levels. To support our advances in literacy, we have partnered with STAIR (Start the Adventure in Reading). This program provides one-on-one tutoring to second grade students identified as having a need for support in the area of literacy. Better Than Ezra contributes financial support to the arts program for students in grades kindergarten through seventh. Through these partnerships and others that will be established in the future, our students will have experienced exposure to quality programming in academics and the arts which helps to foster a well-balanced education for our students.

Eleanor McMMain Secondary School (“McMMain HS”)

Mission: To provide a safe environment, rigorous curriculum, and meaningful experiences for all students.

Vision: Is a learning institution where all stakeholders invest, promote, and empower students to become college and career ready productive citizens in a global environment.

Students will be empowered through Career and Technical Education, access to the Arts and College and Career Readiness.

Eleanor McMMain Secondary School is an institution that enrolls students from grades 7th-12th. The average attendance rate is 93%. The student population includes 93% African American, 2% Hispanic/Latino, 3% Asian Pacific, and 1% white. Professional development is offered to teachers and support staff on a weekly basis during “Cluster” meetings by using the

NIET best practice model. Exceptional Children Services are offered to students with Individualized Education Plans (“IEP”), including Gifted and Talented services. The course offerings range from Advanced Placement (“AP”) classes, honors, and regular core subjects in English, Math, Science, Social, Career and Technical Education (CTE), and arts related curriculum. McMMain HS also offers two programs of studies with a Tops Core Diploma and Arts and Technology program. Students are enrolled in Dual Enrollment courses at Southern University at New Orleans and are afforded the opportunity to obtain college credits. A Parent/Community Liaison is provided for the parents and community in order for all stakeholders to be included in the operations of the school as it relates to culture and climate.

McMMain HS has committed itself, as a school, to achieve three academic goals: 1. Improve ACT scores to at or above Louisiana averages, 2. Increase Algebra 1 proficiency levels to at or above Louisiana averages, and 3. Improve School grade to “A” level as defined by the LDOE. Scores on District Diagnostic tests as well as District Benchmark tests indicate the school is growing in student capacity to meet all three goals.

McMMain has committed itself, as a school, to achieve three cultural goals: 1. Develop a safe learning environment, 2. Develop an aligned rigorous curriculum, and 3. Offer meaningful academic and cultural experiences for students.

McMMain Secondary School Performance Goals

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
EMHS	89.2 - B	92.2 - B	94.8 - B	97.2 - B	100.6 - A	103.2 - A

Table 5: McMMain annual SPS goals over first charter period.

The open enrollment process ensures a diverse community from all areas of New Orleans. The families encompass all economic and social backgrounds, and the majority of the students are economically disadvantaged. Our goal is to engage parents not only in areas where they are most often involved, but also in the areas that matter most: teaching and learning, academic learning targets, and standards. As partners in their student’s education, we recognize the need to invest further in building these bridges. ExCEED is in a singularly favorable position to improve the connection between academics, home, school, and student success, by shifting the social and behavioral norms towards a more positive, open, and inclusive environment. The recent successful transformation of McDonogh 35 High School was supported by and in collaboration with key ExCEED stakeholders. McMMain HS will capitalize on those successes for transformational mindset shifts and improved culture and climate.

McMain HS has a reputation for providing a comprehensive high school experience, which includes a rigorous curriculum and whole-child experiences that revolve around extra-curricular activities (Louisiana High School Athletic Association sports, STEM, and the arts). In an effort to attract transitional students from ExCEED's K-8 schools, collaborative initiatives provide continuity for families through consistency of teaching practices, common assessments, and inter-school projects. For example, Benjamin Franklin ES students participate in the McMain Secondary Band program, and ExCEED will support a student mentorship program that reaches down to the K-8 level network schools. In doing so, McMain HS will continue to attract students from ExCEED elementary schools by providing activities that encourage school spirit and Mustang loyalty.

Keeping its rich traditions, innovative approaches to education, and the ability to hire and retain staff who understands the needs of the 21st century learner in the current educational landscape, McMain HS will remain competitive with high schools across the city. The school will collaborate with and continue to build relationships with the ExCEED Network team, Alumni Association, and local universities in the areas of academics and civic engagement. Currently, the school is partnered with the Algebra Project, LSU Community Clinic, Princeton Review, McMain Alumni, and reliable community leaders who foster and support the mission of the school.

McDonogh 35 High School (“McDonogh 35 HS”)

Mission: Inspire and empower students to excel both academically and socially and to prepare them to be college and career ready far beyond the realm of high school.

Vision: For all stakeholders to be committed to developing the whole child by providing a nurturing and safe environment that fosters a rigorous academic platform and opportunities for student leadership.

McDonogh 35 HS is committed to encouraging academic excellence for all students in challenging and interactive programs that are supported by teachers, staff, students, parents, alumni, and the community.

