

# Application: Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

Brittany Rumph - brumph@bes.org  
New Charter School Applications

## Summary

**ID:** 9104401908  
**Status:** Full Application (Invitation) Stage  
**Last submitted:** Jul 15 2021 01:51 PM (EDT)

## Basic Letter of Intent Information

**Completed** May 3 2021

### Instructions

Please complete the Basic Contact and Application form.

## 2021 PHASE I: Letter of Intent

Basic Contact and Application Information

**New Applicant groups and Existing Education Corporations interested in submitting an application to establish Regents-authorized charter schools are asked to complete this brief information sheet. The Department will use this information to plan and coordinate peer review panels with appropriate expertise to evaluate all application materials.**

**Please indicate whether your applicant group is applying as a New Operator (that does not operate a Regents-authorized charter school or any charter schools currently) or whether your applicant group is an Existing Education Corporation (which operates one or more Regents-authorized charter schools).**

New Operator Applicant Group (operating no charter schools at all or in New York or not operating Regents-authorized charter schools)

## Proposed Charter School Name

(Please write out the full name of the proposed new charter school, and include the words "charter" and "school" in the name).

Proposed School Name	Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School
Grades Served (K-5, .6-8, 9-12, etc.) During Initial 5 year Term	K-4
Max Number of Students During Initial 5 year Term	375

**Please enter the name of the proposed Board Chair (or current Board Chair for existing schools) and the name of the Public/Media Contact person, including mailing address, phone number, and email address.**

(The entire chart may not be visible on your screen. Use the "tab" key to move from column to column. The first column will remain static as you do so).

	First and Last Name	Best Phone Number (###-###-####)	Email Address
Proposed/Current Board Chair	Laura Smith		
Public/Media Contact Person	Brittany Rumph	585-867-1034	<a href="mailto:brumph@bes.org">brumph@bes.org</a>

**Applications will only be accepted for applicant groups seeking to implement one or more of the following priority school designs (See page 5 of RFP) that align with New York State's Approved ESSA Plan and the strategic priorities of the Board of Regents:**

### Responses Selected:

- Partnerships with an existing CBO and/or institution of higher education;



## List of Key Design Elements

List the key design elements (which are those features of the school that are innovative or unique to the school's mission and goals, are core to the school's overall design, and critical or integral to its success. The design elements may include a specific content area focus; unique student populations to be served; specific educational programs or pedagogical approaches; unique calendar, schedule, or configurations of students and staff; and/or innovative organizational structures and systems. **Approved schools will be accountable for implementation of the key design elements included in their charter.**

1	Rigorous Academics paired with High-Quality Instruction
2	Individualized Supports
3	Character Development through a values-based community
4	Participation in the arts to support academic and social success
5	(No response)
6	(No response)
7	(No response)

**If available, please provide the URL to the website established for the proposed school(s).**

<https://www.rocexcellenceacademy.org/>

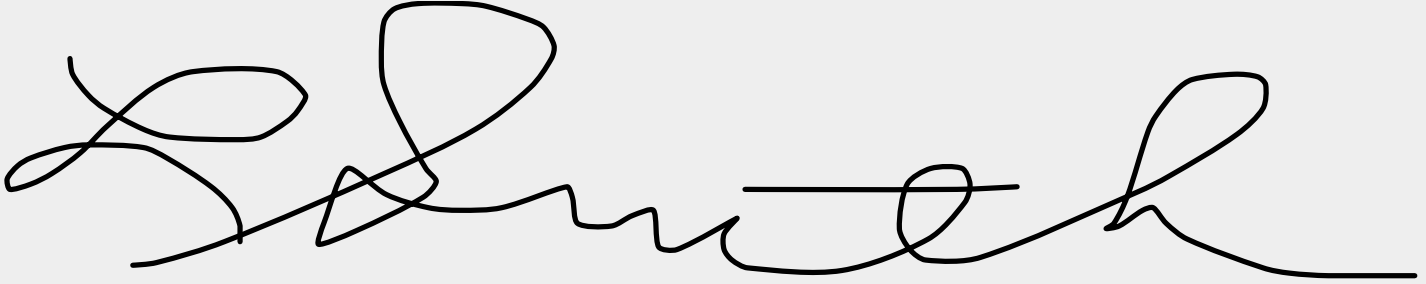
**Proposed Management and/or Partner Organization(s), such as a charter or educational management company or a university, academic program partner, or whole school change partner.**

(Refer to the application kit for definitions and guidance as only "substantial" partnerships should be listed here).

Proposed Management Company	(No response)
Partner Organization 1	YMCA of Greater Rochester
Partner Organization 2	(No response)

## Proposed Board Chair Signature

(Internet Explorer may not support this feature. Open the portal using Google Chrome, Firefox, or Safari).



**Date**

May 3 2021

**Thank you for completing this form.**

## Letter of Intent (6 pages excluding attachments)

**Completed** May 3 2021

### **Instructions**

Upload only the 6 page Letter of Intent (signed by the proposed board chair) in response to the evaluation criteria. Do NOT exceed

the 6 page limit. Do NOT submit petitions; however, keep for your own records.

Attachments are uploaded separately where indicated.

**[Rochester Excellence Academy Letter of Intent 2021 - signed](#)**

**Filename:** Rochester Excellence Academy Letter UxMFexH.pdf **Size:** 337.9 kB

**Table 1: Applicant Group Information**

**Completed** May 3 2021

**[Applicant Instructions](#)**

**la. Applicant Group Members:** Using **Table 1**, provide the name, contact information, current employment, the current or prospective role, and the relevant experience, skills, and/or qualifications in the proposed school for all members of the applicant group, which includes the initial proposed board of trustees and any known proposed school employees. Table 1 is a fillable table within the portal.

**Table 1: Applicant Group Information**

Must include a minimum of 5 members proposed as Trustees

**Applicant Group Information**

The term “applicant group” includes those actively participating in the planning of the application to establish the proposed charter school; those individuals who will comprise the initial board of trustees; and those individuals (if any) who will become school employees. (Employees cannot are not permitted to serve on the Board of Trustees of Regents-authorized charter schools, including as ex-officio members).

	Name/Phone/E mail Address	Current Employment	Relevant Experience/Skills and Role on Applicant Group	Proposed Role in School (e.g., trustee, employee, none)	Proposed Position on Board (Officer, Trustee, Constituent Rep)
1	Brittany M. Rumph/([REDACTED]) [REDACTED]	Program Director, ROC City Learning Pods	Education	Head of School	Proposed Head of School

2	Vernon <a href="#">Connors/</a> [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Finance Director, The Center for Youth Services Inc.	Finance School Business Administration	Trustee	Proposed Treasurer
3	Ashley <a href="#">Cross/</a> [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Executive Director, Generation 2	Non-Profit Management Education	Trustee	Proposed Board Vice-Chair
4	Robert <a href="#">Hoggard/</a> [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Development Officer, Health Equity and Inclusion Initiatives, Rochester Regional Health Foundations	Education Fund Development Board Governance	Trustee	Trustee
5	Rashondra <a href="#">Martin/</a> [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Principal Court Attorney, State of New York Unified Court System	Legal District-level Representation	Trustee	Trustee
6	Loren <a href="#">Montralio/</a> [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Program Director, Community Services Division YMCA of Greater Rochester Center for Equity	Education Project Management Community Based Organization Operations	Trustee	Trustee
7	Bonnie <a href="#">O'Keefe/</a> [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Associate Partner, Bellwether	Education Policy Project	Trustee	Proposed Secretary

		Education Partners	Management		
8	Aqua Porter/ 	Executive Director, Rochester Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative	Project Management Board Governance	Trustee	Trustee
9	Jeffrey Smink/ 	President, Cobbs Hill Consulting	Project Management Education Policy	Trustee	Trustee
10	Laura Smith/ 	Chief Operating Officer & Co-founder, UnboundEd	Project Management Finance Education Charter School Operations	Trustee	Proposed Board Chair
11					
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25					

**Application History**

Identify whether any member of the current applicant group has ever applied to this or another charter entity to open this proposed school or another charter school, either in New York State or outside of New York State. Indicate the date on which the application(s) was/were submitted and to which charter entity; briefly describe the outcome of the charter entity’s decision; and provide a concise description of significant modifications made in this application (if applicable).

Our applicant group applied for the charter authorization of Rochester Excellence on May 22, 2020. In response to the feedback provided after our capacity interview, we have focused on board development and community partnerships. We have recruited proposed board members with expertise in finance and education, have focused on board development through activities such as attending charter school board meetings, connected with existing charter school boards, such as Vertus Charter, Academy of Health Sciences, WHIN Community Music Charter, and Mesa Charter to listen and learn, and have attended professional development sessions such as Academic Dashboard Training and School Print Facilities Training. As part of strengthening our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA, we have added a representative to our proposed founding board, secured summer programming for our students, and we are in discussion regarding space in their facility to locate Rochester Excellence . While not included in feedback from our initial application, we have also modified our curricular choices to ensure continuity of instruction through remote and hybrid models. Though our curricular choices were modified, no significant changes to our school model have been made.

**Table 2: Public Outreach Information**

**Completed** May 3 2021

**Instructions**

Please click here [Table 2: Public Outreach](#) to download a blank MS Word version of Table 2. Complete and upload as a .PDF document when complete.

**[Rochester Excellence Table 2 VF](#)**

**Filename:** Rochester Excellence Table 2 VF.pdf **Size:** 327.5 kB

**Attachment 2a: Initial Samples of Public Outreach**

Completed May 3 2021

## **Instructions**

Provide **ONE** sample of evidence from **each** of the following categories that supports the applicant group's outreach attempts:

1. The group has informed the community about the proposed charter school, including the intended location, the target student population, the grades to be served, and a description of the educational program(s) to be offered;
2. Stakeholders in the community were given the opportunity to provide input into the design of the proposed charter school; and
3. At least one public meeting with stakeholders in the community in the school district in which the proposed charter school is to be located. Reasonable public notice should be provided to community stakeholders.

Samples of evidence may include but are not limited to: a public meeting flyer with sign-in sheet and signatures; minutes of discussions with community parents, stakeholders or organizations and feedback obtained; public awareness campaign materials (emails, social media postings, media, etc.) with documented results; and/or surveys distributed with statistical analysis. For a more complete list of sample evidence, refer to the Public Outreach section of the Full Application. **Please DO NOT submit any signed petitions; keep all petitions for your own records.**

***Please be aware that the Board of Regents will not consider an application if the applicant group does not sufficiently demonstrate that the extensive public outreach process described above has been conducted. Since public outreach activities are expected to be ongoing throughout the application review process, additional information about public outreach activities is expected in the Full Application and at the capacity interview with additional input provided throughout the NYSED public comment period.***

## **Rochester Excellence Attachment 2a\_VF**

Filename: Rochester Excellence Attachment 2a\_VF.pdf Size: 1.5 MB

## **Attachment 5a for each Applicant Group Member**

Completed May 3 2021

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

See [Attachment 5a-Trustee Background Info Sheet](#)

Please submit one combined .PDF file containing the documentation (Attachment 5a) for all members of the Applicant Group - five of which must be identified as proposed members of the initial board of trustees. If this is what you choose to do, follow these steps:

**STEP 1:** Collect, save and combine the required documentation for each member into a single .PDF file.

**STEP 2:** Upload the single combined .PDF file into the portal.

Alternatively, an applicant group may submit an individual Attachment 5a file for **each** member of the Applicant Group - five of which must be identified as proposed members of the initial board of trustees. To upload a file for **each** applicant group, follow these steps:

**STEP 1:** Create folders on your hard drive for each member of the Applicant Group listed on Table 1. (i.e., Vickie\_Smith, Marcia\_Jones, Artemio\_Rodriguez, etc.)

**STEP 2:** Upload a single .PDF file for the first member, then the second member, then the third, and so on. Repeat this step as many times as needed, not to exceed 25 individual files.

For each member, please submit the following documentation:

- a. Submit an Applicant and Proposed School Trustee Background Information Sheet which incorporates the Signed Statement of Intent and Signed Statement of Assurance.
- b. A Resumé or Curriculum Vitae
- c. A Copy of Diploma or Transcript from Highest Degree Granting Institution. If an individual cannot provide such documentation, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

*Note: Individuals are not required to have any of the education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. To the extent available, such documentation is used for identity verification.*

### **[Ashley\\_5a\\_VF\\_Combined](#)**

**Filename:** Ashley\_5a\_VF\_Combined.pdf **Size:** 450.6 kB

### **[Brittany\\_5a\\_VF\\_Combined](#)**

**Filename:** Brittany\_5a\_VF\_Combined.pdf **Size:** 451.3 kB

### **[Laura\\_Smith\\_5a\\_VF\\_Combined](#)**

**Filename:** Laura\_Smith\_5a\_VF\_Combined.pdf **Size:** 480.9 kB

### **[Aqua\\_5a\\_VF\\_Combined](#)**

**Filename:** Aqua\_5a\_VF\_Combined.pdf **Size:** 695.7 kB

### **[Bonnie\\_OKeefe\\_5a\\_combined](#)**



**Filename:** Bonnie OKeefe 5a combined.pdf **Size:** 705.2 kB

### **Loren 5a\_VF Combined**

**Filename:** Loren 5a VF Combined.pdf **Size:** 503.0 kB

### **Robert 5a\_VF Combined**

**Filename:** Robert 5a VF Combined.pdf **Size:** 557.6 kB

### **Rashondra Combined**

**Filename:** Rashondra Combined.pdf **Size:** 759.7 kB

### **Vern 5a\_VF Combined**

**Filename:** Vern 5a VF Combined.pdf **Size:** 420.0 kB

### **Jeff 5a\_VF Combined**

**Filename:** Jeff 5a VF Combined.pdf **Size:** 2.6 MB

## **Full Application Cover Page**

**Completed** Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

Complete the Full Application Cover Page as a form within the portal  
(See <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/startcharter/2021/2021CSRFPStandard3.pdf>)

## **FULL APPLICATION COVER PAGE**

**PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL NAME:** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

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**1. My applicant group is best described as: 1) a new operator applying to establish a new charter school or 2) an existing BOR-authorized education corporation/management company seeking to replicate or add to a network of existing charter schools?**

New Operator Applying to Establish a New Charter School

**1a. If applicable, what is the name of the proposed management company or network that the proposed school seeks to contract with?**

(No response)

**2. If applicable, what is (are) the name(s) of the proposed Partner Organization(s)?**

YMCA of Greater Rochester ; Rochester Education Foundation; Restoration Rochester; Komposition Kids

**3. Proposed Board Chair and Public Contact information**

	Proposed Board Chair Name	Email Address	Phone Number
	Laura Smith		

	Public Contact Name	Email Address	Phone Number
	Brittany Rumph		

**4. District/Community School District of Location**

	Proposed District of Location
	Rochester CSD

**5. Charter schools authorized by the Board of Regents in June or November 2021 should plan to open for instruction in 2022. If issued a charter, the initial 5 year charter term begins on the first day the school opens for instruction and ends on June 30, 2027 of the 5th year of operation.**

Start date of initial term (1st day of school)

Aug 24 2022

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End date of initial charter term

**06/30/2027**

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## 6. Projected Enrollment Table Over the Charter Term

(Leave unused cells blank)

Grades	Ages	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027
K	4 - 5	75	75	75	75	75
1st	5 - 7	45	75	75	75	75
2nd	7- 8		45	75	75	75
3rd	8 - 9			45	75	75
4th	9 - 10				45	75
5th						
6th						
7th						
8th						
9th						
10th						
11th						
12th						
Ungraded						
Total		120.0	195.0	270.0	345.0	375.0

## 7. Mission Statement

A school's mission statement provides the foundation for the entire charter application and for the full term of the school's charter. All elements of the school design should align with and support achievement of the proposed mission. Schools must also determine how they will evaluate and be held accountable for achievement of their mission. Schools must present the goals they intend to use to measure student achievement, the overall educational program, and the key components of the school design in alignment with the mission.

Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports, Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for success in school, career, and life.

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### Priority School Designs Aligned with Regents Strategic Priorities

#### Responses Selected:

Partnerships with existing community-based organizations (CBOs) and/or institution of higher education in the school district or region in which the CBO and/or institution of higher education is established; and

**Key Design Elements (Please provide a brief descriptive name or phrase for each key design element - sufficient for the reviewer to have a clear understanding. Fuller descriptions should be presented in the narrative).**

1	Rigorous Academics paired with High-quality Instruction
2	Individualized Supports
3	Character development through a values-based community
4	Participation in the arts to support academic and social success
5	(No response)
6	(No response)
7	(No response)

**THANK YOU!**

## **Full Application Summary**

**Completed** Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

Upload Full Application Summary, which is intended to provide the public and media with a concise description of the proposed school. This section will not count against the Full Application page limits; however, please limit the Summary to two pages and ensure it is consistent with information provided elsewhere in the Full Application.

### **[Full Application Summary](#)**

**Filename:** Full Application Summary .pdf **Size:** 91.8 kB

## **Certification and Assurances Statement**

**Completed** Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

Click to open the **[Certification and Assurances Statement](#)**. Review the statement and have the proposed board chair sign (in blue or black ink). Scan and convert the signed statement into a PDF format before uploading it to the portal.

## **Cerification and Assurances Statement**

**Filename:** Cerification and Assurances Statement.pdf **Size:** 266.6 kB

## **Table of Contents and Full Application Narrative**

**Completed** Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions - 75 pages**

Please create a Table of Contents (inclusive of the name and location of the attachments) and combine with the Full Application Narrative numbered from page 1 to page 80. Upload as a single .PDF document, not to exceed **75 pages**, with the Table of Contents.

**Note:** Embed the *Projected Enrollment Table, Enrollment and Retention Targets Table, Projected Fiscal Impact Table, Organizational Chart, and Table 3: Management and Staffing Chart* within the 80 page narrative as instructed in the RFP.

### **Full Application Narrative and Table of Contents**

**Filename:** Full Application Narrative and Tabl L7HB8ch.pdf **Size:** 1.2 MB

## **Attachment 1: Admissions Policies and Procedures**

**Completed** Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

#### **Attachment 1: Admissions Policy and Procedures (Suggested 5 pages)**

*(Policy should state how any vacancies created during the school year will be filled and any date by which the school will no longer fill such vacancies).*

### **Attachment 1 Admission Policies and Procedures**

**Filename:** Attachment 1 Admission Policies and 2twr53E.pdf **Size:** 69.6 kB

## **Table 2: Public Outreach Information**

**Completed** Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

#### **Attachment Table 2: Public Outreach Information (Suggested 15 pages)**

Update and submit [Table 2: Public Outreach Information](#) to describe the public outreach conducted to date.

### **Table 2 Public Outreach Information**

**Filename:** Table 2 Public Outreach Information tANihzW.pdf **Size:** 391.0 kB

## Attachment 2b: Evidence of Public Review Process

Completed Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions** (multiple uploads and variety of file formats permitted)

**Attachment 2b: Evidence of Public Review Process.** This attachment should provide a sampling of documentary evidence related to the public review process. Attachments should be limited to documents that provide meaningful and relevant information about the community outreach and public input. Please do not submit photocopied form letters of support or petitions containing signatures and addresses. Include any evidence that the school informed the community about the proposed charter school and invited comments and input, and provide evidence that comments/input were addressed. Examples of evidence may include, but are not limited to:

- Attendance lists from meetings and events;
- Public meeting flyer with sign-in sheet and signatures; (No petitions)
- Minutes or summaries of public meetings and meetings with stakeholders (school boards, school district administrators, elected officials, community leaders, parent organizations, etc.);
- Surveys distributed and resulting statistical analysis;
- Public awareness campaigns (emails, social media postings, media, etc.) with documented results;
- Responses sent to members of the public who submitted comments/input concerning the proposed charter school;
- Copies of received letters or emails;
- Invitations sent for meetings and events; and
- Media announcements or articles.

### **Attachment 2b Evidence of Public Review Process**

**Filename:** Attachment 2b Evidence of Public Re KLnCIHD.pdf **Size:** 5.6 MB

## Attachment 2c: Evidence of Community Support

Completed Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

**If applicable, upload Attachment 2c: Evidence of Community Support;** Provide letters of support or other evidence of community support for the proposed school. Support must reflect the specific proposed school and should not be merely support for charter schools or education reform in general.

### **Attachment 2c Evidence of Community Support**

**Filename:** Attachment 2c Evidence of Community Support.pdf **Size:** 7.8 MB

## Attachment 2d: Evidence of District Support for Restart/Turnaround



Incomplete

### **Applicant Instructions**

#### **If applicable, upload Optional Attachment 2d: Evidence of District Support for**

**Restart/Turnaround**; Proposed charter schools that are intended to operate as a restart or turnaround school or to provide an option for students who are at risk of academic failure because they reside in a community served by a school that is persistently low-achieving must provide a Letter of Support from the school district.

## **Attachment 3: Course Descriptions**

Completed Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions (multiple uploads in variety of formats permitted)**

**Required Attachment 3: Course Descriptions**; Provide brief course descriptions for each subject at each grade level the school would serve within the initial charter term, including both core and non-core subject areas. These should include an overview of content and skills addressed by each course and any known curriculum programs or materials planned for the course. For high school proposals, provide an outline of course sequences leading to graduation.

### **Attachment 3\_Course Descriptions**

Filename: Attachment 3 Course Descriptions.pdf Size: 137.3 kB

## **Attachment 3a: Student and Teacher “Day in the Life”**

Completed Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

**Required Attachment 3a: Student and Teacher “Day in the Life”**; Provide a brief narrative no more than **4 pages** total describing a typical student and teacher day.

### **Attachment 3a\_Day in the Life**

Filename: Attachment 3a Day in the Life.pdf Size: 157.3 kB

## **Attachment 3b: Curricular Documentation**

Completed Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

**Optional Attachment 3b: Curricular Documentation**: Applicants have the option to submit up to **10 pages of curricular documentation** for consideration. All supplemental material must relate directly to the Curriculum response and be labeled as Attachment 3b in the appendix. Such material can include, for example, framework or scope and sequence documents, unit or lesson plan templates, pacing calendars, or other means of cross-walking various curricula that may be essential to reviewers’ understanding of the proposed school model.

### **Attachment 3b\_Optional Curricular Materials**

## Attachment 3c: Exit Standards

Completed Jul 15 2021

### Applicant Instructions

**Attachment 3c: Exit Standards;** Provide sample exit standards for English language arts, mathematics, and one other subject area for each level (i.e., elementary, middle, high) that the school intends to operate.

### [Attachment 3c Exit Standards](#)

Filename: Attachment 3c Exit Standards.pdf Size: 121.0 kB

## Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policy

Completed Jul 15 2021

### Applicant Instructions

**Attachment 4: Student Discipline Policy;** Provide a student discipline policy that includes rules and procedures by which students may be disciplined up to and including expulsion or suspension from the school, which are consistent with (a) the requirements of due process and with federal laws and regulations governing the placement of students with disabilities, and (b) the requirements of the Dignity for All Students Act (Education Law Article 2) relating to the creation of policies intended to create a school environment that is free from discrimination or harassment.

### [Attachment 4 Student Discipline Policy](#)

Filename: Attachment 4 Student Discipline Policy.pdf Size: 174.5 kB

## Attachment 4a: Sample Weekly Student Schedule

Completed Jul 15 2021

### Applicant Instructions (multiple uploads permitted)

**Attachment 4a: Sample Weekly Student Schedule;** Provide a sample weekly student schedule for at least one grade that is representative of each level the school intends to operate (elementary, middle, and/or high school). If scheduling structures are unique to each grade, please provide a sample schedule for each grade.

### [Attachment 4a Student Schedule](#)

Filename: Attachment 4a Student Schedule.pdf Size: 96.4 kB

## Attachment 4b: Sample Weekly Teacher Schedule

Completed Jul 15 2021

### Applicant Instructions (multiple uploads permitted)

**Attachment 4b: Sample Weekly Teacher Schedule;** Provide a sample weekly teacher schedule for at least one grade that is representative of each level the school intends to operate. If scheduling structures are unique to each grade, please provide a sample schedule for each grade.

### [Attachment 4b Sample Weekly Teacher Schedule](#)

Filename: Attachment 4b Sample Weekly Teacher Sc1PQEV.pdf Size: 53.9 kB

## Attachment 4c: Proposed First Year School Calendar

Completed Jul 15 2021

### Applicant Instructions

**Attachment 4c: Proposed First Year Calendar -** Provide a copy of the proposed school calendar for year one of the school's operations that clearly demonstrates:

- Days that school is in session;
- Holidays, days off, and half days;
- Professional development days;
- Summer programming and/or instruction;
- First and last days of class; and
- Organization of the school year (quarters, semesters, trimesters) including the beginning and ending for each segment.

### [Attachment 4c Annual Calendar](#)

Filename: Attachment 4c Annual Calendar.pdf Size: 149.7 kB

## Table 1 : Applicant Group Information

Completed Jul 15 2021

### Applicant Instructions

Table 1: Applicant Group Information; If any Board of Trustee members have been added or removed or will now hold a officer position between the Letter of Intent and Application phases, please update Table 1 within the portal to reflect these changes.


# Table 1: Applicant Group Additions and Deletions

Have you made any changes (additions or deletions) to the applicant group after the submission of the LOI?

Yes

## Changes to Applicant Group Information

	Name/Phone /Email Address	Current Employment	Relevant Experience/S kills and Role on Applicant Group	Proposed Role in School (e.g., trustee, employee, none)	Proposed Position on Board (Officer, Trustee, Constituent Rep)	Change (Add or Remove?)
1	Brittany M. Rumph/ [REDACTED]	Fellow, BES; Special Education Itinerate Teacher, Children's Therapy Network; Founding Director, ROC City Learning Pods	Education Charter Start-up	Head of School	Proposed Head of School	Added
2	Robert Hoggard/ [REDACTED]	Associate Director of Advancemen t for Academic and Student Affairs, Rochester Institute of Technology	Education Fund Developmen t Board Governance	Trustee	Trustee	Added

3	Kelli Ragin 	Assistant Principal, Academy of Health Sciences Charter School	Charter School Start- up Charter School Operations Educational Administrati on	Trustee	Trustee	Added
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
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12						
13						
14						
15						

## New Applicant Group Member History

Has the newly added member(s) of the current applicant group ever applied to this or another charter entity to open this proposed school or another charter school, either in New York State or outside of New York State. Indicate the date on which the application(s) was/were submitted and to which charter entity; briefly describe the outcome of the charter entity's decision; and provide a concise description of significant modifications made in this application (if applicable).

Brittany Rumph and Robert Hoggard: employment changes only, updated for accuracy.

Kelli Ragin has not previously applied to open REA or another charter school.

## Attachment 5a: Upload required documents for each proposed BOT member.

Completed Jul 15 2021

### Applicant Instructions

**Attachment 5a:** For each new member or proposed trustee(s) of the applicant group, please submit the following:

- New Applicant and Prospective School Trustee Background Information Form
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae
- Education Credentials

### [Kelli Ragin\\_Combined](#)

Filename: Kelli Ragin Combined.pdf Size: 214.7 kB

### [Kelli Ragin\\_SJFC\\_eTranscript](#)

Filename: Kelli Ragin SJFC eTranscript.pdf Size: 554.4 kB

## Attachment 5b: By-Laws

Completed Jul 15 2021

### Applicant Instructions

**Attachment 5b: By-Laws** must meet the requirements of Education Law and all applicable laws and regulations governing education corporations in New York State. Submit a draft of proposed by-laws for the board of trustees.

## [Attachment 5b By Laws](#)

Filename: Attachment 5b By Laws.pdf Size: 134.8 kB

## **Attachment 5c: Code of Ethics**

Completed Jul 15 2021

### **Application Instructions**

**Attachment 5c: Code of Ethics** must set forth the standards of conduct expected of the school's trustees, officers and employees, including standards with respect to disclosure of conflicts of interest regarding any matter brought before the board of trustees. Submit a draft of a proposed Code of Ethics for the charter school.

## [Attachment 5c Code of Ethics](#)

Filename: Attachment 5c Code of Ethics.pdf Size: 130.7 kB

## **Attachment 6a (Standard RFP): If applicable, CMO Information.**

Incomplete

### **Applicant Instructions**

**If applicable, Attachment 6a: CMO information;** If a management organization has been identified, provide the following:

- A list of any other schools managed by the organization in New York and in other states, including contact information;
- Academic performance data from all schools managed by the organization for the past three years;
- A summary of the organization's fiscal performance for the past three years and a description of the organization's current financial plan;
- A description of services to be provided by the organization; and
- A description of the management structure and a summary of key personnel at the organization.

## **Attachment 6b (Standard RFP): If applicable: Proposed Management Contract.**

Incomplete

### **Applicant Instructions:**

**Attachment 6b: Proposed Management Contract;** If applicable, submit a

copy of the management contract or term sheet.

## **Attachment 6c (Standard RFP): If applicable, Appendix E Business Plan.**

Incomplete

### **Applicant Instructions**

**Attachment 6c ([2018 RFP Standard Version](#)) Management Organization Business Plan;** If applicable, submit a business plan for the management organization using the format outlined in Appendix E of the 2018 RFP.

## **Attachment 6a: (Replicator RFP) Appendix E: Management Organization Business Plan**

Incomplete

### **Applicant Instructions**

Submit Attachment 6a: Management Organization Business Plan using the prompts in Appendix E.

## **Attachment 6b: (Replicator RFP) Appendix E: Business Plan Attachments A through M**

Incomplete

### **Applicant Instructions:**

Submit Attachment 6b: Business Plan Attachments using Attachments A through M in Appendix E.

## **Attachment 7: If applicable: Partnership Information**

Completed Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

**Attachment 7: Partnership Information;** If applicable, submit a Letter of intent/ commitment or an agreement/contract from a bona fide representative of each partner organization indicating that the organization is undertaking the affiliation and the terms and extent of the undertaking, including evidence that the organization has legal standing to do business in New York and has tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3).

### **[Attachment 7 If applicable Partnership Information](#)**



## **Attachment 8a: Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures**

Completed Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

**Attachment 8a: Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures.** Present a hiring plan and complete the proposed staffing chart. The hiring plan, which should include:

- Job descriptions, including qualifications and responsibilities, used in the hiring of school administrators, teachers and other school employees.
- Hiring processes for administrators, teachers and other staff members.
- Evaluation processes for administrators, teachers and other staff members.
- Complaint process for staff.

### **[Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures](#)**

Filename: Attachment 8a Hiring and Personnel oLQNoCn.pdf Size: 269.0 kB

## **Attachment 8b: Resume for Proposed School Leader, if identified**

Completed Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

**Attachment 8b:** Resume for Proposed School Leader if one has been identified.

### **[Attachment 8b Resume for Proposed School Leader](#)**

Filename: Attachment 8b Resume for Proposed S Y8I2dE8.pdf Size: 226.7 kB

## **Attachment 9: Budget and Cash Flow Template**

Completed Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

Complete the required [Attachment 9 Budget and Cash Flow Template](#) (MS Excel) Template. All budget lines in the budget template are required to include assumptions. **Please do not modify the template--maintain it as an Excel spreadsheet and upload.**

## [Attachment 9 Budget and Cash Flow](#)

**Filename:** Attachment 9 Budget and Cash Flow.xlsx **Size:** 150.7 kB

## **Attachment 10: Evidence of Financial Support**

**Completed** Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

**Optional Attachment 10: Evidence of Financial Support;** If the proposed budget relies on contributions, provide evidence of commitment for those contributions.

## [Attachment 10 Evidence of Financial Support](#)

**Filename:** Attachment 10 Evidence of Financial Support.pdf **Size:** 55.7 kB

## **Attachment 11: Pre-Opening Plan**

**Completed** Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

**Attachment 11: Pre-Opening Plan;** Provide a Pre-Opening Plan with a timeline that documents the start and end dates of key tasks to be completed between approval of the application and the opening of the school and the person(s) responsible for each task.

## [Attachment 11 Pre-Opening Plan](#)

**Filename:** Attachment 11 Pre Opening Plan.pdf **Size:** 179.9 kB

## **Attachment 12: Dissolution Plan**

**Completed** Jul 15 2021

### **Applicant Instructions**

**Attachment 12: Dissolution Plan;** Present a Dissolution Plan that describes the procedures to be followed in the event of closure or dissolution of the school.

## [Attachment 12 Dissolution Plan](#)

**Filename:** Attachment 12 Dissolution Plan.pdf **Size:** 103.0 kB

## **Attachment 13: Plan to Address Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners**

**Completed** Jul 15 2021

## **Applicant Instructions:**

Please provide more specific information including the school's vision of support and instruction for English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners by responding to questions in Attachment 13 on page 78.

### **[Attachment 13\\_MLL ELL Plan](#)**

**Filename:** Attachment 13 MLL ELL Plan.pdf **Size:** 135.1 kB

## Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School Letter of Intent

With this Letter of Intent, we formally acknowledge our intent to apply for a charter to the New York State Education Department (“NYSED”) for Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School. This letter is organized as requested by the NYSED 2021 Request for Proposals.

### I. Applicant Group Information<sup>1</sup>

**a. Applicant Group.** Please see **Table 1** and **Attachment 5a**.

**b. Public Contact.** Brittany M. Rumph, [brumph@bes.org](mailto:brumph@bes.org), 585-867-1034

**c. Application History.** Our applicant group applied for the charter authorization of Rochester Excellence on May 22, 2020. In response to the feedback provided after our capacity interview, we have focused on board development and community partnerships. We have recruited proposed board members with expertise in finance and education, have focused on board development through activities such as attending charter school board meetings, connected with existing charter school boards, such as Vertus Charter, Academy of Health Sciences, WHIN Community Music Charter, and Mesa Charter to listen and learn, and have attended professional development sessions such as Academic Dashboard Training and School Print Facilities Training. As part of strengthening our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA, we have added a representative to our proposed founding board, secured summer programming for our students, and we are in discussion regarding space in their facility to locate Rochester Excellence. While not included in feedback from our initial application, we have also modified our curricular choices to ensure continuity of instruction through remote and hybrid models. Though our curricular choices were modified, no significant changes to our school model have been made.

### II. Proposed Charter School Information

**a. Proposed School Name.** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

**b. Proposed School Mission Statement.** Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports, Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for school, career, and life success.

**c. Proposed School Location.** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School (“Rochester Excellence”) intends to lease space on the open market within the “Fatal Crescent” of Rochester - five neighborhoods bordering downtown and specifically the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants. We are considering leasing space within the Greater Rochester Carlson YMCA facility. We are working with John Nichols, CEO of Nichols Construction, who brings a track record of success with other local charter schools and will secure an accessible, viable, cost-effective building that complies with all local, state, and federal regulations.

**d. Target Population/Community Served.** Our target population are K-4 students in the Fatal Crescent, particularly in the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants. The Rochester City School District educates 25,017 students across 53 schools; 55% are Black or African American, 32% are Hispanic or Latino, 10% are White and 3% are Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander.<sup>2</sup> RCSD has an ~90% FRL rate<sup>3</sup>; 22% of students have disabilities; 15% are English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners (“ELL/MLL”).<sup>4</sup> Rochester has 13,202 children under the age of

<sup>1</sup> N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(m).

<sup>2</sup> <https://data.nysed.gov/profile.php?instid=800000050065>.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.rcsdk12.org/cms/lib/NY01001156/Centricity/Domain/48/Board\\_of\\_Education\\_Presentation\\_010611.pdf](https://www.rcsdk12.org/cms/lib/NY01001156/Centricity/Domain/48/Board_of_Education_Presentation_010611.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.rcsdk12.org/Page/22>.



5.<sup>5</sup> Within the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants, there are 13 elementary schools; Dr. Walter Cooper Academy No.10 and John Walton Spencer No. 16 are on the state’s receivership list.

**Figure 1: 2019 NYS ELA and Math Proficiency: Northwest and Southwest Receivership Schools**

School	ELA	SPED ELA	MLL/ELL ELA	Math	SPED Math	MLL/ELL Math
Dr. Walter Cooper Academy No.10	16%	4%	8%	13%	2%	0%
John Walton Spencer No. 16	7%	0%	8%	7%	0%	0%

Kodak Park School No. 41, located in the Northwest Quadrant, was closed in 2018 due to lack of improvement despite interventions made through receivership and Lincoln Park School No. 44 was closed this school year.<sup>6</sup> The remaining 11 elementary schools located in these two Quadrants consistently perform below New York State (“NYS”) proficiency averages, achieving between 9% and 23% proficiency rates in ELA and between 8% and 24% in math in 2019. There are three charter schools located within the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants. Uncommon Schools’ True North Rochester Prep Elementary Charter School is the only school located within both quadrants; when compared to both traditional public and charter schools, this school consistently performs above NYS’s proficiency averages in both ELA and math, achieving 57% proficiency in ELA and 66% in math in 2019; Rochester Prep West Elementary is the highest achieving elementary school in the city, with 70% proficiency in ELA and 81% in math in 2019. Rochester is ranked first in the nation for children living in extreme poverty.<sup>7</sup> Lead Applicant and proposed Head of School Brittany M. Rumph was born and raised within Rochester’s Northeast Quadrant and attended and graduated from RCSD. We are proposing Rochester Excellence to ensure that the students of Rochester - especially students residing in the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants - have a quality elementary school option by ensuring access to rigorous curriculum within a values-based community and with a relentless focus on providing individualized supports, and which ensures within this model daily access to the arts and a relentless focus on providing the foundation for school, career, and life success for every child.

**e. Priority School Design.** Rochester Excellence is informed by successful charter schools in New York State and is designed in response to the needs and wants of our community. We have partnered with multiple community-based organizations which share our beliefs about what is possible for the children of our city. The Greater Rochester YMCA and Rochester Education Foundation share our belief that arts education supports academic and social success. The Greater Rochester YMCA will lead our daily Arts Exploration block, offering classes instructed by teaching artists from their Dreamseeds Program - a performing arts program encouraging a positive life outlook, confidence, leadership development, and performance opportunities. The YMCA will also offer afterschool and summer programming focused on academic achievement, social emotional development, and physical health. Komposition Kids shares our belief that students must be prepared for college and career and will provide career readiness classes twice each month for

<sup>5</sup><https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/rochestercitynewyork>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/local/communities/time-to-educate/stories/2018/06/06/worst-public-schools-america-rochester-ny-rcsd-kodak-park-school-41/550929002/>.

<sup>7</sup><https://www.actrochester.org/tiny/mce/source//Census%20Update%202018.pdf>.



all students using their interactive Ms. Sow Career Readiness Curriculum, following NYS Career Plan and American School Counselor Association Standards.

**f. Planned Grades and Enrollment.** We will enroll 120 students in our inaugural year. Using a slow growth model, we will enroll 75 kindergarten and 45 first grade students in the first year, adding a cohort of 75 Kindergarten students each year thereafter until we are fully enrolled. We will reach full capacity in 2026–2027 with 375 students in grades K-4.

**Figure 2: Projected Enrollment Table Over the Charter Term<sup>8</sup>**

Grades	Ages	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
<b>K</b>	4 - 5	75	75	75	75	75
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	5 - 7	45	75	75	75	75
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	7 - 8	-	45	75	75	75
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	8 - 9	-	-	45	75	75
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	9 - 10	-	-	-	45	75
<b>Totals</b>		120	195	270	345	375

**g. Proposed Management and/or Partner Organization(s).** In addition to our community partnerships, we are working with the training and support of BES, a highly respected national non-profit that specializes in charter school incubation and leadership development. If authorized, Rochester Excellence will be supported by BES throughout the planning year and the first two years of operation. BES is not a formal partner and has no legal or financial interest in the school.

**h. Replication.** Through the BES Fellowship, Ms. Rumph studied over 30 high-performing charter schools and completed leadership residencies at RISE Prep Mayoral Academy Charter School in Woonsocket, RI and Persistence Preparatory Charter School in Buffalo, NY, which serve a high needs communities and has consistently demonstrated high student outcomes.<sup>9</sup> Ms. Rumph served as an educator and instructional leader on the founding team of Uncommon Schools’ Rochester Prep West Elementary which consistently outperforms local and state averages in ELA and math.<sup>10</sup> She also served as a Teach Like a Champion (“TLaC”) Fellow for three years where she collaborated with the TLaC team to develop model lessons, design and deliver professional development, and serve as a model teacher for training videos.<sup>11</sup> Under Ms. Rumph’s leadership, Rochester Excellence will adopt literacy rotations, Cognitively Guided Math Instruction, professional development practices, and instructional coaching approaches from Uncommon Schools and RISE Prep as they have demonstrated strong student outcomes with similar students.

**i. School Overview.** We believe that everything a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them. Through access to rigorous curriculum delivered within a values-based community, and inclusive of individualized supports, all students can and will excel. We fundamentally believe that excellence is not an accident; rather, it is intentionally supported, fostered, and nurtured. Therefore, our school design is informed by four core beliefs. **Belief 1. Access to rigorous academics paired with high quality instruction drives academic success.** Access to rigorous curriculum is the right of all children. All curricular choices, across all content areas, are research-based, meet the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards (“NYSNGLS”), and have proven to support

<sup>8</sup> N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(p).

<sup>9</sup> RISE Prep Kindergarteners outperformed 63% of their peers and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade outperformed 85% of their peers in NWEA-MAP assessment.

<sup>10</sup> RPWCES 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Graders outperformed their local peers and the state’s average on NYS ELA & Math Assessments 2018- 2019.

<sup>11</sup> <https://teachlikeachampion.com/blog/art-sentence-brittany-rumphs-kindergartners-can-really-write/>.

positive student outcomes in other high performing schools with similar populations. Through rigorous curricular choices and effective instructional practices, students are taught, guided, and supported to think critically and develop the problem-solving skills necessary for a strong foundation in literacy and math. Literacy deficits begin before the start of kindergarten for children in low-income communities, as they as are exposed to approximately 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers.<sup>12</sup> A strong literacy foundation ensures the successful transition from learning to read (K-3) to reading to learn (grades 4+). Approximately half of fourth grade curriculum, across all content areas, is inaccessible for students who are reading below grade level.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, third grade reading levels are indicators for access to future opportunities, including high school graduation, entrance and success in college, and career choice.<sup>14</sup> Our students will have 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction; small group literacy rotations will ensure targeted instruction in all literacy domains, including phonics, collaborative reading, guided reading, and reading comprehension. In 105 minutes of daily math instruction, students develop problem-solving skills through direct instruction, inquiry-based lessons, and Cognitively Guided Instruction. Students explore mathematical concepts, independently solve story problems, present strategies and thought processes, and engage in whole class discourse around conceptual understandings. Comprehensively, our academic program requires students to think critically, analyze, question, problem-solve, explain, and apply knowledge flexibly. We ensure teachers are equipped with curriculum aligned to the NYSNGLS, across all content areas, and are consistently developed through a three-week summer institute, weekly professional development, guided intellectual lesson preparation and weekly observations paired with live coaching and feedback meetings. **Belief 2. All students can achieve at high levels with individualized supports.** We recognize that each student's needs are unique and meeting those needs require strategic, consistent supports. We use a two-teacher model in each grade to allow for extended small group instruction to support the growth of all students, including students with disabilities and ELL/MLLs. To ensure all students receive appropriate support, we use data from Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress ("STEP"), a researched-based literacy assessment, Northwest Education Association Measures of Academic Progress ("NWEA MAP"), a nationally normed assessment, internally-created standards-aligned assessments, and daily classroom assessments to develop and constantly inform individualized plans for all students. Our team has a relentless focus on immediately responding to student data by providing in-the-moment student feedback, differentiating instruction and assignments, and evaluating and modifying curriculum to ensure it meets all students' needs. Our Integrated Co-Teaching ("ICT") classrooms increase individualized supports through a smaller class size of 15 students with a special education certified teacher and a general education teacher. With many of our children living in extreme poverty, our students may face multiple adverse childhood experiences shown to impact academic achievement without adequate supports.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, we believe that supporting students' social emotional development is as essential as supporting their academic success. Each school day begins with a "family meeting" where students and teachers check in on how they are feeling and engage in lessons addressing positive social emotional development. We have daily mindfulness moments, including

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<sup>12</sup> Fernald, A., V.A. Marchman, & A. Weisleder. 2013. "SES Differences in Language Processing Skill and Vocabulary Are Evident at 18 Months." *Developmental Science* 16 (2): 234-48.

<sup>13</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation. *Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters*. Baltimore, MD: 2010. Web. 5 September 2019.

<sup>14</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation. *Double Jeopardy How Third Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation*. Baltimore, MD: 2012. Web. 5 September 2019.

<sup>15</sup> Metzler, M., et al. (2017). "Adverse Childhood Experiences and Life Opportunities." *Children and Youth Services Review*, 72, 141-149.



breathing exercises and yoga and use HighScope’s Six Steps of Conflict Resolution.<sup>16</sup> Our staffing model prioritizes students’ social emotional development and mental health which includes both a Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist (Year 2+). **Belief 3. Character is developed in a values-based community.** Character development, with a particular focus on virtues or values infused into the culture of the school, is critical to ensuring that students will become positive contributors to our society.<sup>17</sup> Our **RESPECT** values guide our mindsets, decisions, and actions within our community: **R**espect - I treat myself, others, and the environment with kindness. **E**mpathy - I show concern for the feelings of others. **S**cholarship - I am eager to know, learn, and question new things. **P**erseverance - I always try my best, especially in challenging situations, and never give up. **E**xcellence - I go above and beyond every day. I only present the best version of myself. **C**reativity - I am open to new ideas, embrace change, and use my imagination when problem-solving. **T**eamwork - I understand my connection to my family, school, neighborhood, and the world. I accept the responsibility of making the world a better place through my actions and support of others. Our **RESPECT** values shape our mindsets and fosters positive character building, setting a high bar of expectation for all our community members including staff, families, and students. **Belief 4. Participation in the arts supports academic and social emotional success.** The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies is clear: “[S]tudy of the arts contributes to student achievement and success. Its multiple benefits are academic, basic and comprehensive.”<sup>18</sup> In a city immersed in the arts, too many children in Rochester are often denied access due to affordability. We have partnered with local community organizations including Western NY Ballet Company, Judah Sealy Music, and the YMCA to offer a robust arts program including daily instruction in Music, Classical Ballet, West African Dance, and Visual Arts, as well as an additional daily Arts Exploration Block as part of our extended day, led by the YMCA Dreamseeds Program through which students will study art forms instructed by Teaching Artists. Classroom teachers and arts instructors will plan collaboratively to develop cross-curricular connections when applicable. All kindergarten and first grade classrooms will have STEAM Centers providing opportunities for collaborative and purposeful play, creative problem-solving, and student-centered exploration of cross-curricular intersectionality.

## **II. Enrollment and Retention Strategies**

**a. Strategies for Recruitment and Enrollment.** While our target population are students in the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants due to the demonstrated need for a high-quality K-4 option, all students residing in Rochester will have full access to Rochester Excellence regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, religion, home language, ability, or any other protected status. Our enrollment policies and procedures will comply with all federal and state requirements. In our recruitment efforts we are intentional about reaching a diverse group of students and families, which mirrors RCSD’s population. We anticipate having 91% of students who are considered economically disadvantaged, 15% of students identified as ELL/MLLs, and 21% of students with disabilities.<sup>19</sup> To ensure our student population reflects RCSD’s, we have established and will continue to foster relationships with community-based organizations who serve students considered economically disadvantaged, such as the City of Rochester Libraries, The City of Rochester Recreation Centers, Western NY Youth Football and Cheerleading League, the YMCA,

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<sup>16</sup> HighScope is used in RCSD’s Universal Pre-Kindergarten and Early Pre-Kindergarten programs.

<sup>17</sup> Bollinger, Richard, and Sarah Clement. *Accelerating Progress: A New Era of Research on Character Development*. Springer Science + Business Media New York, 2017.

<sup>18</sup> Ruppert, Sandra. *Critical Evidence: How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement*. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, 2006.

<sup>19</sup> <https://data.nysed.gov/enrollment.php?year=2018&instid=800000050065>.



Signature:   
Laura Smith (May 3, 2021 13:08 EDT)

Email: 

the Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association, local churches, Action for a Better Community, The Boys and Girls Club, Youth for Peace, and over 15 local childcare centers. We will reach students and families whose native language is not English through our relationship with the Ibero-American Action League, including their bilingual Early Childhood Center, accessing their support in creating all marketing and school materials in Spanish; we will also have an individual whose native language is Spanish with the team during all events and canvassing. Rochester families are eager for alternatives to the district’s current ICT programs, even declining such placements to enroll their children with disabilities in charter schools without ICT classrooms. We will not require families to make such a hard choice, as we will have ICT classrooms with 15:1 student to teacher ratio in addition to inclusion classrooms, and we will actively recruit students with a variety of educational needs. We have established a relationship with E3 Rochester, a community-based local non-profit which promotes charter school collaboration and supports families in choosing the best school option for their children. We will join the collaborative citywide, consolidated, online charter application to reach families.

**b. Retention Strategies.** Our goal is to retain at least 95% of our students each year. To meet this goal, we realize the importance of building and fostering a collaborative relationship with our families. According to community feedback, “communication is key.” Our school year will begin with individual home visits and communication will continue through our personalized Excellence Report, a nightly behavior and academic progress tracker, and, at minimum, a monthly phone call to each family from classroom teachers.<sup>20</sup> We have an open-door policy for families, a standing weekly invitation to our community celebration of excellence, a monthly coffee hour with our Head of School, and quarterly family conferences. We will maintain a productive and collaborative relationship with our local district and outside service providers which will provide related services for students with disabilities. We will prioritize retention of our ESOL-certified teachers to ensure that our ELL/MLL students are adequately supported. We will also maintain our presence in the community to ensure that we are recruiting students considered economically disadvantaged, ensuring that our population reflects that of the local school district.

#### **IV. Public Outreach and Community Support**

**a.** A list of our community outreach to date is in **Table 2: Public Outreach Information.**

**b. Initial Assessment of Parent Interest/Demand.** Rochester Excellence began community outreach in September 2019. We have established relationships with families, community organizations, elected officials, local charter schools, local traditional public schools, faith-based organizations, local businesses, local foundations, and a wide range of other community stakeholders. We have incorporated community feedback on our school model including providing access to the arts, consistent academic progress reporting, community collaboration, and focusing on both college and career in our mission and school design. We have solicited feedback from over 500 community members, distributed over 500 fliers, received 290 petition signatures and 157 survey responses, and we have 693 followers on our school’s social media pages. We will continue to immerse ourselves into the Rochester Community, building strong relationships and soliciting critical feedback to inform our school model.

#### **V. Proposed Board Chair Signature and Date**

Laura Smith

Laura Smith, Proposed Board Chair

05/03/21

Date

<sup>20</sup> Feedback gathered from community members, including Mayor Lovely A. Warren.

**Table 2: Public Outreach Information**

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Date(s) of Outreach (mm/dd/yy)	Target Stakeholder Group	Description of the Outreach	Location of Outreach	Input Obtained	Action Taken on Input	Number of Attendees
09/03/19	Community Member	Quansai Gibson, Parent and Former PTO President	The Blow Dry Lounge 298 Greece Ridge Center Dr, Rochester, NY 14626	As PTO President, Quansai expressed concerns regarding bullying and other related challenges in local schools. She spoke highly of school leaders who know each child's name and create a positive environment.	Provided insight into developing strong relationships and family partnerships. We will create a positive environment by celebrating academic effort and achievement, as well as exemplification of our core RESPECT values.	1 Parent
09/06/19 09/07/19 10/06/19 10/27/19	Age Eligible Families	Presented information regarding Rochester Excellence to families of youth cheerleaders and football players at a series of local Western New York Pop Warner Games.	Franklin High School 950 Norton St, Rochester, NY 14621  John Audubon School No. 33 500 Webster Ave, Rochester, NY 14609	Multiple families expressed interest in enrolling their children in a high-quality charter school focused on building a strong literacy and math foundation.	Rochester Excellence will continue to foster the relationship with the local Pop Warner League.	~60+ Families
09/09/19	Community Leader	Adrian Hale, Senior Manager Workforce/Economic Development & Education Initiatives	Phone Call	Mr. Hale expressed concerns regarding student outcomes in Rochester Public Schools. He expressed the desire to see discipline systems that empower students to self-regulate, advocate for themselves, and instill leadership skills. He is concerned that schools are limiting students'	Rochester Excellence's discipline policy will ensure that we are developing positive social skills. In response to feedback, we expanded our focus on college and career readiness. We have partnered with Komposition Kid and have adopted their Ms. Sow's Career Readiness Curriculum. Their staff will provide instruction on a bi-weekly basis.	1 Community Leader

				employability and future opportunities.		
9/10/19	Community Member	David McBride, Lead Applicant Believe Rochester Charter School, former Principal Uncommon Schools	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Mr, McBride expressed that many Rochester families and community members are supportive of charter schools. He also suggested connecting with the City of Rochester Public Libraries as they were beneficial places to do community outreach.	Per Mr, McBride's advice we connected with the City of Rochester Public Libraries for community outreach opportunities.	1 Community Member
9/10/19	Community Member	Chris Dunstan, President of CT Dunstan LLC	Phone Call	"Charter schools are the answer to the district's current state." Mr. Dunstan was interested in supporting the school in the future.	Rochester Excellence will continue to update Mr. Dunstan on our progress and how he can continue to support the school and the founding team.	1 Community Member
9/12/19	Community Member	Jason Klimek, Attorney at Boylan Code	Phone Call	Mr. Klimek, a Rochester native, expressed how lack of opportunity for problem solving and redundant worksheets stole his love for learning. He expressed the importance of the arts in student achievement. Playing the bass guitar supported his success in school.	Rochester Excellence shares the belief that participation in the arts support student achievement. We increased the daily arts opportunities for students in our school design.	1 Community Member
9/13/19	Community Member	Hettie Barnhill, Musical Theatre Professor at Nazareth College	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Barnhill expressed the importance of the arts for children, as she began dancing at three years old and attended a performing arts high school, which led to a successful Broadway Career and ultimately her current role as a college professor.	Rochester Excellence shares the belief that participation in the arts support student achievement. We increased the daily arts enrichment opportunities for students in our school design.	1 Community Member
9/14/19	Rochester City School District	Attended a workshop at East High School (EPO) Educational Partnership with the University of Rochester, Houghton Mifflin, UnboundED	East High School (EPO) 1801 East Main Street	Attended a literacy workshop where EAST EPO in partnership with the University of Rochester, Houghton Mifflin, and UnboundEd shared their model	Rochester Excellence will have 185 minutes of literacy each day and have an intentional focus on individualized supports driven by data.	~65 Educators and Community Members, 1 Local

			Rochester, NY 14609	which has proven to make academic gains in literacy for the students of Rochester adding a 70-minute whole school intervention block. We shared our school model as we workshopped with a group of RCSD teachers around Equity in Literacy.		University, 2 National Organizations
9/16/19	Community Members	Joe & Dale Klein, Founding CEO of Klein Steel, Local Charter School Board Members	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Mr. & Mrs. Klein provided advice on selecting board candidates with varying expertise and who will be active in governing the school. They shared their experiences of serving on local charter school boards and made recommendations for potential founding team members.	Bonnie O' Keefe, a referral from Mr. & Mrs. Klein, joined the Rochester Excellence Founding Team.	2 Community Members
9/16/19	Community Member	John Rodriguez, Organizational Development Consultant at Palacio Consulting Group	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Mr. Rodriguez explained that to create change for Rochester students all stakeholders must collaborate. John believes that we must focus on career in addition to college. He shared that we should encourage and empower students to lead in global communities. He believes that all students aren't required to return to Rochester to serve the community, if they are creating change in any community around the world.	Rochester Excellence revised the mission and vision, broadening our view on successful futures which includes vocational trades, careers, and entrepreneurship based on feedback from Mr. Rodriguez and others.	1 Community Member
9/17/19	Community Organization	Anthony Hall, Youth Intervention Gang Specialist at Pathways to Peace	Phone Call	Mr. Hall explained that we must address the effects of poverty on our children; to increase student achievement we must ensure that our schools address hunger, are trauma informed, and solicit parent involvement in creative ways. Mr. Hall is interested in supporting our school.	Rochester Excellence has included both a Social Worker and a Therapeutic Intervention Specialist into our staffing model as we realize that students may face daily adverse childhood experiences due to poverty. We will keep Mr. Hall updated on our progress and consider him a friend of the school.	1 Community Member

9/18/19	Community Members	Attended an event hosted by the Center City Community Coalition, a panel explaining both current and future education options for families who commit to living and working in downtown Rochester.	Eastman School of Music 26 Gibbs Street Rochester, NY 14604	Center City residents expressed excitement about adding additional school choices for the students of Rochester. Many connections were made where individuals expressed interest in Rochester Excellence including the Director of Music for the Eastman School, Director of Development at the Carlson YMCA, Special Projects Coordinator of E3, and an employee of the Northeast Charter Association.	Rochester Excellence later connected with the YMCA's Director of Development and the Special Projects Coordinator of E3. We will continue to foster these relationships and would consider a school location in Center City for the families in Rochester.	~40 Community Members and Community Organizations
9/19/19	Community Member	Jim Palozzi, local attorney	Phone call	Mr. Palozzi expressed that building a strong literacy foundation is important for elementary school students. He is interested in being a supporter of our school.	Rochester Excellence commits to maintaining a relentless focus on literacy. We will keep Mr. Palozzi updated on our progress and will consider him a friend of the school.	1 Community Member
9/19/19	Community Members	Attended Rochester Area Community Foundation's Annual Luncheon	Riverside Convention Center 123 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604	Met many Rochester community members including Maya Crane of Rochester Area Foundation, with whom we later connected. LeVar Sanders, Director of Work Based Learning at the Villa of Hope, expressed a need for career readiness education within schools so that students would have viable options and employable skills after high school graduation.	Rochester Excellence has committed to partnering with Komposition Kids, a local non-profit, which will offer all of our students career readiness instruction using their Ms. SOW's Career Readiness Curriculum, twice per month. We revised our mission and vision, broadening our view on successful futures which includes vocational trades, careers, and entrepreneurship, based on feedback.	~150 Community Members
9/19/19	Community Member	John Nichols, Founding Partner of Nichols Construction Team	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Mr. Nichols explained that he supports Rochester Excellence's mission and vision. He also believes in the lead applicant as she is a native of the community. He is interested in assisting with facilities needs in the future and	John Nichols has been actively seeking possible facilities for Rochester Excellence.	1 Community Member

				will work as a friend and connector of the school during the early stages of development.		
9/19/19	Community Member	Alex Amorese	Phone call	Mr. Amrose believes in Rochester Excellence's mission and would like to support the school with legal needs in the future.	None	1 Community Member
9/20/19	Community Member	Jason Klimek and Jennifer Aronson-Jovcevski, Associates of Boylan Code LLP	Village Bakery and Café 145 Culver Road Rochester, NY 14620	Ms. Aronson-Jovcevski represents many charter schools in the Rochester Area. She believes in the school's mission and would like to work with the school in the future. During the early stages of development, she offered her support as a friend and connector for the school.	None	2 Community Members
10/07/19	Community Leader	Dr. Paul Miller, Chief Executive Officer/Principal of Green Tech High Charter School	Phone call	Dr. Miller is a native Rochesterian who now is the Head of School at a high performing, all boys, middle and high school in Albany, NY. He explained that, similarly to Rochester, his sixth-grade students entered school with pre-k - third grade level reading and math skills. His student population consists of 97% black males and has achieved a 92-97% graduation rate with a 100% college acceptance rate. He explained that they achieved this through daily builtin RTI interventions. He suggested incorporating small group instruction , project-based learning, and holding consistently high expectations.	Rochester Excellence will provide individualized supports for all students to support their growth through using data driven instruction, small group and individual interventions, and a daily, school wide RTI block. Our RESPECT Core Values ensure that we maintain high academic and behavioral expectations for everyone in our school community.	1 Community Leader

10/09/19	Community Leader	Anna Hall, CEO of Northeast Charter Schools Network, Former COO of Uncommon Schools Rochester	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms.Hall offered advice on working alongside key community stakeholders. We talked about a possible pre-k start and what it would take.	Rochester Excellence continues to value and seek partnership opportunities within the Rochester community.	1 Community Leader
10/09/19	Community Organization	Ann Michael Henry, Volunteer with E3 Rochester	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Henry gave advice on joining the community collaboration of charter schools. She explained the services that her non-profit offers which includes marketing, collaboration meetings with other charter leaders, a unified online application, assistance with compiling student and family information, and access to enrollment data.	Upon authorization, Rochester Excellence will join the Rochester Charter Schools Collaborative group through E3 Rochester and will be added to E3's city wide charter application, increasing accessibility for all families.	1 Community Member
10/09/19	Community Organization	Bryan Hickman, Co-Founder of E3 Rochester	E3 Rochester 255 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Mr. Hickman offered advice on board development. He was interested in hearing about the Lead Applicant's success with getting students in Rochester to read on grade level as some of the charter schools in which he works with are struggling to accomplish this. He offered to be a connector to other individuals and offered a tour of Vertus all boys charter school.	Rochester Excellence's founding team are individuals committed to serving the students and families of Rochester by responsibly governing and overseeing the charter. They understand the magnitude of their responsibilities according to charter law and the NYSED Framework.	1 Community Leader
10/11/19	Community Organization	Luis Perez, CEO of Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association	Video Conference	Mr. Perez explained that we need a school focused on literacy. He also explained the importance of collaborating with community organizations to increase the positive impact for students and families. He offered to be a supporter and connector for our school.	Rochester Excellence has a relentless focus on building a strong literacy foundation for the students of Rochester. We have also partnered with multiple community-based organizations to enhance the educational experience for our students and families. Perez's Summerleap Program will be a summer option for our students and families.	1 Community Leader



10/13/19	Age Eligible Families	Presentation at Western New York Pop Warner's Inner-City Cheer and Dance Showcase	John James Audubon School No. 33 500 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Our Lead Applicant was given the opportunity to introduce herself and our school model to over 400 inner city families, during a local cheer and dance competition. She solicited feedback and distributed our contact information to interested families. Families expressed interest in enrolling in our school.	Rochester Excellence will continue our relationship with the Western New York Pop Warner Association as they support many inner-city families.	~over 400 Community Members
10/15/19	Community Leader	Dr. Donna Marie Cozine, Chief Education Officer of Renaissance Charter School of the Arts	Phone call	Dr. Cozine explained how her school integrates the arts. She explained their model of arts integration, skills-based classes, and after school opportunities. She invited our Lead Applicant into her school for a visit.	Rochester Excellence will have arts integration in the classrooms through our STEAM Centers and will also have cross curricular connections between Content Areas and the Arts.	1 Community Leader
10/16/19	Community Organization	Carmen, Librarian at Rochester Public Library Sully Branch	Rochester Public Library Sully Branch 530 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Ms, Carmen explained that each day after school the library is full of children who tend to stay until the library closes at 7 pm. She explained that children arrive at the library unattended and hungry. She said that older siblings walk the younger siblings to the library or students walk over after school. She suggested that we attend the Beechwood Community Meetings as there are many active community members whom are looking to improve their community.	Rochester Excellence will continue our relationship with Sully Library Branch. We will be intentional in engaging parents through daily logs home, bi-weekly phone calls, a monthly onsite parent event, and an annual home visit for incoming students. Through our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA we are offering an in-house afterschool program with tutoring, snacks, and physical activities until 6pm.	1 Community Member
10/16/19	Community Organization	Johanna & Mark, Library Manager and Youth Librarian at Rochester Public Maplewood Branch	Rochester Public Library Maplewood Branch 1111 Dewey Avenue	Ms, Johanna and Mr, Mark informed the Lead Applicant that they serve a large group of children whose home language is not English. The Maplewood area is full of families who have recently moved to Rochester from different countries and speak	Rochester Excellence's school and staffing model are designed to support students whose second language is English. We will prioritize hiring and retaining staff with TESOL Certifications. Our classroom environment, taxonomy, and pedagogical practices support	2 Community Members



			Rochester, NY 14613	<p>many different languages. Students come to the library each day hungry and without parent supervision. In many cases, older siblings accompany their younger siblings. The library provides snacks, computers, and tutors. The staff noticed that children consistently perform below grade level in ELA. They noted that students come into the library, each day, and stay until it closes. Lastly, they suggested that their students need additional ELA intervention and social emotional support inside of school. The staff gave permission to table at the library to garner support.</p>	<p>the success of all students including SPED and ELL/MLL. Through our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA we are offering an in-house afterschool program with tutoring, snacks, and physical activities until 6pm.</p>	
10/16/19	Community Organization	Children's Librarian and Library Manager of Rochester Public Library Phyllis Wheatley Branch	<p>Rochester Public Library Phyllis Wheatley Branch 33 Dr. Samuel McCree Way Rochester, NY 14608</p>	<p>The Children's Librarian and the Library Manager explained that they have a teen population that come into the library to use the computers. However, they urge that teens complete their homework first. They also provide tutors geared towards assisting K-6 students. Students who live close to the library come to the library, unattended, and often stay to close. Students often arrive hungry. The library provides snacks for children. They wished that Rochester would revert to having neighborhood schools to eliminate gang related violence in schools, reduce long bus rides, and would strengthen the sense of community. They complained that most of the elementary</p>	<p>Rochester Excellence has chosen both the Southwest and Northwest Quadrants of the city as our target population, recognizing that most of Rochester's Elementary schools are located on the east side of the city.</p>	2 Community Members

				schools were located on the east side of the city or in the neighboring suburbs. The staff granted permission to table at the library to garner support.		
10/17/19	Community Organization	Mariah, Library Manager of Rochester Public Library Sully Branch	Rochester Public Library Sully Branch 530 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Ms. Mariah explained that because her library is connected to a school, students who live in the neighborhood come to the library after school and remain until it closes. She explained that she rarely saw parents. She expressed that 99% of students want to learn but have life's worries weighing on them. She suggested that schools increase their mental health supports for students. She also wished that Rochester would revert to having neighborhood schools. She granted permission to table at the library.	Rochester Excellence is designed to support students in developing adequate social skills and positive mindsets. We support students' mental health through our daily SEL lesson, daily mental health check ins, daily mindfulness moments, conflict resolution curriculum, mindfulness room, and staffing model which includes a Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist.	1 Community Member
10/17/19	Community Organization	Bruce, Library Manager of Rochester Public Library Arnett Branch	Rochester Public Library Arnett Branch 310 Arnett Boulevard Rochester, NY 14619	Mr. Bruce explained that students often come to the library to use the computers as they do not have internet access at home. He suggested aligning our school schedule with the local district's calendar for ease of childcare for families.	Rochester Excellence will align its school vacations with RCSD's calendar for ease of childcare for families. Students will have internet access during the school day.	1 Community Member
10/17/19	Community Leader	Rodney V. Brown, CEO of <i>Southwest Tribune</i> Newspaper	1872 Café 431 West Main Street Rochester, Ny 14608	Mr. Brown expressed the need for culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy within our city schools. He explained that children need to see themselves in the curriculum so that they have an entry point and their culture is affirmed, giving students something of which to be proud. Following our	Rochester Excellence will use Uncommon Schools' ELA Curriculum which was specifically written to be rigorous and culturally relevant for students in urban areas. Our Board Chair is the Co-Founder and COO of UnboundEd which focuses on equity in education and culturally relevant pedagogies. We	1 Community Leader

				meeting Mr. Brown published an article in the local <i>Southwest Tribune</i> urging the community to support the development of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School resulting in numerous individuals, organizations, and elected officials offering their support.	will lean on her knowledge to ensure that our curriculum, environment, and pedagogical practices are equitable and inclusive of all students. We will continue our relationship with Mr. Brown as he is a key supporter and connector for our school.	
10/17/19	Community Leader	Wade Norwood	Phone call	Mr. Norwood advised building a strong board for our school including good people, with diverse skills and expertise, and who can make difficult decisions. He suggested that we connect with The Urban League of Rochester, Superintendent of East High/University of Rochester Educational Partnership Organization, City Hall Employees, and the ROC the Future Initiative. He finished by explaining that families need to see the school as a part of their family.	Rochester Excellence's Founding Board is comprised of individuals with varying backgrounds and expertise, can make difficult decisions, and committed to serving our students and family by responsibly overseeing and governing REA. We have connected with all community organizations in which Mr. Norwood suggested. We have also attended community events to begin to build our relationship with families.	1 Community Leader
10/17/19	Community Organizations	Attended the Community Foundations Board and Volunteer Expo connecting with Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative, Junior League of Rochester, The Greater Rochester YMCA, Literacy Rochester, Allendale Columbia Private School, ROC City Rotary Club, 501WMain Inc., and The Boys and Girls Club of Rochester.	Temple B'rith Kodesh 2131 Elmwood Avenue Rochester, NY 14618	Our school's information was distributed, and each organization was given a brief introduction of our school model and outreach plan. Calvin Eaton, of 501WMain Inc., explained that Rochester needed a charter school that promotes student's creativity. Lindsay Brown of Allendale Columbia Private School requested that we connect in the future.	Rochester Excellence has a robust arts program that supports students' academic and social success. Our cross curricular collaboration helps students develop creative problem-solving skills.	10 Community Members

10/18/19	Community Leader	Shaun Nelms, Superintendent of East High School/University of Rochester Educational Partnership Organization and Director of the William & Sheila Konar Center for Urban Education Success at the University of Rochester	East High EPO 1801 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14609	Mr. Nelms explained that students arrived at East High School with literacy levels multiple years below grade level. Therefore, they modeled the school as a lower school, grades 7 – 9, and upper school, grades 10 – 12. The lower school focuses heavily on reading remediation. East EPO had to extend their school day to encompass the level of remediation necessary for student growth. He expressed the importance of adequate mental health support needed in school for the students of Rochester. East EPO has 11 counselors and 7 social workers. The entire staff is trained and utilizes Restorative Practices which has strengthened relationships between students, staff, and families. He suggested that students need space for curiosity.	Rochester Excellence has an extended school day which allows for 185 minutes of literacy instruction. We are relentlessly focused on building a strong literacy foundation for our students; Therefore, students will be prepared to meet the demands of middle school and high school. Our environment, staff model, core values, and daily practices were designed to support students’ social emotional development and mental health. We support students’ mental health through our daily SEL lesson, daily mental health check ins, daily mindfulness moments, conflict resolution curriculum, mindfulness room, and staffing model which includes a Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist. Our robust Arts Program, cross curricular collaboration, inquiry-based Science and Math Curriculum, and STEAM Centers encourage students’ creativity and curiosity. Scholarship is one of our RESPECT values, “I am eager to know, learn, and question new things.” Which encourages students to question and explore new things	1 Community Leader
10/19/19	Age Eligible Families	Held a small listening circle with four mothers.	Kay Royal’s Beauty Bar 1053 South Clinton Avenue Rochester, NY 14620	Our listening circle consisted of mothers whose children attended local suburban district schools and charter schools. All moms intentionally opted out of sending their children to our local school district. They enjoy the extracurricular clubs offered at their children’s school, the caring	Rochester Excellence will offer a free afterschool program for families through our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA. Our students will have access to technology during their independent literacy block and during STEAM Centers. Through our partnership with the Rochester Education	4 Community Members

				<p>staff, and access to technology. They would like to see a school with more after school activities, a diverse staff, and access to instrumental music before middle school. One mother explained that she pulled her child from a local charter school as she loved the high level of rigor, however, felt the structure was too restrictive for her son who has ADHD. She felt as if the school was unwilling to make the necessary accommodations to meet her son's needs.</p>	<p>Foundation our students will have access to instrumental music. We will seek, support, and retain teachers of color as we value their importance within our community. All our staff will engage in ongoing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work throughout the school year. We value the uniqueness of all students and vow to ensure that our environment, pedagogical practices, and curriculum support the growth of everyone.</p>	
10/22/19	Community Organization	Yversha Roman, Senior Relationship Manager and Latino Leadership Development Coordinator and 26 <sup>th</sup> District County Legislator	United Way 75 College Avenue Rochester, NY 14607	<p>Ms. Roman attended RCSD for grades K-8 and private school for high school. Through her work she has visited many different schools in the Rochester area and explained that she could see the disparities in both quality and culture between various schools. She would like to see a school with a welcoming environment and a focus on supporting students' social emotional development, where teachers focused on building a relationship with students and bilingualism is appreciated, and students have access to a robust STEM Program.</p>	<p>Rochester Excellence will celebrate our ELL/MLLs and their families. Our signage and letters sent home will be available in both English and Spanish, as Spanish is the second most used language in the city of Rochester. Retaining both ELL/MLL students and TESOL will be a key priority each year.</p>	1 Community Leader
10/22/19	Community Members	Attended the United Way's African American Leadership Development Program	Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center 123 East Main Street	<p>Distributed our school's information and discussed our school model with community members during the networking portion of the panel discussion.</p>	.	~20 Community Members

			Rochester, NY 14604			
10/22/19	Community Members	Attended the United Way's United for Impact Panel	Strong National Museum of Play 1 Manhattan Square Drive Rochester, NY 14607	Distributed our school's information and discussed our school model with community members during the networking portion of the panel discussion. Community members expressed interest in bringing our school model to Rochester. John Rodriguez of Palacio Consulting Group expressed that he would like to see students have access to a robust STEM Program. Nydia Padilla of the Rochester City School District expressed that she would like to see students involved in the arts.	Rochester Excellence has incorporated STEAM Centers, an investigative, hands-on, Science Curriculum, and a robust arts program.	4 Community Members
10/23/19	Community Organization	Leah Kazmierski, Founder of Restoration Rochester	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Kazmierski explained that she pulled her daughter from a charter school that did not fit the needs of her daughter as there was minimal structure. She suggested that children need a balance of structure and choice. She is interested in having her organization serve as a resource for the future families of Rochester Excellence.	Rochester Excellence will adopt routines and procedures from Doug Lemov's <i>Teach Like a Champion 2.0</i> to create a safe and predictable environment that maximizes every minute of the school day.	1 Community Member
10/24/19	Community Organization	Attended the New York Charter Association Conference	Marriott Syracuse Downtown 100 East Onodaga Street Syracuse, NY 13202	Distributed school information and discussed best practices upon meeting Ashley Dame, Assistant Education Director, and Fred Dicks, Dean of Students, of Discovery Charter School. They expressed that their school community was experiencing several challenges. Ms. Dame	Rochester Excellence will invite critical friends, with education expertise, in from our community to provide our leadership team with feedback.	2 Community Members

				requested that our lead applicant visit their school as a critical friend and provide the leadership team with feedback. Our lead applicant agreed and later visited Discovery Charter School.		
10/25/19	Age Eligible Families	Held a small listening circle with two mothers.	City of Rochester Adams Street Recreation Center 85 Adams Street Rochester, NY 14608	The mothers expressed that having movement opportunities throughout the day, male teachers, frequent teacher communication, and teachers of color were most important to have in a school. One mom explained that she had to pull her student from a local charter school as she felt that they were unable to make necessary accommodations due to his ADHD diagnosis. She believed that he needed more movement opportunities throughout the day than the school allowed. Another mom explained that she would like to see a more in-depth music program within a school.	Rochester Excellence will ensure that our environment supports all students. We will ensure that our school day, curriculum, instructional methods, and structures in place are responsive to the needs of all students. Our students will experience an in-depth music program through our music teacher's daily instruction, additional music instruction through our partnership with the YMCA, and access to musical instruments through our partnership with the Rochester Education Foundation.	2 Community Members
11/11/19	Community Leader	Gregory Paul Salmon, Managing Shareholder at The Law Offices of Gregory Paul Salmon, P.C.	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	As a former high school drop out of RCSD and now judge /lawyer, Mr. Salmon suggested that teachers must adapt their instructional methods to truly meet the needs of students as he felt this was the deficit for him as a student. He also suggested incorporating financial literacy.	Rochester Excellence prioritizes tailoring instruction to meet individual student needs through daily assessments, modifying lessons to respond to student data, data driven instruction, six-week assessment intervals, team planning, and small group instruction.	1 Community Leader
11/12/19	Community Members	Attended the Urban League's Equity & U Luncheon	Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center	Engaged in a facilitated table discussion about equity in Rochester. A local pastor explained that all sectors must work together to uplift our community. A community	Rochester Excellence believes that it takes a village to raise a child and we value our community partnerships. Our Social Worker will work as a connector for families to available resources	15 Community Members

			123 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604	member explained that children in our community need mentors and families need connectors to the many resources that are available within the city, of which families may not be aware.		
11/13/19	Community Leader	Geoffrey Rosenberger, Managing Director & Financial Analyst of Lily Pond Ventures, LLC and Board Chair of Uncommon Schools' Rochester Prep	Lily Pond Ventures, LLC 7 Lily Pond Lane Rochester, NY 14534	Mr. Rosenberger advised building a board of individuals who have the time, effort, and are mission aligned. He suggested finding an individual with fund development experience. He also advised hiring teachers who are mission aligned and have the capacity to start a school from scratch.	Rochester Excellence's Founding Board is comprised of individuals who have the time, effort, and are mission aligned. Board member Robert Hoggard has experience in fund development.	1 Community Leader
11/14/19	Community Leaders	Jackie Campbell & Larry Marx, Alliance Director & Chief Executive Officer of ROC the Future	ROC the Future 1 South Washington Street Rochester, NY 14614	Ms. Campbell suggested connecting with families and faith-based organizations. Mr. Marx suggested connecting with United Way, Ibero American Action League, and The Children's Institute. Both Ms. Campbell and Mr. Marx stressed the importance of having diverse teaching staff and culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy.	Rochester Excellence is committed to recruiting, supporting, and retaining a diverse teaching staff. As advised, we have connected with our local United Way and Ibero American Action League. We will use Uncommon Schools' ELA Curriculum which was specifically written to be rigorous and culturally relevant for students in urban areas. Our Board Chair is the Co-Founder and COO of UnboundEd which focuses on equity in education and culturally relevant pedagogies. We will lean on her knowledge to ensure that our curriculum, environment, and pedagogical practices are equitable and inclusive of all students.	2 Community Leaders
11/14/19	Community Leaders	Ashley Cross, Natalie Domino, and Leah Kazmierski, College Readiness Counselor of University of Rochester, Youth Ministry of Bethel Christian Fellowship	Bethel Christian Fellowship 321 East Avenue	Ms. Cross spoke about the literacy deficits in her high school students making it difficult to connect them with opportunities post high school graduation. Ms. Domino spoke about the literacy	Rochester Excellence has an extended school day which allows for 185 minutes of literacy instruction. We are relentlessly focused on building a strong literacy foundation for our students;	3 Community Leaders



		Church, and Founder of Restoration Rochester, respectively	Rochester, NY 14604	deficits that her students displayed in her after-school tutoring program at the church's ROC City Kids Program. Ms, Kazmierski spoke about the power of collaboration to strengthen our educational system in Rochester.	Therefore, they will be prepared to meet the demands of middle school, high school, and beyond.	
11/15/19	Community Leader	Natalie Sheppard, Commissioner of Rochester City School District	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Sheppard stated that the three most important elements of school that we should focus on should be safety, rigor, and extracurricular activities.	Rochester Excellence commits to providing grade level appropriate curriculum for all students. We will tailor instruction to the needs of individual students to ensure adequate growth. Our shared RESPECT Core Values create a positive, supportive, celebratory, and safe environment for staff, students, and families. Through our partnership with the YMCA, we will offer our students a variety of art classes to explore during the school day and afterschool recreation opportunities.	1 Community Member
11/15/19	Community Organization	Sarah Fitts-Romig, Director for the City of Rochester's Public Toy Library, Sub-committee member of ROC the Future, SummerLeap Science Curriculum Developer, and Former RCSD Teacher	City of Rochester Public Toy Library 851 Joseph Avenue Rochester, NY 14621	Ms. Fitts-Romig expressed her concern regarding kindergarten through second grade classrooms being developmentally inappropriate and explains that the push for rigor alone is the reason she left the teaching profession. She suggested having opportunities for child-centered play in the classroom and increased hands-on learning.	Rochester Excellence's lower elementary (K-2) students will have 20 minutes of daily cooperative play within our STEAM Centers. The City of Rochester Public Toy Library has offered the usage of hands-on science kits for our students, at no cost.	1 Community Member
11/16/19	Age Eligible Family	Amanda Williams, mother of 3 children who has chosen to homeschool	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Williams explained that she took her children out of public school because she did not feel as if they were getting the proper support needed. One of her daughters has ADHD and her	Rochester Excellence is committed to tailoring instruction to meet the needs of each student through frequent assessments, data driven instruction, and small group instruction. We will offer an ICT	1 Community Member

				school struggled to accommodate the school day and teaching style to meet her needs. She would like to see our school offer hot breakfast, individualized attention for each student, smaller class sizes, foreign language, a diverse teaching staff, and mental health support.	classroom of 15 students per grade level. We are committed to recruiting, supporting, and retaining a diverse teaching staff. Our staffing model includes a social worker and therapeutic intervention specialist. We will support positive social emotional development through daily read alouds, a daily mental health check-in, our RESPECT Core Values, daily mindfulness moments, and through the usage of our mindfulness room.	
11/18/19	Community Organization	Ashley Gantt, Lead Organizer for New York Civil Liberties Union and State Organizer for Just Leadership USA	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Gantt expressed her concerns about Rochester schools having low expectations for students. She would like to see our school have high expectations for students, connect with the community and parents, and offer extracurricular opportunities.	Rochester Excellence will maintain high academic and behavioral expectations for all students. When a student presents a lagging skill, rather academic, behaviorally, or socially we commit to supporting that student in the growth of that skill. We value our community and parent partnerships as we believe it takes a village to raise a child. We will work to build a strong partnership with families through constant communication and in-house events. We will continue working with our local YMCA, Rochester Education Foundation, and Komposition Kids, as well as seeking other community-based partnerships.	1 Community Leader
11/19/19	Community Organizations	Attended SUNY Brockport Rochester Educational Opportunity Center's: Poverty Studies and Economic Development's MPA Meet and Greet/Panel Discussion	SUNY Brockport REOC 161 Chestnut Street Rochester, NY 14604	Our school's information was distributed, and each community member was given a brief introduction of our school model and outreach plan.		6 Community Members

11/20/19	Age Eligible Family	Alia Muhammad, mother of 2 children	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Muhammad explained that she moved to a suburban area of Rochester in search of a quality education, however, she was met with racial tension. Therefore, she moved back to the City of Rochester and sent her children to a charter and private school. She loved the rigorous curriculum offered at the charter school, however she felt as if the heavily structured culture limited her daughter's creativity. She would like to see our school have a diverse teaching staff, have culturally relevant curriculum, and offer STEM or STEAM Exploration.	Rochester Excellence is committed to recruiting, supporting, and retaining a diverse teaching staff. We will use Uncommon Schools' ELA Curriculum which was specifically written to be rigorous and culturally relevant for students in urban areas. Our Board Chair is the Co-Founder and COO of UnboundEd which focuses on equity in education and culturally relevant pedagogies. We will lean on her knowledge to ensure that our curriculum, environment, and pedagogical practices are equitable and inclusive of all students. In partnership with the YMCA, we offer our students a robust arts program. Our core content teachers and arts' teachers will plan together to ensure that there is cross curricular collaboration. Our lower elementary has STEAM Centers in each classroom and all grades will use Amplify Science Curriculum which is based on inquiry, experimentation, and incorporates both hands on and virtual learning opportunities.	1 Community Member
11/20/19	Community Organization	Ericka Wilson, Producer at WHEC TV and Chairwoman of the Finance Committee for Rochester Association of Black Journalists	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Wilson expressed that teachers must build a strong relationship with students. She would like to see a school which offered extracurricular activities, arts involvement, and science fairs in which she believes keeps students engaged in school. She is interested in covering Rochester Excellence in a new segment to help garner support.	Rochester Excellence teachers will be dedicated to building a strong relationship with all students. Through our partnerships with the YMCA and Rochester Education Foundation, we are offering a robust arts program during the school day and afterschool. The YMCA will also offer additional recreation opportunities at our in-house afterschool program.	1 Community Leader

11/20/19	Community Organization	Attended Urban League's Learning Circle	Antioch Baptist Church 304 Joseph Avenue Rochester, NY 14605	Two mothers explained their difficulty with navigating single parenthood in the city of Rochester. They would like to see a school with high expectations, consistent parent communication, and a school that considers single families when planning events.	Rochester Excellence commits to holding all students to high expectations and providing individualized supports to aid students in meeting our high academic and behavioral expectations. We will communicate with our families daily through a log, at least monthly via phone, monthly events with the school leader, and through three family conferences.	5 Community Members
11/21/19	Community Organizations	Attended ROC the Future's: The State of Our Children	Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center 123 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604	Distributed our school's information and gave a brief overview of our school model and academic program to community members. Joi DiGennaro-McMurty, Executive Director of Friendship Children's Center, suggested continuing the use of Highscope's Six Steps of Conflict Resolution and focusing on the SEL Triangle Model as most incoming kindergarteners would be familiar with these models through their work in both Early Pre-kindergarten and Universal Pre-kindergarten.	Rochester Excellence will use Highscope's Six Steps of Conflict Resolution and will support students developing their five SEL competencies, from the SEL Model Triangle.	~20 Community Members
11/21/19	Community Leader	Nydia Padilla-Rodriguez, Director of Community Partnerships at Rochester City School District and Founder/Artistic Director of Borinquen Dance Theatre	Rochester City School District Central Office 131 West Broad Street Rochester, NY 14614	Ms. Padilla-Rodriguez expressed that she would like to see our school focus on building a strong literacy foundation. She also suggested viewing the Arts as a CORE subject as she believes its within our "Human Fabric" which allows students to express themselves creatively and produces valuable transferable skills. Lastly, she stated that to create a positive school culture	Rochester Excellence offers a robust arts program both during the day and afterschool, through our partnership with the YMCA. Our core content teachers and arts teachers will plan together to ensure that there is cross curricular collaboration. Our school-wide commitment to our RESPECT Core Values will contribute to positive school culture.	1 Community Leader

				we must teach and guide CORE values, as they may not be taught in the home, and incorporate systems in which will allow students to develop self-regulation. Through this approach she believed that we may have a low suspension rate.		
11/22/19	Community Organization	Megan DeFranco and James Smith, Director of Development and Director of Development and Community Engagement at the Greater Rochester YMCA	YMCA of Greater Rochester Association Office 444 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. DeFranco wanted to hear more about our school model as she was intrigued by a brief introduction at the Center City Coalition Panel Discussion. Mr. Smith explained that the Greater Rochester YMCA had been searching for opportunities to push into schools in order to serve children whom do not get to visit the YMCA. He suggested incorporating their Dreamseeds Program into our school model as it focused on the arts and building leadership skills. He also offered to incorporate an aquatics program to address water safety for our students.	Rochester Excellence has partnered with the Greater Rochester YMCA to offer a robust arts program and afterschool program for our students.	2 Community Leaders
11/22/19	Age Eligible Families	Held a small learning circle with two mothers who chose to homeschool their children	City of Rochester Adams Street Recreation Center 85 Adams Street Rochester, NY 14608	Rachel explained that she felt as if the school environment was not accommodating for her child with special needs. She would like to see a school that is active in the broader community and teaches Rochester's History. Tracey explained that her son has cerebral palsy and had experienced both racism and discrimination in school; therefore, she chose to homeschool him. She would like to see a school which teaches	Rochester Excellence will ensure that our academic programming, curriculum and instruction, and staffing model supports the growth of all learners, especially students with special needs. We offer an ICT classroom of 15 students at each grade level. We will also prioritize recruiting, supporting, and retaining SPED Certified teachers. We will use Uncommon Schools' ELA Curriculum which was specifically written to be rigorous and culturally relevant for students in urban areas.	2 Community Members

				black history and explores other world viewpoints.	Our Board Chair is the Co-Founder and COO of UnboundEd which focuses on equity in education and culturally relevant pedagogies. We will lean on her knowledge to ensure that our curriculum, environment, and pedagogical practices are equitable and inclusive of all students. We will explore the history of the City of Rochester within our Social Studies Curriculum.	
11/23/19	Community Members/Age Eligible Families	Attended the I am H.E.R (Humble, Educated, Respected) Woman's Empowerment Event	Carmen Clark Lodge 777 Westfall Road Brighton, NY 14620	Tabled during the event and presented our school model and academic programming to a group of parents. Collected several signatures of support.		~35 Community Members
11/24/19	Community Members	On-air interview at 105.5 The Beat local radio station with Host Racqui B.	16 West Main Street Rochester, NY 14614	Our Lead Applicant was interviewed, on-air, where she provided an in-depth explanation of our school model, staffing model, academic programming, her background and experience, proposed board members, and solicited feedback. She also provided our school's contact information. Lastly, the host allowed community members to call in and ask questions or give comments. Several community members called in reminiscing about their experiences they have had when Ms. Rumph was either a teacher or leader in their child's school. Community members were eager to show support for Rochester Excellence Academy.		Hundreds of Community Members

12/2/19	Community Organization	Invitation to observe Discovery Charter School	Discovery Charter School 133 Hoover Drive Rochester, NY 14615	Our Lead Applicant observed classrooms and provided feedback to Discovery's Leadership Team, in efforts to support their goals for school culture improvement and academic growth. She observed a 3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> Grade ICT Classroom which provided ample individualized supports. She also observed the effectiveness of a Lead Teacher and Teacher Assistant co-teaching model. The leadership team advised choosing effective curriculum upon authorization as they initially planned to develop their own curriculum which proved to be unsuccessful and they are now searching for effective curriculum, years after authorization.	Rochester Excellence will adopt an ICT classroom per grade level. The other two classes will be co-taught with a Lead Teacher/Teacher assistant model. We have selected curriculum which has proven to be successful within the Greater Rochester and/or other urban areas with similar student populations. Our team will consistently monitor, accommodate, and evaluate our curriculum choices for relevance and effectiveness.	8 Community Members
12/05/19	Community Member	Chris Fox, Vice President of Sales and Development at SMP	Phone call	Mr. Fox expressed concern regarding Rochester schools. He suggested that our school have a strong Science and Math component to prepare students for careers in the future.	Rochester Excellence has a relentless focus on building a strong math foundation through Cognitively Guided Instruction, direct instruction, and inquiry based lessons which focus on building students' conceptual understandings. Our Science curriculum allows students to question, explore, and experiment to solve real life scenarios.	1 Community Member
12/07/19	Community Members	Attended Youth For Peace's Christmas Giveback for families effected by violence	John Marshall High School 180 Ridgeway Avenue	We tabled at the event and presented our school model, academic programming, and solicited feedback. Antonia of Enhanced Outlook Global Media explained that Rochester is desperately in need of quality	Rochester Excellence is committed to serving the Rochester Community to meet the need for high quality school options.	~50 Community Members

			Rochester, NY 14615	schools. Several signatures of support were collected.		
12/07/19	Community Members	Attended The City of Rochester's Liberty Pole Lighting & Kick-Off of the ROC Holiday Village	Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Park 252 Court Street Rochester, NY 14607	Distributed our school's information and gave a brief overview of our school model and academic program to community members.		~250 Community Members
12/16/19	Community Organization	Walter Larkin, Jr. and Malcolm Lee, Chief Executive Officer and Athletic Director of University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men	U Prep 1290 Lake Avenue Rochester, NY 14613	Mr. Larkin and Mr. Lee urged the importance of building a strong and diverse board and school leadership team. They spoke of the importance of having mission aligned individuals who have expertise in all domains of the school's operations, academic programming, and fiscal management.	Rochester Excellence's Founding Board is comprised of mission aligned individuals whom have the time, effort, and expertise to provide oversight for the school. <b>Our Lead Applicant will hire a Director of Operations and Director of Curriculum and Instruction during Year 0 to ensure a strong start for the founding year.</b>	2 Community Leaders
12/16/19	Community Organization	Kelly McDermott, Community Liaison at the University of Rochester	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. McDermott was interested to learn about the school model after meeting our Lead Applicant at a previous education reform panel attended. She is hoping to find a way to partner with our school to improve the physical and mental healthcare options for our students.	We will continue to build our relationship with the University of Rochester as they are a great resource for our students and families.	1 Community Member
12/16/19	Community Organization	Ida Perez, Director of Ibero's Early Childhood Center	777 Clifford Avenue Rochester, NY 14621	Ms. Perez explained that in many Early Pre-K and Universal Pre-K programs families have a Family Support Associate which supports families in meeting all their basic needs including financial resources, physical and mental health resources, housing resources, and education. She suggested having at least one employee dedicated to support	Rochester Excellence prioritizes family partnerships and are committed to support both our students and families. Our Social Worker will support families by connecting them to resources within our community to meet their needs. We will use Highscope's Six Steps of Conflict Resolution and will support students in developing their	1 Community Member



				families as they rely on that connection which seems to get lost when kindergarten begins. She suggested that we study and adopt the SEL Pyramid Model, the importance play, the role of the arts, and incorporate Highscope's six steps of conflict resolution into our model.	five SEL competencies, from the SEL Model Triangle.	
12/17/19	Community Organization	Maya Crane, Program Officer of Equity at The Rochester Area Community Foundation	Ugly Duck Coffee 89 Charlotte Street Rochester, NY 14607	Ms. Crane advised that parent engagement and community engagement are very important in the success of a school. She shared her experience navigating Special Education in Rochester. She also advised getting a coach for our lead applicant to help navigate founding year.	Rochester Excellence will partner with parents keeping them updated, soliciting feedback, and inviting them into our school. We value our community partnerships and we will actively seek more partnership opportunities support our students and families. We will prioritize recruiting, supporting, and retaining teachers with Special Education Certifications. BES will provide a follow-on support for our school leader throughout year 2 of operation.	1 Community Leader
12/18/19	Community Organization	Mary Louise Musler, Co-Director of the Early Training Academy through The Children's Institute	The Children's Institute 274 North Goodman Street Rochester, NY 14607	Ms. Musler explained that she would like to see charter schools collaborate with the Universal Pre-kindergarten community to increase the effectiveness of the kindergarten transition.	Rochester Excellence has adopted Highscope's six steps of conflict resolution, incorporated STEAM centers which mirror Pre-k Centers, incorporated 20 minutes of daily cooperative play, and shares a focus on supporting the 5 SEL Competencies. Our Lead Applicant has also joined the Early Training Academy's Advisory Committee to begin bridging the gap between charter schools and the Rochester City School District.	1 Community Leader
12/18/19	Community Organization	Holli Budd and Alicia Jinks, Chief Executive Officer and Program Officer of the Farash Foundation	Farash Foundation 255 East Avenue	Ms. Budd and Ms. Jinks are supporters of our school. They suggested connecting with the City of Rochester to inquire about	We have reached out to get the schedule for The Academy of Health & Sciences Charter School's board meetings. We plan to attend	2 Community Members