McDonogh 35 HS's academic programming includes a focus on STEM course pathways through a partnership with Project Lead the Way, rigorous core and non-core courses designed to build college readiness, expanding career pathways that include industry-based certifications and the opportunity to pursue college degrees through a proposed PTECH program, accelerated courses through Advanced Placement and Honors courses, and Talented and Visual Arts programming specific to students' needs. Community partnerships that enhance the academic pathways include Youth Force NOLA, College Beyond, and The Algebra Project, a collaboration with Xavier University of Louisiana and Dillard University. By providing students with ample opportunities to capitalize on their unique talents and ambitions, McDonogh 35 HS aims to fulfill its commitment to improving post-secondary opportunities for the youth of New Orleans. As the school moves upward towards

accomplishing its goals, professionals on site undergo training in incorporating best instructional practices supported by the NIET Best Practices Center, teacher collaboration centered on building student knowledge, and ongoing administrative training and team building practices. McDonogh 35 HS is unique in that it can boast of ample community support from its alumni organization and other community partners such as the LINKS, the Reserve Officers' Training Corps ("ROTC"), and businesses located in the surrounding New Orleans area. Community involvement and engagement contributes to the school's rich culture and provides students with additional opportunities to build knowledge and skills in the community.

In summary, McDonogh 35 HS has committed itself, as a school, to prepare students for college, inspire students' desire to learn and grow (academically and culturally), and develop student, community, and family relationships that interact to promote whole student success. Attainment of the academic and enrichment goals will support the school in making an upward trajectory towards increasing its academic rating and community perceptions.

McDonogh 35 School Performance Goals

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
MCD35	76.5 - C	81.5 - C	85.4 - B	90.8 - B	95.2 - B	100.3 - A

Table 6: McDonogh 35 annual SPS goals over first charter period.

Over the past ten years, McDonogh 35 HS has serviced a student population that is primarily of low socioeconomic status and over 98% minority. Students have benefited from holistic approaches to addressing academics and behavior. In order to ensure that students have the best opportunity to focus on their education, the staff and teachers oftentimes must become involved in linking community resources to our families. These resources include but are not limited to needs related to homelessness, substance abuse, mental health concerns, behavioral issues, and time constraints due to work schedules.

McDonogh 35 HS's vision includes strengthening partnerships with K-8 and middle schools within and outside the ExCEED Network in an effort to be a center of excellent high school education in the city of New Orleans. As a high quality high school with a rich tradition of excellence, McDonogh 35 HS is poised to become a city hub of secondary education that provides students with ample opportunities to build skills that are relevant to modern society locally and across the globe. School-to-school partnerships will include cross-site academic programming (i.e. The Algebra Project) that spans across all five network campuses with a common focus. Additional programs that address literacy, technology, and the arts will further support this effort to connect ExCEED schools together. High school students in New Orleans will be provided with K-12 pathways that are more streamlined, intentional, and progressive

compared to the current matriculation practices in the city. In short, McDonogh 35 HS is prepared to be a city hub that expands educational opportunities to a more diverse student population in a more stable and comforting pathway from kindergarten to grade 12. The school is in a position to be a competitive entity within the city and attract diverse learners in its effort to build a supportive and successful school community.

Several practices are already in place that promote positive messaging on behalf of the school and its efforts. Re-identifying the school as a place where student learning is valued has been communicated through print materials, visual displays on campus, signage, and student opportunities to communicate through newsletters and committees. Enhanced student and community activities have been planned by key personnel. Faculty and staff have already committed to improving recruitment by informing stakeholders of the various programs and showcasing physical spaces on campuses designed for specialized learning (i.e. the Engineering wing, Health Sciences Wing, etc.). Community events include Open House, athletics, marching band, academic fairs, and PTO meetings. Social media and signage in the community are additional outlets in use that communicate the school's values and special events such as the Centennial celebration of the school's existence.

McDonogh 35 HS will work with the Network and the alumni to position itself to continue to foster and grow an existing and diverse array of community partners including Links, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club, Crimestoppers, New Orleans Police Department, Delgado Community College, Xavier University of Louisiana, Southern University at New Orleans Trio Program, Good Samaritan Nursing Home, Second Harvest Food Bank, Club 180 Leadership and Mentorship Program, Next Generation Mentorship Program, Juvenile Justice Center, and Wraparound Community Services.

ExCEED is committed to preserving the one-hundred year legacy of educating the youth of New Orleans. Embracing our the RonEagle traditions (McDonogh 35's legendary mascot) and drawing inspiration from an active alumni association, McDonogh 35 HS will continue to build relationships and work collaboratively with the ExCEED Network team.

Conclusion

As evidenced in our application and highlighted in this executive summary, ExCEED is the best suited candidate for all five schools.

- For educators, by educators
- Founded by the principals
- Focus on excellence in education and celebrating tradition
- Funnel from Pre-K to high school
- Firm foundation during time of change

ExCEED is committed to providing appropriate and robust supports that our schools require. The Network will focus its efforts on:

- Implementing a rigorous curriculum that reflects high expectations and includes student supports;
- Building, retaining and growing strong school leadership teams;
- Attracting, growing and retaining quality teachers;
- Facilitating collaborative approaches among the ExCEED schools; and
- Building layers of accountability structures.

As supported by the hundreds of letters and petition signatures in our application from the faculty, staff, parents and community partners behind the school leaders and founders of ExCEED, this is the right time for this historic conversion to take place. ExCEED has leadership, vision, and skill to execute on an unprecedented vision of excellence while building on tradition.

The combined experience and extensive knowledge of the current school leaders and the ExCEED Network leadership provides a seamless transition from district run to charter network. ExCEED is positioned to leverage the academic momentum and drive to becoming a network of great schools, better than any other applicant. This experience, knowledge, and combined voice of the communities we serve distinctively qualifies us to provide this network of schools maximum results without disruption to function and form. In fact, as we have already begun to prove, it is the foundation for outstanding support and accountability, that lead to the kinds of results that our students deserve.