			Rochester, NY 14604	cohabitation. They also suggested attending a monthly board meeting for The Academy of Health & Science Charter School to gain insight into founding year expectations.	to gain insight into Year 1 expectations.	
1/3/19	Community Organization	Jamila Smith, Workforce Development Manager of Finger Lakes Performing Provider System	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Smith suggested that our school host community events to build a relationship with the broader community. She also suggested considering expansion to build a high quality K-6 option. Jamila hopes to collaborate with our school to increase the physical health of our students by providing an on-site Nurse Practitioner.	Rochester Excellence will continue to work with Ms. Smith hoping our collaboration works out. We will work as a team to ensure that we are connecting with the broader Rochester Community.	1 Community Member
1/9/20	Elected Official	Mayor Lovely Warren of the City of Rochester and Sandra Simon Director of Special Projects and Education Initiatives for the City of Rochester	City Hall 30 Church Street Rochester, NY 14614	Mayor Warren is a supporter of Rochester Excellence. She suggested that we have curriculum that requires mastery before moving on and that each student's progress is tracked. She requested that parents have access to their student's progress, throughout the school year. She would like to see a diverse teaching staff who take time to build relationships with each student. Ms. Simon suggested that we have a plan to support homeless students as Rochester's homelessness rate is rising.	Rochester Excellence will use STEP to track reading mastery levels. Math skills will be tracked through daily exit tickets and interim assessments. Student data will be communicated to parents through daily communication logs and bi-weekly phone communication. Families will be updated on students' present levels of performance, benchmarks, and instructional methods to support student growth. We are committed to recruiting, supporting, and retaining diverse teaching staff. Our School Social Worker will work to support all students and families, including families facing homelessness.	2 Community Leaders
1/15/20	Community Member	Linda Thornton Hillery, Realtor of Re/Max Plus	Phone call	Ms. Hillery is an enthusiastic supporter of Rochester Excellence. She believes that teacher and leader diversity is	Rochester Excellence will prioritize recruiting, supporting, and retaining a diverse teaching staff. We will	1 Community Member

				essential in a school located in an urban area. She expressed the need for high quality educational options in Rochester.	continue to work with Linda in the future.	
1/20/20	Age Eligible Families	Attended the Rochester Rams Football and Cheerleading League Annual Banquet	John Audubon School #33 500 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	We tabled and presented our school model and academic programming. We also solicited feedback and collected several signatures of support.		~150 Community Members
1/28/20	Community Organization	Lawrence Forte of Komposition Kids	Video Conference	Mr. Forte expressed the importance of career readiness curriculum beginning in elementary school.	Rochester Excellence formed a partnership with Komposition Kids. Their staff will provide career readiness instruction, for our students, twice a month.	1 community Member
2/4/20	Community Organizations	Attended the Advisory Committee for the Early Learning Training Academy	Ibero Children's Center 777 Clifford Avenue Rochester, NY 14621	RCSD Early Childhood Teachers and community organization Pre-Kindergarten teachers expressed the importance of a developmentally appropriate early childhood educational experience. They hope to improve the relationships with traditional public and charter schools to improve the Pre-K to Kindergarten transition.	Rochester Excellence will continue our relationships with our local early childhood centers to improve students and families' Pre-k to Kindergarten Transition. Our Lead Applicant joined the advisory committee.	4 Community Organization
2/7/20	Community Organization	Lindsey Brown, Director of SummerLeap at Allendale Columbia Private School	Phone call	Ms. Brown advised collaborating with as many community organizations and schools as possible. She suggested sharing our school model, developments, and successes with the broader Rochester community. She invited our Lead Applicant to be a critical friend to both Allendale Columbia Private School and RCSD School #17, observing and providing feedback to the leadership teams. Ms. Brown	Rochester Excellence will continue to seek community-based organizations and schools to increase our number of partnerships, to enhance the support of our students and families. Our Lead Applicant will observe at both Allendale Columbia Private School and RCSD's School #17 and will provide feedback based on observation and best practices. We will continue our relationship with Mr. Brown.	1 Community Leader

				hopes to form a future partnership.		
2/19/20	Community Members	Held a Public Meeting to solicit feedback.	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Families expressed the importance of parent communication throughout the school year and a strong literacy focus. Students expressed the importance of feeling heard and supported, relationship building, and the desire to learn cursive.	Rochester Excellence is committed to constant parent communication through initial home visits, daily communication logs, bi-weekly phone calls, and three family conferences. We devote 185 minutes to daily literacy instruction. Teachers will take the first week of school to build a strong relationship with each student and will nurture this relationship throughout the year through family meetings and individual check-ins.	11 Community Members
2/19/20	Community Organization	Interview with Spectrum News	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Spectrum News attended our public meeting and interviewed our Lead Applicant. The interview was aired on our local news two days later.		1 Community Organization
2/25/20	Elected Official	Councilwoman Lashay Harris of Rochester's City Council and Career Pathways Coordinator at Rochester City School District	1872 Café 431 West Main Street Rochester, NY 14608	Councilwoman Harris explained that the 11 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> graders in her program often drop the program or are unable to be placed into a career field post-graduation as they lack the literacy foundation required to pass the civil service exam. She suggested having a literacy focus for our school.	Rochester Excellence has a relentless focus on building a strong literacy foundation beginning in kindergarten through devoting 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction.	1 Community Leader
3/14/20	Community Organization	Presented at the St. Paul Holiness Church's Annual Scholarship Banquet	RIT Conference Center 5257 West Henrietta Road	We presented our school model and key design elements to the banquet attendees. We also distributed our school and contact information, requesting feedback.	Rochester Excellence will continue our relationship with the St. Paul Holiness Church's Congregation Members.	~80 Community Members

			Henrietta, NY 14467	Many community members offered signatures of support.		
3/18/20 3/19/20 3/20/20	Community Members	Partnered with Community Leaders to provide emergency childcare for families due to school closures	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Our Lead Applicant partnered with Dr. Mary Bisbee-Burrows to offer emergency childcare which included literacy and performing arts instruction.		4 Community Members
3/18/20	Community Member	Marvin Creative Writing Teacher at Urban Choice Charter	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Mr. Marvin expressed the importance of building a strong literacy foundation in the early elementary grades to negate the need for intense remediation in middle and high school, which Rochester is experiencing now. He suggested building relationships with families and students is essential for academic success.	Rochester Excellence has a relentless focus on building a strong literacy foundation beginning in kindergarten through devoting 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction. We will build and continue to nurture relationships with our families through constant communication, opportunities to provide feedback, as well as social and celebratory gatherings.	1 Community Member
3/20/20	Community Member	Jamayne Fleming Home School Advisor for Young Women's College Prep Charter School	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Mr. Fleming expressed the need for connecting with families to increase student achievement.	Rochester Excellence Academy will begin building a relationship with parents through Parent Orientation Events and Home Visits. We will continue building relationships with families as we partner in supporting the growth of their child.	1 Community Member
4/25/20	Community Organization	Attended Restoration Rochester's Virtual Situation Room Community Meeting	Via Google Meet	Community members from multiple community-based organizations expressed the current community needs and we brainstormed ways we could band together to meet the needs of children and families of our community during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Rochester Excellence Academy developed a virtual Kindergarten Readiness Series, streamed on social media, to assist parents with 3-5 year old children with homeschooling and kindergarten readiness activities.	Multiple Different Organizations

5/4/20	Community Organization	Attended Restoration Rochester's virtual Community Collaborative Meeting	Via Google Meet	Community organizations were introduced to the Care Portal which links specific family needs with community resources.	Rochester Excellence Academy has formed a partnership with Restoration Rochester to assist our families in crisis.	Multiple Different Organizations
5/4/20	School Leadership	Video Conference with Wanda Perez Brundage Founding Principal of Academy of Health Sciences Charter School	Via Zoom	Mrs. Perez-Brundage provided advice on building family relationships, having a plan for distance learning, and setting/maintaining high expectations for students. She expressed the need for filling academic gaps due to her fifth-grade start.	Rochester Excellence Academy will have a relentless focus on providing increased and extended literacy supports for all students to build a strong literacy foundation by the end of third grade, to prevent academic gaps as our students move on to middle school. We will continue our relationship with Mrs. Perez-Brundage throughout our journey.	1 Community Member
5/18/20	Age Eligible Families	Hosted a virtual Kindergarten Readiness Session via Social Media for parents of 3-5 year old children	Via Facebook Live	In response to our current pandemic, our Head of School hosted the first of a series of Kindergarten Readiness Sessions to assist parents prepare their 3-5 year old children for kindergarten in the fall. The session was viewed by 665 community members.	We will continue to host weekly Kindergarten Readiness Sessions for parents of 3-5 year old children during the COVID-19 pandemic.	665 Community Members
7/24/20	Community Members	Tabled at The Melanin Public Market	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Provided our school's information to community members in attendance and requested feedback.	We will continue to visit the local Melanin Public Market to connect with community members.	100 Community Members
8/14/20	Community Members	Video Conference with Maya Crane (Rochester Area Community Foundation) Deb Hamner (Greater Rochester Parent Leadership Training Institute) Felecia Drysdale (Rochester City School District) Shanai Lee (Uncommon Schools)	Via Zoom	Our Lead Founder, Brittany Rumph, connected with multiple community members to discuss supporting students and families through the 2020-2021 school year as the Rochester City School District and many local charters were only offering remote	Our Lead Founder developed ROC City Learning Pods, with the oversight of an advisory committee, in partnership with the Rochester Public Libraries to support children and families. She will continue to serve as the Program Director throughout the 2020-2021 school year.	5 Community Members



		Rochester Prep) Ashley (Child Time Learning Centers)		instruction, which left families in crisis.		
8/26/20	Community Organization	Presenter at the Racial Growth Webinar hosted by the Rochester Area Community Foundation	Via WebEx	Our Lead Founder, Brittany Rumph, delivered a presentation addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic for underprivileged families living in inner city Rochester.	Through the webinar Ms. Rumph connected with local philanthropists and secured funding to operate ROC City Learning Pods. Our team will continue to foster relationships with local philanthropists in efforts of inspiring individuals to continue to support initiatives that uplift the children and families of Rochester.	100+ Community Members
9/14/20	Community Organizations	Attended the Community Collaborative hosted by Restoration Rochester	Via Zoom	Multiple community organizations discussed systems integration and streamlining processes that provide resources for those in need within our community. The collaborative ended with time to network with each other.	Rochester Excellence Academy has formed a partnership with Restoration Rochester to assist our families in crisis.	Multiple Community Organizations
10/27/20	Community Organization	Presenter at the Joe U. Posner Breakfast hosted by the Rochester Area Community Foundation	Via Zoom	Our Lead Founder, Brittany Rumph, delivered a presentation addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic for underprivileged families living in inner city Rochester.	Through the webinar Ms. Rumph connected with local philanthropists and secured funding to operate ROC City Learning Pods. Our team will continue to foster relationships with local philanthropists in efforts of inspiring individuals to continue to support initiatives that uplift the children and families of Rochester.	100+ Community Members
12/15/20	Community Organizations	Presenter at the Digital Divide Virtual Briefing	Via Zoom	Our Lead Founder, Brittany Rumph, delivered a presentation addressing the impacts of the digital divide for underprivileged families living in inner city Rochester. Multiple community organizations brainstormed ideas and actions that could be taken to ensure digital access for all of Rochester's families.	Our team reviewed and revised our plan surrounding digital access to ensure that our families are not affected by the digital divide. We will ensure that all families have a technology device and internet access allowing students to access virtual instruction.	Multiple Community Organizations

12/17/20	Community Organizations	Meeting with Jacquetta Harris and Melissa Berrien of Rochester Housing Authority	Via Zoom	Harris and Berrien expressed their concerns with the lack of support experienced by children and families engaged in remote instruction.	Our team reviewed and revised our plan to address remote instruction, ensuring that all curricular choices had digital components and families possessed devices allowing internet accessibility.	Community Organization
1/18/21	Community Member	Meeting with Duwaine Bascoe	Via Zoom	Bascoe stressed the need for quality education options for the children of Rochester. He also shared best practices for charter school boards.	Our team has continued to connect with multiple charter school boards for best practices and lessons learned to strengthen our ability to provide governance and oversight.	Community Member
1/19/21	Community Organization	Attended Vertus Charter School's Monthly Board Meeting	Via Zoom	Our team attended Vertus Charter School's Monthly Board Meeting as observers. Vertus' Board Members extended the invitation to connect at any point for guidance.	Our team learned the importance of codifying systems and procedures to ensure effective transitions of employees.	Community Organization
1/25/21	Community Organization	Attended Academy of Health Sciences Charter School's Monthly Board Meeting	Via Zoom	Our team attended Academy of Health Sciences Charter School's Monthly Board Meeting. The ACHS Team extended an invitation to connect for guidance.	Our team will continue to connect with ACHS to learn best practices.	Community Organization
1/29/21	Community Organization	Interview regarding education inequities and Rochester's Black History Roots with WHEC News 10	Via Zoom	Our Lead Founder participated in an interview with two local district superintendents regarding education and Black History in Rochester. Ms. Rumph also shared the future plans for Rochester Excellence Academy		Community Organization
2/1/21	Community Organization	Attended the Monthly Community Collaborative hosted by Restoration Rochester	Via Zoom	Multiple Organizations discussed racial justice, racial inequities in our area, and systems integration. The meeting ended with a networking session.	Rochester Excellence Academy has formed a partnership with Restoration Rochester to assist our families in crisis.	Multiple Community Organizations
2/10/21	Community Organization	Attended the A Tale of Two Cities: Redlining and Racist Policies in Rochester, NY hosted by the Rochester Area Community Foundation	Via Zoom	Two presenters discussed the history of redlining and other racist policies in Rochester, NY and their impact on our community, today.	Our team is committed to ensuring that our policies, practices, procedures, curriculum, and outlook are developed with an anti-racist lens. We will continuously self-evaluate and seek feedback to	Community Organization

					ensure that all voices in our community are acknowledged, heard, and valued.	
2/17/21	Community Organization	Tour of the Greater Rochester YMCA Carlson Metro Center	444 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604	Kevin Fitzpatrick of the Greater Rochester YMCA expressed a desire to lease space in their centrally located facility to Rochester Excellence Academy as that facility is no longer in use.	Our Founding Team will be taking a second tour on Tuesday May 4, 2021. We are considering leasing space in the Carlson YMCA as it is centrally located and would strengthen our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA.	Community Organization
3/24/21	Community Member	Meeting with Darin Price	Via Zoom	Darin expressed the importance of quality school options and access to the arts. He suggested partnering with the Hochstein School of Music and Dance.	Rochester Excellence Academy has a robust arts program as we value the arts and their proven ability to support both academic and social success. We plan to explore a potential partnership with Hochstein.	Community Member
4/28/21	Community Members	Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School's Public Meeting	Via Zoom live streamed on Facebook	The proposed full founding team, including proposed board members and head of school, hosted a community meeting. Our team discussed our school model, timeline, and took questions.	We will continue to connect with community members to ensure that our school model is tailored to the needs of the community.	264 Community Members



## Attachment 2a: Initial Samples of Public Outreach

1. Our applicant group has informed the community about the proposed charter school, including the intended location, the target student population, the grades to be served, and a description of the educational program(s) to be offered.

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School (“Rochester Excellence”) has held two public meetings, attended 28 community events, connected with 30 community organizations and over 500 families, and hosted three listening circles where we have distributed over 500 fliers in both English and Spanish. Our flier was posted on our social media pages which has 693 followers. We have met with five elected officials including our city’s mayor, Mayor Lovely Ann Warren. The applicant group has also had the opportunity to share information about Rochester Excellence through interviews with our local radio station 105.5 The Beat, the *Spectrum News*, *WHEC News 10*, *WXXI*, and the *Southwest Tribune Newspaper*. Our community outreach will continue throughout the application process with the goal of connecting with age-eligible Rochester families, including those who are economically disadvantaged, have children with special needs, and families with children identified as multilingual learners.

Figure 1: Rochester Excellence Academy Flier – English and Spanish

**ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY**

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School is a proposed K-4, tuition free, public charter school for the young leaders of Rochester.

We believe everything a child needs to succeed is already inside of them. When properly supported all students can and will excel.

Therefore, excellence is not an accident.

Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college, career, and life.

**CORE BELIEFS**

All students can achieve at high levels with individualized supports.	Literacy is the key that opens doors of opportunity. We offer 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction.	It takes a village to raise a child. We value our parent and community partnerships.
Rigorous academics drives student achievement.	Access to the arts supports academic achievement and social emotional development.	Character is developed in a community based on values.

**Contact Us:**  
Brittany Rumph, Lead Founder  
(585) 867-1034  
brumph@ees.org

**Stay connected:**  
/ROCEXcellenceAcademy  
@roc.excellence.academy  
www.rocexcellenceacademy.org

Fill out our community survey @ <http://bit.ly/ROCEXcellence>

**ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY**

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School es una propuesta de grados K-4, libre de matrícula, escuela charter pública, para los jóvenes líderes de Rochester.

Creemos que todo lo que un niño necesita para tener éxito ya está dentro de ellos. Cuando se apoya correctamente todos los estudiantes pueden superar.

Por lo tanto, la excelencia no es un accidente.

A través de académicos rigurosos, una comunidad basada en valores, y apoyos individualizados Rochester Excellence Academy equipa a todos los académicos de kindergarten a cuarto grado con las habilidades y mentalidades necesarias para el éxito en la escuela, la escuela superior, la universidad, la carrera y la vida.

**Creencias básicas**

Todos los estudiantes pueden lograr en niveles altos con apoyos individualizados.	La alfabetización es la clave que abre las puertas de las oportunidades. Ofrecemos 185 minutos de instrucción diaria de alfabetización.	El acceso a las artes apoya el logro académico y el desarrollo emocional social.
Académicos rigurosos impulsa el logro de los estudiantes.	El carácter se desarrolla en una comunidad basada en valores.	Se necesita un pueblo para criar a un niño. Valoramos nuestras asociaciones para padres y comunidades.

**Contáctenos:**  
Brittany Rumph, Principal Fundadora  
(585) 867-1034  
brumph@ees.org

**Stay connected:**  
/ROCEXcellenceAcademy  
@roc.excellence.academy  
www.rocexcellenceacademy.org

Fill out our community survey @ <http://bit.ly/ROCEXcellence>



**2. Stakeholders in the community were given the opportunity to provide input into the design of the proposed charter school.**

Rochester Excellence has collected 157 surveys from community members. Our online survey is available to the public through our website, social media pages, and through scanning a QR code located on our flier. All community input obtained through surveys, meetings, listening circles, and community events has been documented in **Table 2: Public Outreach Information**.

**Figure 2: Rochester Excellence Academy Survey and Analytics**

Section 1 of 2

Rochester Excellence Academy Survey

Form description

Image title

**ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY**  
A proposed K-4 public charter school for the students of Rochester

Name \*

Short answer text

Email \*

Short answer text

Are you a parent or legal guardian of a school age child? \*

Yes

No

Are you a parent or legal guardian of a child between the ages of 3 - 5 ? \*

Yes

No

Are you satisfied with the education options for Kindergarten - 4th Grade students in your neighborhood? \*

Yes

No

What are the 3 most important things you want to see in your child's elementary school? \*

Short answer text

Would Rochester benefit from a K- 4 public, tuition-free charter school focused on building a strong literacy and math foundation, supporting students' social emotional development, and providing access to the arts? \*

Yes

No

Parents/Guardians Only: Given the opportunity, Would you enroll your child in a K - 4 public, tuition- free charter school focused on building a strong literacy and math foundation, supporting students' social emotional development, and providing access to the arts?

Yes

No

Are you interested in joining our volunteer email list? \*

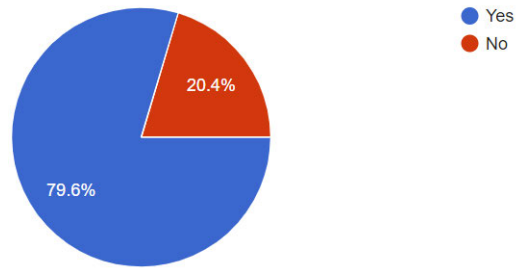
Yes

No



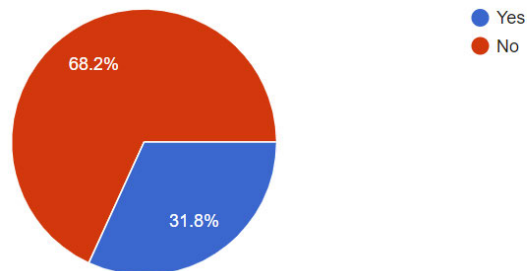
Are you a parent or legal guardian of a school age child?

157 responses



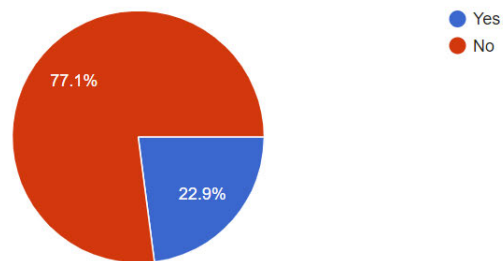
Are you a parent or legal guardian of a child between the ages of 3 - 5 ?

157 responses



Are you satisfied with the education options for Kindergarten - 4th Grade students in your neighborhood?

157 responses



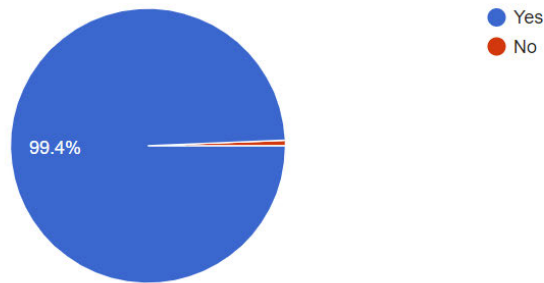
What are the 3 most important things you want to see in your child's elementary school?

157 responses

- Discipline. A caring and nurturing staff. A curriculum and activities that are comparable to the better schools in the area
- Better Grades and better pay for teachers
- Reading fundamentals thoroughly taught, educators who care, results and changes made when students receive poor evaluations.
- Sports, enhanced and reading programs
- Individualized support, rigorous curriculum, Arts
- Restorative Practice- Building more relationship with students and students with peers. Focus on childrens skills to build weak areas. Commitment to family, school and community connections.
- Safety, Education, & Teachers who actually care about the students.
- Good teachers, Good leadership, good culture

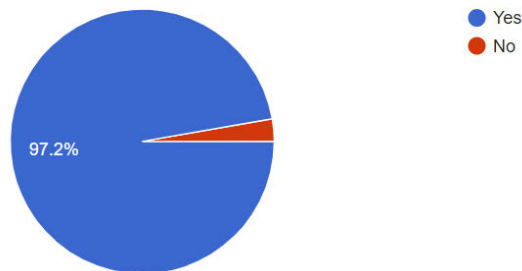
Would Rochester benefit from a K- 4 public, tuition-free charter school focused on building a strong literacy and math foundation, supporting students' social emotional development, and providing access to the arts?

157 responses



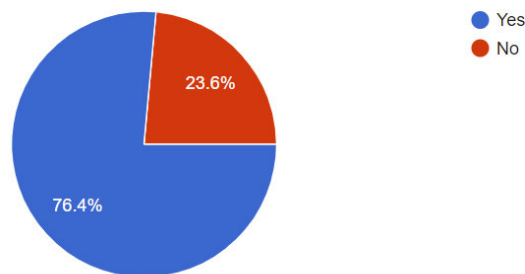
Parents/Guardians Only: Given the opportunity, Would you enroll your child in a K - 4 public, tuition- free charter school focused on building a strong literacy and math foundation, supporting students' social emotional development, and providing access to the arts?

145 responses



Are you interested in joining our volunteer email list?

157 responses



**3. At least one public meeting with stakeholders in the community in the school district in which the proposed charter school is to be located. Reasonable public notice should be provided to community stakeholders.**

To date, Rochester Excellence has held two public meetings on February 19, 2020 at the Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609 and a live streamed public meeting on April 28, 2021. The first public meeting was advertised for three weeks in the local newspaper, both print and online, as well as through posted meeting dates on the local news channels' community calendars and through our social media pages. The second virtual public meeting was advertised through a Facebook Ad.

Figure 3a: Public Meeting Notifications

10C | SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2020 | ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT & CHRONICLE

# Classified

## Buzz

**Announcements**

All classified ads are subject to the applicable rate card, copies of which are available from our Advertising Dept. All ads are subject to approval before publication. The Democrat and Chronicle reserves the right to edit, refuse, reject, classify or cancel any ad at any time. Errors must be reported in the first day of publication. The Democrat and Chronicle shall not be liable for any loss or expense that results from an error in or omission of an advertisement. No refunds for early cancellation of order.

**Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School Public Meeting**  
 Wednesday February 19, 2020  
 Legacy Drama House  
 112 Webster Avenue  
 5:45 - 6:45 pm  
 We want to hear from ALL community members, especially children...  
 (585)867-1034 bump@bes.org

**Wanted to Buy**

BASEBALL SPORTS CARDS + ALL Vintage Collectables 1910 to 1970 Top \$ Paid 535-645-4379

**PAID FOR YOUR GENETIC TEST STRIPS.**  
 Same Day Pickup at Prices Paid up to \$600. All Brands Considered! Between 11am-6:30pm  
 Bob 585-284-3455

**COSTUME JEWELRY WANTED**

**Wanted to Buy**

**WANTED ANTIQUES & ESTATE JEWELRY**

For over 35 years we specialize in buying antiques, silver, costume & estate jewelry, Pocket watches, rings, cameos, stick pins, bracelets, cuff links, masonic items, gold, sterling, etc, etc.

**WE NEED STERLING SILVER!**  
 Over 5000 flatware patterns now needed. Bowls, candlesticks, compotes, etc. We Also Buy Silverplate

"NO ONE PAYS MORE!"

# Classified

585-454-1111  
 classified.democratandchronicle.com

## Buzz

**Announcements**

All classified ads are subject to the applicable rate card, copies of which are available from our Advertising Dept. All ads are subject to approval before publication. The Democrat and Chronicle reserves the right to edit, refuse, reject, classify or cancel any ad at any time. Errors must be reported in the first day of publication. The Democrat and Chronicle shall not be liable for any loss or expense that results from an error in or omission of an advertisement. No refunds for early cancellation of order.

**Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School Public Meeting**  
 Wednesday February 18, 2020  
 Legacy Drama House  
 112 Webster Avenue  
 5:45 - 6:45 pm  
 We want to hear from ALL community members, especially children...  
 (585)867-1034 bump@bes.org

**Wanted to Buy**

**COSTUME JEWELRY WANTED**

**PAID FOR YOUR GENETIC TESTING & MAIL!**

**LAURIE**  
 585-301-8227

**OLDER WOOD FURNITURE IN ANY CONDITION WILL PAY CASH!**  
 Call 585-739-4098

**PAYING CASH** for Rock, Metal, Jazz Records/CDs, Video Games & Systems. Call Dan 585-662-3790

**RODS COIN**

**GOLD SILVER**

**Wanted to Buy**

**WANTED ANTIQUES & ESTATE JEWELRY**

For over 35 years we specialize in buying antiques, silver, costume & estate jewelry, Pocket watches, rings, cameos, stick pins, bracelets, cuff links, masonic items, gold, sterling, etc, etc.

**WE NEED STERLING SILVER!**  
 Over 5000 flatware patterns now needed. Bowls, candlesticks, compotes, etc. We Also Buy Silverplate

"NO ONE PAYS MORE!"

Also buying Antiques, glassware, china, hummers, old toys, fountain, postcards, military items, paintings, oriental rugs, primatives, coins, stamps, paper items, art glass, pottery, clocks, art objects, etc. etc.

**WHY CALL US FIRST? SIMPLY WE PAY MORE!**  
 Unlimited Capital means we can pay you the correct price for your antiques & valuables!

Former R News Antique Expert

## Pets

**Domestic Pets**

**Akita Males Older Pups - Reg'd,** large, house broken, Price Reduced, \$400. 565-281-2364

**American Bully Puppies -** \$1,800. ad@arthurandson@gmail.com or Call 315-666-2579

**Australian Shepherd Poodle mixes,** shots and wormed, \$400-\$500. 716-353-9913

**Beagle Pups - 2 M, 1 F,** shots UTEI, ready 2/1, great parents. \$350. 315-310-3362

**English Bull Dog Pups - 3 M, 3 F,** ready 2/1, shots UTEI. Parents well matched. \$600. 315-310-3362

**Boxer Red Lab Pups - 5 girls 1 boy,** born Oct 10, de-wormed, family raised, guaranteed, m/f on premises, registered, shots, vet checked \$750 (2/aged) 6463

**French Bulldog Puppies** great little family pets, well socialized, family raised, used on vacs, worming, health cert. Deposit will hold. Ready 2/15. Call or text 585-425-5163

**German Shepherd Puppies (SV/Ten,** AKC, 1st shots, dewormed, \$700. Call 585-704-9891

**German Shepherd Puppies - Reg,** Family raised, Very friendly, Ready Now. \$475. 315-526-2121 No Sunday Calls!

**German Shepherd Pups, AKC, 8 wks,** old, 1st shots & dewormed, black & reddish tan, parents on premises - \$800 Call 585-801-1408

**German Short-haired Pointer Pups** M/F, AKC/DFA, Ch&C parents, champ lines, gorgeous! 807-966-8317 vets

**Domestic Pets**

**LABRADOODLE 8 mos.** Neutered male, well trained, beautiful, sturdy, cuddly & happy, vet checked, UTEI shots, house broken & well socialized, \$750. Contact by phone only 585-285-6796

**LABRADOR RETRIEVERS - AKC, Silver & Charcoal Pictured,** born 12/16. For info call 667-266-3412, www.highkrollabs.com

**Labrador Retriever** We are taking deposits for Chocolate, Silver, and Charcoal Labrador retriever puppies... English style, champion bloodlines, limited, 2 year guarantee, with great personalities and demeanor... be the first in your neighborhood to own one of these beautiful Silver or Charcoal puppies. \$1,000-\$1,200 (807)966-0027

**Miniature cockapoo 8 weeks,** black, de-wormed, family raised, guaranteed, m/f on premises, shots, vet checked \$650. 585-704-0850

7

# ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY

A proposed K-4 public charter school for the students of Rochester



28

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28, 2021 AT 6:30 PM EDT – 7:15 PM EDT

## Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School's Public Meeting

Facebook Live

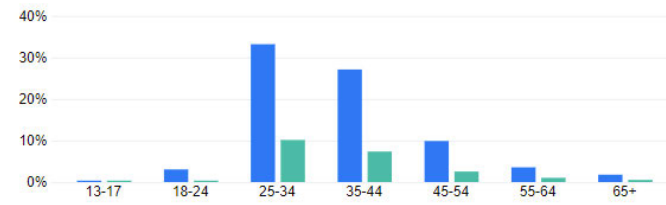
Event Ended

### Audience

This ad reached 399 people in your audience.

People Placements Locations

78.5% Women 21.5% Men



### Audience Details

Location - Living In  
**United States**

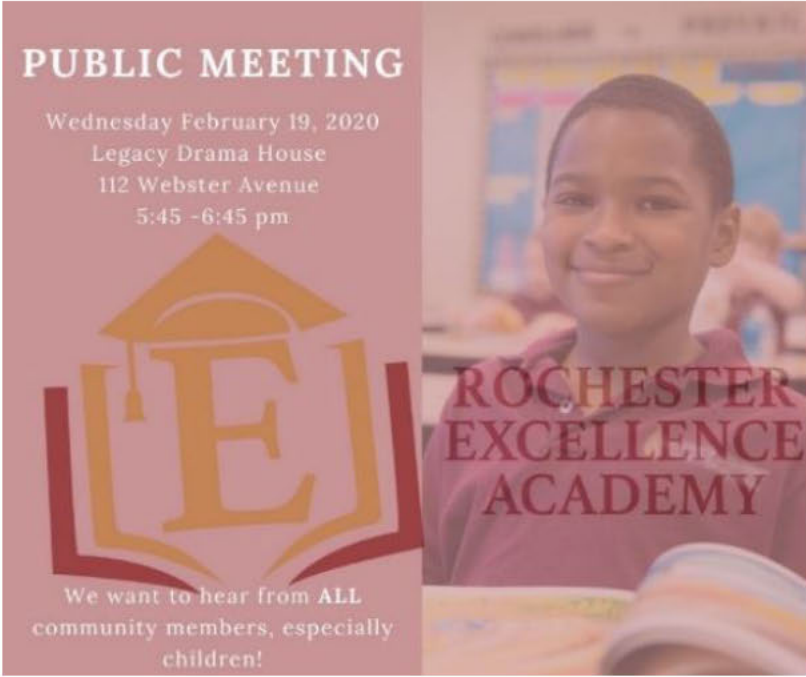
Age  
**18 - 65+**

People Who Match

People who like Rochester Excellence Academy and Friends of connections: Friends of people who are connected to Rochester Excellence Academy



**Figure 3b: Public Meeting Flier – English and Spanish**



**PUBLIC MEETING**

Wednesday February 19, 2020  
Legacy Drama House  
112 Webster Avenue  
5:45 -6:45 pm



**ROCHESTER  
EXCELLENCE  
ACADEMY**

We want to hear from ALL  
community members, especially  
children!

The English version of the flier features a light purple background. On the right side, there is a photograph of a young girl with a friendly expression, wearing a purple sweater and holding a book. The text is arranged in a clean, sans-serif font. The logo is a stylized gold and purple emblem with the letters 'E' and 'A' inside a shield-like shape.



**REUNIÓN PÚBLICA**

Miércoles 19 de febrero de 2020  
Legacy Drama House  
112 Webster Ave  
5:45 - 6:45 PM



**ROCHESTER  
EXCELLENCE  
ACADEMY**

¡Queremos saber de todos los  
miembros de la comunidad,  
especialmente de los niños!

The Spanish version of the flier is identical in layout and imagery to the English version, but with the text translated into Spanish. It features the same purple background, photograph of the young girl, and the Rochester Excellence Academy logo.

## REUNIÓN PÚBLICA

Miércoles 28 de abril de 2021  
via Facebook Live  
@ROCExcellenceAcademy  
6:30 - 7:15 PM



¡Queremos saber de todos los miembros de la comunidad, especialmente de los niños!



## PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday April 28, 2021  
via Facebook Live  
@ROCExcellenceAcademy  
6:30 - 7:15 pm




We want to hear from ALL community members, especially children!





**Figure 3c: Public Meeting Sign In-Sheet - February 19,2020**




**ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY**

**Our Mission:** Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary to succeed in middle school, high school, college, career, and life.

We believe everything that a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them. When properly supported all students can and will excel. Therefore, excellence is not an accident.

Public Meeting  
February 19, 2020

	Name / Nombre	Zip Code / Código Postal	Phone Number / Número de Teléfono	E-Mail / Correo Electrónico	Age of Child(ren) / Edad del Niño(s)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					



**ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY**

**Our Mission:** Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary to succeed in middle school, high school, college, career, and life.

We believe everything that a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them. When properly supported all students can and will excel. Therefore, excellence is not an accident.

Public Meeting  
February 19, 2020

	Name / Nombre	Zip Code / Código Postal	Phone Number / Número de Teléfono	E-Mail / Correo Electrónico	Age of Child(ren) / Edad del Niño(s)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

**Figure 3d: Virtual Public Meeting - April 28, 2021**



NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT CHARTER SCHOOL  
OFFICE

**ATTACHMENT 5a: NEW APPLICANT AND PROSPECTIVE  
SCHOOL TRUSTEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET  
(For New School Applications Only)**

**Applicant Group Members (“AG”):** The term Applicant Group is newly applied to include those individuals formerly identified as *lead applicants* and those participating in the planning of the application to establish the proposed charter school; those who will comprise the initial board of trustees; and those who will become school employees—anyone who is involved in the development of the Letter of Intent and the Full Application. All members, including prospective board members, must provide the background information where indicated for Applicant Group Members.

**Prospective BOT Members (“BOT”):** Service on a public charter school board of trustees (“board”) is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school’s board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school. To properly evaluate proposed board members, please provide full and complete background information where indicated for proposed board members.

Note: Additionally, prospective members of the Board of Trustees are required to undergo a criminal background check via a fingerprint scan arranged by and at the expense of the State Education Department. ***The inability or unwillingness of any member of the applicant group to promptly undergo the required criminal background check via fingerprint scans within the timeframe requested in advance of the Board of Regents meeting shall be grounds for terminating an application or denying a charter recommendation.***

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**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS**

**Member Name:** Ashley Cross

**Proposed Charter School Name:** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

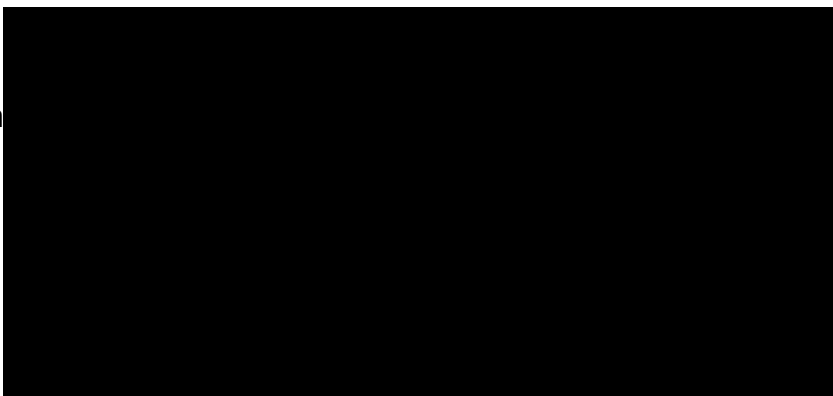
**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_



*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided above will be redacted.*

### **Background Information – All Applicant Group Members**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. **Note:** Individuals are not required to have degrees or education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. This documentation is for identify verification only.

Résumé Attached

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group.

Ms. Brittany Rumph and I were introduced to each other by Leah Kazmierski, CEO of Restoration Rochester, a local non-profit. We began to discuss the focus of Rochester Excellence Academy and how I can support. We had several conversations to review the school model and the impact it will have on the Rochester community. I accepted the invitation to join the Board because I believe in the mission and will commit my time and expertise to supporting the growth of the school.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

I affirm.

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

I affirm.

## **Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members**

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.

By leading programs across a range of subjects and capacities, I have honed my communication, creativity, critical and strategic thinking, teaching and motivational skills. My inherent dedication to fostering collaborative and exciting environments has successfully encouraged and developed consistently popular and dynamic community programs. I also have program and project coordination, capital fundraising, strategic planning, team collaboration, and family and youth engagement and advocacy are just a few of the areas in which I excel.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

As a member of the board of Rochester Excellence Academy, I am committed to assisting in every aspect of the application process. I understand that this process includes providing feedback on key design, school programming and academic programming. I also understand that during the application process, I will be ensuring the school model incorporates community feedback. I am also committed to studying NYSED Charter School Performance Framework and ensuring our school model is developed to meet the charter school performance framework benchmarks.

Furthermore, as proposed Vice Chair of the founding board, I am committed to assisting the chair of the board in performing their duties and responsibilities. I am also committed to supporting the proposed school leader in respect to strategy and attending monthly board meetings and community engagement efforts during the preauthorization stage.

Also, as a member of the Governance Committee, I am committed to assisting with evaluating the quality of performance of the board as a whole and individual board members. I am also committed to recruiting and onboarding new board members.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review of your background.

There is no additional information I feel is pertinent to the Department's review of my background.

*Ashley*

Ashley Cross

---

Printed Name

Ashley A. Cross  
03/28/2020

---

Signature

3/28/2020

---

Date

### Background Information—Proposed Board of Trustees Only

8. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.

I affirm.

9. Please indicate whether you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

10. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to  me. Yes. If yes, please provide an explanation.

11. What board position(s) and/or offices(s) will you hold? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.):

Vice Chair serving on the Governance Committee.

12. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

I desire to serve of the board of Rochester Excellence Academy because I believe in the mission and vision of the school and the leadership of Ms. Brittany Rumph. I know the need for strong schools, definitely in Rochester, New York, and I desire to do my part in helping establish one.

After nearly 12 years of advocating for youth in the foster care system, I have realized that not all students have access to the same resources. After spending years advocating for the best interest of foster children, I noticed that attending school has become a major stressor and challenge for the them to overcome. This is due to many schools lacking the social emotional support for children to thrive in addition to the academic challenges they face. I have personally connected to the mission of Rochester Excellence Academy because it focuses on exposing students to academic rigor and equips students with the mindsets necessary to succeed.



Throughout my career, I have met several students that I believed could achieve; however, their mindsets and school environment posed a serious threat to their achievement. I believe Rochester Excellence Academy will provide opportunities for Rochester students to thrive and further their education through higher learning.

13. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

I have served as a member on the following boards:

- Launch Outreach (2010-2017)- I was the Founder and Executive Director of Launch Outreach and served as a voting board member until I became a paid employee in 2016.
- 111 Tulsa (2013-2015)- I served as a member of the 111 Tulsa board. My primary role was to support the vision of 111 Tulsa and assist with advocating for children in foster care and bringing awareness to the local church. I assisted with leveraging relationships with churches, partners and political leaders.
- Oh Be Joyful Farm (2014-2016)- I served as a Founding board member and assisted with developing a community for sibling in foster care. As a board member, I assisted with developing the budget and hiring and training foster parents for the children who lived on the farm.
- Monroe County CASA (2019- Present)- I recently joined the board of CASA to assist with strategic planning, marketing, volunteer recruitment and fundraising.

## Conflict of Interest - Proposed Board of Trustees Only

14. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective board members.

I / we do not know any such  persons. Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a proposed charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such  persons. Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

16. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, plans to contract or do business with, the proposed charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the proposed charter school.

No. Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

17. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.

18. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.

19. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that will be conducted.



Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

/ we do not anticipate conducting any such business.

20. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

None  Yes

21. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

If a member is found to have been involved in self-dealing, for their own interest, the Board Chair is responsible for investigating the matter. If the Board Chair determines there is self-dealing, that member will be removed from the board as we have outlined within our Bylaws. At Rochester Excellence Academy, we do not accept any form of self-dealing. As a board, on an annual basis, we will review, approve, and sign the Conflict of Interest Policy. We are expected to disclose any real or perceived conflicts.

22. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to the previous items 16-23, you may so indicate.



This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.

Yes.

### **Educational Philosophy -Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

23. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.

"Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports REA equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary to succeed in middle school, high school, college, career, and life."

Furthermore, Rochester Excellence Academy believes that everything a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them and when properly supported, all students can

and will succeed. Our Core Values of R.E.S.P.E.C.T. (Respect, Empathy, Scholarship, Perseverance, Excellence, Community and Trustworthiness) will be integrated into the culture of Rochester Excellence Academy and imbedded into the organization's overall philosophy.

24. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

Rochester Excellence Academy focuses on rigorous academics, art exploration and individualized supports for all students. We have selected a rigorous curriculum and designed effective instructional practices for our teachers. This allows students to think critically and develop problem-solving skills necessary for a strong foundation of literacy and math. Each school day consists of 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction to build a strong literacy foundation. Through small group literacy rotations, we will ensure that students receive targeted instruction.

In Math, through direct instruction, students improve specific skills through clear explanation and examples – creating a more engaging experience for students. We will provide inquiry-based lessons, to allow students to participate in their learning through experimentation. Finally, through our Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI), it allows teachers to meet students where they are and helping to support students to build on their thinking. Students will explore mathematical concepts, independently solve story problems, present strategies, though whole group instruction.

Lastly, Rochester Excellence Academy provides art exploration which is intended to support students' academic and social emotional development. Through strategic partnerships, our arts component will encourage student self-expression, increase creativity, build communication skills, and improve problem solving skills.

25. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. Please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

A successful charter school has a clear mission and vision, accountability and governance, a student-focused instructional planning, data-driven, and focuses on students and families through community engagement.

We believe all students can learn, and we believe in meeting students where they are. We will leverage strategic partnerships that will provide students and their families with an array of services and resources. We will have a student-centered culture and prepare teachers to be equipped in their classrooms. We will continue to use data to inform instruction and student progress.

As a board, we will evaluate student performance and its leadership on an ongoing basis, provide academic, fiscal, and organizational oversight, review and approve

policies, advocate on behalf of Rochester Excellence Academy through strategic partnerships, leverage personal and professional networks, utilize our expertise, and commit to advancing the mission and vision.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE—PROPOSED TRUSTEES ONLY**

I, Ashley Cross (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.



Ashley R. Cross (Mar 28, 2020)

Signature

3/28/2020

Date

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE**

**ATTACHMENT 5a: NEW APPLICANT AND PROSPECTIVE  
SCHOOL TRUSTEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET  
(For New School Applications Only)**

**Applicant Group Members (“AG”):** The term Applicant Group is newly applied to include those individuals formerly identified as *lead applicants* and those participating in the planning of the application to establish the proposed charter school; those who will comprise the initial board of trustees; and those who will become school employees—anyone who is involved in the development of the Letter of Intent and the Full Application. All members, including prospective board members, must provide the background information where indicated for Applicant Group Members.

**Prospective BOT Members (“BOT”):** Service on a public charter school board of trustees (“board”) is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school’s board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school. To properly evaluate proposed board members, please provide full and complete background information where indicated for proposed board members.

Note: Additionally, prospective members of the Board of Trustees are required to undergo a criminal background check via a fingerprint scan arranged by and at the expense of the State Education Department. ***The inability or unwillingness of any member of the applicant group to promptly undergo the required criminal background check via fingerprint scans within the timeframe requested in advance of the Board of Regents meeting shall be grounds for terminating an application or denying a charter recommendation.***

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**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS**

**Member Name:** Brittany M. Rumph

**Proposed Charter School Name:** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

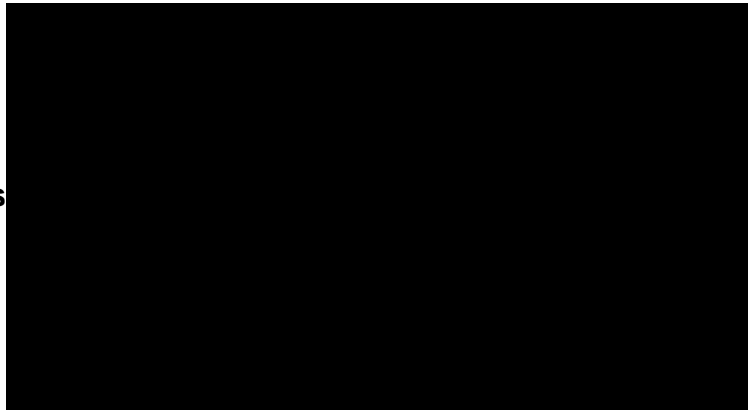
**E-Mail Address:**

**Home Telephone:**

**Home Address:**

**Business Telephone:**

**Business Address:**



*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided above will be redacted.*

### **Background Information – All Applicant Group Members**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. **Note:** Individuals are not required to have degrees or education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. This documentation is for identify verification only.

Résumé Attached

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group.

I am the lead applicant for Rochester Excellence Academy.

Growing up in the city of Rochester was no easy feat as our city is infamous for high crime rates, extreme poverty, and low student achievement. I am a proud product of teenage parents whom, with the support of the village, raised me to be proud of and give back to my community. Church, school, and the dance floor served as my safe havens allowing me to escape from the many distractions surrounding me. Throughout my K-12 educational experience, within the Rochester City School District, I have had caring and dedicated teachers whom pushed me to accomplish all my dreams, despite the grim statistics for the children of my neighborhood. As a child, I didn't know what it meant to be labeled at-risk or that my neighborhood was called the "Fatal Crescent". I wasn't aware that my city ranked number one for children living in extreme poverty and my school district was one of the lowest performing in the nation. However, in high school I was blessed to have the chance to take dance classes outside of my performing arts high school and it was then that I realized that my friends whom resided in the suburban areas of Rochester received a starkly different educational experience. That realization birthed my life's mission. I knew then that my purpose in life was to obtain a college level education and return to uplift the next generation of children from my neighborhood. I have spent the last eleven years serving the children of my community as an educator, dance instructor, and volunteer cheerleading coach. In the fall of 2019, I began the BES Fellowship after serving as both a teacher and teacher leader in Rochester. Founding Rochester Excellence Academy will ensure we are serving the children of my community at a greater scale.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

I affirm.

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the



charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

I affirm.

## Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.

As a native Rochesterian, Rochester City School District graduate, and first-generation college graduate, I have made it my life's mission to positively impact as many Rochester students as possible and prepare them for future success. I have spent the last 11 years as a leader, educator, and volunteer within the city of Rochester.

Most recently, I was an Instructional Leader, fourth-grade teacher, and Summer Academy Director at Uncommon Schools' Rochester Prep West Elementary. Before joining Uncommon as a Founding Kindergarten Teacher, I spent four years working in education at Action for a Better Community's Head Start as a preschool teacher, as well as Hillside Family of Agencies and The Villa of Hope as a Special Education Teacher's Assistant. I was also a Teach Like a Champion Fellow with Doug Lemov on the TLaC Team. I have obtained two Bachelor of Arts degrees, in Dance and Interdisciplinary Arts for Children, from The College at Brockport, and a Master of Science in Inclusive Early Childhood Education from Nazareth College. I hold two New York State Professional Teacher's Certifications, Early Childhood Education (Birth – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade) and Teaching Students with Disabilities (Birth - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade).

Being a part of a founding team, at Uncommon Schools Rochester Prep, has taught me what it means to persevere through start-up years, handling both successes and challenges with grace, relying on the power of the team and remaining relentlessly focused on the school's mission. As a Preschool and Kindergarten Teacher, I was able to understand the intense literacy support that is necessary for the children of the Rochester community. As a Special Education Teacher's Assistant, at both Hillside's Crestwood Children's Center and The Villa of Hope, I learned the value of individualized supports within a smaller classroom setting for children with increased special needs. My experience as a Teach Like a Champion with Doug Lemov and the TLaC Team is invaluable, having learned best practices from teachers around the world and gained experience developing and delivering professional development sessions. As a graduate of School of the Arts High School who continued to study the arts and its effect on children at the College at Brockport, I understand first-hand the importance accessibility to the arts for children living in poverty and its positive impact on future success.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

As the lead applicant I began seeking community input for our proposed charter school, in September 2019. We have solicited feedback from over 500 community members, distributed over 400 flyers, received 290 petition signatures, 151 survey responses, and have 585 followers on the ROC Excellence Academy Facebook page. I have been the primary writer of the charter application and have led our efforts to incorporate feedback from all community stakeholders. I am committed to continuing

community outreach, collaborating with our proposed board trustees, and incorporating feedback from the community for the development of our full charter application.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review of your background.

Our current education crisis in Rochester is multi-faceted and has been created over many years. I am proud to be a native Rochesterian as it has shaped me into the determined and ambitious woman that I am today. I understand community need, cultural nuances, and the day-to-day struggles in which children and families may face, as I have shared the same experiences. My commitment to the children of Rochester didn't begin with the development of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School; it began when I realized the inequities within my community as a teenager and remains my life's mission.

**Brittany MRumph**

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Printed Name

*Brittany MRumph*

BrittanyMRumph(Mar31,2020)

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Signature

**Mar 31, 2020**

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Date

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE

**ATTACHMENT 5a: NEW APPLICANT AND PROSPECTIVE  
SCHOOL TRUSTEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET  
(For New School Applications Only)**

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**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS**

**Member Name:** Laura Smith \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed Charter School Name:** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Résumé Attached

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group.

I was introduced to the Lead Founder, Ms. Brittany Rumph, through a mutual professional contact, Ms. Holli Budd, Executive Director of The Farash Foundation, a local philanthropy. Ms. Rumph and I met at a local coffee shop to learn more about each other and the mission for Rochester Excellence Academy. Suffice to say, within 30 minutes of meeting Ms. Rumph, I was so inspired by the vision for the school and wanted to support it in whatever way she felt I could be most helpful. We discussed our individual experiences, our shared beliefs about a high quality education as a fundamental right for all children, the importance of coaching and supporting teachers.

I also shared my commitment to charter schools and in particular my experiences at the NYC Charter Center and my current role as COO and board treasurer and secretary of a national education non-profit, UnboundEd. Ms. Rumph asked if I’d like to consider commencing the process to join the board of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School which I accepted with much enthusiasm.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

I affirm.

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board’s by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board’s by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

I affirm.

## Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.

I have over 25 years of experience in K-12 education and hope to bring my experience, skills and knowledge to support Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School. As a former NYSED Assistant Commissioner, I am familiar with the critical role that a charter school's board plays in ensuring the effective instruction of all students. My experience as the Director of Operations for the NYC Charter Center gave me a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of planning and management of a charter school's financial and operational responsibilities and requirements. I authored the NYC Charter Center's first "operations guidebook" which nine schools used to start up their schools.

Also, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, I also served as a reviewer of charter school applications and provided feedback to the authorizer in Louisiana. This provided valuable insight into the necessity of instructional and operational comprehensiveness and coherence that school founders need in their early strategic planning in order to support a successful school.

During my time with the San Diego City School District, I supported the conversion of three large comprehensive schools into 15 separate schools. Through this process, I was part of the team that supported the hiring and professional development of the cohort of principals and the design of the staffing, operational and financial structures and systems we needed to put in place (within the context of the larger school system) to ensure the successful launch and sustainability of the schools.

Finally, in my current role as the co-founder and chief operating officer of a national K12 non-profit that supports educators in delivering standards-based and equitable instruction, I ensure the delivery of effective services while overseeing all operations and finances for our organization which has a \$14M annual budget. This includes all federal and state fiscal and operational compliance requirements. I serve as a member of the board and have been the board secretary and treasurer since the organization's inception. In this role I have the primary responsibility of planning and managing board meetings in collaboration with our CEO, board chair and general counsel.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

As a member of the Board of Trustees of Rochester Excellence Academy, I am responsible for ensuring the school provides a high-quality education to all students. This is primarily accomplished by: ensuring there is a strategic vision for the school; establishing and maintaining expectations for the school leader for students' academic success and holding her accountable for that success; and providing financial oversight. As a board member, I also believe my role is to stay engaged



with the school, know its strengths and weaknesses as well as the demographics of our students and families.

Since moving back to the Rochester area in 2015, I have wanted to support the local community in a meaningful way. I have long been a proponent of charter schools because of the school choice options they provide families and the learning opportunities they afford students. While I have been invited to serve on the board of several local charter schools, I feel Rochester Excellence Academy will make a unique contribution to our community. The school's focus on rigorous academics with social emotional development combined with culturally relevant pedagogy is critically needed not just in Rochester but across the country. I also believe the school's partnerships with community-based organizations - from its inception – will ensure it is responsive to the needs of the families and community it serves. Additionally, as a school founded by a “born and raised” community member and educator, I believe Rochester Excellence Academy will bring to Rochester a much-needed independent charter school that will serve as a model for other schools locally. I am honored and committed to serve on its board.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review of your background.

From my time at the NYC Charter Center, I saw a number of schools experienced academic success, only to later run afoul of their financial management and planning responsibilities or other regulatory obligations. From my experience there, I learned how important it is for school leaders and boards to carefully plan for and monitor their financial resources. In my current role at UnboundEd, I am responsible for overseeing all preparations of our annual audit and ensuring we have the financial oversight systems and processes to effectively manage our finances.

**Laura Smith**

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Print Name



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Signature

Mar 26, 2020

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Date

**Background Information—Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

8. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.

I affirm.

9. Please indicate whether you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

10. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. If yes, please provide an explanation.

11. What board position(s) and/or offices(s) will you hold? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.):

Board Chair

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12. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

I wish to serve on the board of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School because I believe it will create high quality educational opportunities for our local community. After graduating from high school in upstate NY and attending Cornell University, I left the Rochester area for nearly 20 years and worked in the K-12 ecosystems of some of our country's largest cities, including San Francisco, San Diego, and New York City. Through these experiences, I saw the impact that charter schools could make not just on the children and families they served, but on their broader community and neighboring district schools. Additionally, I've also learned how important it is for schools to be places not just where students learn, but also where teachers learn as they are continuously provided high quality professional development and coaching.

Rochester Excellence Academy's founder, Ms. Brittany Rumph is as a member herself of the Rochester community and she has demonstrated herself as an expert educator and teacher professional developer and coach. These skills and experience make her uniquely skilled to start and lead a school that meets the unique needs of Rochester

students and families.

13. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

I currently serve as board secretary and treasurer for Unbounded Learning, Inc. ("UnboundEd"), a 501c3 that provides professional development services and resources for K-12 schools nationwide.

### Conflict of Interest - Proposed Board of Trustees Only

14. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a proposed charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

16. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, plans to contract or do business with, the proposed charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the proposed charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

17. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.

18. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.

19. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that will be conducted.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.

20. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

None  Yes

The only conflict I would anticipate is if Rochester Excellence Academy wanted to purchase services from UnboundEd. While this would likely be a management decision based on cost amounts, if for any reason it required board discussion or decision, I would recuse myself from the discussion and vote.

21. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

I would inquire whether or not they have completed a conflict of interest of form. If a form is not available, I would make sure one is completed. As board chair, I would convene the board's Executive Committee to investigate the situation and work to remedy the situation. If determined, that any individual is involved in self-dealing, they will be removed from the board.

22. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to the previous items 16-23, you may so indicate.

This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.

Yes.

### **Educational Philosophy - Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

23. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.

The school's mission is: Through rigorous academics, a community-based on values, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college, career, and life.

Rochester Excellence Academy's philosophy is grounded in the belief that everything

a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them; when properly supported, all students can and will excel. Therefore, excellence is not an accident; it is intentionally supported, fostered, and nurtured.

This fundamental belief – that all children can learn and succeed when properly supported – is critical to the success of any effectively-performing school.

24. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School’s educational program is grounded in three core components: rigorous academics, arts exploration, and individualized supports. The school will also support students’ social and emotional well-being and mental health through a comprehensive approach.

In terms of **rigorous academics**, teachers will be equipped with curriculum aligned to the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards “NYSNGLS”, across all content areas, and are consistently supported through a three-week summer institute intensive, weekly professional development, and weekly observations paired with both live coaching and feedback meetings.

More specifically:

- **Literacy** skills and knowledge will be supported 185 minutes of instruction and small group literacy rotations.
- **Math** will be supported through inquiry based lessons and direct instruction as well as a daily story problem block
- **Science** instruction will feature hand-on experiments; require students to research, explore, and experiment and problem-solve real life situations; Amplify’s science curriculum will support students’ learning. Younger students in K-1 will have daily STEAM centers.

In terms of **arts exploration**, the school has developed a robust arts program which will support both academic achievement and social emotional development. The program will include Classical Ballet, West African Dance, Music, Visual Arts, and Theatre through an arts exploration block and after school enrichment. These will be conducted in partnership with the Rochester YMCA and their Dreamseeds Program as well as the Western NY Ballet Company, and Judah Sealy Music. The school has also partnered with the Rochester Education Foundation to provide music instruments for students.

To support **students individualized needs**, the school’s two-teacher model and integrated ICT classroom of 15 students at each grade level increases the ability to provide individualized supports. Teachers will be supported in the use and analysis of data to best inform their instruction and individual student support including data from STEP, a researched based literacy assessment, NWEA MAP, a nationally normed assessment, as well as internally-created assessments, and daily classroom assessments.

In terms of **social and emotional growth and mental health** the school will employ a Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist. There will also be Daily Mental Health Check-ins, Daily “Moments of Peace” (Mindfulness Moments) and a daily social emotional interactive Read Aloud. The school is also partnering with Komposition Kids, a non profit organization that offer programs for young people, between the ages of 6-12, who live in single-parent households or are economically disadvantaged. They are partnering to offer a Career Readiness Program.

25. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. Please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

While research has identified numerous characteristics for success schools, I believe a successful school should have the following characteristics:

1. Effective Leadership – this includes both the school leader and the board of directors. All leaders must be familiar with the needs of students and families and the needs of the school and its community. The board should also have an understanding of the strength and growth areas of the school leader and the staff overall. They should have a clear and aligned vision that is shared by all and effectively communicated to all stakeholders.
2. Shared vision and goals – The vision set by leadership should be understood by all members of the school community. Goals – whether student growth or teacher performance – should be clearly articulated and in support of the schools’ vision. They should be accessible and regularly referenced and visited as part of overall management of the school.
3. Grade-level expectations for students – countless research has shown that teachers’ beliefs about their students’ ability informs their instruction as well as school practices and policies. All educators must believe their students are capable of grade-level work.
4. A cycle of feedback and continuous improvement – ongoing feedback is crucial for any high performing organization. For a school, this includes the ongoing use of formative and interim data to inform instruction. It also includes continuous feedback and coaching for teachers to enable them to grow their mindsets, knowledge and skills.
5. Operationally effective – first and foremost, schools must be safe spaces in order to be effective learning environments. They should be secure and fiscally sound while also meeting all regulatory requirements. The school should also have the systems, resources and tools needed to effectively deliver instruction and meet their educational goals whether it be in their staffing model, professional development supports, their curriculum, or data analysis tools.




In terms of the steps the board should take to ensure the school is and remains successful, I'd propose the following steps:

1. Build a strong board with clear roles and responsibilities.
  - a. This includes identifying board member roles and committees. Board members should be oriented to their role as stewards of the education of children and tax payer fiduciaries.
  - b. Ensure there is a shared vision for the school and measurable results for students and the school leader.
  - c. Once the school is incorporated, establish bylaws and approve policies that will guide the board.
  - d. Establish a process for evaluating the school leader and the board
  - e. Board members should also have opportunities to get to know each other as individuals.
  
2. Ongoing monitoring of the school
  - a. The board should have data and clear processes for monitoring both student achievement, fiscal health and the overall school community culture.
  - b. Check points should be at least monthly so that the board continually has "the pulse" of the school and can identify problems well in advance and work with the school leader to implement solutions and provide other needed supports.
  - c. Regular evaluation of the school leader and the board per established policies

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE—PROPOSED TRUSTEES ONLY**

I, Laura Smith (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.



Signature

Mar 26, 2020

Date

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE**

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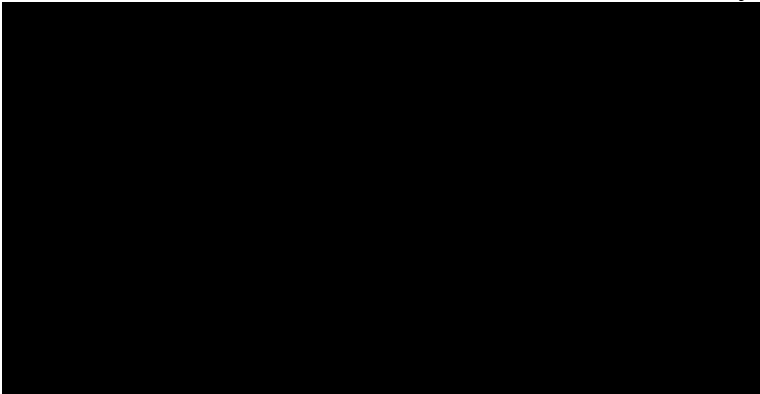
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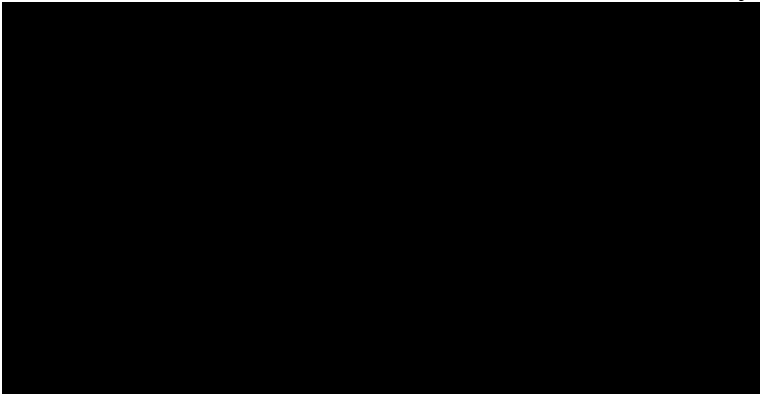
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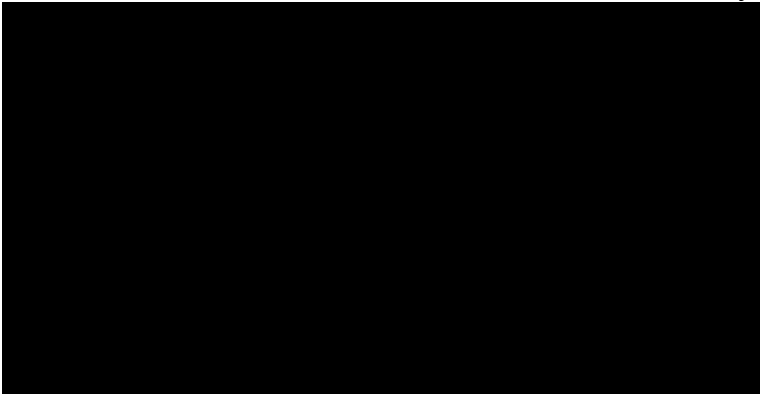
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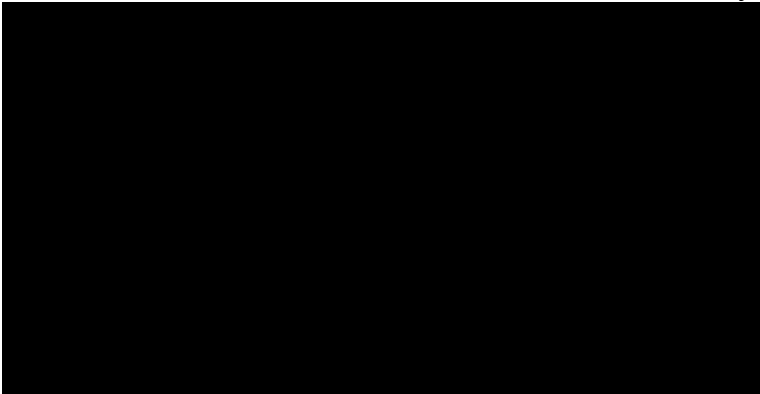
**Member Name:** Aqua Yvette Porter

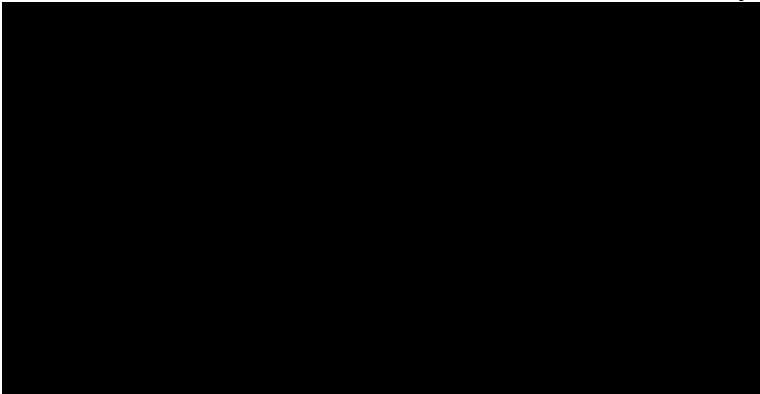
**Proposed Charter School Name:** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

**E-Mail Address:**  \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Telephone:**  \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:**  \_\_\_\_\_

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**Business Address:**  \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Background Information – All Applicant Group Members**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. **Note:** Individuals are not required to have degrees or education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. This documentation is for identify verification only.

Résumé Attached

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group

I attended an event in Spring 2019 regarding School Reform hosted by the Rochester Chamber, where I was introduced to Ms. Brittany Rumph. We had an initial conversation regarding the state of Public Education in Rochester where I expressed my frustration and disappointment in the results for our Rochester City children. Over the next few months, Ms. Rumph and I stayed in touch, and in the Fall of 2019, Ms. Rumph and I began discussing the mission and vision of Rochester Excellence Academy through various phone calls and in-person meetings. I was presented with the opportunity to join the founding team which I was delighted to accept.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

I affirm.

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

I affirm.

### **Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members**

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.

With more than 30 years as a professional, I am a retired Executive Leader in Technology and Innovation – leading various organizations with more than 200 employees, managed multi-million-dollar budgets, and was responsible for leading and delivering global, multi-million dollar technology projects. I graduated with a BS in Mechanical Engineering from Kettering University and with an Executive MBA from Rochester Institute of Technology.

My extensive management background enables me to apply skills in strategy, operations management, performance management, and sound judgment to drive good decision making to boards and organizations where I volunteer and serve. I currently serve as the Vice-Chair for Keuka College, Returning Board Member of The Susan B. Anthony Museum and House as a former Board Chair, member of the RIT Saunders School Dean’s Advisory Council, board member for the Yoga 4 A Good Hood, member of the Rochester (NY) Chapter of The Links Incorporated, and member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

My role as a member of the founding team for Rochester Excellence Academy is to provide insight and guidance through the application process, participate in board meetings to ground myself in the mission, vision, and key elements of the school, and engage in community outreach. As a board, we will provide oversight to the school ensuring academic, financial, and organizational oversight of the school.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department’s review of your background.

N/A

**Aqua Y Porter**

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Printed Name



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Signature

**Mar 26, 2020**

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Date

**Background Information—Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

8. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.

I affirm.

9. Please indicate whether you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

10. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. If yes, please provide an explanation.

11. What board position(s) and/or offices(s) will you hold? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.):

I will serve as a board member on the Governance Committee.

12. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

I have been a Rochester resident since 1999, and my son began his academic career in the Rochester City Schools. Unfortunately, due to the inconsistency and challenges he experienced in his district school, we moved him to a charter school, where he flourished academically. For my son, a charter school was the best option, an option that every parent should have for their child. Many of the students in Rochester face substantial barriers, and I believe a high-quality charter school like Rochester Excellence Academy will be a game-changer for our students and the greater community.

13. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

### Conflict of Interest - Proposed Board of Trustees Only

14. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a proposed charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

16. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, plans to contract or do business with, the proposed charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the proposed charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

17. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.

18. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.



19. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that will be conducted.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.

20. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

None  Yes

21. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

As a member of the board, it is my duty to ensure we remain compliant and act always in the best interest of Rochester Excellence Academy. Should a member on the board be found to work for their own benefit, it will be my duty to report this to the Board Chair. The Board Chair will investigate the matter, and if the member is found to have been part of self-dealing, they will be removed from the Board in accordance with our Bylaws.

In addition, if any member on the Board has a conflict of interest, they must disclose this information to the Board Chair. In addition, the member will need to remove themselves from any discussion and vote on the matter for which they have a conflict of interest. All members of the Board will sign a Conflict of Interest Policy each year.

22. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to the previous items 16-23, you may so indicate.

This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.

Yes.

### **Educational Philosophy -Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

23. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.

The mission of Rochester Excellence Academy will provide Rochester city scholars

in kindergarten through fourth grade with a rigorous academic program enabled with a character-based philosophy. With our school model, students will be prepared to transition to middle school with fundamental skills and mindsets necessary for success through the remainder of their academic career, college and life.

24. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

The Rochester Excellence Academy's academic program includes a rigorous curriculum, arts explorations, and individual supports. Students will have an extended school day and school year, a classroom model with increased individualized support with two teachers per grade level and a classroom size of 15 students. In addition, a strong literacy program with 185 minutes of instruction in small group literacy rotations. The math foundations will include inquiry-based lessons and cognitively guided instruction. Science study will be bolstered by hands-on experiments and other subjects will be supplemented with daily visits to the STEAM Center for grades K and 1. Rochester Excellence Academy will provide arts enrichment including Classical Ballet, West African Dance, Music, Theatre and the Visual Arts.

25. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. Please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

**Characteristics of A Successful Charter School include:**

- A well-defined, well intentioned and relevant mission
- A resolute focus on the child/scholar
- The belief that every child is valued and wanted.
- The principle that every child can be successful
- Competent, well trained, well compensated school leadership, staff and faculty
- Excellent purpose-built facilities, accessible resources and up-to-date technology
- A compassionate, empathetic and nurturing community

**Steps to ensure academic, financial, and organizational success include:**

- A highly trained, passionate and competent school leader is identified and in place.
- A respected, well networked and professionally successful Board of Trustees is recruited and seated.
- A charter application which reflects the mission of the school with evidence and proof sources with measured and sustained results is submitted.
- The board is highly engaged, is comfortable discussing and debating critical topics and issues and holds both themselves and the school leaders accountable for performance.
- Roles and responsibilities for the Board of Trustees and the Faculty, Staff and Leadership is clearly articulated. The interactions between the groups is agreed and managed.

- Funding is solidified and financial metrics are adhered to and there is no compromise for missing budgets plans.
- Performance KPI's are established and reviewed on a regular and agreed schedule.
- Performance Improvement plans are defined, targets and measures and timeframes are agreed and executed.
- Poor performance issues are immediately addressed.
- Outstanding performance is immediately recognized.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE—PROPOSED TRUSTEES ONLY**

I, Aqua Y Porter

(name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.



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Signature

Mar 26, 2020

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Date

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE**

**ATTACHMENT 5a: NEW APPLICANT AND PROSPECTIVE  
SCHOOL TRUSTEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET  
(For New School Applications Only)**

**Applicant Group Members (“AG”):** The term Applicant Group is newly applied to include those individuals formerly identified as *lead applicants* and those participating in the planning of the application to establish the proposed charter school; those who will comprise the initial board of trustees; and those who will become school employees—anyone who is involved in the development of the Letter of Intent and the Full Application. All members, including prospective board members, must provide the background information where indicated for Applicant Group Members.

**Prospective BOT Members (“BOT”):** Service on a public charter school board of trustees (“board”) is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school’s board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school. To properly evaluate proposed board members, please provide full and complete background information where indicated for proposed board members.

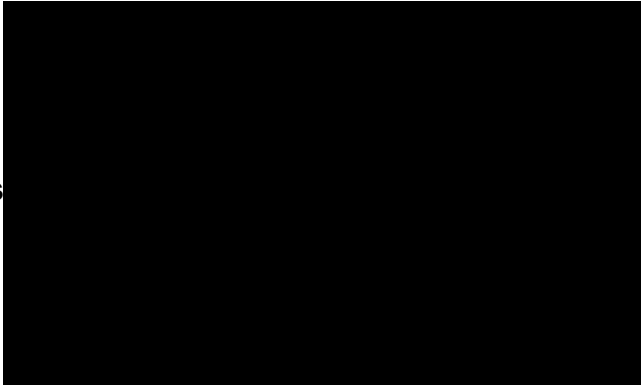
Note: Additionally, prospective members of the Board of Trustees are required to undergo a criminal background check via a fingerprint scan arranged by and at the expense of the State Education Department. ***The inability or unwillingness of any member of the applicant group to promptly undergo the required criminal background check via fingerprint scans within the timeframe requested in advance of the Board of Regents meeting shall be grounds for terminating an application or denying a charter recommendation.***

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**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS**

**Member Name:** Bonnie O’Keefe

**Proposed Charter School Name:** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

**E-Mail Address:**  \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided above will be redacted.*

### **Background Information – All Applicant Group Members**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. **Note:** Individuals are not required to have degrees or education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. This documentation is for identify verification only.

Résumé Attached

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group.

I became aware of Rochester Excellence Academy through a colleague who referred me to Ms. Brittany Rumph. I met with Ms. Rumph and her BES Governance Coach to discuss the commitments and responsibilities of a Board member. Ms. Rumph and I discussed her experience growing up and teaching in Rochester, the importance of literacy instruction before third grade, my work and research experience, and the combination of academic rigor and social and emotional supports she planned to create. I also spoke with BES staff on the phone on the role of the board. I was then invited to join the Founding team and have supported in the development and growth of the school.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

I affirm.

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

I affirm.

## Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.

I am a resident of the city of Rochester and a parent. I believe that all children in Rochester can achieve, in education and in life. In order to do so, they need adults to create environments, systems, and supports that will nurture their unique gifts and give them the knowledge and skills that will allow them to change the city and the world for the better. I believe Rochester Excellence Academy will provide a positive environment for its students and families and inspire positive change beyond its walls.

In my professional capacity, I am an education policy researcher, project manager, and consultant with Bellwether Education Partners. I have had the chance to work on a variety of issues in pre-K - 12 education on behalf of clients and grant-funded research projects, on topics that I believe will be useful and relevant to REA, including assessment and accountability, urban school district reform, charter school policy, early childhood education, and more. My clients include foundations, national and local education non-profits, charter school networks, and other education organizations working to improve educational outcomes for underserved students. Prior to this role, I worked for the District of Columbia State Education Agency (DC OSSE) managing the implementation of new assessments, and as an advocate and researcher at DC Action for Children. In those roles, I had the chance to work directly with school leaders, educators, and early childhood education providers in an urban school system achieving the highest growth of any city in the nation.

Three things that resonate in particular about Rochester Excellence Academy's mission and model are the focus on early elementary experiences, strong school culture and community, and rigorous focus on literacy. These focus areas are supported by both research and community need.

My professional experiences have given me a broad base of knowledge about education policy and research, and the chance to see different schools (and school boards) at work in many cities and states across the country. I also want to give back in my community locally, and engage with educational change in Rochester. Growing up, my mom was a longtime school volunteer who eventually became the school board president in my hometown – she instilled in me the importance of supporting local education. Generational poverty, systemic racism, and deep economic and educational challenges are not unique to Rochester, but they do manifest uniquely here. While a single great school cannot solve all problems, it can catalyze change for children, families, neighborhoods, and communities in important ways.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

As a member of the Founding team, I ensure alignment with our mission and vision, contribute to the development of the application, and build community partnerships with families and key stakeholders. In addition to supporting the school's mission and development, the board meets monthly to review the school model and prepare ourselves to govern if authorized. As a governing board, we must fulfill specific governance and legal responsibilities to ensure that the school is educationally successful, fiscally healthy, and operating in accordance with its charter and all relevant local/state/federal laws, in order to serve the students and families in the community of Rochester. We are responsible for hiring, setting the compensation for, and holding the school leader accountable for student academic success. I commit my time, resources, personal and professional network to further the success of Rochester Excellence Academy.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review of your background.

**Bonnie RO'Keefe**

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Printed Name

  
Bonnie R O'Keefe (Mar 28, 2020)

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Signature

**Mar 28, 2020**

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Date

**Background Information—Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

8. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.

I affirm.

9. Please indicate whether you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

10. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.



This does not apply to me.  Yes. If yes, please provide an explanation.

11. What board position(s) and/or offices(s) will you hold? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.):

Board member, Secretary

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12. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

I want to give back to the community where I live and will be raising a child, and I want use the education policy expertise I have gained in my career so far to have a positive effect on local education. Recently, I've served as a volunteer at the Center for Youth Crisis Nursery, a free drop-in child care center intended for families in crisis. Meeting some of the children and families there and hearing their stories motivated me to volunteer in a capacity that could have broader impact. I had previously considered serving on a charter school board as one way to do that but had not yet connected with a school that seemed like the right fit for me and for the community. When I met Ms. Rumph, I was inspired by the school, especially the combination of literacy and academic rigor with community-responsive and supportive values. I believe the proposed school will be an asset for Rochester children, families, and the community, and I am excited to be part of the founding team.

13. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

I have worked with school districts, charter schools, and charter school networks in previous roles, and my expertise is in K-12 education policy, especially at the state and local level. I have not served on a board of trustees before, but I have served on the DC alumni board of Education Pioneers (a professional development program for non-teaching roles in education), and volunteered for organizations including Reading Partners (in DC), and the Center for Youth Crisis Nursery (in Rochester). I believe I will bring to the board a depth of experience and familiarity with charter school operations and education research and policy in general that will be valuable and important, especially in the early years of the school.

### Conflict of Interest - Proposed Board of Trustees Only

14. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a proposed charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

16. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, plans to contract or do business with, the proposed charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the proposed charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

17. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.

18. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.

19. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that will be conducted.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.

20. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

None  Yes

21. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

Each year, every member of the Rochester Excellence Board of Trustees will sign the Conflict of Interest Policy and is responsible for disclosing any and all real or perceived conflicts that will impact the board or school. If a member has a real or perceived conflict, they must disclose this to the Board Chair and remove themselves from the discussion and vote. On the Rochester Excellence Board, there is no room for self-dealing, and it will not be tolerated. Should a Board member be found to have participated in self-dealing, that member will be relieved from their duties and removed from continuing to serve on the Board in accordance to our Bylaws.

22. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to the previous items 16-23, you may so indicate.

This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.

Yes.

### **Educational Philosophy -Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

23. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.

The mission of Rochester Excellence Academy is to equip all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college, career, and life, through rigorous academics, a community-based on values, and individualized supports. Rochester Excellence Academy believes everything a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them, and all students can and will excel if properly supported.

24. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

Rochester Excellence Academy will serve students in grades K-4 with rigorous academics, arts exploration, and individualized supports. Rigorous academics will include a focus on early literacy, which research shows is critical to longer term academic success. Individualized supports will include inclusive and supportive classrooms for students of all needs and abilities, and a school culture that supports healthy social and emotional developments. Arts exploration will provide additional educational and enriching experiences in school and through community partnerships.

25. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. Please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

We believe success in a charter school includes partnerships with families, students, and the key stakeholders, a School Leader who remains focused on the school's mission and vision, an educationally sound mission and vision, which recognizes students' needs and strengths, and the operational systems to fulfill that mission, an exemplary team of educators and other professionals working together to ensure student success, utilizing research and data to support the best outcomes for students and monitor progress in every aspect of the school's design and operations, a governing board who will maintain academic, fiscal, and organization oversight, and adhering to all local, state, and federal laws.

In order to support the success of the school, the board's responsibilities are to hire, set the compensation for, and evaluate the school leader, and provide oversight to ensure that the school is fulfilling its mission, its charter, its legal, ethical, and fiscal responsibilities as a public school, and most importantly, serving its children and families. The board will also help make connections and partnerships between the school and other community organizations and service providers, and monitor progress on an ongoing basis to ensure the school's success.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE—PROPOSED TRUSTEES ONLY**

I, Bonnie R O'Keefe (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

  
Bonnie R O'Keefe (Mar 28, 2020)

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Signature

Mar 28, 2020

Date

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**  
**CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE**

**ATTACHMENT 5a: NEW APPLICANT AND PROSPECTIVE  
SCHOOL TRUSTEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET  
(For New School Applications Only)**

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**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS**

**Member Name:** Loren M. Montrallo

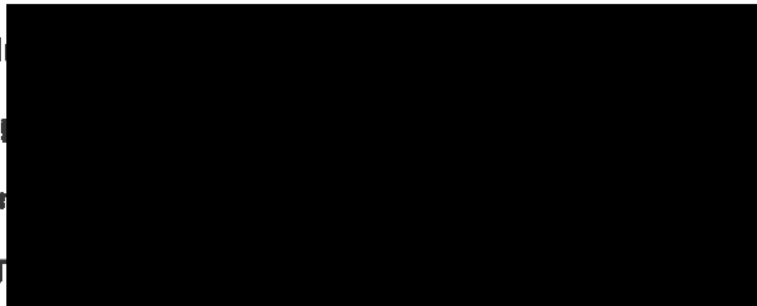
**Proposed Charter School Name:** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

**E-Mail Address:**

**Home Telephone:**

**Home Address:**

**Business Telephone:**



Business [REDACTED]

*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided above will be redacted.*

### **Background Information – All Applicant Group Members**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. **Note:** Individuals are not required to have degrees or education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. This documentation is for identify verification only.

Résumé Attached

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

- If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group.

- a. I was introduced to the Leader Founder, Ms. Brittany Rumph, through a mutual professional contact, Mr. Todd Waite, Program Officer of The Farash Foundation, a local philanthropy. We met at a local coffee house and to learn more about each other and the mission for Rochester Excellence Academy. We quickly realized that we both had a similar vision regarding education and youth development services for the families and youth of the Greater Rochester area. We both expressed our passion for viewing families through a holistic lens that allows youth and families to gain access to not only a high-quality academic education but, high quality out of school time opportunities as well. Ms. Brittany and I discussed my position at the YMCA of Greater Rochester, the Program Director at The YMCA Center for Equity at Lewis Street as a strong support to the families at the Rochester Excellence Academy. The YMCA of Greater Rochester not only helps support youth through academic enrichment programs but also social and emotional enrichment opportunities. We both discussed that it would be key for the success of families that they have a connection to a resource rich organization as the YMCA of Greater Rochester. Ms. Brittany asked if I had an

interest in joining the board of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School which I gladly accepted.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

I affirm.

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

I affirm.



## Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.
  - a. I have been a youth development professional with many different roles for over 16 years in the Greater Rochester area. I am a certified NYS teacher with years of experience working with youth who are receiving specialized services. I also have experience writing and implementing individual education plans across multiple grade levels and education programs. As the Program Director here at the YMCA of Greater Rochester I have had the opportunity to work with multiple schools from across the Greater Rochester area including the Rochester City School District as well as several charter schools across the city. During my time working with those schools it has become highly apparent that families and youth need high quality out of school opportunities. Out of school opportunities such as afterschool programs provide youth and families several benefits. Schools that have high quality after school programming have data proven youth who have higher attendance rates and higher attachment to their school community. I am looking forward to helping the families at the Rochester Excellence Academy access great youth programs.
  - b. Before working at the YMCA of Greater Rochester I was the Behavioral Specialist for BOCES 2. During my time as the behavioral specialist I worked hand in hand with teachers and families connecting them with individualized behavior plans that helped youth achieve academically, socially, and emotionally. I was also the TCIS (Therapeutic Crisis Intervention in Schools) trainer for the program as well. With my knowledge of TCIS I have trained multiple school teams and youth development program teams in appropriate behavior management techniques that put the needs of youth first. The TCIS model has completely reshaped how schools and youth programs engage with youth who experience challenging behaviors. The TCIS model also helps support administration, teachers, support staff, and families with engaging with youth experiencing challenging behaviors.
  - c. One of my primary roles as Program Director for the YMCA of Greater Rochester is to help seek, write, report, and manage multiple grants. These grants vary from Federal, State, and local grants. I fully understand how to seek out grants and how to properly manage and report out on grants to help fund high quality youth programs. I am highly skilled at navigating multiple grant portals and reporting databases so that schools and non-profits can stay in compliance with their grant requirements. I have built many professional relationships with multiple funders at the Federal, State, and local level and have successfully received and maintained millions of

dollars in grant revenue over the last several years. Many of these grants have gone through multiple cycles and I have continued to allow the YMCA to be awarded these grants so that we can continue to provide high-quality out of school opportunities for youth and families at absolutely zero cost to any participant.

- d. With my experience as a classroom teacher, a behavioral specialist, and non-profit program director I am looking forward to building an excellent school together that helps youth and families reach their fullest potential. I believe that Ms. Rumph has done an excellent job at building a diverse group of individuals who have a wide variety of experiences and skills to help youth and families.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

- a. As a member of the board of trustees of Rochester Excellence Academy, I am responsible for ensuring the school provides a high-quality academic education to all students but, also provides high-quality out of school enrichment opportunities to all youth and families. I will ensure there is a strategic vision for the school which, honors the voices of everyone in the school community. The voices of youth and families should and will be present on this school board and I look forward to ensuring that this happens. I also believe my role is to stay engaged with all aspects of the school and to stay connected to the school's youth and families and ensure their needs are always at the forefront of the school boards mission and vision.
- b. I also believe it is my mission to connect youth and families to access multiple local supports through many different avenues. Rochester, New York is a very resource rich city; however, many families are unsure or unable to access many of the resources our city has to offer. Through my service on the board at the Rochester Excellence Academy I plan to ensure that families are well informed and supported by the multiple resources we have to offer as a board.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review of your background.

Loren M. Montrallo

Printed Name



Signature

4.30.21

            
Date

**Background Information—Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

8. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.

I affirm.

9. Please indicate whether you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

10. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. If yes, please provide an explanation.

11. What board position(s) and/or offices(s) will you hold? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.):

a. Board Member

12. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

a. I wish to serve on the board of the Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School because I believe in the ability of quality schools to change the lives of youth and families. When excellent schools wrap their arms around a family it can completely make all the difference for a youth and their family surrounding not only academic success but, social and emotional success as well. I believe it is vitally important that schools be a beacon to the citizens in the community. A place where not only children go to learn but to feel safe and supported in a wide variety of ways. Schools should also build positive relationships with the community they serve and build relationships with other community organizations as well. Throughout my different work experiences in the Greater Rochester area I have been able to build many connections with a wide variety of schools and community organizations and I would like to support

the Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School by helping the school build stronger and broader relationships within the Greater Rochester community.

- b. During my time speaking with Ms. Rumph I have found many similarities between her pedagogical practices and my own. We also both believe that youth and families deserve the best a school can provide. This has clearly been evidenced by how much work Ms. Rumph has put in to building a diverse board for our school. I am very excited to begin the work of bringing youth and families together and building even stronger relationships.

13. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

### Conflict of Interest - Proposed Board of Trustees Only

14. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a proposed charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

16. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, plans to contract or do business with, the proposed charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the proposed charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

The YMCA of Greater Rochester which I am employed by plans on providing an after-school program as well as instructional supports throughout the school day. However, during votes regarding the YMCA of Greater Rochester I will not be able to vote.

17. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.

18. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or

indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.

19. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that will be conducted.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.

20. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

None  Yes

21. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

a. I would alert the board chair and go from there.

22. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to the previous items 16-23, you may so indicate.

This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.

Yes.

### **Educational Philosophy -Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

23. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.

a. Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School has a mission to empower all families and youth; Kindergarten through fourth grade

through rigorous academics and enhanced enrichment opportunities. The school will work together as a community to support all youth and families to achieve life-long success.

- b. We believe that all children have the natural gifts they need in order to learn and to succeed socially and emotionally when they are properly supported.

24. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

- a. There are three main core components to the Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School's educational program. The school will empower youth and families through rigorous academics, arts enrichment opportunities, and individual supports. Social and emotional learning will be at the forefront of all academic and enrichment opportunities as well.
- b. Rigorous academics will be driven through teachers, youth, and families who will be equipped with curriculum aligned to the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards, across all content areas. These learning standards will be supported through a three-week summer institute intensive, weekly professional development, and weekly observations paired with both live coaching and several feedback meetings.

More specifically:

- **Literacy** skills and knowledge will be supported 185 minutes of instruction and small group literacy rotations.
  - **Math** will be supported through inquiry-based lessons and direct instruction as well as a daily story problem block
  - **Science** instruction will feature hand-on experiments; require students to research, explore, and experiment and problem-solve real life situations; Amplify's science curriculum will support students' learning. Younger students in K-1 will have daily STEAM centers.
- c. The school has developed a comprehensive arts program which will support both academic and social emotional achievement in partnership with the YMCA of Greater Rochester's Community Services Division. The program can include a wide variety of music, visual arts, fine arts, and performing arts through a robust art exploration block and out of school time program. The Western NY Ballet Company, Judah Sealy Music, and the Rochester Education Foundation will provide support as well.
  - d. To support students individualized needs, the school's two-teacher model and integrated ICT classroom of 15 students at each grade



level increases the ability to provide individualized supports. Teachers will be supported in the use and analysis of STEP, a researched based literacy assessment, NWEA MAP, a nationally normed assessment, as well as internally created assessments, and daily classroom assessments.

- e. Social Workers and Therapeutic Intervention Specialists will help to provide social and emotional supports to students at every level. There will also be daily mental health check-ins, daily moments of peace and daily social emotional interactive read aloud to promote social and emotional learning. The school will be partnering with Komposition Kids, a not for profit organization that offers programs for young people, between the ages of 6 – 12, who live in single-parent households or are economically disadvantaged. They are partnering to offer a career readiness program.

25. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. Please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

a. **Leadership:**

- i. Students perform better when the principal and school board members provide strong leadership. Effective leaders are visible, can successfully convey the school's mission and vision, collaborate with teachers to enhance their skills, and are involved in the discovery of and solution to problems.

b. **High Expectations:**

- i. High expectations of students as well as teachers. High expectations of students have repeatedly been shown to have a positive impact on student performance. Students are dependent on the expectations placed on them during this period of their development, they are still shaping their personal sense of ability and esteem and it is very important that school staff empower youth to achieve more. Teachers who are expected to teach at high levels of effectiveness can reach the level of expectations, particularly when teacher evaluations and professional development are geared toward improving instructional quality and not tied directly to test scores.

c. **Continuous Improvement Plans:**

- i. Effective use of assessment data allows schools to identify problematic areas of learning at the classroom and school levels, so that teachers can generate solutions to address the problems. There should also be data driven assessments to

make sure that youth are not only growing academically but socially and emotionally as well.

**d. Goals and Direction:**

- i. The fourth attribute of a successful school is the existence of goals and direction. According to research, the successful school principal actively constructs goals and then effectively communicates them to appropriate individuals (e.g.; students, teachers, and the community at large.) School principals must also be open and willing to incorporate innovation into goals for school processes and practices. So it is very important to invite input from all stakeholders in the process of developing school goals. Students performance has been shown to improve in schools where the entire school community works towards shared goals that are clearly communicated and shared among all in the learning environment.

**e. Secure and Organized:**

- i. The fifth and final attribute of a successful school is the extent to which the school is secure and organized. For maximum learning to occur, students must feel safe and secure in their learning environments. Respect is a quality that is promoted and is fundamental aspect of an effective and safe school. Successful schools also have a number of trained staff and programs, such as social workers, who work with students experiencing challenges before situations get out of hand. It is also very important that community members and families feel safe and secure in the school as well.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE—PROPOSED TRUSTEES ONLY**

I, Loren Montraillo (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

  
Signature

4.30.21

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Date

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE**

**ATTACHMENT 5a: NEW APPLICANT AND PROSPECTIVE  
SCHOOL TRUSTEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET  
(For New School Applications Only)**

**Applicant Group Members (“AG”):** The term Applicant Group is newly applied to include those individuals formerly identified as *lead applicants* and those participating in the planning of the application to establish the proposed charter school; those who will comprise the initial board of trustees; and those who will become school employees—anyone who is involved in the development of the Letter of Intent and the Full Application. All members, including prospective board members, must provide the background information where indicated for Applicant Group Members.

**Prospective BOT Members (“BOT”):** Service on a public charter school board of trustees (“board”) is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school’s board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school. To properly evaluate proposed board members, please provide full and complete background information where indicated for proposed board members.

Note: Additionally, prospective members of the Board of Trustees are required to undergo a criminal background check via a fingerprint scan arranged by and at the expense of the State Education Department. <sup>RH</sup> ***The inability or unwillingness of any member of the applicant group to promptly undergo the required criminal background check via fingerprint scans within the timeframe requested in advance of the Board of Regents meeting shall be grounds for terminating an application or denying a charter recommendation.***

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**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS**

**Member Name:** Robert Hoggard

**Proposed Charter School Name:** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided above will be redacted.*

### **Background Information – All Applicant Group Members**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. **Note:** Individuals are not required to have degrees or education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. This documentation is for identify verification only.

Résumé Attached

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

- If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group.

Ms. Brittany Rumph and I met to discuss education reform. In that meeting, we discussed the components that create a high-quality school, the mission of the school, board responsibilities, time commitment, and what we would like to see for the families and students of Rochester. After several discussions and in-person meetings to determine mission alignment, Ms. Rumph invited me to the founding team.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

I affirm.

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

I affirm.

## Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.

I taught students full of enormous potential at Leadership Academy for Young Men and Vanguard High School in Rochester, New York. I saw first-hand how many of our children are underserved by the K-12 education system. I left Rochester City School District to serve low-income families through The Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program at Keuka College. I stepped in to mitigate the concerns students faced at home, prepared them for college, and directed them to various resources on campus that would support their success.

I was also a steering committee member on the President's campus-wide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce. This drove me to pursue my Ph.D. in Higher Education at Warner School of Education at the University of Rochester (UR). My research interests are centered on college readiness, the functionality of college rankings, and the utility of the college degree. I serve on UR's campus wide First Year Celebration Committee in support of President Sarah Mangelsdorf's first year as president. I saw a need to address how we provide quality health care to those who need it the most. Currently, I work at Rochester Regional Health as a Development Associate raising monies to ensure we provide quality health care to everyone.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

My role in the application process has been to ensure our application and our school model coherently incorporates data-driven strategies that drive student achievement. The ultimate key performance indicator will be to ensure that all students are prepared for college or career. I have participated in our monthly board meetings, community outreach efforts to engage with families and prospective students and provided my expertise to the lead founder.

If awarded the charter, as a board member, I will be responsible for maintaining academic, financial, and organizational oversight of the school, hiring and evaluating the School Leader, and continuing to support the school in building strong community partnerships.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review of your background.

N/A

Robert KHoggard

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Printed Name

*Robert K Hoggard*

Robert KHoggard (Mar 31, 2020)

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Signature

Mar 31, 2020

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Date

## Background Information—Proposed Board of Trustees Only

8. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.

I affirm.

9. Please indicate whether you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

10. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. If yes, please provide an explanation.

11. What board position(s) and/or offices(s) will you hold? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.):

Academic Committee.

12. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

Joining the Rochester Excellence Academy Board will allow me to make an impact on my community and a difference in the lives of our families and students. Students within Rochester are deprived of a strong and quality option. It is incumbent upon us to give students and families a quality education that will prepare them with the tools and skills necessary for the real world.

13. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

I serve on the board of the Academy of Health Sciences Charter School.





## Conflict of Interest - Proposed Board of Trustees Only

14. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a proposed charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

16. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, plans to contract or do business with, the proposed charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the proposed charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

17. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.

18. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.

19. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that will be conducted.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.

20. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

None  Yes

21. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

I would report the issue to the board chair and ensure the board chair investigates the issue. If the member of the board is involved in the issue, he or she will be removed from the board.

22. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to the previous items 16-23, you may so indicate.

This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.

Yes.

### **Educational Philosophy -Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

23. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.

The proposed school has a rich mission to ensure academic achievement happens and children learn the fundamental skills needed for college and careers. In Rochester, students are deprived from educational opportunities that spur them to be literate and numerate at competent, proficient, and even mastery levels. However, the proposed school prides itself on being a beacon in the Rochester community and I'd like to take part in it.

We believe through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized support, Rochester Excellence Academy can equip all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college, career, and life. The mission is important because it places the needs of the community at the forefront and focuses on the outcomes of a sound education.

24. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

We know that students need a strong foundation to have a fighting chance in education throughout the P-12 continuum. At Rochester Excellence Academy, we believe through rigorous academics, arts exploration and individualized support all students will be equipped with the academic skills and positive mindsets necessary to succeed. We will ensure teachers are providing high-quality instruction daily and utilizing data to inform and achieve student progress. We believe students should have the opportunity to have access to and be exposed to the city's strong arts and culture to support their academic and emotional growth. We also believe that individualized supports allow teachers to meet students where they are to provide adequate time and focus for success.

25. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. Please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

A successful charter school achieves high academic results for students, utilizes data to inform instruction and student progress, sets achievable goals, holds true to the mission and vision of the school, financially healthy, responsive to the needs of students and families, works expeditiously to build partnerships that help further student educational success, and the board holds itself and the School Leader accountable for the success of the organization. In addition, the charter school board and lead staff must check-in on all goals to ensure the school is on-track with providing a quality education.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE—PROPOSED TRUSTEES ONLY**

I, Robert K Hoggard (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

*Robert K Hoggard*

Robert K Hoggard (Mar 31, 2020)

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Signature

Mar 31, 2020

Date

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE**

**ATTACHMENT 5a: NEW APPLICANT AND PROSPECTIVE  
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**Prospective BOT Members (“BOT”):** Service on a public charter school board of trustees (“board”) is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school’s board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school. To properly evaluate proposed board members, please provide full and complete background information where indicated for proposed board members.

Note: Additionally, prospective members of the Board of Trustees are required to undergo a criminal background check via a fingerprint scan arranged by and at the expense of the State Education Department. ***The inability or unwillingness of any member of the applicant group to promptly undergo the required criminal background check via fingerprint scans within the timeframe requested in advance of the Board of Regents meeting shall be grounds for terminating an application or denying a charter recommendation.***

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**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS**

**Member Name: Rashondra Martin**

**Proposed Charter School Name: Rochester Excellence Academy**

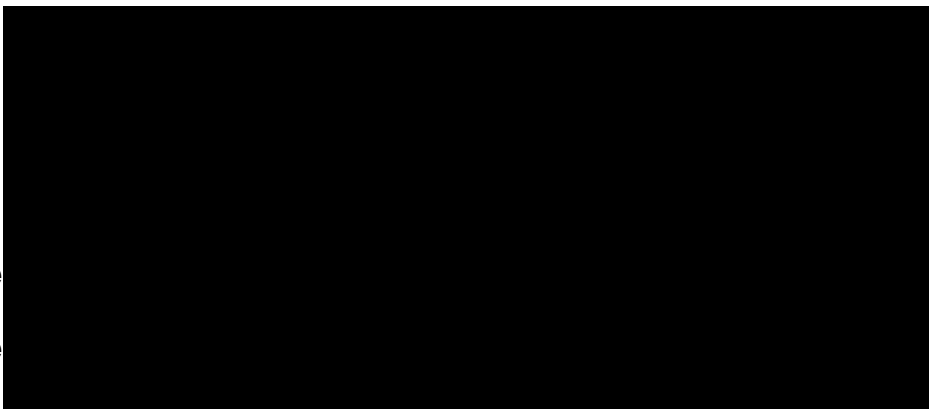
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*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided above will be redacted.*

### **Background Information – All Applicant Group Members**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. **Note:** Individuals are not required to have degrees or education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. This documentation is for identify verification only.

Résumé Attached

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group.

I was introduced to the Lead Founder, Ms. Brittany Rumph, through a mutual professional contact. Ms Rumph and I met virtually through Zoom due to the COVID pandemic to learn more about each other and the mission for Rochester Excellence Academy. I was inspired by her vision for the school and wanted to support her in in this endeavor. We discussed our individual experiences, our shared beliefs about a high-quality education as a fundamental right for all children. Ms. Rumph then set up a meeting for me to meet with the Board's Governance Committee. I was interviewed by the Board's Governance and further discussed the mission of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School and the role board members would play. After meeting with the Board's Governance Committee and extending me the opportunity to join the board of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School and I was honored to accept.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

I affirm.

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

I affirm.



## Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.

I am an attorney that practiced in K-12 education and I hope to bring my experience, skills and knowledge to support the work of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School. I have the unique experience of working at two school districts in New York State. I was the General Counsel for Buffalo Public Schools. I managed the legal department and provided legal advice and counsel to senior management and various departments within the organization. I managed risk holistically and proposed practical solutions while balancing legal considerations with educational objectives. During my tenure with Buffalo Public Schools, I provided management and supervision in labor and employment matters, litigation matters, charter schools renewals and Board Governance.

Prior to my role with Buffalo Public Schools, I was an Associate Attorney for the Rochester City School District. I drafted and negotiated all contracts and managed a contract portfolio of approximately \$75,000,000.00. The contracts included agreements with charter organizations. In addition, I was responsible for drafting and updating the District's policies and procedures.

I believe my legal experience in K-12 education will serve as an asset as a member of the board of trustees for Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

As a member of the board of trustees of Rochester Excellence Academy, I know I am responsible for ensuring the school provides a high-quality education to all students. My duties include ensuring there is a strategic vision for the school; establishing and maintaining expectations for the school leader and holding the leader accountable for students' academic success; and providing financial oversight. As a board member, it is my responsibility develop policies that drive academic and fiscal success.

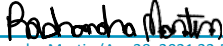
I want to continue my tradition of lending my legal acumen to the community. I believe education is a key factor to closing the poverty gap in our community. I am confident that Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will make a unique contribution to the academic landscape in the community. The school's focus on rigorous academics with social emotional development combined with culturally relevant pedagogy are key components in making the school community successful. I am elated about the opportunity to have a profound impact in our students' success and honored to serve.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review of your background.

Rashondra Martin

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Printed Name



Rashondra Martin (Apr 28, 2021 22:53 EDT)

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Signature

Apr 28, 2021

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Date

**Background Information—Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

8. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.

I affirm.

9. Please indicate whether you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

10. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. If yes, please provide an explanation.

11. What board position(s) and/or offices(s) will you hold? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.):

Board Member

12. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

I wish to serve on the board of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School because I am committed to creating high quality educational opportunities for students within the community. I recognize that the school's focus on rigorous academics with social emotional development combined with culturally relevant pedagogy is critically needed in the educational landscape in Rochester.

It is also compelling to me that Rochester Excellence Academy's founder, Ms. Brittany Rumph is as a member herself of the Rochester community and she has demonstrated herself as experienced educator and professional developer and coach. Her professional experience and the fact that she is from Rochester makes her uniquely situated to start and lead a school that meets the unique needs of Rochester.

13. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

### Conflict of Interest - Proposed Board of Trustees Only

14. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a proposed charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

16. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, plans to contract or do business with, the proposed charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the proposed charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

17. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.

18. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.

19. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that will be conducted.

- Yes.
- Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.
- I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.

20. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school’s board.

- None  Yes

21. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school’s board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

I would raise the concern of self-dealing to the board members and request and investigation. If determined, that any individual is involved in self-dealing, my recommendation would be removed from the board. It is my understanding that our Bylaws and Conflict of Interest policy should address the steps necessary for self-dealing.

22. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to the previous items 16-23, you may so indicate.

- This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.
- Yes.

**Educational Philosophy -Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

23. Please explain your understanding of the charter school’s mission and/or philosophy.

The school’s mission is: Through rigorous academics, a community-based on values, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college, career, and life.

Rochester Excellence Academy's philosophy is grounded in the belief that everything a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them; when properly supported, all students can and will excel. Therefore, excellence is not an accident; it is intentionally supported, fostered, and nurtured.

This fundamental belief – that all children can learn and succeed when properly supported – is critical to the success of any effectively-performing school.

24. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School's educational program is grounded in three core components: rigorous academics, arts exploration, and individualized supports. The school will also support students' social and emotional well-being and mental health through a comprehensive approach.

In terms of **rigorous academics**, teachers will be equipped with curriculum aligned to the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards "NYSNGLS", across all content areas, and are consistently supported through a three-week summer institute intensive, weekly professional development, and weekly observations paired with both live coaching and feedback meetings.

More specifically:

- **Literacy** skills and knowledge will be supported 185 minutes of instruction and small group literacy rotations.
- **Math** will be supported through inquiry-based lessons and direct instruction as well as a daily story problem block
- **Science** instruction will feature hand-on experiments; require students to research, explore, and experiment and problem-solve real life situations; Amplify's science curriculum will support students' learning. Younger students in K-1 will have daily STEAM centers.

In terms of **arts exploration**, the school has developed a robust arts program which will support both academic achievement and social emotional development. The program will include Classical Ballet, West African Dance, Music, Visual Arts, and Theatre through an arts exploration block and after school enrichment. These will be conducted in partnership with the Rochester YMCA and their Dreamseeds Program as well as the Western NY Ballet Company, and Judah Sealy Music. The school has also partnered with the Rochester Education Foundation to provide music instruments for students.

To support **students individualized needs**, the school's two-teacher model and integrated ICT classroom of 15 students at each grade level increases the ability to provide individualized supports. Teachers will be supported in the use and analysis of data to best inform their instruction.

In terms of **social and emotional growth and mental health** the school will employ a Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist. The school is also partnering with Komposition Kids, a non-profit organization that offer programs for young people, between the ages of 6-12, who live in single-parent households or are economically disadvantaged. They are partnering to offer a Career Readiness Program.

25. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. Please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

I believe a successful school should have the following characteristics:

1. Operationally effective – first and foremost, schools must be safe spaces in order to be effective learning environments. They should be secure and fiscally sound while also meeting all regulatory requirements. The school should also have the systems, resources and tools needed to effectively deliver instruction and meet their educational goals whether it be in their staffing model, professional development supports, their curriculum, or data analysis tools.
2. Grade-level expectations for students –All educators must believe their students are capable of grade-level work. The teachers should be given the tools to ensure that they can provide the best instruction for their students and be required to continue professional development.
3. Effective Leadership – this includes both the school leader and the board of directors. All leaders must be familiar with the needs of students and families and the needs of the school and its community. The board should also have an understanding of the strength and growth areas of the school leader and the staff overall. They should have a clear and aligned vision that is shared by all and effectively communicated to all stakeholders.

The steps the board should take to ensure the school is and remains successful, are the following steps:

1. Build a strong board with clear roles and responsibilities.

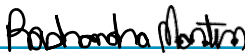


- a. This includes identifying board member roles and committees. Board members should be oriented to their role as stewards of the education of children and taxpayer fiduciaries.
  - b. Ensure there is a shared vision for the school and quantifiable measurable results for students and the school leader.
  - c. Once the school is incorporated, establish bylaws and approve policies that will guide the board. In addition, have an on-going commitment to update policies.
2. Ongoing monitoring of the school
- a. The board should have data and clear processes for monitoring both student achievement, fiscal health, and the overall school community culture.
  - b. The Board should have monthly meetings to stay apprised of of the school's successes and identify problems. Then work with the school leader to implement solutions.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE—PROPOSED TRUSTEES ONLY**

I, Rashondra Martin (name of

proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

  
Rashondra Martin (Apr 28, 2021 22:53 EDT)

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Signature

**Apr 28, 2021**

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Date

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE**

**ATTACHMENT 5a: NEW APPLICANT AND PROSPECTIVE  
SCHOOL TRUSTEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET  
(For New School Applications Only)**

**Applicant Group Members (“AG”):** The term Applicant Group is newly applied to include those individuals formerly identified as *lead applicants* and those participating in the planning of the application to establish the proposed charter school; those who will comprise the initial board of trustees; and those who will become school employees—anyone who is involved in the development of the Letter of Intent and the Full Application. All members, including prospective board members, must provide the background information where indicated for Applicant Group Members.

**Prospective BOT Members (“BOT”):** Service on a public charter school board of trustees (“board”) is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school’s board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school. To properly evaluate proposed board members, please provide full and complete background information where indicated for proposed board members.

Note: Additionally, prospective members of the Board of Trustees are required to undergo a criminal background check via a fingerprint scan arranged by and at the expense of the State Education Department. ***The inability or unwillingness of any member of the applicant group to promptly undergo the required criminal background check via fingerprint scans within the timeframe requested in advance of the Board of Regents meeting shall be grounds for terminating an application or denying a charter recommendation.***

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**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS**

**Member Name:** Vernon Connors \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed Charter School Name:** Rochester Excellence Academy \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided above will be redacted.*

### **Background Information – All Applicant Group Members**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. **Note:** Individuals are not required to have degrees or education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. This documentation is for identify verification only.

Résumé Attached

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group.

Board member Robert Hoggard reached out to recruit me to join the Board. I was recommended by Shaun Nelms, Superintendent of East High School, with whom I had worked with at the Rochester City School District. Robert and I had several conversations about the school and the role I could play in making it a success, after which Brittany Rumph and I discussed my background and she offered me the role as the Board Treasurer.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

I affirm.

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

I affirm.

## Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.

I have 25 years of experience in school administration and financial management in both private and public school settings. I served in a variety of organizations, from a small private school as the Business Manager at Bishop Kearney High School to a large urban school district as the Budget Director and Acting Chief Financial Officer for the Rochester City School District. I have a great deal of hands on business office experience from my time as the Business Manager at Bishop Kearney and as the District Treasurer for the Brockport Central District. In addition, I have a great deal of administrative experience as the School Business Official for the Lansing Central School District, Budget Director at the Rochester City School District, and Director of Financial & Business Affairs at the Jamestown City School District. This combination of operational and administrative experience will enable me to help the Rochester Excellence Academy manage its financial affairs successfully.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

My role at the Rochester Excellence Academy would be to serve as the Treasurer for the Board of Trustees, providing financial oversight and guidance for the new school.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review of your background.

I have a permanent certification in School Business Administration from the New York State Education Department.

Vernon Connors

Printed Name

Vernon Connors

Signature

April 30, 2021

Date

### Background Information—Proposed Board of Trustees Only

8. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.

I affirm.

9. Please indicate whether you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

10. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. If yes, please provide an explanation.

11. What board position(s) and/or offices(s) will you hold? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.):

I would serve on the Finance Committee as the Board Treasurer.

12. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

I wish to remain involved in Rochester education after serving 25 years in area educational institutions. The challenges that Rochester children face are well documented from a high level of childhood poverty to the struggles of the Rochester City School District. The Rochester Excellence Academy would offer Rochester children a small, individualized program that would meet their educational, social, emotional, and mental health needs. I believe that my school administration and financial management background would benefit the school and enable the educational leaders and staff to direct their focus on instructional program and provide Rochester children an excellent educational opportunity.

13. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):



### Conflict of Interest - Proposed Board of Trustees Only

14. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

I worked with Rashondra Martin at the Rochester City School District where I served as the Budget Director and she worked in the Legal Department.

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a proposed charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

16. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, plans to contract or do business with, the proposed charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the proposed charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

17. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.

18. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.



19. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that will be conducted.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.

20. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

None  Yes

21. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

I would document my concerns and bring it to the Executive Director and other board members for review and validation. If those concerns were validated, I would work with the board to rectify the situation and remove the offending member from the board if necessary.

22. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to the previous items 16-23, you may so indicate.

This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.

Yes.

### **Educational Philosophy -Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

23. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy.

The Rochester Excellence Academy believes that all children can learn and succeed when properly supported through rigorous academics and individualized supports. All students, including those academically at-risk, who have learning disabilities, or are English language learners, can succeed in small classroom settings with appropriate education and instructional, emotional, and social support.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE—PROPOSED TRUSTEES ONLY**

I, Vernon Connors \_\_\_\_\_ (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

*Vernon Connors*

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Signature

April 30, 2021

Date

24. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

The Rochester Excellence Academy will offer individualized education in small class settings of up to 15 students with both a regular education and special education teacher in each classroom to serve all students, including those with special needs and/or English language learners. Most importantly, Arts education and community partnerships will be embedded in all classrooms providing for a sound, well-rounded education.

25. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. Please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

Successful schools address all of its students' needs, including academic, emotional, social, and mental health. As Rochester has one of the highest rates of childhood poverty in the country, its students experience these challenges to a much greater degree than do students from more affluent communities. Rochester schools must expend greater effort to remove these barriers that prevent academic success. Small classrooms that provide individualized education, along with the necessary supports for students with learning disabilities, as well as social and emotional needs, provide the framework to enable students to succeed academically. The Rochester Excellence Academy meets this framework with its integrated 15 student classrooms that provide special needs and English language learners support, while infusing each academic area with arts education and community partnership support.

The Board can best support academic success by monitoring the school to ensure that it remains true to its instructional model, arts integration, and community partnership support, while tracking academic, social and emotional student outcomes.

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE**

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Note: Additionally, prospective members of the Board of Trustees are required to undergo a criminal background check via a fingerprint scan arranged by and at the expense of the State Education Department. ***The inability or unwillingness of any member of the applicant group to promptly undergo the required criminal background check via fingerprint scans within the timeframe requested in advance of the Board of Regents meeting shall be grounds for terminating an application or denying a charter recommendation.***

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**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS**

**Member Name:** Jeff Smink

**Proposed Charter School Name:** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

**E-Mail Address:**

**Home Telephone:**

**Home Address:**

**Business Telephone:**

**Business Address:**

*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided above will be redacted.*

### **Background Information – All Applicant Group Members**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. **Note:** Individuals are not required to have degrees or education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. This documentation is for identify verification only.

Résumé Attached

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group.

I became aware of this opportunity from Bonnie O'Keefe, another REA Board member. I had been looking for an opportunity to make a difference for Rochester students and families and as I learned more about Rochester Excellence Academy and met Brittany and other Board members, it became clear this was a great fit.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

I affirm.

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

I affirm.

## Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.

I bring over twenty years of experience in education to this role, with significant roles at the national, state, and local level. As someone who was born and raised in the Rochester area, I am passionate about improving academic opportunities for students in the City of Rochester and see Rochester Excellence Academy as playing a key role in filling this critical need.

I'm particularly excited about this role because it connects with two issues that I have significant expertise and passion for—early literacy and community engagement. For the past decade, I've worked on a variety of early literacy efforts that have prepared me well for serving on the Board. As a Senior Consultant with the Campaign for Grade Level Reading, I worked closely with over twenty urban communities across the nation to increase 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading proficiency rates, with a focus on school-community partnerships. I'm also currently working as Senior Advisor for two national early literacy organizations that provide support to K-3 teachers and parents and have learned a great deal about effective literacy instruction, including the science of reading. I know from research and personal experience, how critical it is that more students read at grade level by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Several years ago, I served on Rochester Mayor Warren's Early Learning Council and we found that students with successful outcomes in Pre-K were having all of their learning gains erased by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. K-3 is the ideal time to provide students with the gift of reading and I'm confident and grateful that REA will be helping students meet that goal, providing them with a foundation for a successful life.

Additionally, I bring significant experience in community engagement and school-community partnerships through my work as a co-founder and Vice President of the National Summer Learning Association. Finally, I have a strong understanding of the Rochester education landscape, having worked as a consultant and volunteer for local organizations such as the Mayor's Office, Rochester Public Library, and Urban League of Rochester. As a result, I look forward to building strong community partnerships throughout the community to support the students and families of Rochester Excellence Academy.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

As someone who has worked with and observed school boards across the nation, I've seen too many Boards either serve as a "rubber stamp" that provides little oversight or as a micromanager that slows down progress. As a result, I'm eager to play a role that provides appropriate oversight and accountability while allowing school leaders to use their expertise to best support schools and families. I see my over-arching role as helping

to support a strategic vision for the school; ensuring that school leaders are meeting expectations for student success; and providing fiscal oversight.

In my role on the Academic Committee, I look forward to using my expertise in early literacy and community engagement to support school leaders around best practices and new partnerships that will improve the academic and enrichment experiences of students. I'm also interested in helping to explore summer and afterschool partnerships that can expand learning opportunities for students and take advantage of Rochester's rich cultural heritage. Finally, I'm excited about supporting REA's focus on both rigorous academics and social emotional development. Too often, charter schools focus on one or the other, and I believe this more balanced approach is the right one for Rochester children and can provide a model for other schools across the region and state.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review of your background.

I moved back to Rochester 10 years ago, with the goal of using my experience in education to make a difference in the lives of Rochester students and families. Unfortunately, I learned that it is extremely challenging to make change in a system like Rochester, which is dominated by the interests of adults rather than children. The current outcomes for our students in Rochester are simply not acceptable and I'm committed to supporting schools like REA that can truly make a difference in our community by giving students a strong foundation for success in school and life.

Jeff Smink \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name

*Jeff Smink*

Jeff Smink (Apr 29, 2021 10:46 EDT)

Signature

Apr 29, 2021 \_\_\_\_\_

Date

**Background Information—Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

8. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.

I affirm.

9. Please indicate whether you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

10. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

This does not apply to me.  Yes. If yes, please provide an explanation.

11. What board position(s) and/or offices(s) will you hold? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): Academic Committee \_\_\_\_\_

12. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

I wish to serve on the board to make a difference in the lives of Rochester students and families, as well as the larger community. In Rochester, only 11% of students are proficient in reading and math, leading to poor outcomes in school and life. Based on my interactions with Brittany and the Board, I believe Rochester Excellence Academy can reverse this trend and give students a strong foundation to build on. Given my experience in education, early literacy, and community partnerships, I'm excited to share what I've learned to support Brittany and the students at REA in my role as a Board member.

13. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.



This does not apply to me.  Yes. (Include description here):

I'm currently a Board member for the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Rochester where I serve as the Vice President for Schools and Scholarship. In this role, I lead the alumni interview process for all students in the Rochester region, with a focus on finding students from underserved communities. Having a school like REA can help create a pipeline of qualified students from Rochester that are prepared to attend Harvard and other competitive colleges.

### Conflict of Interest - Proposed Board of Trustees Only

14. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective board members.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:  
I know Bonnie O'Keefe since we both work in the same field and live in Rochester.

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a proposed charter school employee.

I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

16. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, plans to contract or do business with, the proposed charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the proposed charter school.

No.  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

17. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we do not know any such persons.

18. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Yes.

Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.

I / we have no such interest.

19. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that will be conducted.

- Yes.
- Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.
- I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.

20. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school’s board.

- None  Yes

21. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school’s board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

If this situation occurred, I would report my suspicions to the Board Chair. The Executive Committee would then do an investigation. If any self-dealing is found, the Board Member would be dismissed immediately, which I would fully support.

22. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to the previous items 16-23, you may so indicate.

- This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.
- Yes.

**Educational Philosophy -Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

23. Please explain your understanding of the charter school’s mission and/or philosophy.

The school’s mission is: Through rigorous academics, a community-based on values, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college, career, and life.

Rochester Excellence Academy’s philosophy is grounded in the belief that everything a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them; when properly supported, all students can and will excel. Therefore, excellence is not an accident; it is intentionally supported, fostered, and nurtured.

This fundamental belief – that all children can learn and succeed when properly supported – is critical to the success of any effectively-performing school.

24. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school.

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School’s educational program is grounded in three core components: rigorous academics, arts exploration, and individualized supports. The school will also support students’ social and emotional well-being and mental health through a comprehensive approach.

In terms of **rigorous academics**, teachers will be equipped with curriculum aligned to the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards “NYSNGLS”, across all content areas, and are consistently supported through a three-week summer institute intensive, weekly professional development, and weekly observations paired with both live coaching and feedback meetings.

More specifically:

- **Literacy** skills and knowledge will be supported 185 minutes of instruction and small group literacy rotations.
- **Math** will be supported through inquiry based lessons and direct instruction as well as a daily story problem block
- **Science** instruction will feature hand-on experiments; require students to research, explore, and experiment and problem-solve real life situations; Amplify’s science curriculum will support students’ learning. Younger students in K-1 will have daily STEAM centers.

In terms of **arts exploration**, the school has developed a robust arts program which will support both academic achievement and social emotional development. The program will include Classical Ballet, West African Dance, Music, Visual Arts, and Theatre through an arts exploration block and after school enrichment. These will be conducted in partnership with the Rochester YMCA and their Dreamseeds Program as well as the Western NY Ballet Company, and Judah Sealy Music. The school has also partnered with the Rochester Education Foundation to provide music instruments for students.

To support **students individualized needs**, the school’s two-teacher model and integrated ICT classroom of 15 students at each grade level increases the ability to provide individualized supports. Teachers will be supported in the use and analysis of data to best inform their instruction and individual student support including data from STEP, a researched based literacy assessment, NWEA MAP, a nationally normed assessment, as well as internally-created assessments, and daily classroom assessments.

In terms of **social and emotional growth and mental health** the school will employ a Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist. There will also be Daily Mental Health Check-ins, Daily “Moments of Peace” (Mindfulness Moments) and a daily social emotional interactive Read Aloud. The school is also partnering with Komposition Kids, a non profit organization that offer programs for young people, between the ages of 6-12, who live in single-parent households or are economically disadvantaged. They are partnering to offer a Career Readiness Program.

25. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. Please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

While research has identified numerous characteristics for success schools, I believe a successful school should have the following characteristics:

1. Effective Leadership – this includes both the school leader and the board of directors. All leaders must be familiar with the needs of students and families and the needs of the school and its community. The board should also have an understanding of the strength and growth areas of the school leader and the staff overall. They should have a clear and aligned vision that is shared by all and effectively communicated to all stakeholders.
2. Shared vision and goals – The vision set by leadership should be understood by all members of the school community. Goals – whether student growth or teacher performance – should be clearly articulated and in support of the schools’ vision. They should be accessible and regularly referenced and visited as part of overall management of the school.
3. Grade-level expectations for students – countless research has shown that teachers’ beliefs about their students’ ability informs their instruction as well as school practices and policies. All educators must believe their students are capable of grade-level work.
4. A cycle of feedback and continuous improvement – ongoing feedback is crucial for any high performing organization. For a school, this includes the ongoing use of formative and interim data to inform instruction. It also includes continuous feedback and coaching for teachers to enable them to grow their mindsets, knowledge and skills.
5. Operationally effective – first and foremost, schools must be safe spaces in order to be effective learning environments. They should be secure and fiscally sound while also meeting all regulatory requirements. The school should also have the systems, resources and tools needed to effectively deliver instruction

and meet their educational goals whether it be in their staffing model, professional development supports, their curriculum, or data analysis tools.

In terms of the steps the board should take to ensure the school is and remains successful, I'd propose the following steps:

1. Build a strong board with clear roles and responsibilities.
  - a. This includes identifying board member roles and committees. Board members should be oriented to their role as stewards of the education of children and tax payer fiduciaries.
  - b. Ensure there is a shared vision for the school and measurable results for students and the school leader.
  - c. Once the school is incorporated, establish bylaws and approve policies that will guide the board.
  - d. Board members should also have opportunities to get to know each other as individuals.
  
2. Ongoing monitoring of the school
  - a. The board should have data and clear processes for monitoring both student achievement, fiscal health and the overall school community culture.
  - b. Check points should be at least monthly so that the board continually has "the pulse" of the school and can identify problems well in advance and work with the school leader to implement solutions and provide other needed supports.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE—PROPOSED TRUSTEES ONLY**

I, Jeff Smink, (name of proposed board member) state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

*Jeff Smink*

Jeff Smink (Apr 29, 2021 10:46 EDT)

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Signature

**Apr 29, 2021**

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Date

## Full Application Summary

Proposed Charter School Name	Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School		
Application History	N/A		
Proposed Board Chair Name	Laura Smith		
Proposed Board Chair Email Address	[REDACTED]		
Proposed Board Chair Telephone Number	[REDACTED]		
Public Contact Name	Brittany Rumph		
Public Contact Email Address	brumph@bes.org		
Public Contact Telephone Number	(585) 867-1034		
District of Location	Rochester, NY		
Opening Date	August 24, 2022		
Proposed Charter Term <sup>19</sup>	Initial 5-year term		
Proposed Management Company or Partner Organizations	N/A		
Priority School Design Elements	Partnership with Community Based Organizations		
Projected Enrollment and Grade Span for Indicated Years	<b>Year</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
	<b>1</b>	K-1	120
	<b>2</b>	K- 2	195
	<b>3</b>	K-3	270
	<b>4</b>	K- 4	325
	<b>5</b>	K- 4	375
<p><b>Mission Statement.</b> Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skill, habits, and mindsets necessary for school, career, and life success.</p>			
<p><b>Vision.</b> Excellence is not an accident; rather, it is intentionally supported, fostered, and nurtured.</p>			
<p><b>(1) Access to rigorous academics paired with high-quality instruction drives academic success.</b> All curricular choices across all content areas are research-based, meet New York State Next Generation Learning Standards, and have proven to support positive student outcomes in high performing schools with similar communities. Through rigorous curricular choices and effective instructional practices, students are taught, guided, and supported to think critically and develop problem-solving skills, ensuring a strong foundation in literacy and math. Students have 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction; small group literacy rotations will ensure targeted instruction in all literacy domains, including phonics, collaborative reading, guided reading, and reading comprehension. Through 105 minutes of daily math instruction, students develop problem-solving skills through direct instruction, inquiry-based lessons, and Cognitively Guided Instruction. Students explore mathematical concepts, independently solve story problems, present strategies and thought processes, and engage in whole class discourse around conceptual understandings. Teachers are equipped with standards-aligned curriculum across all content areas, and are consistently developed through a three-week summer institute, weekly professional development, guided intellectual lesson preparation, and weekly observations paired with live coaching and feedback meetings.</p>			
<p><b>(2) All students can achieve at high levels with individualized supports.</b></p>			



We use a two-teacher model to support the growth of all students, including those with disabilities and ELL/MLLs. We use data from Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress, a researched-based literacy assessment, Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress, a nationally normed assessment, internally-created standards-aligned assessments, and daily classroom assessments to inform individualized learning plans. We immediately respond to student data, providing in-the-moment feedback, differentiating instruction, and modifying curriculum. Integrated Co-Teaching classrooms increase individualized support through smaller class size (15 ) with special education certified and general education teachers. Living in extreme poverty, our students face multiple adverse childhood experiences. Each day begins with a “family meeting” during which students and teachers check in on how they are feeling and engage in lessons addressing positive social emotional development. We provide daily mindfulness moments, breathing exercises and yoga and use HighScope’s Six Steps of Conflict Resolution. Prioritizing social emotional development and mental health, our team includes a Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist.

### **(3) Character is developed in a values-based community.**

Character development, focused on virtues or values infused into the school culture, is critical to ensuring students become positive contributors to our society. **RESPECT** values guide our mindsets, decisions, and actions: **Respect** - I treat myself, others, and the environment with kindness. **Empathy** - I show concern for the feelings of others. **Scholarship** - I am eager to know, learn, and question new things. **Perseverance** - I always try my best, especially in challenging situations, and never give up. **Excellence** - I go above and beyond every day. I only present the best version of myself. **Creativity** - I am open to new ideas, embrace change, and use my imagination when problem-solving. **Teamwork** - I understand my connection to my family, school, neighborhood, and the world. I accept the responsibility of making the world a better place through my actions and support of others. Our **RESPECT** values shape our mindsets and fosters positive character building, setting a high bar of expectation for all our community members including staff, families, and students.

### **(4) Community-based participation in the arts supports academic and social emotional success.**

In a city immersed in the arts, too many children in Rochester are often denied access due to affordability. We have partnered with local community organizations including Western NY Ballet Company, Judah Sealy Music, and the YMCA to offer a robust arts program including daily instruction in Music, Classical Ballet, West African Dance, and Visual Arts, as well as an additional daily Arts Exploration Block as part of our extended day, led by the YMCA Dreamseeds Program through which students study art forms instructed by Teaching Artists. All kindergarten and first grade classrooms have STEAM Centers providing opportunities for collaborative and purposeful play, creative problem-solving, and student-centered exploration of cross-curricular intersectionality.

### **(5) Community Informs Us and Stands With Us.**

Rochester Excellence Academy is designed in partnership with the community to serve the diverse needs of our students and families, especially those residing in the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants. Poverty and lack of access to high quality school options has deferred hopes, dreams, and future opportunities for Rochester families, who have expressed the need for an elementary school that ensures students have access to rigorous curriculum, individualized supports, social emotional supports, and the arts. The Founding Team, our Community Partnerships, and our expansive community support align with the priorities of SED and this proposal responds to the many voices across our city excited for the promise that Rochester Excellence Academy will provide.



## CERTIFICATION AND ASSURANCES STATEMENT

Proposed Charter School Name:	Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School
Proposed School Locations (District):	Rochester, NY
Name of Existing Ed. Corporation (If applicable):	N/A

I hereby certify that the applicant group/prospective Board of Trustees have all read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. By submitting a charter school application to the Board of Regents, the applicant group/prospective Board of Trustees understands that the Board of Regents is the authorized chartering entity with the authority to approve our application to establish the proposed charter school and enter into a charter agreement setting forth the terms and conditions under which the Board of Trustees will operate the charter school. The applicant group/prospective Board of Trustees also understands that this charter school application serves as the first component of an application for a federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) Planning and Implementation Grant. We understand that if the charter application is approved and a charter is issued by the Board of Regents, the school is qualified to receive a CSP grant, pending available funding and final approval of additional materials – including budget materials - by NYSED and by the New York State Office of the Comptroller. We agree to complete all required budget information and assurances according to forthcoming instructions and a revised timeframe to be issued by NYSED.

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further I understand that, if awarded a charter, the proposed school shall be open to all students on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including on the basis of ethnicity, race, creed, national origin or ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, disability, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, age, religion, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement. I understand that the Charter Schools Act allows, to the extent consistent with Federal law, “the establishment of a single-sex charter school or a charter school designed to provide expanded learning opportunities for students at-risk of academic failure or students with disabilities and English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners.”<sup>20</sup>

The applicant group also makes the following assurances pursuant to Section 7221b of the United States Code (USC), which will be incorporated into, and made a part of, the Charter School’s charter, if granted, and be binding on the Charter School itself:

- An assurance that the charter school will annually provide the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department such information as may be required to

<sup>20</sup>N.Y. Education Law § 2854(2)(a)

determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in this application;<sup>21</sup>

- An assurance that the charter school will cooperate with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department in evaluating the program assisted;<sup>22</sup> and
- That the charter school will provide such other information and assurances as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department may require.<sup>23</sup>
- That the school will follow any additional procedures required by NYSED to ensure an orderly closure and dissolution process, including compliance with the applicable requirements of Education Law §§2854(2)(t), 219 and 220 and any Closing Procedures specified by NYSED.

I, Laura Smith, hereby certify that the information submitted in this Full Application to establish Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after issuance of the charter.

Signature of Proposed BOT Chair:

Laura Smith

Date:

07/14/21

Signature:

  
Laura Smith (Jul 14, 2021 20:16 EDT)

Email:

[REDACTED]



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## I. MISSION, KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS, ENROLLMENT, AND COMMUNITY

### A. MISSION STATEMENT, OBJECTIVES, AND GOALS

**Mission.** Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports, Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for success in school, career, and life.

**Objectives.** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School (“Rochester Excellence Academy”) equips the students of Rochester, especially those in the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants, with a strong foundation in literacy and mathematics. Through our values-based character education, robust arts program, expansive community partnerships, and relentless focus on individualized supports, we ensure that students develop positive and productive mindsets as we prepare them to meet the rigorous academic and social demands of middle school, high school, college, career, and life. We set ambitious goals and are committed to providing multiple, tiered supports to aid our students in achieving them. Designed to meet the objectives outlined in the Charter School Act of 1998, we propose a school that will “improve student learning and achievement”<sup>1</sup> for the students of Rochester by pairing rigorous academics, aligned to the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards, with high-quality instruction using innovative teaching methods adopted from high performing charters schools serving similar populations. Our curriculum choices and instructional methods have proven to increase student achievement in Rochester and nationwide and our curriculum embraces the power of community partnerships through a robust arts curriculum. Our core curricular choices offer interactive options in which ensure continuity of instruction throughout in-person, hybrid, and remote learning settings. Student achievement will be monitored daily, weekly, monthly, and cyclically through data and analysis, with immediate response through modifying instructional practices, informing individual and small group interventions, and guiding curriculum modification and teacher supports. Our school is designed to “increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure”<sup>2</sup> by offering an inclusive classroom model and an integrated co-teaching classroom of 15 students at each grade level. Including multiple Special Education Teachers, ESOL Certified Teachers, and a Social Worker in all years, our staffing model meets the unique and diverse needs of all students. Through our co-teaching model, extended day and year, focus on data-driven instruction and immediate response to data, daily small group instruction, and relentless focus on providing adequate individualized supports, we support the growth of all learners, including those with disabilities, who identify as MLL/ELLs, and who may be considered economically disadvantaged.

**Goals.** Rochester Excellence Academy has set ambitious academic goals informed by the Charter School Performance Framework and aligned to NY State Next Generation Learning Standards.

**Benchmark 1 - Student Performance.** The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation.

- **Goal 1. The school will receive a NYSED rating of “Good Standing.”**

K-2 students will be assessed using the Strategic Testing of Educational Progress for reading and the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (“NWEA MAP”)

<sup>1</sup>Education Law §2850(2) [https://www.nyccharterschools.org/sites/default/files/resources/NYSCharterSchoolsActof1998\\_with2014amendments\\_0.pdf](https://www.nyccharterschools.org/sites/default/files/resources/NYSCharterSchoolsActof1998_with2014amendments_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

Literacy and Math. Students in third through fourth grade will be assessed using STEP, NWEA MAP, and New York State Exams. All students will demonstrate adequate yearly progress and exceed local district proficiency rates.

- **Goal 2. Students will demonstrate proficiency in Literacy.**

**Metric 1.** Using STEP, 70% of students in K will reach Step 3 by end of school year in preparation for grade 1. **Metric 2.** Using STEP, 80% of grade 1 students enrolled for 2 years will reach Step 6 in preparation for grade 2. **Metric 3.** Using STEP, 90% of grade 2 students enrolled for 3 years will reach Step 9 in preparation for grade 3. **Metric 4.** At least 85% of students will demonstrate three STEP levels of growth each year. **Metric 5.** At least 70% of each cohort enrolled for at least three years will score proficient (3 or 4) on NY State ELA assessments. **Metric 6.** School average proficiency will exceed local proficiency by at least 15 percent.

- **Goal 3. Students will demonstrate proficiency in Mathematics.**

**Metric 1.** Using NWEA MAP Math assessment, all students will demonstrate growth of 5 percentage points per year until average score exceeds 80%. **Metric 2.** At least 70% of each cohort enrolled for at least 3 years will score proficient (3 or 4) on NY State Math assessments. **Metric 3.** School average proficiency will exceed local proficiency by at least 15 percent.

- **Goal 4. Students will demonstrate proficiency in Science.**

**Metric 1.** At least 70% of students in grade 4 enrolled for at least 2 years will perform at proficiency on the Grade 4 NY State Elementary Science assessment. **Metric 2.** Percentage of students scoring proficient will exceed local district percentage of proficient students.

**Benchmark 2 - Teaching and Learning.** Leaders implement systems designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that propel students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school implements rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments aligned to NYSNGLS. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so all students experience consistently high levels of engagement and achievement. **Metric 1.** The school will execute NYSNGLS-aligned curriculum, differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade level skills and concepts. **Metric 2.** Led by the Head of School and involving all teachers, we will use qualitative data to inform instructional decisions, PD planning, curriculum choices, and student interventions. **Metric 3.** We will use NYSNGLS-aligned assessments.

**Benchmark 3 – Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement.** The school will have systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members, and school staff will work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress, social-emotional growth, and well-being. Families and students will be satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.

**Metric 1.** At least 90% of responding families will indicate on annual survey that school community is safe and respectful. **Metric 2.** At least 90% of responding families will indicate on annual survey satisfaction with student academic performance and social-emotional growth. **Metric 3.** At least 100% of family members will attend at least 1 school event per year. At least 80% will attend 2 or more events per year.



**Benchmark 4 - Financial Condition.** The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.

**Benchmark 5 – Financial Management.** The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, internal controls, and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.

**Metric 1.** 100% of budgets are mission-aligned, balanced, and serve all students. **Metric 2.** 100% of budgets demonstrate positive cash flow in all months. **Metric 3.** 100% of annual external audits demonstrate the school meets or exceeds accurate GAAP and all required accounting measures.

**Benchmark 6 - Board Oversight and Governance.** The Board of Trustees (“Board”) provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, Board effectiveness, and faithful to the terms of its charter.

**Metric 1.** The Board completes formal annual evaluation of school leader tied directly to all academic, fiscal, and organization goals outlined in the charter. **Metric 2.** The Board recruits, selects, and orients high-capacity, mission-aligned Board members with professional expertise to meet school’s needs. **Metric 3.** The Board reviews monthly financial, academic, cultural, and operational data against charter goals. **Metric 4.** The Board conducts annual self-evaluation through which it assesses strengths/areas of growth and creates priorities to address areas of growth. **Metric 5.** The Board annually reviews, update, and adopt bylaws and all policies.

**Benchmark 7 - Organizational Capacity.** The school establishes a well-functioning organizational structure and clearly delineates roles for staff, management, and Board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.

**Metric 1.** School leadership recruits, hires, manages, trains, and retains staff. **Metric 2.** The Head of School leads staff in a semi-annual evaluation of the academic and operational programs against goals outlined in the charter. **Metric 3.** The Board approves a delineated organizational plan and approve job descriptions of Board members and key roles in the school.

**Benchmark 8 - Mission and Key Design Elements.** The school is faithful to its mission and implements the key design elements outlined in its charter.

**Metric 1.** At least 90% of responding stakeholders indicates on annual surveys that school operations are aligned to our mission and key design elements.

**Benchmark 9 – Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention.** The school meets or makes annual progress toward meeting its enrollment plan and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, MLLs/ELLs, and students eligible applicants for the FRL program or demonstrates that it has made extensive efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.

**Metric 1.** The school meets or exceeds projected enrollment October 1 of each year. **Metric 2.** The school enrolls a population comparable to that of local district. **Metric 3.** The school has ADA of at least 95% across all subgroups, including students with disabilities, MLLs/ELLs, and students eligible for FRL. **Metric 4.** The school reenrolls at least 85% of grade-eligible students in all populations, including students with disabilities, MLLs/ELLs, and students eligible for FRL.

**Benchmark 10 – Legal Compliance.** The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of its charter.



**Metric 1.** The Board conducts an annual legal evaluation of its policies and procedures. **Metric 2.** The school updates policies throughout the year in response to any new or revised legal or regulatory requirements. **Metric 3.** The school provides NYSED with a report on the school’s academic, operational, and financial health annually and in accordance to required timelines.

## **B. KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS**

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Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports, Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary to succeed in school, career, and life. Rochester Excellence Academy is designed to support the individual needs of all students on their quest to achieve academic and social success, thereby opening future doors of opportunity which have remained locked for too many of Rochester’s families for generations. Our students will be equipped with the academic skills and positive mindsets to meet the rigorous demands of middle school, high school, college, careers, and life through: **(1)** access to rigorous academics and high quality instruction that drives academic achievement; **(2)** individualized supports that ensure all students can achieve at high levels; **(3)** a values-based community which holds the school community to a high bar; and **(4)** community-based participation in the arts that support academic and social success. Key design elements were developed through studying best practices of high performing schools serving similar populations<sup>3</sup>, our Lead Founder’s experience teaching and leading at the top local charter school in Rochester, and a deep community investment in the enriching elements of our program - and all were adapted to meet the diverse needs and wants of Rochester’s students and families.<sup>4</sup>

**1. We believe that access to rigorous academics paired with high quality instruction drives academic achievement.** We commit to immersing students in grade level curriculum across all content areas as we know that having access to rigorous curriculum is the right of all children. Our curriculum choices, across all content areas, are research-based, meet the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards (“NYSNGLS”), and have proven to support student achievement in high performing schools with similar populations. Through rigorous curriculum choices and effective instructional practices, we educate students to think critically and develop the problem-solving skills necessary for building a strong foundation in literacy and mathematics. For children growing up in poverty, and as we anticipate with 90% of our incoming students, literacy deficits begin before the start of kindergarten as those children are exposed to approximately 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers.<sup>5</sup> A strong literacy foundation must be built in the early elementary years before there is a transition from learning to read in kindergarten through third grade, to reading to learn in fourth grade and beyond. If not, approximately half of fourth grade curriculum, across all content areas, will be inaccessible for students who are reading below grade level.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, third grade reading levels are indicators for access to future opportunities including high school graduation, entrance and success in college, and career choice.<sup>7</sup> Our intention is to build a solid literacy foundation, essential for our students’ future success. Our small group

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<sup>3</sup> We drew inspiration from successful BES Charter schools across the nation, i.e. RISE Prep Mayoral Academy (Woonsocket, RI)

<sup>4</sup> Lead Founder was Founding Teacher, Instructional Coach, Summer Academy Director at Rochester Prep West Elementary for 6 years, the only NYSED Recognition School in Rochester 2018- 2019, <https://patch.com/new-york/rochester-ny/rochester-prep-recognized-new-york-state>

<sup>5</sup> Fernald, A., V.A. Marchman, & A. Weisleder. 2013. “SES Differences in Language Processing Skill and Vocabulary Are Evident at 18 Months.” *Developmental Science* 16 (2): 234–48

<sup>6</sup> *Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010. Web. 5 September 2019.

<sup>7</sup> *Double Jeopardy: How Third Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012. Web. 5 September 2019.

literacy rotations ensure that students receive targeted instruction in all literacy domains. Isolating literacy components has proven to be successful at high performing charter schools including Springfield Prep<sup>8</sup>, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy<sup>9</sup>, and Rochester Prep<sup>10</sup>, and has been adopted by such ambitious schools as Ivy Hill Prep.<sup>11</sup> While this model supports the growth of all students, it is essential for our MLL/ELL and SPED populations as extended instruction in small groups permits individualized supports critical for their learning. In math, students sharpen problem-solving skills through direct instruction lessons, inquiry-based lessons, and Cognitively Guided Instruction. Students explore mathematical concepts, independently solve story problems, present strategies and thought processes, and engage in whole class discourse on their conceptual understandings. Comprehensively, our academic program requires students to think critically, analyze, question, problem solve, explain, and apply knowledge flexibly. Teachers are consistently supported through a three-week summer intensive, weekly professional development, and weekly observations paired with live coaching and feedback meetings. This model of instructional coaching is proven to aid teachers' development, and in turn, supporting students' academic success at multiple high performing charter schools, including RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Purpose Prep<sup>12</sup>, and Uncommon Schools' Rochester Prep West Elementary. As the "purpose of instructional leadership is not to evaluate teachers but to develop them,"<sup>13</sup> we bring experienced leadership to this critical component of our program: Lead Founder and proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph has served as Instructional Coach for over five years, fostering teachers' growth by following Bambrick-Santoyo's *Get Better Faster* and Lemov's *Practice Perfect* models and with direct support from both authors/educational leaders. **2. We believe that all students can achieve at high levels with individualized supports.** We recognize that each student's needs are unique; we have designed a program, structures, staffing, and schedule that allow consistent, multi-tiered individualized supports. Our two-teacher model and unique Integrated Co-Teaching classroom of 15 students at each grade level increases our ability to provide such supports. To ensure all students receive appropriate levels of support, we use data from Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress ("STEP"), a research-based literacy assessment, Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress ("NWEA MAP"), a nationally normed assessment, internally created assessments, and daily classroom assessments. Our team immediately responds to student data, providing in-the-moment student feedback, differentiating instruction and assignments, and evaluating and modifying curriculum to ensure it meets all students' needs. Rochester is ranked first in the nation for children living in extreme poverty<sup>14</sup>, which increases the reality that the majority of our students will face multiple adverse childhood experiences, in turn lowering their likelihood of having a successful academic experience and life future beyond K-12. We know that supporting students' social emotional development is just as important as supporting their academic success. Each school day begins with a "family meeting" where students and

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<sup>8</sup> Springfield Prep is a high-achieving charter school in its fifth year of operation in Springfield, MA. The school and its leadership has been incubated and supported by BES and its approach to literacy has informed our design [www.springfieldprep.org](http://www.springfieldprep.org)

<sup>9</sup> RISE Prep Mayoral Academy is a high-achieving charter school in its fourth year of operation in Woonsocket, RI. The school and its leadership has been incubated and supported by BES and its approach to literacy has informed our design [www.risepreperi.org](http://www.risepreperi.org)

<sup>10</sup> Rochester Prep is member of the Uncommon Schools Network, a high-achieving charter school in our city, and has informed the experiences of Lead Founder and proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph

<sup>11</sup> Ivy Hill Prep is a charter school in its first year of operation, authorized by SED. The school and its leadership has been incubated and supported by BES and its approach to literacy has informed our design [www.ivyhillprep.org](http://www.ivyhillprep.org)

<sup>12</sup> Purpose Prep is a high-achieving charter school in its seventh year of operation in Nashville, TN. The school and its leadership have been incubated and supported by BES and its approach to literacy and math have informed our design [www.purposesprep.org](http://www.purposesprep.org)

<sup>13</sup> Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul *Get Better Faster*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2016

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.actrochester.org/tinymce/source/Census%20Update%202018.pdf>

teachers have a mental check in on how they are feeling and engage in an interactive read aloud lesson addressing positive social emotional development. There will be daily mindfulness moments, including breathing exercises and yoga, and we continue to support students in using HighScope's Six Steps of Conflict Resolution (used in RCSD's Universal Pre-Kindergarten and Early Pre-Kindergarten's curriculum). Our staffing model prioritizes students' social emotional development, with a Social Worker in all years and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist starting in Y2, supporting students' development of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making, and providing support by pushing into the classrooms and in our mindfulness room. **3. We believe that character is developed in a values-based community.** Research tells us that character development is essential for students who will positively contribute to society and it further suggests that character education should be infused into the curriculum and wider culture of a school.<sup>15</sup> Our **RESPECT** values guide our mindsets, decisions, and actions and are paired with "I" statements allowing for true understanding and internalization: **R**espect - I treat myself, others, and the environment with kindness. **E**mpathy - I show concern for the feelings of others. **S**cholarship - I am eager to know, learn, and question new things. **P**erseverance - I always try my best, especially in challenging situations, and never give up. **E**xcellence - I go above and beyond every day. I only present the best version of myself. **C**reativity - I am open to new ideas, embrace change, and use my imagination when problem-solving. **T**eamwork - I understand my connection to my family, school, neighborhood, and the world. I accept the responsibility of making the world a better place through my actions and support of others. Our **RESPECT** values foster positive character building, setting a high bar of expectation for all our community members including school staff, families, and students, allowing us to be exemplars of excellence within our larger Rochester community. **4. We believe that community-based participation in the arts supports both academic and social emotional success.** "The evidence is clear: study of the arts contributes to student achievement and success. Its multiple benefits are academic, basic, and comprehensive. . . . [S]tudents who took four years of arts coursework outperformed their peers who had one half-year or less of arts coursework by 58 points on the verbal portion and 38 points on the math portion of the SAT."<sup>16</sup> Rochester is a city immersed in the arts, yet our children are often denied access due to affordability. We have ambitiously partnered with local community organizations including Western NY Ballet Company, Judah Sealy Music, and the YMCA to offer a robust arts program including daily instruction in Music, Classical Ballet, West African Dance, and Visual Arts, and providing additional daily arts exploration, offered through the YMCA Dreamseeds Program and in which students choose an art form to study under the instructional guidance of Teaching Artists. Classroom Teachers and Teaching Artists plan collaboratively to develop cross curricular connections, when applicable. All kindergarten through second grade classrooms have S.T.E.A.M Centers in which they can explore daily. Lead Founder and proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph is testament to the power of the arts, graduating from Rochester's highest performing high school, School of the Arts, studying Dance and Interdisciplinary Arts for Children in college before beginning her career as teacher and instructional leader in Rochester. Ms. Rumph knows that participation in the arts provides students with an outlet for self-expression, increases creativity,

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<sup>15</sup> Bollinger, Richard, and Sarah Clement *Accelerating Progress*. Springer Science + NY, Business Media, 2017

<sup>16</sup> Ruppert, Sandra *Critical Evidence How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement*. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, 2006



sharpens communication skills, increases content knowledge, and supports problem-solving skills, and wrapping a community of arts leaders around our students will open a world of opportunity.

### C. Students and Educational Milieu

We are proposing a unique, community-rich and arts-infused K-4 charter school designed to serve students residing in the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants of Rochester, locally referred to as the “Fatal Crescent.” In Rochester, the Fatal Crescent, or Crescent of Poverty, is composed of five neighborhoods which border the downtown area, with the city’s highest population of Black, Latino, and immigrant residents, and is known for its high number of violent crimes, poor quality of health, low educational attainment, and high number of families living in extreme poverty.<sup>17</sup>

**Rochester’s Academic and Budgetary Crisis.** The Rochester City School District (“RCSD”) educates 25,017 students across 53 schools; 55% are Black or African American, 32% are Hispanic or Latino, 10% are White, and 3% are Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander.<sup>18</sup> RCSD has an ~90% FRL rate<sup>19</sup>; 22% of students have disabilities; 15% are English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners.<sup>20</sup> Rochester has 13,202 children under the age of five.<sup>21</sup> RCSD students consistently perform below state averages on ELA and math assessments. In 2019, state assessment data shows RCSD grades 3-8 proficiency rates of 13% in ELA and 13% in math; 2018 proficiency rates were 11% in ELA and 13% in math.<sup>22</sup>

<b>Figure I.C.1: 2019 RCSD Student Performance by Subgroup</b>		
<b>Student Subgroup</b>	<b>ELA</b>	<b>Math</b>
All Students	13%	13%
Students with Disabilities	2%	3%
Multilingual/English Language Learners	3%	4%
Non-Economically Disadvantaged	32%	31%
Economically Disadvantaged	11%	11%

In September 2019, the RCSD Board of Trustees alerted state officials of a discrepancy in its budget following the 2018-2019 audit. RCSD had a \$30M deficit from 2018-2019 and was overspending by \$30 million dollars in the 2019-2020 school year’s budget as well, resulting in the resignation of RCSD’s Chief Financial Officer, 109 mid-year layoffs (December 2019), and strained relationship between RCSD, The City of Rochester Board of Trustees, and Rochester families.<sup>23</sup> In response, Superintendent Terry Dade announced his resignation and the school board approved cutting an additional 315 staff members at the end of the 2019-2020 year, including reductions in Special Education and Arts programming and five school closures. Four of the five school closures are elementary schools located within the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants. Dr. Leslie Myers-Small has since fulfilled the role of Superintendent for the Rochester City School District and Dr. Shelly Jallow was appointed as the state monitor of the Rochester City School District.<sup>24</sup> Their efforts successfully navigated the RCSD through the many challenges in

<sup>17</sup>[https://rocwiki.org/Crescent\\_of\\_Poverty](https://rocwiki.org/Crescent_of_Poverty)

<sup>18</sup><https://data.nysed.gov/profile.php?instid=800000050065>

<sup>19</sup>[https://www.rcsdk12.org/cms/lib/NY01001156/Centricity/Domain/48/Board\\_of\\_Education\\_Presentation\\_010611.pdf](https://www.rcsdk12.org/cms/lib/NY01001156/Centricity/Domain/48/Board_of_Education_Presentation_010611.pdf)

<sup>20</sup><https://www.rcsdk12.org/Page/22>

<sup>21</sup><https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/rochestercitynewyork>

<sup>22</sup><https://data.nysed.gov/profile.php?instid=800000050065>

<sup>23</sup><https://www.rochesterfirst.com/news/education/how-rcsd-got-here-timeline-of-events-in-districts-budget-crisis/>

<sup>24</sup><http://www.nysed.gov/news/2020/state-education-department-appoints-dr-shelley-jallow-monitor-rochester-city-school>



which they faced during the 2020-2021 school year, where schools were unable to fully open for all students due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. **Education in the Crescent.** Within the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants, there are currently 13 elementary schools; two of these - Dr. Walter Cooper Academy School No.10 and John Walton Spencer School No. 16 - are on the state’s receivership list.

**Figure I.C.2: 2019 NYS ELA and Math Proficiency: Northwest and Southwest Receivership Schools**

School	ELA	SPED ELA	MLL/ELL ELA	Math	SPED Math	MLL/ELL Math
Dr. Walter Cooper Academy No.10	16%	4%	8%	13%	2%	0%
John Walton Spencer No. 16	7%	0%	8%	7%	0%	0%

Kodak Park School No. 41, located in the Northwest Quadrant, was closed in 2018 due to lack of improvement despite receivership interventions.<sup>25</sup> As noted, the RCSD school board has approved closing four additional elementary schools within the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants for 2020-2021.<sup>26</sup> The remaining 11 elementary schools located in these Quadrants consistently perform below New York State proficiency averages, achieving between 9% and 23% proficiency in ELA and between 8% and 24% in math in 2019. There are three charter schools located within the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants. Uncommon Schools’ True North Rochester Prep Elementary Charter School is the only school located within both quadrants; when compared to traditional public and charter schools, this school consistently performs above state proficiency averages in ELA and math, achieving 57% proficiency in ELA and 66% in math in 2019; Rochester Prep West Elementary is the highest achieving elementary school in the city, with 70% proficiency in ELA and 81% in math in 2019. Rochester is ranked first in the nation for children living in extreme poverty.<sup>27</sup> Lead Applicant and proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph was born and raised within the Northeast Quadrant and attended and graduated from RCSD; she has been a vital part of the educational team at the city’s highest achieving elementary school (more details below) and is supported by many educational and business leaders across the city (see Letters of Support in **Attachment 2c**). We propose this school to ensure that the students of Rochester - especially those residing in the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants - have a quality elementary school option by ensuring access to rigorous curriculum within a values-based community and with a relentless focus on providing individualized supports, and which ensures within this model daily access to the arts that takes full advantage of our city’s arts resources and a relentless focus on providing the foundation for school, career, and life success for every child. **Crisis Response.** Rochester Excellence Academy was designed in direct response to our city’s academic and budgetary crisis. Our extended day, in-house after-school programming, extended

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/local/communities/time-to-educate/stories/2018/06/06/worst-public-schools-america-rochester-ny-rcsd-kodak-park-school-41/550929002/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/education/2020/05/07/rcsd-budget-goes-city-council-after-school-board-approval/5175234002/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.actrochester.org/tiny/mce/source/Census%20Update%202018.pdf>

school year, and access to summer programming allow for increased time in a safe environment with adults dedicated to supporting individual students' needs in building a strong literacy and math foundation; we ensure that students have approximately 435 daily instructional minutes M-Th, 240 minutes on abbreviated Fridays, and 187 instructional days each year. Teachers are equipped and supported to provide high-quality instruction through a 17-day Summer Excellence Intensive, 24 total PD days with data analysis, weekly observation and feedback meetings, live coaching, collaborative planning, and weekly professional development. We ensure each student receives individualized supports, tracking and immediately responding to data through aggressive monitoring during student work time and conferencing, targeted small group instruction, daily school wide RTI block, analysis of daily exit tickets, analysis and action planning after each assessment, weekly data analysis meetings, and collaboration with parents. In preparing students for future success, we realize that rigorous academics alone are not enough, especially for our students in a city which ranks number one in the nation for children living in extreme poverty<sup>28</sup>, with many potential negative impacts often referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences ("ACES"). Research tells us that constant exposure to "harsh or unstable environments can create biological changes in the growing brains and bodies of infants and children."<sup>29</sup> These biological brain changes may impair a child's ability to regulate their thoughts and feelings, and make it difficult to manage emotions and process information. We support students in developing five Core Social Emotional Learning ("SEL") Competencies of Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Self-Management, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making through a daily interactive SEL Read Aloud, daily mindfulness exercises, "Moments of Peace," Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, a Social Worker on staff throughout all years, a Therapeutic Intervention Specialist in Y2 and beyond, and a Mindfulness Room – all delivered within a values-based community that explicitly builds character strengths. In response to our district's proposed cuts to special education and arts programming, we offer community-rich access to a 45-minute daily enrichment classes including Classical Ballet, West African Dance, Music, and Visual Arts, an additional daily arts exploration block, after-school and summer programming provided by the Greater Rochester YMCA, STEAM Centers (K-2), instrumental music lessons through our partnership with Rochester Education Foundation, and an Integrated Co-teaching Classroom ("ICT") of 15 students with a General Education and Special Education Teacher at each grade level to support our students' academic and social success. Our Founding Team has connected with two RCSD elementary school principals, the RCSD Director of Community Partnerships, the RCSD Career Pathways Coordinator, a RCSD Commissioner on the Board, the RCSD East EPO Superintendent, and has reached out to the RCSD Superintendent in which we are currently awaiting a response. We recognize the power of community and look forward to learning from the vast educational communities in which we are connected to both locally and nationally. Through having an open-door policy, public monthly coffee meetings with our school leader, and hosting public professional development sessions every six weeks throughout the school year in which we will invite the staff members of other local schools within our community; we commit to disseminating educational and social emotional innovations and

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<sup>28</sup> <https://www.actrochester.org/tiny/mce/source/Census%20Update%202018.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> Tough, Paul, *Helping Children Succeed: What Works and Why* NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2016

best practices gained. <sup>30</sup> The Founding Board is a diverse group of community leaders and professionals unified by an unwavering belief that all students regardless of race, gender, differing abilities, home language, or socioeconomic status can excel when adequately supported. All Founding Board members bring proven success in their respective areas of expertise; as a unit, we possess the expertise, dedication, experience and capacity to ensure the school's effective start-up, governance, and leadership. Expertise includes educational leadership, charter school operations, non-profit governance, law, finance, community development, real estate, and fund development. Proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph is a native of Rochester and graduate of our proposed district, and she is a dedicated educator and recognized leader within the Rochester community. Our diverse Founding Board has the expertise, experience, dedication, and capacity to ensure our school remains fiscally healthy, proactively monitoring the school's financials and academics, and are prepared to make difficult decisions if necessary to ensure fiscal health. The authorization of Rochester Excellence Academy would add an elementary school to a community which: (a) has faced five elementary school closures within the last two years; (b) was developed to directly address the district's cuts to the arts, school social workers, and special education; (c) brings strong partnership in the arts into the school community; and (d) uses best practices of teacher training and support and standards-aligned curriculum with robust assessment platform aligned to our RTI interventions, all proven to measurably increase student achievement. **Community Support.** We have held two public meetings, attended 40 community events, connected with 31 community organizations and 500+ families, and hosted three listening circles during which we have distributed 500+ fliers in English and Spanish. Our flier was posted on our social media pages which has 697 followers. We have met with five elected officials including Mayor Lovely Ann Warren. We have shared information through interviews with local radio station 105.5 The Beat, the *Spectrum News*, *WHEC News 10*, *WXXI*, and *The Southwest Tribune Newspaper*. Our community outreach will continue throughout the application process with the goal of connecting with age-eligible Rochester families, including those who are economically disadvantaged, have children with special needs, and have children identified as multilingual learners. To ensure we are recruiting inner city families, mirroring those served by our residing district, we will leverage our relationships with community organizations such as Volunteers of America Children's Center, The Greater Rochester YMCA Childcare Center, Action for a Better Community's Head Start Programs, Friendship Children Center, and Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association's SummerLeap Program, all of which serve Universal Pre-Kindergarten Rochester students. Some centers provide after-school childcare, from which we will recruit incoming first graders. Many centers hold a Kindergarten Recruitment Night which our team will attend. We will participate in Kindergarten Readiness events hosted by local early childhood centers. We will continue our relationship with Ibero-American Action League's Early Childhood Center as they have the only Bilingual Universal Pre-K Program within the City of Rochester, ensuring we reach Multilingual and Bilingual Families. To families, UPK Teachers, Center Directors, and Related Service Providers at Ibero Family and Tabling Events, and at all centers, we will assure families that our school is designed to support all students, including those with disabilities; we will have school information in Spanish and a team member who speaks fluent Spanish accompanying our team.

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<sup>30</sup> Public professional development dates located in attachment 4c: Proposed First Year Calendar



We will advertise our school model focused on individualized supports, SPED and ESOL Intervention Specialists, and our ICT classroom, consisting of a SPED Certified and General Education Teacher with 15 students. To ensure we are reaching inner city families, we will use other community relationships, including The City of Rochester Public Libraries, Western New York Pop Warner Youth Sports League, 105.5 The Beat Radio Station, WHEC-TV, Spectrum News, WXXI, *The Southwest Tribune Newspaper*, St Paul Holiness Believers Church, The City of Rochester Youth for Peace, Urban League of Rochester, and the United Way.<sup>31</sup> Upon authorization, we have committed to joining E3 Rochester which offers advertising on billboards around the City of Rochester, radio advertisements, inclusion in the unified city-wide online charter application, lottery operation and parental notices, multiple collaborative charter school recruitment events and collaborative charter school meetings and trainings with other charters including Academy of Health and Sciences, Discovery, Eugenio Maria De Hostos, Exploration, Genesee Community, Renaissance Academy, Rochester Academy, Rochester Prep, Young Women’s College Prep, University College Preparatory for Young Men, Urban Choice, and Vertus Charter Schools. The unified city online application is available in English and Spanish. If a family requires translation services, we will use the Catholic Family Center’s translation services<sup>32</sup> and will have devices during recruitment events for families in need of internet access. We will work to retain students through building and fostering strong relationships with families through Family Orientation, initial home visits, bi-weekly communications, weekly Community Meetings, Monthly Coffee Hours with the Head of School, three Family Conferences and by seeking and responding to feedback from families through general and subgroup specific surveys.<sup>33</sup> Though we have garnered support of many community members, community leaders, and community organization, we have experienced opposition from one community organization comprised of local school district teachers who are advocates for a charter moratorium in Rochester due to current funding deficits for the local district. After receiving a comment from the group through our social media page, we immediately provided our direct contact information to engage in meaningful discussion, however the group declined our invitation. We will continue to reach out to form relationships with all community organizations and entities which serve our community’s children as we believe that we all can work together and learn from each other, to increase our impact for our students in the immediate term and for generations to come.

#### **D. APPLICANT GROUP HISTORY AND CAPACITY**

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The applicant group is a diverse group of community leaders and professionals unified by an unwavering belief that all students regardless of race, gender, differing abilities, home language, or socioeconomic status can excel when adequately supported. During our current educational crisis and beyond, we are committed to supporting our students and families through providing a high-quality elementary school designed to meet the specific needs of Rochester’s communities. All Founding Team members bring proven success in their respective areas of expertise; as a unit, we possess the expertise, dedication, experience and capacity to ensure the school’s effective start-up, governance, and leadership. Expertise includes educational leadership, charter school

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<sup>31</sup> Please see **Table 2: Public Outreach Information** for details regarding all community engagement efforts

<sup>32</sup> All budget costs for translation services each year are reflected in our Budget (see Tab 6)

<sup>33</sup> All family events, including Orientations, Home Visits, Coffee Visits, and Conferences are noted in our Annual Calendar found in **Attachment 4c** All weekly Community Meetings, to which families are invited, are noted in our daily schedules, specifically our abbreviated Friday schedule, found in **Attachment 4a**.



operations, non-profit governance, law, finance, community development, and fund development. Our Founding Team was assembled by Lead Founder and Primary Application Author Brittany Rumph. With targeted professional development and supports provided by national charter experts as part of the highly selective BES Fellowship, Ms. Rumph began connecting with hundreds of Rochester community members, in August of 2019, to recruit diverse, mission-aligned, high-capacity Founding Team members. Ms. Rumph identified community leaders who brought strong commitment to serving the students and families of Rochester, and who continue to be invested in uplifting the Rochester community. Each candidate engaged in multiple conversations with Ms. Rumph and BES leaders on educational philosophy, initial core beliefs, professional skillsets and experience, the role of board governance in charter schools, and time commitment; each member formally accepted a position on the Founding Team by signing an agreement outlining their roles and responsibilities pre- and post-authorization. Throughout the formation of the Founding Team, Ms. Rumph balanced her deep community engagement work in Rochester with national study of high performing charter schools serving high need populations, including completion of Leadership Residencies at RISE Prep Mayoral Academy in Woonsocket, RI and Persistence Prep in Buffalo, NY.<sup>34</sup> Within Rochester, Ms. Rumph continuously connected with as many Rochester stakeholders as possible, including elected officials, faith-based organizations, local business leaders, non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, charter schools, traditional public schools, and most importantly our students and families to gather their input and feedback regarding the development of Rochester Excellence Academy. Our Founding Team include parents, native Rochesterians, faith-based community leaders, a charter school administrator, college faculty, individuals who work for national education organizations, founders of organizations, and individuals with executive management and oversight experience; all bring differing backgrounds and life experiences unified by our mission to provide rigorous academics paired with high-quality instruction, robust individualized supports, a values-based community to build character strengths, and access to the arts to promote the academic and social success of Rochester’s children. Our school model, key design elements, and academic programming were developed by best practices adopted from other high performing charter schools, continuously informed by community input, grounded in our Lead Founder’s educational experiences, and reflective of input from our Founding Team members. **Member Dr. Ashley Cross** has influenced our focus on supporting students’ social emotional development while maintaining rigorous academics and hopes to create a partnership with Generation 2 (“G2”), a local non-profit which links civic engagement, child-centered, intergenerational friendships within elementary schools and child advocacy.<sup>35</sup> **Member Robert Hoggard** urged that students be consistently provided with rigorous academics that challenge them and promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills. He continues to ensure that our model meets students’ needs and has used his platform to engage the community. **Member Bonnie O’Keefe** has provided feedback on the importance of focusing heavily on literacy during the early elementary years. **Member Aqua Porter** influenced our adoption of daily mindfulness exercises into the school day to support positive social emotional development, coordinates our meetings, has contributed to the formation of our organization flow

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<sup>34</sup> RISE Prep Mayoral Academy was founded by Rosalind Da Cruz through the BES Fellowship in 2015, located in Woonsocket, RI; student population includes 53% FRL, 17% students with disabilities, and 5% MLL/ELLs; outperforms district averages in ELA and Math on state assessments in 2019 <https://www.riseprepri.org/>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.g2rochester.org/mission-vision>

chart, and has helped refine our core values. **Member Laura Smith** influenced our extensive professional development and instructional coaching model to support the growth of teachers. She has connected our team with invaluable organizations within her network, including Amplify which has provided our team with an Amplify Science Curriculum kit and Charter School Business Management Inc. which reviewed our proposed budget with team members. Our applicant group first applied for the charter authorization of Rochester Excellence on May 22, 2020. In response to the feedback provided after our capacity interview, we have focused extensively on board development and community partnerships. We have recruited proposed board members with expertise in finance, education, and real estate including **Loren Montrallos, Vernon Connors, Jeff Smink, Rashondra Martin, Kelli Ragan,** and **Ernest Ferullo**, who is currently completing the onboarding process, and have focused on board development through activities such as attending charter school board meetings, connected with existing charter school boards, such as Vertus Charter, Academy of Health Sciences, WHIN Community Music Charter, The American Dream School and Mesa Charter to listen and learn, and have attended professional development sessions such as Academic Dashboard Training and School Print Facilities Training, hosted by BES. We have incorporated community input into our school model gained through holding two public meetings, attending 40 community events, connecting with 31 community organizations and 500+ families, hosting three listening circles, connecting with 697 social media followers, surveying 160 families, meeting with six elected officials including Mayor Lovely Ann Warren, and receiving feedback during radio show at local radio station 105.5 The Beat. (**Table 2: Public Outreach Information**). All Founding Team members have garnered support for the proposed school and provided connections to their networks. An abbreviated biography for each member is included in section **III.B Board of Trustees and Governance** and in **Table 1**.

## **E. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

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The Founding Team began community outreach to solicit input in September 2019, connecting with community leaders, elected officials, for profit and non-profit organizations, educators and educational leaders, and most importantly local families. Through hosting public meetings and learning circles, attending community events, tabling, holding numerous scheduled meetings, and reviewing collected surveys, we have been able to consider and address public comments on the proposed school. Our mission, vision, key design elements, academic programming, and intervention approach are all products of community input received through our outreach efforts.

**Informing Our Community.** In September 2019, we began our grassroots efforts via individual meetings with influential, well-respected community leaders and vital community organizations including the Ibero-American Action League, Western New York Pop Warner League, Rochester Chamber of Commerce, Foodlink, Rochester Area Community Foundation, Farash Foundation, United Way, City of Rochester Public Libraries, Rochester City School District, Discovery Charter School, Renaissance Charter School of the Arts, University Preparatory Charter for Young Men, Young Women’s College Preparatory Charter School, Urban Choice Charter School, Academy of Health Sciences Charter School, Allendale Columbia School, University of Rochester, ROC The Future, The Children’s Institute, Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association, New York Civil Liberties Union, E3, and others. We connected with six elected officials, including a City Councilwoman and Councilman, RCSD Commissioner, Monroe County Legislator, a NYS

Assemblyman and Mayor Lovely Warren. Proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph participated in interviews with *Spectrum News*, 105.5 The Beat Radio Station, *WXXI*, *WHEC News 10*, and *The Southwest Tribune Newspaper* where she informed the public about our proposed school and solicited community feedback. Founding Board Member Robert Hoggard participated in an interview with I Heart ROC where he informed the public about our proposed school and provided contact information.<sup>36</sup> We have attended multiple community events, connecting with community members and distributing our school's information, with contact info in English and Spanish.

**Learning From Our Community.** Our Founding Team has worked to collect and address input on our school design and model from all community stakeholders through tabling events, in-person meetings, attending community events, meetings via phone or video conference, and through online survey. Developed in November, 2019 and accessible to the public through our website, social media pages, and QR code located on all marketing materials and fliers, our survey has received 160 responses. Families expressed dissatisfaction with current school options within our local district and are searching for a school option which (1) has a diverse staff, (2) accommodates the needs of students with disabilities, (3) provides access to the arts and other enrichment experiences, (4) has frequent parent communication, (5) and builds a strong literacy foundation. In addition to collecting feedback from families who currently have children attending local district schools, we've connected with two RCSD elementary school principals who explained the benefits of building principals possessing the autonomy to tailor all aspects of the school to ensure they are meeting the unique need of students and families and the necessity of school counselors and increased support for families engaged in remote learning settings; the RCSD Director of Community Partnerships who recommended that the arts be a core subject area as it provides room for creativity and produces valuable transferable skills, as well as ensuring that our school has a strong literacy program; the RCSD Career Pathways Coordinator who explained that current district students struggle to pass the civil service exam due to their literacy deficits and therefore are unable to be placed on a career pathway after completing their career and technical education programming, she stressed the importance of having strong literacy instruction; an RCSD Commissioner on the Board who explained the importance of safety, rigor, and access to extracurricular activities; and the RCSD East EPO Superintendent who stressed the importance of building a strong literacy foundation to mitigate the immense need for reading recovery in current middle and high school students in Rochester. We have contacted the RCSD Superintendent in hopes of connecting and are awaiting a reply. Our school model was shaped by the feedback collected from all our community stakeholders to ensure that we meet the needs of students, families, and the community.

**Responding to Our Community.** In response to local input, we will actively seek diverse staff members by using our connections with local colleges and universities. Staff will participate in a series of professional development sessions addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion to ensure we proactively address historical inequities within our school community. Academic and staffing models provide individualized supports for all students with increased supports for students with disabilities, including NYS Certified Special Educators and ESOL/ENL Teachers, push-in and pull-out supports, daily school-wide Response to Intervention ("RTI") block, and an Integrated Co-Teaching ("ICT") classroom option of 15 students at each grade level. We share the belief in the power of the arts in supporting students' academic and social success;

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<sup>36</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/p/B8Z9z1ajed4/>

we will offer daily 45-minute enrichment classes instructed by local Teaching Artists, K-2 STEAM Centers, and an additional 35-minute Arts Exploration Block provided by the Greater Rochester YMCA's Dreamseeds Program. We will partner with parents to ensure students are adequately supported at school and home, which will happen through frequent communication beginning with home visits before school begins for newly enrolled families and continuing through nightly communication which require signatures, weekly invitation to our community meeting, bi-weekly phone calls from classroom teachers and intervention specialists, monthly coffee events with the school leader, monthly newsletters, and trimester family conferences. Families were concerned about their children entering middle school, and subsequently high school, with literacy skills below grade level, thereby limiting their children's future opportunities. We will provide 185 minutes of daily extended literacy instruction in targeted, homogenous, small group rotations proven successful in many charter schools locally and nationally. We will provide adequate individualized supports to ensure that all our students meet our ambitious goals of meeting and exceeding all NYSNGLS for ELA, building a strong foundation in literacy by the third grade. The Founding Team has attended and tabled at 40 community events, connected with 31 community organizations and over 500 families, and hosted three listening circles where we have distributed over 500 fliers in English and Spanish. Our flier was posted on our social media pages which has 697 followers. **Public Meetings.** We held two public meetings on February 19, 2020 at Legacy Drama House located within the City of Rochester<sup>37</sup> and a virtual public meeting; streamed from our Facebook Page, held on April 28, 2021 which remains posted for public viewing and comment. We began advertising our public meeting #1 on January 28, 2020 via our social media pages, in the local *Democrat and Chronicles Newspaper* in print and online, and through community calendar posts. Our second public meeting was advertised through a paid Facebook Ad and posts on community calendars. At both public meetings, we explained the school's preliminary details, in its early stages of development, including proposed grade span, neighborhoods of location, target student population, and descriptions of the academic and enrichment programming; we then solicited feedback regarding our proposed school model. Families expressed the importance of parent communication throughout the school year and a strong literacy focus in all grades. Students expressed the importance of feeling heard and supported and of relationship-building, and, interestingly, the desire to learn cursive. We have not experienced any local opposition, and we are grateful for the groundswell of support that we have received. We are committed to constant parent communication through initial home visits, daily communication logs, bi-weekly phone calls, and three family conferences each year. Teachers will take the first week of school to establish a strong early relationship with each student and will nurture this relationship throughout the year through family meetings and individual check-ins.

## **F. ENROLLMENT, RETENTION, AND RECRUITMENT**

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Rochester Excellence Academy is an open enrollment, K-4 charter school designed to meet the unique needs of the children residing in the City of Rochester. Currently with 12,959 children under the age of five<sup>38</sup>, local charter schools within the 2021 enrollment cycle offered 788 kindergarten seats and 50 first grade seats. As part of our community outreach, we have secured

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<sup>37</sup> Legacy Drama House is located at 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609, within the Rochester City School District

<sup>38</sup><https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/rochestercitynewyork>



48 Letters of Support from religious leaders, educational leaders, community leaders, as well as for-profit and not-for-profit organization. We have received 160 survey responses from community members and local families; 159 families agree that Rochester Excellence Academy would be beneficial; of age-eligible families surveyed, 141 indicate that they would enroll their child(ren) upon authorization, which is 21 more families than seats available in our founding cohort. We intend to enroll 120 students in our inaugural year. Using a slow growth model, we will enroll 75 kindergarten and 45 first grade students in the first year, adding a cohort of 75 kindergarten students each year until we are fully enrolled. We will reach capacity in 2026–27 with 375 students in K-4. This plan will enable increased individualized supports for incoming first graders who attended kindergarten at other schools, ensure financial viability in Y1, control the overall size of our school, and allow us to establish a strong values-based community.

**Figure I.F.1: Projected Enrollment Table Over the Charter Term<sup>39</sup>**

Grades	Ages	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
K	4 – 5	75	75	75	75	75
1 <sup>st</sup>	5 – 7	45	75	75	75	75
2 <sup>nd</sup>	7 – 8	-	45	75	75	75
3 <sup>rd</sup>	8 – 9	-	-	45	75	75
4 <sup>th</sup>	9 – 10	-	-	-	45	75
<b>Totals</b>		120	195	270	345	375

In Y1, there will be two co-taught inclusive kindergarten classrooms with 30 students each, with one General Education Teacher and one Teaching Assistant per class, and one ICT kindergarten classroom co-taught by one NYS Certified Special Education Teacher and one General Education Teacher with 15 students. There will be one co-taught inclusive grade 1 classroom with 30 students, one General Education Teacher and one Teaching Assistant as well as one ICT first grade classroom co-taught by one NYS Certified Special Education Teacher and one General Education Teacher. We maintain a larger inaugural cohort size in kindergarten and smaller cohort size in grade 1 as we expect a larger enrollment interest in the inaugural kindergarten class even as we recognize that some families will have interest in grade 1. This configuration will allow targeted small group instruction with groups of 5-10 students, with size informed by need; small groups will be split in half for Guided Reading instruction, allowing small groups of 3-5 students with size informed by need. This model has proven to support students in achieving and exceeding ambitious literacy benchmarks for each grade level at high performing charter schools including RISE Prep Mayoral Academy in Woonsocket, RI and Rochester Prep West Elementary, in Rochester, NY.<sup>40</sup> Our enrollment targets and staffing model support our ambitious goal of having

<sup>39</sup> N Y Education Law § 2851(2)(p)

<sup>40</sup> Lead Founder Brittany Rumph has studied and worked in Leadership Residence with RISE Prep as part of the BES Fellowship; RISE Prep serves 54% FRL, 17% SPED, and 5% ELL; within a district and state in which 14% and 38% of students show ELA proficiency in Grade 3 assessments, RISE Prep has 76% showing ELA proficiency and in 2019 ranked higher than 95.8% of elementary schools in the state <https://www.schooligger.com/go/RI/schools/0002900494/school.aspx>. Ms Rumph has served as part of the team at Rochester Prep (please see resume in Attachment 8b); Rochester Prep serves 83% FRL, 10% SPED, and 1% ELL; within a

all students meeting or exceeding literacy benchmarks and NYSNGLS in ELA by the third grade. We know that literacy deficits begin before the start of kindergarten in low-income communities as young children under the age of three are typically exposed to approximately 30 million fewer spoken words than their more affluent peers.<sup>41</sup> We focus on closing this gap, as we believe that a strong literacy foundation must be built in the early elementary years for more advanced learning opportunities to be equitably available to all students. We know that there is a transition from learning to read in K-3 to reading to learn in grades four and beyond. Seen through an equity lens, approximately half of fourth grade curriculum across all content areas is inaccessible for students reading below grade level.<sup>42</sup> With third grade reading levels indicators for access to future opportunities (high school graduation, entrance/success in college, career choice<sup>43</sup>), our classroom structure, staffing plan, and emphasis on literacy are intended to turn this reality on its head. Based upon experiences of similar schools and informed by local economic instability and accompanying geographical movement it creates, we conservatively expect an attrition rate of up to 7% each year; we will proactively work with parents to retain, at minimum, 95% of our students each year, with our constant goal of a 100% retention rate. Should a seat become available during the school year, we will fill it from our waiting list during any of the first three quarters of the school year. Our primary strategy to retain students year to year is to form meaningful relationships with families, beginning with annual whole group Family Orientations<sup>44</sup> during which families are introduced to the expectations and goals of our school, followed by individual Home Visits<sup>45</sup> for newly enrolled families, conducted by classroom teachers along with Special Education and ESOL Intervention Specialists, and all occurring before the first day of school for every family. During Orientations, families will complete a Home Language Survey if (a) they have indicated that English is not their home language, (b) by request, or (c) if our team deems it would be beneficial. A translator will attend all Family Orientations to ensure effective communication with families, based on information gathered from families prior to orientation. If one of the teachers is not bilingual in the family's home language, an interpreter from the Catholic Family Center will accompany our team on home visits to ensure effective communication.<sup>46</sup> Throughout the school year we will keep the lines of communication open for parents through: 187 nightly Excellence Reports that outline daily achievement and includes a behavior tracker, which require parental signature, and have designated space for communication between home and school; 37 weekly invitations to our Community Meetings each Friday; 20 bi-weekly phone calls from classroom teachers and/or Intervention Specialists; 10 monthly newsletters; eight monthly Coffee Hours with our school leader<sup>47</sup>; three family conferences, multiple volunteer opportunities, and annual family surveys.<sup>48</sup> Our Leadership Team will share survey trends with the Board and will incorporate feedback into our annual priorities; survey highlights/implications will be included within our first newsletter to families each school year. To ensure we are recruiting inner city families, mirroring families served

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district and state in which 13% and 45% of students show ELA proficiency in Grade 3, Rochester Prep has 70% showing ELA proficiency and is a NYSED Recognition School

<sup>41</sup> Fernald, A., V A Marchman, & A Weisleder 2013 "SES Differences in Language Processing Skill and Vocabulary Are Evident at 18 Months" *Developmental Science*. 16 (2): 234-48

<sup>42</sup> *Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters* Baltimore, MD: The Annie E Casey Foundation, 2010 Web 5 September 2019

<sup>43</sup> *Double Jeopardy: How Third Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation* Baltimore, MD: The Annie E Casey Foundation, 2012 Web 5 September 2019

<sup>44</sup> During Y1, three Family Orientations will be held: July 29, August 5, and August 12 (please see **Attachment 4c**)

<sup>45</sup> During Y1, Home Visits will be done during afternoon portion of Summer Excellence Intensive August 15-19 (please see **Attachment 4c**)

<sup>46</sup> Catholic Family Center offers translating services in 21 different languages (please see **Attachment 9**, Tab 2, line 103)

<sup>47</sup> Please see **Attachment 4c** for Monthly Coffee Hours

<sup>48</sup> We will provide a general parent survey as well as additional survey for families of students who receive special education and ESOL services

by our residing district, we will leverage our relationships with community organizations such as Volunteers of America Children’s Center, The Greater Rochester YMCA Childcare Center, The Children’s Therapy Network, Action for a Better Community’s Head Start Programs, Friendship Children Center, and the Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association’s SummerLeap Program, all of which serve Universal Pre-Kindergarten Rochester students. Some centers provide after-school childcare, from which we will recruit incoming first grade students. Many centers hold a Kindergarten Recruitment Night which our team will attend. We will participate in Kindergarten Readiness events hosted by local early childhood centers. We will continue our relationship with Ibero-American Action League’s Early Childhood Center as they have the only Bilingual Universal Pre-K Program within Rochester, ensuring we reach Multilingual and Bilingual Families. To families, UPK Teachers, Center Directors, and Related Service Providers at Ibero Family and Tabling Events and at all centers, we will assure families that our school model supports all students, including those with disabilities; we will have school information in Spanish and a team member who speaks fluent Spanish accompanying our team. We will advertise our school model focused on individualized supports, Special Education and ESOL Intervention Specialists, and our ICT classroom, consisting of a Special Education Certified and General Education Teacher with 15 students. To ensure we are reaching inner city families, we will use other community relationships, including The City of Rochester Public Libraries, Western New York Pop Warner Youth Sports League, 105.5 The Beat Radio Station, WHEC-TV, Spectrum News, *The Southwest Tribune Newspaper*, St Paul Holiness Believers Church, The City of Rochester Youth for Peace, Urban League of Rochester, and United Way.<sup>49</sup> Upon authorization, we have committed to joining E3 Rochester which offers advertising on billboards around the City of Rochester, radio advertisements, inclusion in the unified city-wide online charter application, lottery operation and parental notices, multiple collaborative charter school recruitment events and collaborative charter school meetings and trainings with other charters including Academy of Health Sciences, Discovery, Eugenio Maria De Hostos, Exploration, Genesee Community, Renaissance Academy, Rochester Academy, Rochester Prep, Young Women’s College Prep, University College Preparatory for Young Men, Urban Choice, and Vertus Charter Schools. The unified city online application is available in English and Spanish. If a family requires translation services, we will use the Catholic Family Center’s translation services and will have devices that could be used during recruitment events for families in need of internet access. Our lottery will be held on April 21. Services through E3 Rochester’s Good Schools ROC initiative include parental notification of acceptance. First priority goes to families within the Rochester City School District (“RCSD”). If all RCSD families receive a spot and there are available seats open, remaining seats will be filled with families from surrounding districts. If we have more applications than available seats, remaining children will be placed on our waiting list in numerical order as pulled during the lottery. We will pull students from the waiting list to backfill available seats in every grade K-4 throughout the first, second, and third quarters of the school year. We will provide sibling preference to ensure families have the option of ensuring all their children can attend the same school together. After receiving a seat through the lottery process and accepting that seat online, staff members will reach out to families to assist with collecting necessary enrollment paperwork. We will invite each family to one of our Family Orientation nights to which they will bring their

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<sup>49</sup> Please see **Table 2: Public Outreach Information** for details regarding all community engagement efforts



child for diagnostic assessments, and during which they will take a Home Language Survey as well as attend a meeting explaining the school’s expectations, systems, routines, and goals, and each with rationale aligned to the community’s dreams and priorities for their children. Families will leave Orientation with literacy and math assessment data, strategies to support their child’s growth, and materials to aid in-home skills practice until the start of the school year. In all years, our Social Worker will work with families throughout the enrollment process to ensure they have access to the proper resources necessary to begin school on the first day, including obtaining physical examinations and original birth certificates. Before the first day of school, Classroom Teachers and in some cases Special Education and/or ESOL Intervention Specialists will complete a Home Visit for each child in their class to begin building meaningful relationships with families; if needed, a translator will accompany the team.

**Figure I.F.2: Enrollment and Retention Targets<sup>50</sup>**

Subgroup	Enrollment % / #	Retention % / #
Economically Disadvantaged	91% / 343	95% / 327
Students with Disabilities	15% / 58	96% / 56
Multilingual/English Language Learners	11% / 42	95% / 40

**G. PROGRAMMATIC AND FISCAL IMPACT**

We will enroll 120 students in our inaugural year, with 75 kindergarten and 45 first grade students in the first year, adding a cohort of 75 kindergarten students each year until we are fully enrolled. As indicated in **Section F**, in Year 1 there will be: two co-taught inclusive kindergarten classrooms with 30 students each and one ICT kindergarten classroom co-taught by a NYS Certified Special Education Teacher and General Education Teacher with 15 students; and one co-taught inclusive grade 1 classroom with 30 students and 1 ICT grade 1 classroom similarly co-taught by a NYS Certified Special Education Teacher and General Education Teacher with 15 students. In all future years, we will enroll 75 kindergarten students with the same classroom configurations and staffing plan. We maintain a larger inaugural cohort size in kindergarten and smaller cohort size in grade 1 as we expect a larger enrollment interest in the inaugural kindergarten class even as we recognize that some families will have interest in grade 1, because they have more than one child or because of their dissatisfaction with their current elementary option even after one year of schooling. We will reach full capacity in 2026–2027 with 375 students in grades K-4. We will have limited fiscal or programmatic impact on the Rochester City School District, 0.2% in Year 1, as we are a small school.

**Figure I.G.1 Projected Fiscal Impact Upon District of Location**

Year	Number of Enrolled	Charter School Base Per	Total Charter School Per Pupil	Estimated Additional Costs to District (e.g.	Total Projected Funding From District	Total District General Fund Budget <sup>52</sup>	Projected Impact on District Budget
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<sup>50</sup> Numbers align to those at full capacity and grade enrollment; all % remain constant in all years, with appropriate numbers aligned to each year’s enrollment. All numbers have been tabulated w/NYSED calculator attached to RFP. When calculating numbers outside of NYSED calculator, numbers do vary slightly; we include NYSED calculations here and look forward to finalizing numbers with SED as appropriate.

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.rcsdk12.org/cms/lib/NY01001156/Centricity/Domain/92/Proposed%20Budget.pdf>



	Students	Pupil Tuition Rate <sup>51</sup>	Cost to District	SPED Funds)			
2022 - 2023	120	13,785	1,571,490 <sup>53</sup>	219,550 <sup>54</sup>	1,791,040 <sup>55</sup>	948,993,855	0.2%
2023 - 2024	195	13,785	2,553,671	356,769	2,910,441	948,993,855	0.3%
2024 - 2025	270	13,785	3,535,853	493,988	4,029,841	948,993,855	0.4%
2025 - 2026	345	13,785	4,518,034	631,207	5,149,241	948,993,855	0.5%
2026 - 2027	375	13,785	4,910,906	686,095	5,597,001	948,993,855	0.6%

**H. COMMUNITY**

**Community to be Served.** Rochester is a city which sits in upstate New York running along the Erie Canal. The arts flourish throughout its streets. The city is home to famous artists such as Garth Fagan, Founder of Garth Fagan Dance and choreographer of Broadway’s The Lion King, and Taye Diggs, an American Actor. School of the Arts High School, in Rochester, continues to mold the innate creativity within our community’s youngest artists. Rochester was once one of our country’s leading cities of industrial and manufacturing development; local businesses have produced innovations in which have stood the test of time and continues to impact our everyday lives; Bausch and Lomb developed optical innovations which improve our eye sight today, Kodak produced innovations in film and photography in which are present today, Xerox’s digital innovations remain present within our everyday lives, and Gannett’s innovations in media continue to shape the way in which Americans receive local and national news today. We believe that when properly supported, Rochester’s youngest innovators will continue to shape the future of our country and world. Though Rochester is currently plagued with poverty, low education attainment, and a high mortality rate caused by historically racist policies and systems, which are still present today, we believe in the power of our resilient communities who draw strength from each other and possess the spirits of the famous Rochester abolitionist, Frederick Douglas, and woman’s rights activist, Susan B. Anthony. **Learning from Our Community.** Our Founding Team has worked to collect and address input on our school design and model from all community

<sup>51</sup> <https://stateaid.nysed.gov/>  
<sup>53</sup> All totals in this column reflect Budget Tab 6, line 24, per all District Per Pupil Revenue  
<sup>54</sup> All totals in this column reflect Budget Tab 6, line 25, Special Education Revenue  
<sup>55</sup> All totals in this column reflect Budget Tab 6, line 30, Total Revenue from State Sources



stakeholders through tabling events, in-person meetings, attending community events, meetings via phone or video conference, and through online survey. Developed in November 2019 and accessible to the public through our website, social media pages, and QR code located on all marketing materials and fliers, our survey has received 160 responses. We have attended and tabled at 40 community events, connected with 31 community organizations and over 500 families, and hosted three listening circles where we have distributed over 500 fliers in English and Spanish. Our flier was posted on our social media pages which has 697 followers. Families expressed dissatisfaction with current school options within our local district and are searching for a school option which (1) has a diverse staff, (2) accommodates the needs of students with disabilities, (3) provides access to the arts and other enrichment experiences, (4) has frequent parent communication, (5) and builds a strong literacy foundation. In addition to collecting feedback from families who currently have children attending local district schools, we've connected with two RCSD elementary school principals who explained the benefits of building principals possessing the autonomy to tailor all aspects of the school to ensure they are meeting the unique need of students and families and the necessity of school counselors and increased support for families engaged in remote learning settings; the RCSD Director of Community Partnerships who recommended that the arts be a core subject area as it provides room for creativity and produces valuable transferable skills, as well as ensuring that our school has a strong literacy program; the RCSD Career Pathways Coordinator who explained that current district students struggle to pass the civil service exam due to their literacy deficits and therefore are unable to be placed on a career pathway after completing their career and technical education programming, she stressed the importance of having strong literacy instruction; an RCSD Commissioner on the Board who explained the importance of safety, rigor, and access to extracurricular activities; and the RCSD East EPO Superintendent who stressed the importance of building a strong literacy foundation to mitigate the immense need for reading recovery in current middle and high school students in Rochester. Our school model was shaped by the feedback collected from all our community stakeholders to ensure that we meet the needs of students, families, and the community.

**Responding to Our Community.** In response to local input, we will actively seek diverse staff members by using our connections with local colleges and universities. Staff will participate in a series of professional development sessions addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion to ensure we proactively address historical inequities within our school community. Academic and staffing models provide individualized supports for all students with increased supports for students with disabilities, including NYS Certified Special Educators and ESOL/ENL Teachers, push-in and pull-out supports, daily school-wide Response to Intervention (“RTI”) block, and an Integrated Co-Teaching (“ICT”) classroom option of 15 students at each grade level. We share the belief in the power of the arts in supporting students’ academic and social success; we will offer daily 45-minute enrichment classes instructed by local Teaching Artists, K-2 STEAM Centers, and an additional 35-minute Arts Exploration Block provided by the Greater Rochester YMCA’s Dreamseeds Program. We will partner with parents to ensure students are adequately supported at school and home, which will happen through frequent communication beginning with home visits before school begins for newly enrolled families and continuing through nightly communication which require signatures, weekly invitation to our community meeting, bi-weekly phone calls from classroom teachers and intervention specialists, monthly coffee events with the school leader,

monthly newsletters, and trimester family conferences. Families expressed concern about their children entering middle school, and subsequently high school, with literacy skills below grade level, thereby limiting their children's future opportunities. We will provide 185 minutes of daily extended literacy instruction in targeted, homogenous, small group rotations proven successful in many charter schools locally and nationally. We will provide adequate individualized supports to ensure that all our students meet our ambitious goals of meeting and exceeding all NYSNGLS for ELA, building a strong foundation in literacy by the third grade. **Commitment to Our Community.** As a native Rochesterian, a graduate of the Rochester City School District, a first-generation college graduate, mother of a current elementary student, experienced educator, and life-long community member, our Proposed Head of School, Brittany Rumph, refuses to accept that a child's zip code should determine their future opportunities and success. Growing up in inner city Rochester has afforded her both the challenges and benefits in which our community faces today and has equipped her with keen insight into our very nuanced community built on its rich history and carried by hope for the future. She has devoted her life to uplifting her community beginning with her 'Stop the Violence' Campaign, as a RCSD third grade student, and has continued through her career in education and volunteerism in youth extracurricular activities and participation in the arts. Throughout the 2020-2021 school year she partnered with the Rochester Public Libraries to found and direct ROC City Learning Pods developed to support the students and families of Rochester through in-person remote learning support. Ms. Rumph brings a deep-rooted sense of community to our diverse applicant group of community leaders and professionals unified by an unwavering belief that all students regardless of race, gender, differing abilities, home language, or socioeconomic status can excel when adequately supported. Our Founding Team include parents, native Rochesterians, faith-based community leaders, a local charter school administrator, individuals who work for national education organizations, founders of organizations, and individuals with executive management and oversight experience; who all bring differing backgrounds and life experiences unified by our mission to provide rigorous academics paired with high-quality instruction, robust individualized supports, a values-based community to build character strengths, and access to the arts to promote the academic and social success of Rochester's children. During our current educational crisis and beyond, we are committed to supporting our students, families, and the Greater Rochester Community through providing a high-quality elementary school designed to meet the specific needs of the Rochester community; through continuously collecting, monitoring and responding to data to ensure that our school's model, policies, and procedures meet the ever-changing needs of our community, and by disseminating best practices and collaborating with the Greater Rochester education community. We recognize that our community extends far beyond our enrolled children and their families to include our local traditional district public schools; Rochester City School District and surrounding Suburban Districts, local charter schools and networks, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, national charter and public schools, and national education non-profits. Our school was developed to provide educational equity within a community who has historically been marginalized and directly impacted by racist policies and inequalities. We believe that all children regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic status, zip code, gender identity, home language, and differing abilities will excel when properly supported, seen, heard, represented, and nurtured; therefore, excellence is not an accident. To ensure that our school model, policies, and procedures



adequately meet the ever-changing needs of our community we commit to having an open-door policy, residency requirement for board members, public monthly coffee meetings with our school leader, critical friend feedback meetings held with community members, and annual community surveys. Feedback from the community will be reviewed by the school's leadership team, reported to the board of trustees, and will be used to shape annual goals and priorities. We recognize that the future of Rochester depends on the success of the next generation; Therefore, our team commits to partnering with our local and national communities to uplift, educate, and empower our most precious jewels, our children. **Community Partnership.** We believe in the true power of community building, and we recognize the vital role that our school and the community together play in the success of our students. We have formed community partnerships with community-based organizations which share the same values, as we believe that it takes a village to raise a child. Our partnerships ensure that the most vulnerable children of our community have access to a high-quality educational experience, enhanced by community assets in which they may otherwise be barred from accessing. There are many organizations within Rochester working in individual silos towards the same mission of improving outcomes for our community's children; we have decided to collaborate with multiple community organizations to increase our positive impact. The Greater Rochester YMCA and Rochester Education Foundation share our belief in the power of the arts in supporting academic and social success. Komposition Kids shares our belief in preparing students to meet rigorous demands for college and careers. Restoration Rochester shares our belief that our children and families deserve access to quality healthcare, nutrition, housing, and other resources. We are honored to collaborate with community-based partners to enhance and support our students' educational experience. The YMCA will offer daily arts exploration through its Dreamseeds Program, in which employs local teaching artists to provide access to various art forms. Our Head of School will evaluate the program's effectiveness twice per year based on the NYS Learning Standards for the Arts. The Board will be debriefed on the evaluation, and it will inform the upcoming year's strategic plan. Families indicated the need for extracurricular activities outside of the school day; we have also partnered with the YMCA to offer an on-site afterschool program. The YMCA's Achievement Gap after school program was developed in response to the fact that 1 in 4 children are left home alone after-school; the program gives students a safe place to be after school and focuses on Health & Wellness, Academic Support, STEM, Global Learning, Leadership, and Enrichment.<sup>56</sup> Our students will also have access to the YMCA's Power Scholars Academy, a summer learning program which focuses on literacy, math, STEAM, and health in efforts to prevent summer learning loss.<sup>57</sup> Additionally, our team has participated in two tours of a recently vacated YMCA Facility, centrally located in Downtown Rochester, and we are in discussion with the YMCA leadership team about leasing space to locate Rochester Excellence Academy within their facility. In partnership with Komposition Kids, our students will receive bi-weekly career readiness instruction through their Ms. Sow's Career Readiness Curriculum which meets the American School Counselors Association Standards and NYS Career Plan. We have partnered with the Rochester Education Foundation to offer instrumental music lessons through their music instrument donation program. Our Social Worker will partner with Restoration Rochester to assist families in crisis throughout the school year. Our team is opened to forming

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<sup>56</sup> <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ymca-y-net-prod/files/photos/pdf/achievement-gap-accelerating-academics.pdf>

<sup>57</sup> <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ymca-y-net-prod/files/photos/pdf/achievement-gap-summer-to-succeed.pdf>

additional community partnerships, to join in enriching the lives of our students and families, as we believe that it takes the collective strength of the village to uplift and empower our community's leaders of tomorrow.

## **I. DISSEMINATION**

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Our Founding Team is committed to serving our community through providing a high-quality elementary school for all our children and families. We recognize that our community extends far beyond our enrolled children and their families to include Rochester City School District and surrounding district schools, local charter schools and networks, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, national charter and public schools, and national education non-profits. We honor, value, and respect our fellow educators and community members who continue to answer the call of our community's children and families. As a part of our listening and learning community outreach, we have connected with two RCSD elementary school principals, the RCSD Director of Community Partnerships, the RCSD Career Pathways Coordinator, a RCSD Commissioner, the RCSD East EPO Superintendent, and have reached out to the RCSD Superintendent and are awaiting a response. In addition to connecting with the Superintendent of the East Educational Partnership Organization, a partnership between an RCSD high school formerly in receivership and the University of Rochester, we also attended a public professional development session hosted by the East EPO and are looking forward to learning from their work around literacy remediation and use of restorative practices, which has aided their school in successfully recovering from receivership status. Additionally, Rochester Excellence Academy, though not a part of a charter management organization, has the unique privilege of being connected to a network of over 195 independent charter schools, across 46 cities nationwide, through BES<sup>58</sup>. This connection provides our team with access to education innovations from other schools located in urban areas across the nation. We strongly believe in promoting opportunities for all of Rochester's youth, and as such, we believe in disseminating effective practices. To act on that belief and responsibility, we commit to having an open-door policy, public monthly coffee meetings with our school leader, and host public professional development sessions every six weeks throughout the school year, in which we will invite the staff members of other local schools within our community<sup>59</sup>. We recognize that the future of Rochester depends on the success of the next generation; Therefore, our team commits to partnering with our local and national communities to uplift, educate, and empower our most precious jewels, our children.

## **II. EDUCATIONAL PLAN**

### **A. EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY**

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The skills, habits, and mindsets necessary to achieve life success are built in elementary school. A strong literacy and math foundation are required to gain access to higher education and career opportunities. In elementary school children learn and internalize values which crystalize into character strengths and where curiosity is nurtured into creative problem solving.<sup>60</sup> We believe

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<sup>58</sup> <https://bes.org/impact/>

<sup>59</sup> Public professional development dates located in attachment 4c: Proposed First Year Calendar

<sup>60</sup> Tough, Paul *How Children Succeed Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*. NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2012



that access to rigorous academics paired with high-quality instruction drives academic success. All curricular choices are research-based, meet New York State Next Generation Learning Standards, and have proven to support positive student outcomes in high performing schools with similar populations. All children can achieve at high levels with adequate individualized supports; our educational model is grounded in monitoring, supporting, and responding to student data. **Teacher Development.** Passionate, well-trained teachers are mission-critical. We will recruit a diverse group of teachers including Special Education Certified, ESOL Certified, and teachers who reflect our community. Teachers will be trained to use curriculum as a map and individual student data as their GPS navigation system. Curriculum will serve as a scope and sequence of content for the year; teachers will be supported in modifying content to meet the needs of all learners. All teachers will participate in three weeks of Summer Intensive professional development (“PD”).<sup>61</sup> During Summer PD, school leaders and outside consultants will train teachers on varying instrumental topics including content knowledge-building, management, rigor, diagnostics and assessments, data analysis and data-driven instruction, diversity, equity, inclusion, our **RESPECT** Core Values and the “Excellence” way of doing daily school procedures and learning activities. We will set the expectations for building meaningful relationships with students and families. Five afternoons of Summer PD will be devoted to making home visits where teacher pairs will visit each of their student’s families. Teachers will participate in weekly PD each Friday, following our abbreviated school day.<sup>62</sup> PD topics will respond to student data, daily teacher observation trends, and upcoming assessment cycles. Teachers will engage in weekly grade level team meetings, collaborative planning, and data analysis. Team meetings will be facilitated by school leaders, held during the YMCA Dreamseeds Arts’ Block. All teachers will have an instructional coach whose purpose is not to evaluate but to develop them.<sup>63</sup> Instructional coaches will observe instruction for each teacher at minimum once per week; during observations, an instructional coach may provide the teacher with live coaching if there is beneficial feedback that would positively and immediately affect student outcomes. Following observations, there will be practice-based, feedback meetings during which teachers will receive bite-sized, measurable, and observable action steps to increase student achievement.<sup>64</sup> Teachers may receive more than one observation per week based on individual needs to ensure high-quality instruction and student achievement in all classrooms. **Data-Driven Instruction.** Data informs an ambitious school community. Student data will guide instructional practices, decisions, and curriculum modifications.<sup>65</sup> Our curriculum provides a framework for content and teachers will be trained and supported to modify instruction to meet students’ needs. At Family Orientation Nights before the start of the school year, teachers will assess each incoming student by administering the STEP assessment and informal basic math skills assessment. Families will leave Orientation with student data and materials for home to promote academic growth. School leaders and teachers will use initial student data to tailor instruction to meet the needs of all learners, starting on the first day of school. Each lesson will conclude with an independent student practice and, at times, an exit ticket on which students will need to apply skills and concepts learned independently. During independent practice, teachers will circulate,

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<sup>61</sup> Uncommon Schools Rochester Prep, the highest performing public school within Rochester, begins with a three-week summer pd intensive

<sup>62</sup> RISE Prep Mayoral Academy and Uncommon Schools Rochester Prep have a weekly abbreviated day to allow time for weekly teacher PD

<sup>63</sup> Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul *Get Better Faster: A 90 Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2016

<sup>64</sup> Lemov, Doug, Erica Woolway, and Katie Yezzi *Practice Perfect*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012

<sup>65</sup> Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul *Driven by Data 2.0: A Practical Guide to Improving Instruction*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2019

aggressively monitoring, collecting data, prompting, and providing written feedback. Teachers will analyze data and modify upcoming lessons to address findings. Data will determine lesson modifications, questions asked, students called on, and pacing alteration of initial scope and sequence. Math data will be entered into a daily tracker, visible to all grade team members and school leaders. Reading data will be entered into a weekly tracker, visible to all grade level team members and school leaders. Grade level teams will meet weekly in response to student data, identifying trends, problem-solving, and sharing best practices. All nationally normed, standards-based, and interim assessments will be graded collaboratively; each grade level team will analyze grade level student data, action planning to address students' needs. Student data will be shared with families on a weekly basis to ensure that we are working as a team to support student growth.

**Literacy.** We believe that “[o]nce you learn to read, you will be forever free.”<sup>66</sup> In the late 1800s, Frederick Douglass urged the importance of literacy for people of color within the same community in which Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will reside. Today, low ELA proficiency rates for students in the Southwest and Northwest Quadrants of Rochester mirror the results of many other low-income cities across our nation. The challenge begins even before the start of formal schooling: literacy deficits begin before the start of kindergarten for children in low-income communities as they are exposed to approximately 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers.<sup>67</sup> Therefore, it is life- and mission-critical that a strong literacy foundation be built for our students in the early elementary years. With a transition from learning to read in kindergarten through third grade, to reading to learn in fourth grade and beyond, approximately half of fourth grade curriculum is inaccessible for students who are reading below grade level.<sup>68</sup> Third grade reading levels are indicators for access to future opportunities including high school graduation, entrance and success in college, and career choice.<sup>69</sup> We will ensure that students are reading on grade level by the third grade through devoting 134,060 minutes to literacy instruction, separated into components to target the complex layers of literacy. Students will receive instruction in phonics, reading comprehension, guided reading, collaborative reading, handwriting, shared writing, computer literacy, informational texts, fiction texts, and a literacy focused social emotional development curriculum. To address the needs of all students including students with special needs and English language learners, instruction will include large and small groups, and intervention when necessary, and groups will be homogeneous to differentiate instruction. Student data will be recorded, monitored, and analyzed weekly to inform the following week's plans. Teachers will administer the STEP Assessment every six weeks to gauge growth and tailor instruction to meet students' needs. The NWEA Map Assessment will be administered three times per school year to track growth and inform instruction. Students will receive 185 minutes of literacy instruction Monday through Thursday, and 155 minutes on Fridays. **Inquiry-Based Learning and Problem-Solving.** Critical thinking and problem-solving skills must be developed and supported throughout the childhood years. Our mission to prepare students for future success requires that we move from rote learning alone as the traditional form of learning, as lecturing students about content does *not* prepare them to meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

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<sup>66</sup> <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/335571-once-you-learn-to-read-you-will-be-forever-free>

<sup>67</sup> Fernald, A., V. A. Marchman, & A. Weisleder. “SES Differences in Language Processing Skill and Vocabulary Are Evident at 18 Months.” *Developmental Science* 2016 (2): 234–48

<sup>68</sup> *Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010. Web. 5 September 2019.

<sup>69</sup> *Double Jeopardy: How Third Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012. Web. 5 September 2019.

Our current job market requires skill sets which move away from memorization; instead, adults must possess the ability to “ work in teams, to present ideas to a group, to write effectively, to think deeply and analytically about problems, to take information and techniques learned in one context and adapt them to a new and unfamiliar problem or situation.”<sup>70</sup> Therefore, math and science lessons will begin with a teacher briefly presenting a problem, situation, or giving the parameters of a task; students will then be launched into a task, individually or in a group, during which they will build on prior knowledge to problem solve. During work time, both teachers will circulate, observing student actions, recording data, prompting or questioning student thinking, and providing written feedback on the parameters. After work time, teachers will facilitate a student-led discussion around strategies used and conceptual understandings gained. Teachers will be trained to listen to, understand, and prompt student thinking for continuous growth. Through play in daily STEAM Centers, kindergarten, first, and second grade students will have time to take information and techniques learned and collaboratively adapt them to new, unfamiliar situations.

## **B. CURRICULUM**

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Our curriculum choices are heavily influenced by the work of high-performing charter schools in high-poverty areas. Through the BES Fellowship, Lead Applicant and proposed Head of School has traveled the nation studying 30+ schools serving similar communities. The Founding Team has paired best practices from these studied charter schools with Ms. Rumph’s professional experience, successfully teaching and leading in a local high-achieving charter school, and tailored it to address our community need, expanding that curriculum in response to our community’s desire for more arts infusion across all elementary grades and daily opportunities for social-emotional learning. Like so many community leaders and families, we recognize that a strong academic foundation alone will not be sufficient in engaging students in the joy of learning and in preparing students for their bright future; together we agree that it is essential that we support our students’ holistic growth through the arts and social emotional development.<sup>71</sup> All curriculum choices are aligned to the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards (“NYSNGLS”) and our scope and sequence documents and internal assessments are further guided by previous NYS Assessments, national reading inventories, and nationally normed assessments. Teachers will be trained and supported in adapting curriculum and instruction to meet individual student needs, including but not limited to students with special needs and multilingual language learners. Our curriculum choices and instructional methods have proven to increase student achievement in Rochester and nationwide and our curriculum embraces the power of community partnerships through a robust arts curriculum. Our core curricular choices offer interactive digital components in which ensure continuity of instruction throughout in-person, hybrid, and remote learning settings. **Development, Implementation, and Evaluation.** To meet Benchmark 1 of the NYS Charter School Performance Framework, curricular choices across all content areas have been selected only if they have proven to support high student achievement. We further ensure that our curriculum meets our community’s expressed and empirical needs.<sup>72</sup> Curriculum will be rolled out to staff during a three-week professional development (“PD”) Summer Intensive which will

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<sup>70</sup> Tough, Paul, *Helping Children Succeed: What Works and Why* NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2016

<sup>71</sup> Tough, Paul, *Helping Children Succeed: What Works and Why* NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2016

<sup>72</sup> Rochester’s students consistently score below NYS Assessment averages; community members expressed the need for increased literacy support in schools, as seen in **Community Outreach Table 2**.



primarily consist of practice-based PD sessions. Teachers will be trained to internalize lesson plan frameworks, incorporate and address collected student data, and respond to student data trends and misconceptions, and prompt for sophistication of student response in the moment. Practice-based PD sessions will begin with live models or video exemplars followed by individual and group practice, with feedback provided by our Head of School, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Student Supports Coordinator (licensed NYS Special Educator).<sup>73</sup> Throughout the school year, teachers will be supported by their instructional leader or coach, and the Leadership Team will provide live feedback, weekly observations paired with feedback and practice, collaborative planning and data meetings, and weekly practice-based PD sessions. Grade level teams will practice lesson delivery in weekly team meetings, providing each other with feedback. Teachers will receive scripted lesson plans in units and be responsible for intellectual prep and tailoring lessons to meet individual student's needs. They will go through lessons annotating, taking notes, inserting individualized student data, developing prompts and questions, and anticipating student errors with accompanying prompts and share outs. These "marked up" lessons will be due to the coach one week before instruction and will be returned with written feedback at least three days before instruction. Lessons with the appropriate amount of intellectual prep will always be placed visibly and directly outside of each classroom, available for any observer. By providing scripted lessons, we place teachers' focus on delivering high-quality instruction and addressing student gaps in the moment rather than on developing curriculum from scratch. As curriculum development is a nuanced skill which must be developed, having scripted lessons ensures equity in rigor level and quality of instruction across classrooms. Our Head of School, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Student Supports Coordinator will work with teachers to provide supplemental materials and resources to ensure adequate individualized supports. The Leadership Team will monitor and modify curriculum weekly based on student data trends and growth. The Team (Head of School, Director of Curriculum, Student Supports Coordinator, ESOL Interventionist, Grade Level Chairs) will convene once per week, at minimum, to evaluate student data trends and ensure curriculum is horizontally aligned across subject areas and vertically aligned across grade levels. Our Head of School, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Student Support Coordinator will ultimately determine if major curriculum changes are necessary. Annually, the Leadership Team will evaluate curriculum using data, including performance and growth measures on STEP, NWEA MAP, internal assessments, and NY State Assessments as data is made available. Teachers will provide feedback regarding our curriculum throughout the year through weekly grade level team meetings and through annual surveys. **Literacy.** Our mission to equip students with the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for future success requires a relentless focus on building a strong literacy foundation for all students in the early years of elementary school. With a shift in the purpose for reading from learning to read (K-3), to reading to learn (grade 4+), for a student unable to read on grade level, 50% of fourth-grade curriculum, across all content areas, would be inaccessible.<sup>74</sup> This gap widens each year as the amount of content a student is required to attain through reading exponentially increases. In light of this trajectory and need, we have organized our school into two, developmentally appropriate academies - Lower (K-2) and Upper (3-4) - to adequately support literacy growth. **Lower**

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<sup>73</sup> Lemov, Doug, Erica Woolway, and Katie Yezzi. *Practice Perfect: 42*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012

<sup>74</sup> *Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010. Web. 5 September 2019.

**Academy Literacy.** We will devote the mornings to high-quality literacy instruction, Monday – Thursday for 185 minutes per day and Friday for 155 minutes. Literacy instruction will include whole group, small group, and intervention. Interactive read aloud lessons will be delivered in whole group; students will actively listen and respond to texts. Students will engage in discussions, with their teacher and peers, regarding the text. They will be required to respond to factual, inferential, and critical thinking questions. When applicable, students will be asked to make connections which are text to text, text to world, and text to self. As there are many layers of literacy, separate components will be taught in isolation, within small group rotations, to ensure foundational literacy skills are mastered. Small group instruction will include phonics, reading comprehension, guided reading, collaborative reading, oral language, vocabulary development, and writing. Instructing within three small homogeneous group rotations each day will allow teachers to use targeted data to ensure that all students’ needs are being met, including those with special needs and Multilingual Learners.<sup>75</sup> Our writing curriculum includes whole group shared writing, handwriting, and independent writing. Research demonstrates that students are less likely to graduate from high school if they end the third-grade reading below grade level. To ensure that our students are reading on or above grade level, beginning in kindergarten, students will be assessed approximately every six weeks using the STEP Assessment, a research-based assessment tool developed by the University of Chicago’s Urban Education Institute and three times per year using NWEA MAP Assessment to measure student growth. Teachers and leaders will analyze student assessment data, identifying present levels of performance, possible gaps, and will customize individual support plans to meet each students’ needs. As needed, students may be informally assessed between rounds to tailor literacy instruction to meet individual needs.

**Figure II.B.1: Lower Academy Literacy Approach (K-2)**

Curriculum	Components	Description
Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts	Read Aloud	Teachers read texts that are NYSNGLS aligned, culturally relevant, and age appropriate. Teachers model thought processes when reading and engage students in discussion with factual, inferential, and critical thinking questions. Read alouds will include fiction, non-fiction/informational texts, dramas, and poetry with a focus on comprehension discussions.
	Reading Comprehension	Teachers continue teaching comprehension skills, mirroring Real Aloud lessons, w/in small groups.
Rigby Books	Guided Reading	Teachers provide real-time feedback for students as they independently decode,

<sup>75</sup> Using this literacy model, Rochester Prep West Elementary was able to build a strong literacy foundation for students of inner-city Rochester, outperforming local and state proficiency averages on the New York State English Language Arts Assessment by 65%- 66% (2019)



		retell, and discuss books on their independent reading level.
Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts	Writing	Lower Academy writing supports the development of appropriate writing conventions, handwriting, spelling, and understanding of parts of speech and sentence structure. The Shared Writing component allows students to express their ideas verbally as teachers model the writing process.
Dolch Sight Words	Word Study	Teachers deliver oral drills during small group rotations, during transitions, and throughout day. Students also explore CKLA Sayings and Phrases.
Wilson Foundations	Phonemic Awareness; Phonics / Word Study; High Frequency Word Study; Reading Fluency Vocabulary; Comprehension Strategies ; Handwriting; Spelling	Teachers deliver, targeted, multi-sensory literacy instruction during small group rotations.

<b>Figure II.B.2: Upper Academy Literacy Approach (3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 4<sup>th</sup>)</b>		
<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Components</b>	<b>Description</b>
Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts	Informational Text Guided Reading	Teachers provide real-time feedback for students as they independently read, retell, and discuss informational texts on independent reading level. Students will be given ample opportunities to respond to text in writing.
	Narrative Guided Reading	Teachers provide real-time feedback for students as they independently decode, retell, and discuss narrative texts on their independent reading level. Students will be given ample opportunities to respond to text in writing.
	Grammar	Teachers deliver a traditional grammar lesson with a model, scaffolded practice, and independent student practice.
	Writing	Students go through writing process, independently developing and writing narrative stories, persuasive writing pieces, reports, poems, letters and written responses

		to text. Teachers circulate providing individual feedback.
	Close Reading	Teachers help students sharpen reading comprehension via analysis of shared text.
	Vocabulary / Word Study	Students study weekly vocabulary words and learn to define unknown words within texts. Students also explore Sayings and Phrases.

**Figure II.B.3 : Lower and Upper Academy Math Approach**

Curriculum	Components	Description
Internally Created with Supplemental Materials (K-2)	Calendar Math	Students and teachers will engage in an interactive review of basic mathematical concepts.
Eureka Math (K-4)	Math Lesson	Math lessons are NYSNGLS-aligned and vary in type including inquiry-based, project-based, and procedure-based, and will connect procedures with mathematical conceptual understandings. Teachers roll out problem or parameters of a task, then students engage in individual or group work. Teachers provide feedback. Lessons end with student-led discourse and charting of student identified key conceptual understandings.
Carpenter, Fennema, Franke, & Levi's Cognitively Guided Instruction	Daily Story Problems	Students engage in independent problem-solving. Teachers monitor, record data, and provide written feedback. Problem-solving ends with student-led discourse and charting of student identified key conceptual understandings.

**Mathematics.** Our approach for math instruction is to isolate components of mathematics to increase students' conceptual understanding and ability to think analytically and critically. K-4 students will engage in a daily 40-minute Cognitively Guided Instruction block where they will independently solve word problems, share thinking/strategies, engage in mathematical discourse, develop universal key understandings, and test their findings with extra practice of the same problem type. Teachers will monitor independent work time, circulating, recording student data, provide written feedback, and prompt student thinking. They will act as facilitators of class discourse. Student thinking will be charted and displayed in the classroom as anchor charts. Math lessons are NYSNGLS-aligned and vary in type including inquiry-based, project-based, procedure-based, and will connect procedures with mathematical conceptual understandings. Lessons will end with students engaging in mathematical discourse, while the teacher charts their



thinking and identified universal key understandings. Charts illustrating student thinking will be displayed in the classroom as anchor charts. The basis of our math approach is to increase students' understandings and develop their ability to critically think and problem solve; we also recognize there is an appropriate place for fact-based learning to aid problem-solving skills. K-2 students will engage in fast-paced Calendar Math, oral drills, and Math Fluency sprints to support fact-based math. Students in grades 3-4 will engage in oral drills, Math Fluency sprints, and daily spiral reviews to support in fact-based math. Our math approach was adapted using the models of Springfield Prep, Brooke Charter Schools, Purpose Prep, and Rochester Prep West Elementary.

**Science.** All students will engage in investigative scientific exploration. We will use Amplify Science, a research-based curriculum based on NGSS standards. Students act as scientists or engineers to actively investigate the world around them through engaging hands-on activities, immersive digital simulations, comprehensive reading and writing activities, and lively classroom discussions. Through collaborative research and exploration, students solve real world problems. K-2 students will engage in 20 minutes of daily exploration in our STEAM Centers. **Social Studies** The Head of School, Lower Academy Director of Curriculum & Instruction, and Upper Academy Director of Curriculum & Instruction will internally create our Social Studies Curriculum using the NYSNGLS, narrative texts, and informational texts to guide the creation. Our curriculum will be developed to affirm the identities of urban students, serving as both a mirror, as it is intentionally culturally relevant, and as a window, as it allows students to learn about other worldviews. **Arts.** We recognize the enormous impact that having access to the arts plays for the future success of all children, especially students living in impoverished areas. Students will engage in enrichment classes including Classical Ballet, West African Dance, Visual arts, and Music, instructed by Teaching Artists with the autonomy to create curriculum under the supervision of the Head of School and Director of Curriculum and Instruction, aligned to the NYS P-12 Learning Standards for the Arts, and in collaboration with classroom teachers to allow for cross-curricular connections. Through our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA, students will receive an additional 35 minutes of arts exploration in the art form of their choice through the Dreamseeds Program, developed to promote a creative, focused, and confident mindset while increasing students' public speaking, leadership, art literacy and problem-solving skills. This program offers instruction in Fine Arts & Graffiti, Breakdancing, Drama & Script Writing, DJing & Production, Poetry, and Spoken word & Rap. Through our partnership with the Rochester Education Foundation our students will have access to instrumental music lessons, per student interest, Y2 and beyond. More details can be found in **Attachment 3b. Social Emotional Development.** Another unique element of our curriculum, and distinguished from curriculum drawn from any major charter network within our city, is the fact that students begin the day with a mental health check-in and a whole group interactive read aloud focused on one of the five competencies of Social Emotional Learning: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making.<sup>76</sup> Teachers and students engage in discussion, role plays, daily mindfulness exercises, and "Moments of Peace" as needed. K-2 students review Highscope's Six Steps of Conflict Resolution, drawn from Rochester's Early Pre-K and Pre-K programs. Teachers facilitate peer-to-peer resolution conversations as they arise,

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<sup>76</sup> <https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/CASEL-Competencies.pdf>

and in all grades our **RESPECT** values will guide our mindsets, habits, and build our character strengths: **R**espect - I treat myself, others, and the environment with kindness. **E**mpathy - I show concern for the feelings of others. **S**cholarship - I am eager to know, learn, and question new things. **P**erseverance - I always try my best, especially in challenging situations, and never give up. **E**xcellence - I go above and beyond every day. I only present the best version of myself, **C**reativity - I am open to new ideas, embrace change, and use my imagination when problem solving, **T**eamwork - I understand my connection to my family, school, neighborhood, and the world. I accept the responsibility of making the world a better place through my actions and support of others. We know that character strengths can be learned, modeled, and will be celebrated.<sup>77</sup> **Social Emotional Development.** We believe that rigorous academics alone are not enough, especially for students who reside in a city which ranks number one in the nation for children living in extreme poverty.<sup>78</sup> Living in poverty has many potential negative impacts on children often referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACES. Constant exposure to “harsh or unstable environments can create biological changes in the growing brains and bodies of infants and children.<sup>79</sup>” These biological brain changes may impair a child’s ability to regulate their thoughts and feelings, making it difficult to manage emotions and process information. We will support student’s social emotional development through daily mindfulness exercises or “Moments of Peace” as well as daily Family Meetings during which we will have individual mental health check-ins and a whole group Social Emotional Learning interactive read aloud. Our **RESPECT** values will help guide our mindsets, habits, and build our character strengths: **R**espect - I treat myself, others, and the environment with kindness. **E**mpathy - I show concern for the feelings of others. **S**cholarship - I am eager to know, learn, and question new things. **P**erseverance- I always try my best, especially in challenging situations, and never give up, **E**xcellence - I go above and beyond every day. I only present the best version of myself. **C**reativity - I am open to new ideas, embrace change, and use my imagination when problem solving. **T**eamwork - I understand my connection to my family, school, neighborhood, and the world. I accept the responsibility of making the world a better place through my actions and support of others. We know that character strengths can be learned, modeled, and celebrated.<sup>80</sup> Through the guiding language and beliefs of our values, we will hold everyone in our community to high expectations. We will use HighScope’s Six Steps of Conflict Resolution, taken from Rochester’s shared Pre-K Curriculum, to help students develop their ability to problem-solve and self-advocate. Through our YMCA partnership, we offer all students a robust arts program with 35 minutes of daily arts exploration. Students will participate in Music, Classical Ballet, West African Dance, and Visual Arts during enrichment and will later participate in the art form of their choice during our YMCA Dreamseeds Arts Block which will offer Fine Arts & Graffiti, Breakdancing, Drama & Script Writing, Djing & Production, Poetry, and Spoken word & Rap. Through our partnership with the Rochester Education Foundation, students will have access to instrumental music lessons starting in Y2. According to The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, “The evidence is clear: study of the arts contributes to student achievement and success. Its multiple benefits are academic, basic and

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<sup>77</sup> Tough, Paul *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*. NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.actrochester.org/tinymce/source/Census%20Update%202018.pdf>

<sup>79</sup> Tough, Paul, *Helping Children Succeed: What Works and Why* NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2016

<sup>80</sup> Tough, Paul *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*. NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2012

comprehensive.”<sup>81</sup> Lead Applicant and proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph is testament to the positive impact the arts has for children living in high poverty areas, as she was born and raised in Rochester, studied the arts in high school at School of the Arts, continued studying the impact of the arts for children at The College at Brockport, and is now an arts advocate within our city.

### **C. INSTRUCTION**

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We know that having access to rigorous, on-grade-level, age-appropriate material promotes academic growth. We also know that rigor is a right for all children. Therefore, all students will have access to curriculum aligned to the NYSNGLS for each subject, at every grade level. We define high-quality instruction as instruction that is engaging, tailored to individual student needs, and pushes students to critically and analytically think, question, and problem-solve. **Instructional Coaching.** Teachers will begin training during our three-week professional development (“PD”) Summer Intensive. PD sessions will be practice-based during which teachers will practice lesson delivery, taxonomy techniques, and responding to student data in the moment. During PD practice sessions, the Head of School and Director of Curriculum and Instruction will circulate, providing individual, in-the-moment feedback for teachers and will continue every Friday in response to observed trends. Throughout the school year, all teachers will be observed by their instructional coach, at minimum once per week, with coaches observing instruction through the lens of student impact through teacher actions. If necessary, instructional coaches may intervene by providing real-time written feedback, live coaching with whisper prompts, or by modeling instruction<sup>82</sup> with real-time feedback debriefed later in the day. The goal is to provide feedback in the least invasive manner, avoiding interrupting instruction unless student achievement is at stake. All teacher observations will be followed with formal feedback meeting during which teachers and instructional coaches will talk through observed instruction, analyzing teacher actions and student impact. Together they will arrive at an appropriate action step that is observable, measurable, bite-sized, and would positively impact student achievement. The teacher will be assigned “Quick Hits” - small aspects of instruction that could be altered immediately to increase achievement. Observations and feedback meetings will conclude with 1:1 practice of a targeted instructional technique aligned to the week’s action step. **School-wide Instructional Taxonomies.** We will adopt instructional techniques from Lemov’s *Teach Like a Champion 2.0*, proven to contribute to achievement in high-performing, urban charter schools across the nation and within Rochester.<sup>83</sup> Our Lead Applicant previously worked with the Teach Like a Champion Team as a three-year Fellow, codifying effective taxonomy practices.<sup>84</sup> Our school wide taxonomy techniques will be introduced during Summer PD. Taxonomy-focused sessions will begin with definitions, rationale, and impact on achievement, followed by video or live models, partner or group practices, and real-time feedback.<sup>85</sup> Techniques have proven to increase student engagement, increase student achievement, aid in providing access to curriculum for all students including our students with disabilities and Emerging Bilinguals, increase instructional minutes, and establish a shared level of high expectations for all students across all grade levels. **Instructional Model.** Our instructional model is designed to provide increased individualized supports for all students. Schoolwide TLaC

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<sup>81</sup>Ruppert, Sandra *Critical Evidence: How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement*. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, 2006

<sup>82</sup> Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul *Get Better, Faster: A 90-Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2016

<sup>83</sup> RISE Prep Mayoral Academy in RI and Uncommon Schools Rochester Prep West Elementary in Rochester, NY use TLaC taxonomies

<sup>84</sup> <https://teachlikeachampion.com/tag/brittany-rumph/>

<sup>85</sup> Lemov, Doug, Erica Woolway, and Katie Yezzi *Practice Perfect* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012



taxonomies provide Tier 1 supports for all students, increasing engagement in learning. All classrooms are co-taught by a Lead Teacher and Teacher’s Assistant, increasing individualized supports. Our two-teacher model allows each teacher to focus on specific content areas in which they provide instruction for. **Special Student Populations.** We are preparing to serve a population which mirrors our local district, including 22% of students with disabilities and 15% of MLL/ELL students. At every grade level we will have one Integrated Co-teaching Classroom (“ICT”) which consists of 15 students, one General Education Lead Teacher and one Special Education Teacher Lead Teacher (NYS Certified). Our Head of School, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Coordinator of Student Supports may recommend a student for the ICT classroom based on diagnostic assessment scores at the start of the school year. All classrooms are inclusive; however, families who would prefer their children receive increased individualized supports within a smaller class size also have the option of requesting a spot in the ICT classroom. Tier 2 supports such as a school wide daily Intervention block, targeted small group instruction, and multisensory literacy instruction are available for all students. Tier 3 supports including push-in and pull-out intervention services are provided by our Special Education Interventionist (NYS Certified) and ESOL Interventionist (NYS Certified). All teachers, including classroom teachers and teaching artists, will participate in professional development regarding best practices in supporting our special student populations. Our Coordinator of Student Supports will also support all teachers and families throughout the school year ensuring that all students receive the appropriate amount of support. **Data-Driven Instruction.** Our NYSNGLS-aligned curriculum provides teachers with the content to teach; however, student data drives instruction. Teachers are provided with a scope and sequence, scripted lessons, and cyclical assessments, but they will do the intellectual preparation to deliver high-quality instruction. Following data analysis of daily student work, exit tickets, and assessments, teachers will modify lessons to meet the individual needs of each student. Teachers may need to add and omit questions, assign questions to students, increase intervention times, or re-teach a lesson to ensure all students are adequately supported. While the content will be the same across grade level classrooms, pacing, scaffolds, and interventions will vary based on needs. **Literacy Instruction.** Data determines small group literacy placement. Small group literacy rotations are held at the same time across all grade levels to allow students the ability to travel vertically based on literacy support needs. Small groups range between 5 and 10 students per group. Our two-teacher model allows teachers to target instruction to meet individual student needs and increases the amount of individual feedback. During Guided Reading Lessons, the small group of 5-10 students will be split into two groups, Groups A and B, for increased individualized support. Teacher Assistants will provide Phonics and Reading Fluency instruction, primarily using peppering to review foundational phonics. Lead Teachers will provide Guided Reading, Reading Comprehension, and Writing instruction, acting as facilitators supporting students in using previously taught decoding and comprehension skills and holding individual student conferences. **Math Instruction.** Curriculum primarily relies on facilitating inquiry-based lessons, using peppering for fast-paced basic concept review, and Cognitively Guided Instruction. Lead teachers will serve as facilitators of inquiry-based lessons. During an inquiry-based lesson, the teacher will present the parameters of a task and then will launch students into work time. Throughout work time, both teachers will aggressively monitor student work, on a predetermined pathway, collecting data and only speaking to prompt student thinking. A lesson concludes with students

sharing strategies and thinking which leads to a whole class, student-led discussion. The class discussion ends with the teacher charting and stamping the conceptual understandings that students identified. Teacher Assistants will use face-paced peppering, targeted questions to review basic mathematical concepts during Calendar Math. Cognitively Guided Instruction will begin with the Lead Teacher telling a story. Then, students will retell the story and may act out the action or relationship in that story. Next, students will be sent to their desks for independent work time during which they will solve the problem in the story. Throughout work time, both teachers will aggressively monitor student work on a predetermined pathway, collecting data and only speaking to prompt student thinking. A lesson concludes with students sharing out their strategies and thinking which leads to a whole class, student-led, discussion. The class discussion ends with the teacher charting and stamping the conceptual understandings that students identified.

#### **D. SPECIAL STUDENT POPULATIONS AND RELATED SERVICES**

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We have designed our academic programming, staffing model, and social emotional health supports, aligning budgetary priorities to each, to serve a diverse group of students and families, including those who may have differing abilities, home languages, and a wide variety of backgrounds. We anticipate serving students who mirrors those of our local school district and we ensure that all students will have the supports to achieve academic and social success. We believe that access to rigorous academics and high-quality instruction is a right for all students and is a central component of our mission. We know that when properly supported, all students can achieve at high levels. Our focus, therefore, is on consistently monitoring our students' academic and behavioral needs and allowing data to be the driving force for instruction, curricular choices, supports, and interventions. It is through our consistent response to student data, flexibility, and a commitment to pivoting, at any point, that we can best ensure that all of our students have access to rigorous academics, set ambitious goals, and are adequately supported in achieving success. We accept our legal and moral obligation in providing all students with a Free and Appropriate Education ("FAPE"). We will adhere to all applicable federal and state laws including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA").

**Response to Intervention.** Response to intervention ("RTI") is a research-based, multi-tiered approach which permits early identification for leveled individualized student supports.<sup>86</sup> This process requires that all students receive high-quality instruction, are consistently and frequently assessed, and data is used to differentiate instruction, inform supports, and determine interventions. We will implement a three-tiered RTI system to determine necessary individualized supports.

**RTI Academics.** Our academic programming design ensures that all students receive Tier 1 supports, including a two-teacher classroom model, targeted small group instruction, extended literacy and math instruction, differentiated lessons, rigorous academics paired with high-quality instruction, and daily RTI intervention blocks. Targeted small group literacy rotations are scheduled at the same time across all grades to ensure each student receives appropriately leveled instruction. A student from the Lower Academy (K-2) may quickly excel and need to travel to an Upper Academy (grades 3-4) classroom for literacy; an Upper Academy student may struggle and need additional phonics instruction and have opportunity to travel to a Lower Academy classroom to receive leveled instruction. Preliminary STEP and basic math skill assessments, given during student

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<sup>86</sup> <http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/what/whatisrti>

orientation within the first week of school, will determine leveled individualized supports for incoming students at the start of the year. Moving forward into the year, all students will take STEP, NYSNGLS-aligned Interim ELA and Math assessments approximately every six weeks and NWEA MAP assessments in Reading and Math quarterly. Teachers will further document student data between assessment rounds. Assessment data will determine necessary interventions. We anticipate that Tier 1 supports will be effective for 80-90% of our students. If assessment data highlights that a student needs increased support beyond Tier 1, the Student Supports Team (Head of School, Student Supports Coordinator - NYS Special Education certified, Classroom Teacher, Special Education Intervention Specialist assigned to that grade, and Social Worker) determine appropriate interventions and work with families on streamlining in-home supports. Students displaying inadequate growth will be supported with Tier 2 supports, including small group pull-out and push-in instruction, provided by our Special Education Intervention Specialist or ESOL Intervention Specialist, and Scholarship Work (Homework) modification. Tier 2 interventions will require written parental consent as students may be removed from the classroom to receive instruction in a smaller, alternative, setting within our resource room. Resource room interventions will be scheduled during non-instructional times such as arrival, breakfast, lunch, snack, or during the schoolwide RTI intervention block. Push-in services will occur within the classroom setting during independent work time when students will be pulled to the U-table in a small group for additional support and scaffolding. All teachers will document student data between assessment rounds. After six weeks of intervention, the Student Support Team will re-evaluate individualized supports based on new assessment data and growth. If a student is making sufficient growth, s/he may continue with Tier 2 interventions. If a student is making tremendous growth, Tier 2 interventions may be reduced/discontinued. For a student who exhibits little to no growth, s/he will begin to receive Tier 3 interventions. We anticipate that 10-15% of students will exhibit growth with Tier 2 interventions. The Student Support Team will invite parents to a Collaborative Student Support Meeting to collectively decide which Tier 3 supports would be beneficial. Tier 3 supports include individual pull-out and push-in services, alternative classroom setting for literacy rotations (including a grade below), a placement change into our Integrated Co-Teaching (“ICT”) Classroom, and filing a request for a full evaluation from our local school district’s Committee on Special Education. Interventions will be re-evaluated every six weeks. Student progress reports will be sent home on a weekly basis and require a parent/and or guardian signature. **RTI Behavior.** We use our values-based community to develop and reinforce character strengths, and daily Social Emotional Learning (“SEL”) Interactive Read Aloud and mindfulness moments to help students develop five Core SEL Competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making.<sup>87</sup> Tier 1 supports include shared school-wide behavior expectations and explicit teaching, modeling, and praising student exhibition of our **RESPECT** values - Respect, Empathy, Scholarship, Perseverance, Excellence, Creativity, and Teamwork. We will use a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports approach through which we explicitly teach, model, track and reward positive behavior.<sup>88</sup> Our token system will correlate with our **RESPECT** values; when students exemplify one or more values, they will earn RESPECT Rewards (Lower Academy) and Scholar Dollars (Upper Academy). Rewards and

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<sup>87</sup> <https://casel.org/core-competencies/>

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.pbis.org/>

Dollars will be collected, tracked, and traded in weekly for a variety of incentives; classroom teachers will manage their classrooms' token system and will input data into our schoolwide data tracking system, making it accessible for the Student Supports Team for monitoring purposes. Teachers will provide reminders for students throughout the day as we support students' ability to self-regulate. Behavior data will be tracked, by the Student Supports Team through Powerschool and sent home in nightly Excellence Reports requiring nightly parent signature. Students who receive more than five reminders throughout the school day in the Lower Academy and more than three reminders throughout the school day in the Upper Academy will visit the classroom reflection desk and rejoin the learning community after Moments of Peace and a conference with a classroom teacher. If a student is unable to re-enter the learning community, s/he will visit the Mindfulness Room where s/he will work with the Social Worker (Y1) or Therapeutic Intervention Specialist (Y2+) on developing positive coping skills. A student who requires more than one visit per week to the reflection desk may require Tier 2 interventions. The Student Supports Team will analyze and review behavioral data on a weekly basis and support classroom teachers in developing appropriate Tier 2 interventions, which may include individual behavior trackers, scheduled check-ins and feedback from either classroom teachers, the Social Worker, or the Therapeutic Intervention Specialist. Students may also have proactively scheduled visits to the Mindfulness Room where they will work on developing their five SEL Core Competencies in a small group setting. The Social Worker will lead parent communication on behavioral intervention plans to ensure in-home supports are streamlined. If a student shows tremendous growth with Tier 2 interventions throughout a five-week period, they may discontinue additional supports. If a student shows minimal to no growth within a five-week period, the Student Supports Team will invite the family into school for a Collaborative Student Support Meeting to discuss appropriate Tier 3 interventions, which might include more frequent check-ins and feedback, frequently scheduled breaks, and push-in supports provided by the Social Worker. Tier 3 supports continue until a student exhibits growth and the consistent ability to regulate their emotions and behaviors.

**RTI Attendance.** Families will be introduced to our attendance policy during annual Family Orientations held prior to the start of the school year. Our Office Manager will track daily attendance, sending daily attendance reports to all staff, and will make absentee calls. Families of absent students will receive a phone call after 9:00am each day. The Student Supports Team will analyze attendance data weekly; after a student exceeds five unexcused absences, a letter will be sent home as reminder of the Attendance Policy, requiring parent signature. Upon exceeding six unexcused absences, families will be invited to a Collaborative Student Support Meeting to determine supports that may be required to allow strong and consistent daily school attendance. Upon reaching 10 unexcused absences, families will be required to come into school to re-evaluate supports in place to aid in increasing daily school attendance. Our Social Worker will work closely with families to develop action plans that support their ability to get students to school each day.

**Special Education Programming.** All teachers will be trained during our Summer Excellence Intensive on providing adequate supports for students who have a disability or identify as MLL/ELLs. We devote multiple PD sessions to building teacher capacity, both general education and special education certified, to support students with differing abilities and needs. All teachers will be trained to read IEPs and 504 plans, provide accommodations and modifications within an inclusive setting, maximize Tier 1 supports to meet all students' needs, understand the referral

process, and complete proper intervention documentation. Teachers will be trained by the Head of School, Student Supports Coordinator, and ESOL Intervention Specialist. Training to properly support students with disabilities and MLL/ELLs will continue throughout the school year during weekly two-hour PD sessions. The Student Supports Coordinator will work with individual teachers in supporting students with differing needs. The Leadership Team will consistently monitor all data, attending to all sub-groups' growth measures. We will devote a portion of action planning after each assessment to analyze and plan for closing gaps that may occur within subgroups. The Special Education Interventionist and ESOL Intervention Specialists will provide push-in and pull-out intervention services in accordance with students' IEPs or 504 plans.

**Staffing.** We anticipate serving a population that mirrors RCSD. In 2019, the averages slightly shifted to 19% with a disability and 13% identified as MLL/ELLs; Last school year 22% of RCSD students had disabilities and 15% identified as MLL/ELLs .<sup>89</sup> Based on such numbers, we conservatively project that 22% of students will have disabilities and 15% will identify as MLL/ELLs; based on local and surrounding districts, we anticipate 90% of students will be economically disadvantaged and at risk of adverse childhood experiences.<sup>90</sup> Proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph is a NYS certified special educator with experience in self-contained and inclusive classroom settings. She will ensure that all students, especially those with special needs and who identify as MLL/ELLs, are properly supported, and we will have in place a .5 FTE Special Education Coordinator and two Special Education Lead Teachers in kindergarten and first grade ICT classrooms in Y1. We will have 1 Special Education Intervention Specialist and 1 ESOL Intervention Specialist responsible for push-in and pull-out interventions for kindergarten and first grade students in Y1. Each year, our number of Special Education and ESOL educators will increase to meet the needs of our students (see below). Should our actual student needs differ at from our projections any point, we will modify our staffing model and budgetary allocations to adequately meet our students' needs.

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<sup>89</sup> <https://data.nysed.gov/enrollment.php?year=2018&instid=800000050065>

<sup>90</sup> [https://www.rcsdk12.org/cms/lib/NY01001156/Centricity/Domain/48/Board\\_of\\_Education\\_Presentation\\_010611.pdf](https://www.rcsdk12.org/cms/lib/NY01001156/Centricity/Domain/48/Board_of_Education_Presentation_010611.pdf)



Figure II.D.1: Staffing Model and Student Population Projection				
Year	Student Population	# of MLL/ELLs <sup>91</sup>	# of Students with Disabilities <sup>92</sup>	Staffing
2022-2023	120	18	26	.5 FTE Student Supports Coordinator 2.5 Special Education Teachers 1 ESOL/ENL Teacher
2023-2024	195	29	43	1 Student Supports Coordinator 5 Special Education Teacher 1 ESOL/ENL Teacher
2024-2025	270	41	59	1 Student Supports Coordinator 7 Special Education Teachers 2 ESOL/ENL Teachers
2025-2026	345	52	76	1 Student Supports Coordinator 8 Special Education Teachers 2 ESOL/ENL Teachers
2026-2027	375	56	83	1 Student Supports Coordinator 8 Special Education Teachers 2 ESOL/ENL Teachers

**Child Find.** During initial Home Visits and Family Orientations, families will identify if their child has received special education services. Based on this information, diagnostics assessment data, and IEP or 504 plans located by our Student Supports Coordinator, we will determine an appropriate placement in one of our inclusive classroom settings. Research tell us that when placed within an inclusive classroom, academic achievement for students with disabilities has increased in literacy and math; being placed in an inclusive classroom setting, rather than a self-contained classroom, also has proven to positively impact social outcomes for students with disabilities.<sup>93</sup> All classrooms, to the greatest extent possible, are inclusive; students who would benefit from increased individualized supports are recommended for our ICT classroom staffed with a general education and special education certified teacher and a maximum of 15 students. Students whose IEP recommend a 15:1:1 or 12:1:1 setting will receive priority placement for ICT classrooms. Our Student Supports Coordinator will scan all student IDs in Frontline, Rochester City School District’s database, upon enrollment to ensure that we have accurate IEPs and 504 plans. Our Students Supports Coordinator will contact Special Education Directors regarding students who may enroll from surrounding districts as we would not have direct access to their databases. We will work with districts to ensure that our students receive all related services allocated per their IEP or 504 plans. If there is a significant need that might arise for our unclassified students, we would reallocate our funds to provide related services that would meet the needs of our students.

**Documentation.** Our Student Supports Coordinator will obtain and properly store all IEPs and 504 plans. Documents will be filed in a locked filing cabinet; only the Head of School and Student Supports Coordinator will have full access to this locked cabinet. Upon receiving training during

<sup>91</sup> Projection based on 15% of total student population

<sup>92</sup> Projection based on 22% of total student population

<sup>93</sup> Blazer, Christie “Review of the Research on Inclusive Classrooms: Academic and Social Outcomes for Students With and Without Disabilities” *Best Practices and Parents’ Perceptions of Benefits and Risks*. 1701 Miami-Dade County Public Schools Research, FL, 2017

Summer Excellence Intensive, teachers will receive IEPs and 504 plans for their students. Related Service providers will receive copy of students' IEPs or 504 plans. The Student Supports Coordinator, Head of School, and Instructional Coaches will work with each teacher to ensure they understand their students' goals, accommodations, and modifications required for daily instruction and within the classroom. Enrichment Teaching Artists will know and adhere to the goals, accommodations, and modifications required for all students whom they instruct. Mid-year and Annual Teacher evaluations will include each teacher's ability to support the growth of students with disabilities and MLL/ELLs. The Special Education Intervention Specialist, ESOL Intervention Specialist, and Special Education Lead Teachers within ICT classrooms will work with the Student Supports Coordinator to ensure that all interventions, services, and individual progress are documented throughout the school year. Families will receive weekly progress reports and bi-weekly phone calls from the special educator who works directly with their child to ensure that they are informed and in-home supports are streamlined. All families will receive formal progress reports and report cards with the same frequency as all students not receiving services.

**Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners (“MLL/ELLs”).** We anticipate that 15% of students will identify as MLL/ELLs, based on RCSD's student populations. We will provide rigorous academics and high-quality instruction for all students and through individualized supports will ensure that all students have equal access to achieving academic and social success. During annual Family Orientations, each family will complete a Home Language Questionnaire, available in Rochester's dominant languages of English and Spanish.<sup>94</sup> If a family needs a translator for languages outside of English or Spanish, we will contract out for translating services<sup>95</sup> and a translator will join our Classroom Teachers and ESOL Intervention Specialist on a home visit. We devote five afternoons during our Summer Excellence Intensive to visit all incoming families' homes. Classroom teachers will visit each students' home on their preliminary class list, drafted based on diagnostic assessment results and family input gathered at Family Orientations. Our ESOL Intervention Specialist will accompany classroom teachers on Home Visits for families whose primary language is other than English. During the Home Visit, the child will be given the NYSITELL Assessment; this includes students with an established IEP. Any student whose NYSITELL proficiency deems them to be at the Entering, Emerging, Transitioning, or Expanding proficiency level will receive ELL services throughout the school day. Our ESOL Intervention Specialist will push into classrooms during our 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction, including Interactive Read Alouds, Literacy Rotations, Shared Writing, Grammar, and Writing Workshop. ESOL Intervention Specialists will attend weekly grade level team meetings and collaboratively plan with classroom teachers, ensuring instruction supports MLL/ELL students during general classroom instruction. We will assess the effectiveness of our supports on a weekly basis based on student data. If it is deemed that students are exhibiting minimal to no growth, additional supports may be added during non-instructional times including our daily schoolwide RTI block, arrival, breakfast, lunch, snack, or during any independent student work time. Families will receive a weekly progress report from our ESOL Intervention Specialist and bi-monthly phone call ensuring that they are updated on their child's progress and in-home supports are streamlined. Every six weeks, our Student Supports Team will review MLL/ELL

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<sup>94</sup> <https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2016/12/02/languages-of-rochester/94726584/>

<sup>95</sup> We provide annual costs for translating services within the proposed Budget details



assessment data and will dedicate a significant amount of time analyzing and action planning to close gaps they may occur. At the conclusion of each school year, students who receive ELL services will be given the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (“NYSESLAT”) which assess students’ ability to speak, read, and write in English. Only students who achieve a proficiency level of Commanding will discontinue receiving ELL services. **Related Service Providers.** Student Support Coordinators will collaborate with all service providers, which are contracted by the Rochester City School District, to ensure compliance with all related services required for each student per their IEP or 504 plan, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and counseling. **Committee on Special Education.** In accordance with Education Law 4402 and Part 200.3 (8 NYCRR), our Student Supports Specialist and Classroom Teacher will join the RSCD Committee on Special Education for annual reviews, program changes or modification, program reviews, and will provide all required reporting and documentation.<sup>96</sup> Our Student Supports Team will work with the RCSD Committee on Special Education in the referral process for newly identified students. We will act as a liaison between the RCSD Committee and our parents to ensure that our parents are informed, represented, and actively participate in committee meetings. **Gifted and Talented Students.** We are relentlessly focused on using student data to provide adequate individualized supports to ensure all students have the access needed to achieve academic and social success; this includes students who consistently outperform our given benchmarks. Students who consistently outperform the NYSNGLS of their appropriate grade level, have reading and math proficiency levels more than one grade above their age-appropriate grade level, and consistently exhibit advanced social skills may be deemed Gifted and/or Talented. If a student meets all criteria, families will be invited into school for a Collaborative Student Supports Meeting to determine proper supports to promote continued academic and social growth including individual projects, partial grade level promotion, peer tutoring, and modified curriculum. **Academic Dashboards.** During monthly Board Meetings, our Board will be presented with an academic dashboard that includes schoolwide student assessment, behavioral, and attendance data. Assessment data will be presented by grade level and will be disaggregated to highlight sub-group assessment results including students with disabilities, MLL/ELLs, and those deemed economically disadvantaged. Our Head of School will ensure the data drives instructional coaching, action planning, and evaluate the effectiveness of supports and interventions. The Board will provide Academic Oversight, measuring assessment results against our initial charter metrics.

## **E. ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

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To ensure K-2 students are on track to achieving academic success, we must rely on student data long before the state assessment given in grade 3. Data will be collected using frequent standards-aligned assessments, summative and formative, to gauge progress and mastery of NYSNGLS. Assessment data will immediately be analyzed by teachers, the Head of School, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Coordinator of Student Supports to determine individualized supports and interventions, small group formation/re-formation, and curriculum accommodations and modifications. This cycle of frequent assessments, data analysis, and response to data is

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<sup>96</sup>[https://govt.westlaw.com/nycr/Document/I09ae7e12c22211dda1bb852bdc84e3be?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=\(sc Default\)](https://govt.westlaw.com/nycr/Document/I09ae7e12c22211dda1bb852bdc84e3be?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=(sc Default))

essential for student achievement. Assessment dates will be shared at the start of the school year on our annual calendar and concluding each assessment, data will be shared with all stakeholders, including parents and the Board. All assessment data will be presented to the Board through monthly academic dashboards debriefed by the Head of School, at regularly scheduled monthly Board Meetings. Parents will receive assessment data within two weeks of each assessment round, through nightly Excellence Reports, bi-weekly phone communication and Family Conferences. State assessment data will be presented to the Board, printed in monthly newsletters, posted on our website, and posted inside of the school each year to ensure accessibility for all stakeholders. As a school community we own the responsibility of using assessment data to guide instruction and interventions to enable students to meet our ambitious goals. We will celebrate the successes in academic achievement, stay informed on student progress, and appropriately respond to our gaps, together. A wide variety of assessments will be used throughout the school year including nationally normed assessments, state mandated assessments, and internally created exams. **Daily Assessments.** In K-4, math lessons will end with daily exit tickets which require students to prove mastery of lesson objectives by applying skills or concepts in an unfamiliar problem. Grade Level Chairs will work with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction to develop exit tickets. Daily exit ticket data will be entered into our online data tracker; our Leadership Team will analyze daily data and provide feedback to teachers on appropriate response to data. Teachers will respond to data in upcoming lessons and during the whole school RTI block. Upper Academy students (grades 3-4) will have a daily spiral review assessment, including multiple problem types directly tied to NYSNGLS. Teachers will deliver a mini re-teach lesson on common misconceptions from spiral assessment data twice per week. Standards addressed will remain the same throughout the week and will require students to show mastery through skill application in unfamiliar contexts. **Weekly Assessments.** K-2 students will have phonemic awareness, phonics, and reading fluency assessments given during reading rotations. Data will be entered into our online data tracker. Our Leadership Team will analyze daily data and provide feedback to teachers on appropriate responses. Teachers will respond to data in upcoming lessons and during whole school RTI blocks. Lower Academy students will have a weekly math assessment of basic skills taught during Calendar Math. Upper Academy students (grades 3-4) will have weekly vocabulary and reading fluency assessments given during reading rotations. Data will be entered into our online data tracker. Our Leadership Team will analyze daily data and provide feedback to teachers on appropriate responses. They will also have a weekly Spiral Review Assessment based on the standards in which they had reviewed throughout the week. **Research-Based Assessments.** Upon confirmed enrollment, students will be given the Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress (“STEP”), a research-based literacy assessment developed by the University of Chicago, to diagnose literacy skill levels. STEP data will be analyzed by the Leadership Team to determine classroom placement, literacy rotation groups, intervention needs, and instructional decisions. Teachers will base literacy rotation instruction on STEP Benchmarks throughout the year. STEP will be administered every six to eight weeks. Following each STEP round, teachers will analyze classrooms data and develop action plans for the upcoming six weeks. Grade level teams and the Leadership Team will meet to analyze grade level data and its implication on student placement and instruction for the upcoming six weeks. Weekly literacy data will inform instruction and group placement throughout the six weeks between STEP rounds. **Interim Assessments.** Students will

be given ELA and Math assessments every six to eight weeks. Teachers will not have access to the assessment before the morning on which it is given, ensuring that student data is authentic and reflects their true ability to flexibly show mastery of NYSNGLS. Interim Assessments will be graded collaboratively to ensure we have a baseline for evidence of mastery. Following each Interim, teachers will analyze their classroom data and develop action plans for the upcoming six weeks. Grade Level Teams and the Leadership Team will meet to collectively analyze grade level student data and its implication on student placement and instruction for the upcoming six weeks. Weekly math assessment data will inform instruction throughout the six weeks of instruction between Interims. **Nationally-Normed Assessments.** The Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (“NWEA MAP”), a nationally-normed assessment, will be given three times per year in ELA and Mathematics. MAP will provide national level comparison data, measure student growth, and grade level proficiency averages. Following the MAP, teachers will analyze classroom data and will develop action plans for the upcoming quarter. Grade Level Teams and the Leadership Team will meet to collectively analyze grade level student data and its implication on student placement and instruction for the upcoming trimester. Weekly ELA and Math assessment data will inform instruction throughout the quarter of instruction between NWEA MAP Assessment rounds. **New York State Assessments.** All required state assessments will be administered in all grades and content areas. The Leadership Team will analyze assessment data and its implication on the following year’s priorities, instruction, student placement, staffing, scheduling, and curricular choices. State assessment data will be reported to the Board, posted on our website, provided in our annual report to the authorizer, and included in monthly newsletters sent home to families and available to all community stakeholders. The Board will use state assessment data to (a) evaluate student achievement against the metrics stated within our charter, (b) evaluate the Head of School’s performance, and (c) inform annual budgetary decisions, allocations, and priorities. **Non-Academic Assessments.** Students will be assessed on their social and emotional growth using the five Core SEL Competencies. Teachers will assess students quarterly based on their ability to exhibit Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making. SEL data will be analyzed by Classroom Teachers, the Social Worker, Therapeutic Crisis Interventionist, and Coordinator of Student Supports and together they will create action plans to promote student growth. Enrichment Teaching Artists will assess students quarterly using the NYS Arts Learning Standards, assessing students’ growth and ability to create, present, perform, produce, respond to, and make cross-curricular connections. Teaching Artists and the Leadership Team will analyze data and action plan to promote student growth.

## **F. PERFORMANCE, PROMOTION, AND GRADUATION STANDARDS**

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Rochester Excellence Academy will provide all students with daily individualized supports to aid them in achieving academic and social success. Our focus on student data allows us to consistently and frequently monitor and respond to the immediate needs of each student. Our Student Supports Team will collaborate with families throughout the school year to ensure each student has adequate support and provide fluid and frequent communication in support of a strong school and home relationship. Every 4-6 weeks we will re-evaluate our interventions and supports to ensure that they are effective and that each of our students is achieving the ambitious goals outlined in **Section**



**IA.** Through access to rigorous curriculum paired with high-quality instruction, research-based curriculum with proven results within similar populations, data tracking and data-driven instruction, collaborative action planning and supervised implementation, and three level tiered supports and interventions, we are confident that the majority of students will exhibit growth and matriculate to the next grade. We recognize that students will join our school community having had different early childhood educational experiences which will result in differing levels of school readiness. We also know it is essential for students to build a strong literacy and math foundation in the early elementary years to support future school, career, and life success. Therefore, it will be necessary to retain students who struggle to master grade level literacy and math standards, have inconsistent daily attendance, and exhibit minimal growth in developing the five SEL Competencies despite having received consistent individualized supports and tiered interventions. Our Student Supports Team will work with families to decide what is best for their child throughout the school year; however, we reserve the right to retain a student who does not meet promotion criteria at the end of the year and would struggle to meet the next grade’s demands.

**Promotion Policies.** We will adopt mastery-based grading aligned to NYSNGLS, as many high performing charter schools use this grading method. Mastery-based grading will be implemented across all grade levels to provide continuity and objectivity, and to keep our community rooted in student data and standards. Families will be explicitly introduced to mastery-based grading during Family Orientation and will have a follow-up tutorial during initial Home Visits. Teachers will provide targeted instruction through small group literacy rotations, schoolwide RTI intervention blocks, delivering written and verbal student feedback, and conferencing with students during independent work time. Our relentless focus on collecting, monitoring, and immediately responding to student data through data-driven instruction allows teachers to track student progress in mastering grade level content and standards daily. Families will be frequently updated on student’s progress towards mastering grade level content and standards through daily Excellence Reports requiring nightly parent signatures, bi-weekly phone calls from classroom teachers or Intervention Specialists, and quarterly Family Conferences, and Collaborative Student Supports Meetings. Throughout the school year, we will collaborate with families to decide the best supports and interventions for home and school to aid students in achieving academic and social success. When paired with data driven instructions, rigorous research-based curriculum, and our three-tiered supports and interventions, we know most students will achieve mastery across content areas in every year at each grade level. Students must achieve a 3 average for literacy and mathematics standards to be eligible for promotion to the next grade level. Grades will reflect performance on exit tickets, assessments, and independent student work as they are all aligned to the NYSNGLS.

**Figure II.F.1: Grading Policy<sup>97</sup>**

Criteria	Standard-Aligned Metric	Letter Grade	Percentage
Student has above grade level mastery and can apply standard in new ways	4	A	90% - 100%

<sup>97</sup> Adopted from Primary Hall Charter School and informed by BES training and resources

Student has grade level mastery of standards and is able to work independently	3	B	80% - 89%
Student has partial mastery of standard and requires minimal support	2	C	70% - 79%
Student has minimal mastery of the standard and requires continued support	1	D	60% - 69%
Student has no mastery of standard	0	F	0% - 69%

Kindergarten students must achieve an average of a 3 across all Literacy and Math NYSNGLS, average a 70% on Math Interim Assessments, and achieve a STEP level 3 on literacy assessments by the end of quarter 4 for promotion. First grade students must achieve an average of a 3 across all Literacy and Math NYSNGLS, average 70% on Math Interim Assessments, and achieve STEP level 6 on literacy assessments by the end of quarter 4 for promotion. Second grade students must achieve an average of a 3 across all Literacy and Math NYSNGLS, average 70% on Math Interim Assessments, and achieve STEP level 9 on literacy assessments by the end of quarter 4 for promotion. Third grade students must achieve an average of a 3 across all Literacy and Math NYSNGLS, average 70% on Math Interim Assessments, and achieve STEP level 12 on literacy assessments by the end of quarter 4 for promotion. Fourth grade students must achieve an average of a 3 across all Literacy and Math NYSNGLS, average 70% on Math Interim Assessments, and achieve STEP level 15 on literacy assessments by the end of quarter 4 for promotion. Retention conversations will begin on bi-weekly phone calls leading up to our third quarter Family Conferences, supported by student data and growth measures. As needed, Classroom Teachers and Intervention Specialists will collaborate with families to develop intensive interventions and supports for school and home. Any student who achieves a 2 average or below at the end of the school year will be eligible for retention. If retained, families will attend a Retention Conference with the Classroom Teachers and Student Supports Team to develop an individualized plan for the following school year, solidifying supports and interventions to be in place on the first day of school to support the student’s growth. The team will develop a support plan for the summer to decrease summer learning loss and promote student growth, including providing summer learning materials and referrals to summer learning programs such as the SummerLEAP program.<sup>98</sup> We realize a student who is retained may excel in some content areas and through our individualized supports we will be able to ensure that all students are consistently supported and challenged. Our Head of School will track student data in all years and oversee implementation of individualized plans for all retained students. All final promotion and retention decisions will be made by the Head of School.

## G. SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Our school community is infused with and guided by our **RESPECT** values. Each value is paired with a student-friendly “I” statement for ease of internalization for students, and as observed at

<sup>98</sup> SummerLeap is a summer learning program ran by the Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association whose mission is to provide free high-quality summer learning opportunities for low-income children in the Greater Rochester Area. Our Lead Founder and proposed Head of School is a former Classroom Liaison and Monitor for SummerLeap.



Nashville Classical Charter School<sup>99</sup>: **R**espect - I treat myself, others, and the environment with kindness. **E**mpathy - I show concern for the feelings of others. **S**cholarship - I am eager to know, learn, and question new things. **P**erseverance - I always try my best, especially in challenging situations, and I never give up. **E**xcellence - I go above and beyond every day. I only present the best version of myself. **C**reativity - I am open to new ideas, embrace change, and use my imagination when problem-solving. **T**eamwork - I understand my connection to my family, school, neighborhood, and the world. I accept the responsibility of making the world a better place through my actions and support of others. Values are explicitly taught and modeled, and exemplification of values are frequently and ritualistically praised and rewarded.<sup>100</sup> Values allow for character development to be infused into our school culture and guide our staff, students, and families as a community of people holding ourselves to the highest regards<sup>101</sup>; exemplifying our core values and holding ourselves and our community members to high expectations is the “Excellence Way.” Families will be introduced to our values-based community through recruitment materials and upon enrollment will receive an explicit introduction to our high expectations which we hold for staff, students, and families. Our **RESPECT** values will aid in building character strengths for students, as research tells us that children who “exhibit certain noncognitive capacities (including self-control and conscientiousness) are more likely to experience a variety of improved outcomes in adulthood.”<sup>102</sup> We recognize that this may be the first time our students experience a values-based community and structured learning environment; the majority of students will have previously attended RCSD’s early pre-kindergarten and universal pre-kindergarten programs which are grounded in play-based and child-centered curriculum and instruction. Students will spend the first three days of school simply learning in age-appropriate ways the “Excellence Way” of doing school. Teachers will focus on explicitly teaching, modeling, and practicing schoolwide systems, routines, expectations, core values, chants, cheers, celebration songs, motivational props, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. All staff will work together throughout the first four weeks of school most particularly to emphasize 100%, Do-it-again, and Habits of Discussion to build the foundation of our school’s culture.<sup>103</sup> Our systems and routines are in place to maximize instructional minutes by ensuring that our classrooms and educational spaces operate in a predictable manner, promoting safety, security, and success, as students feel safe and successful when there are known expectations that they are capable of meeting. **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.** We will use a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (“PBIS”) approach to support students in meeting our high behavioral expectations. PBIS begins with explicitly taught expectations including teacher modeling and identifying when expectations are met. When a student exemplifies one of our values or behavioral expectations, teachers will pause instruction and use the model as a teachable moment. Positive behaviors and mindsets will be rewarded through our token system and praised publicly. Lower Academy students earn RESPECT Rewards and Upper Academy students earn Scholar Dollars for meeting or exceeding our high behavioral and academic expectations. Rewards will be collected, tracked,

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<sup>99</sup> Nashville Classical was founded, incubated and continues to be supported through BES and is a high-achieving school recognized for its achievement in the State of TN. The school exudes a warm, respectful, and joyous culture centered in life-affirming values which we have adopted for our use in Rochester, NY. For more details on Nashville Classical, please see [www.nashvilleclassical.org](http://www.nashvilleclassical.org)

<sup>100</sup> Tough, Paul *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*. NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2012

<sup>101</sup> Bollinger, Richard, and Sarah Clement “Accelerating Progress.” *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*.46 3 May 2017

<sup>102</sup> Tough, Paul *Helping Children Succeed What Works and Why*. NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2018

<sup>103</sup> Lemov, Doug *Teach Like a Champion 2.0: 62 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2015

and traded in for incentives. PBIS is a tiered intervention approach and we will implement increased individualized supports to aid students in meeting high expectations. **Discipline.** We believe that any behavior outside of our given expectation is a gap in either (1) a student’s development of one or more of the five SEL Competencies of Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making or (2) a direct result of trauma.<sup>104</sup> In preparing students for future success we realize that rigorous academics alone is not enough, especially for students residing in a city which ranks number one in the nation for children living in extreme poverty<sup>105</sup> with many potential negative impacts on children, often referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences (“ACES”). Constant exposure to “harsh or unstable environments can create biological changes in the growing brains and bodies of infants and children”<sup>106</sup> which may impair a child’s ability to regulate thoughts and feelings, making it difficult to manage emotions and process information. We will support student’s challenges in meeting behavioral expectations in the same way that we address an inability in meeting academic expectations - with individualized supports collaboratively developed and supported by the Student Supports Team, Classroom Teachers, and Families.<sup>107</sup> Teachers will provide reminders for students throughout the day as we support students’ ability to self-regulate. Reminders will be delivered when students fail to meet our high behavioral expectations and are disrupting the learning environment. Our goal is to deliver the least invasive reminders as possible, often using non-verbal gestures and individual private corrections. Behavior data will be tracked through Powerschool and will be sent home in our daily Excellence Report, which will require a nightly signature. Students who receive more than five reminders in the Lower Academy (K-2) and more than three reminders per day in the Upper Academy (grades 3-5) will visit the classroom reflection desk and rejoin the learning community after Moments of Peace and conference with a classroom teacher. If a student is unable to re-enter the learning community, s/he will visit the Mindfulness Room where s/he will work with the Social Worker (Y1) or Therapeutic Intervention Specialist (Y2+) on developing positive coping skills. Students who require more than one visit per week to the reflection desk may require Tier 2 interventions. The Student Support Team will analyze and review behavioral data on a weekly basis and will support classroom teachers in developing appropriate Tier 2 interventions, which may include individual behavior trackers, scheduled check-ins and feedback from either classroom teachers, the Social worker, or the Therapeutic Intervention Specialist. Students may also have proactively scheduled visits to the Mindfulness Room where they will work on developing their five SEL Core Competencies in a small group setting. The Social Worker will take the lead on parent communication regarding behavioral intervention plans to ensure that in-home supports are streamlined. If a student shows tremendous growth with Tier 2 interventions throughout a six-week period, s/he may discontinue additional supports. If a student shows minimal to no growth within a six-week period, the Student Supports Team will invite the family into school for a Collaborative Student Supports Meeting to discuss Tier 3 interventions, including more frequent check-ins and feedback, frequently scheduled breaks, and push-in support provided by the Social Worker. Tier 3 supports continue until a student exhibits growth and the consistent ability to regulate their emotions and behaviors. **Disciplinary Action.** If a student does not respond

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<sup>104</sup> <https://casel.org/core-competencies/>

<sup>105</sup> <sup>105</sup> <https://www.actrochester.org/tinymce/source/Census%20Update%202018.pdf>

<sup>106</sup> Tough, Paul, *Helping Children Succeed: What Works and Why* NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2016

<sup>107</sup> SST (Y1): Head of School, Student Supports Coordinator, ESOL Intervention Specialists, Special Education Specialists, and Social Worker



to Tier 2 and 3 interventions and is disrupting the learning community, disciplinary action will be taken. The student will meet with the Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist to determine next steps. The student's academic success will always be our priority; we will seek options that permit the student to remain in class. If there is a more egregious offense (harassment, fighting, threats) the student may be suspended; the Team will meet with the student and family to outline the incident and discuss consequences. **Short-Term Suspension.** A short-term suspension is a suspension equal to or fewer than 10 school days. When short-term suspension is given, we will provide the student and parent with oral and written notice with explanation of the behaviors that led to the consequence. Parents have a right to an informal hearing during which the Student Supports Team explains reason for the suspension. The student can deny the charge, at which time, a school staff member must share evidence for the school's decision regarding the student's behavior. We intend all informal hearings to occur prior to the suspension, unless the student poses a threat to students or to the learning community. If this is the case, the student is granted an opportunity for the informal conference as soon as possible. The Head of School must attend all informal hearings. **Checklist for Short-Term Suspension.** The school will provide written and/or oral notification of short-term suspension, including number of days, behavior that led to the suspension, and results of informal hearing with Head of School, Student Supports Team, and student/parent during which both have opportunity to share their version of the incident and provide proof or explanation. **Long-Term Suspension/Expulsion.** A long-term suspension is a suspension of greater than 10 school days. We will provide the student and parents with written notice of the long-term suspension, including behaviors that led to the consequence. Written notice will include information about the suspension, including instructions regarding how to schedule a hearing, if the student or parent chooses to do so, their right to secure counsel, confront, and cross examine witnesses, and call his or her own witnesses to verify his/her version of the incident. A record of the hearing will be maintained, and the hearing officer's decision is appealable to the Board of Trustees and then to the authorizer, pursuant to Education Law Section 2855(4). **Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion Procedures and Appeal Process.** In the case of long-term suspension or expulsion, we will follow procedures that comply with all applicable laws: (1) The student is immediately removed from class/school as needed. (2) The student is informed of the charges as well as evidence of those charges; where applicable, the student has opportunity to explain his/her version of events. The Head of School immediately notifies the guardian in person or on the phone and sends written confirmation by personal delivery or express mail within 24 hours of the decision to suspend or expel, sets a date for formal hearing, and notifies guardians in writing of the date, time, and place of the hearing, charges against the student, summary of supporting evidence, their right to be represented (at their own expense) by an attorney at the hearing, present evidence, and question witnesses. The Head of School will preside at the hearing and make decision as to the student's status and issue a written decision which is sent to the student's guardians, Board, and put in the student's permanent file. If the Head of School finds that long-term suspension or expulsion is indicated, the student's guardian(s) may appeal the decision to the Board within 10 days of the decision to suspend or expel. Appeal is heard at the discretion of the Chair; in such cases the guardian(s) are notified in writing of the of the date, time, and place of the hearing, charges against the student, summary of supporting evidence, their right to be represented (at their own expense) by an attorney at the hearing, present evidence, and

question witnesses. **Discipline for Students with Special Needs.** Behavioral expectations remain the same for students with disabilities as they do for all students, unless the IEP recommends an individualized behavior plan. If students struggle to meet behavioral expectations, we will use our tiered PBIS approach to provide appropriate interventions/supports. Our Student Supports Team will analyze behavioral data weekly and collaborate with families and teachers to implement, monitor, and evaluate the effectiveness of individualized behavioral support plans. We will adhere to all federal policies and regulations regarding students with disabilities as noted in Education Law §2854(1)(b) and IDEA and will discipline students with behavior plans in compliance with those plans. **Suspension Policies for Students with Disabilities.** If a student with disabilities is being suspended for less than or equal to 10 consecutive or cumulative days, the student is subject to the same due process requirements as with short-term suspension. If a student with a disability is receiving suspension for longer than 10 cumulative days throughout the school year, we must make a determination as to whether a pattern of removal exists constituting a change of placement. If we determine that there is a pattern of removal, a Manifestation Determination Review is required.<sup>108</sup>

## **H. SCHOOL SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR**

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We have designed an annual calendar and weekly schedule that allow ample time for (a) teachers to collaboratively plan and deliver high-quality, data-driven instruction and (b) students to develop a strong literacy and mathematical foundation, five Social Emotional Learning (“SEL”) competencies, creative problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills, and to master the NYSNGLS across all content areas. Many of the similarly missioned and populated charter schools that inform our approach to time have an extended day and year model. Local and regional examples include Rochester Prep West Elementary here in NY and RISE Prep Mayoral Academy in RI; there are dozens of other schools across the Tri-State region and hundreds throughout our country that take a similar approach, and we will adopt this same approach to building our school schedule and calendar for the professionals on our team and the students who attend our school. Our school day officially begins at 7:25am (doors open for breakfast at 7:10am) and officially ends at 4:00pm. We have established strong partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA (see Letter of Support and Partnership in **Attachment 7**) to offer an afterschool program which focuses on academic achievement, social emotional development, and physical health. Research tells us that participation in a high-quality afterschool and summer program allows students to learn differently, explore core academics informally, offers hands-on experiences, provides a chance for students to take on leadership roles, and gives the chance for students to learn from community members with different expertise which positively impacts student achievement. This model has shown great results in the After-school Corporation in NY, NY, Citizen Schools in Boston, MA, and After-school Alliance in Providence, RI.<sup>109</sup> Our in-house after-school programming runs Mon.-Thu. from dismissal until 6:00pm. Parents will be responsible for transportation if students are enrolled in the program. Each Friday will be an abbreviated school day which begins at 7:25am and ends at 1:00pm for students, allowing teachers two and a half hours of weekly practice-based PD in response to weekly teacher observations, student data, school and staff culture, assessments

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<sup>108</sup> Disciplinary Policies informed by those of Primary Hall Charter School and informed by the training and resources of BES

<sup>109</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/what-new-research-on-extended-school-day-says/2012/04/18/gIQAnmV3RT\\_blog.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/what-new-research-on-extended-school-day-says/2012/04/18/gIQAnmV3RT_blog.html)

and action planning, and/or preparing for upcoming assessments. Teachers begin the year with 17 full-day PD sessions during our Summer Excellence Intensive, an additional 6 full PD days throughout the school year, and 36 PD sessions on Friday afternoons - all totaling 256 hours. Our annual calendar includes 187 instructional days, which is 7 more days than our local district. Over these 187 days, students receive approximately 74,325 minutes of instruction each school year, exceeding the state's requirement of 180 days and 54,000 instructional minutes. **Instructional Day.** Students may arrive between 7:10am and 7:25am during which they complete Bright Work, which is literacy- and math-focused independent work generally aligned to grade-level learning objectives. A student who is meeting or exceeding grade level standards will complete Bright Work completely independently. A student performing below grade level or approaching standard proficiency may be pulled to work individually or in a small group for intervention immediately upon arrival. Bright Work is completed after Breakfast. All students are required to be present by 7:25 am which marks the official beginning of the day and start to our 20-minute schoolwide Response to Intervention (“RTI”) Block. During daily RTI, students receive tailored data-driven instruction in small groups of 5 to 10 students; students meeting and exceeding grade level standards are prompted for sophisticated strategies, analytical and critical thinking, and complex problem-solving; students performing below grade level or approaching standard mastery work on developing foundational skills and knowledge. After the RTI Block, students and teachers engage in a whole class Family Meeting which includes singing, chanting, and a daily Interactive SEL Read Aloud. Students then engage in 185 minutes of literacy instruction in homogenous small group rotations of 5-10 students, tailored to meet individual needs. Within classrooms that include two teachers and blended learning stations, Lower Academy students (K-2) receive instruction in phonics, word study, guided reading, reading comprehension, and reading fluency. Upper Academy students (grades 3-4) receive instruction in vocabulary, narrative and informational guided reading, reading comprehension, and reading fluency. Students receive direct writing and grammar instruction, followed by independent writing with individual conferencing. After lunch, Lower Academy students engage in cooperative play and creative problem-solving in STEAM Centers for 20 minutes, with classroom teachers as facilitators; Upper Academy students engage in cooperative play during a 20-minute recess. Math instruction begins with math fluency oral drills and basic skills practice for 15 minutes; Lower Academy students do this through Calendar Math and Upper Academy students through daily spiral review. Students then engage in a daily 45-minute/35-minute on abbreviated day Cognitively Guided Instruction (“CGI”) Story Problem Block during which students independently solve word problems, two to three students share their thinking and strategies, and the class concludes with a whole class discourse. Students push each other's thinking and progressively work to build conceptual understandings of numbers, number sense, number relationships, and Base 10. After CGI, students engage in a 45-minute inquiry-based mathematics lesson where the bulk of time is spent individually or cooperatively exploring mathematical concepts. Math lessons conclude with a whole class discourse and students pushing each other's thinking. Students work cooperatively to explore, investigate, and make connections in Social Studies and Science for 30 minutes; content areas alternate every 6-8 weeks. Students engage in 45-minute daily Enrichment, including Classical Ballet, West African Dance, Music, and Visual Arts, through which we build cross-curricular connections, when applicable. Students end the day with a 35-minute Arts Exploration Block during which they choose which art form

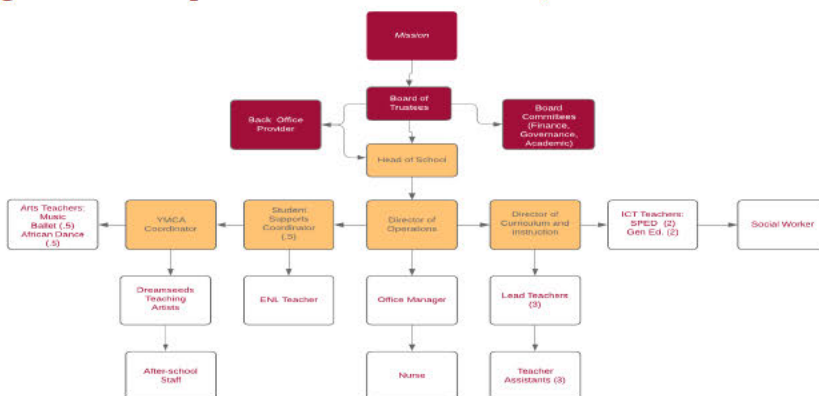


they would like to study - Fine Arts & Graffiti, Breakdancing, Drama & Script Writing, DJing & Production, Poetry, and Spoken word & Rap. Our final Arts Block is a result of another dimension of our strong community partnership, developed and led by local Teaching Artists through the Greater Rochester YMCA’s Dreamseeds Program designed to promote creativity, leadership, confidence, and problem-solving skills. All students are eligible to participate in our in-house afterschool program run by YMCA Staff and which promotes academic achievement, social emotional development, and physical health. **Teachers’ Daily Schedule.** We have adopted a co-teacher model to allow a relentless focus on individualized data and daily individualized supports. We operate with the mindset of Ujima, a Kwanzaa principle which values collective work and responsibility for the community; as a school community, we are collectively responsible for our students’ academic and social/emotional growth and achievement. Therefore, outside of daily planning periods of 130 minutes for Lead Teachers and 100 minutes for Co-teachers/Associate Teachers, all staff have responsibilities to support the growth of students; all staff, including all non-instructional staff, will attend our 17 full-day Summer Excellence Intensive. Through summer and weekly PD, weekly observations, and feedback meetings, all staff will be prepared to meet the needs of all students. Lead Teachers will lead daily instruction for 320 minutes; Co-teachers/Associate Teachers will lead daily instruction for 265 minutes, excluding abbreviated Fridays. When a teacher is not leading instruction or working within one of their dedicated planning periods, they are providing student support as their co-teacher is instructing. Both teachers will have 100 minutes of planning time which would include individual and collaborative lesson planning, observation and feedback meetings, data meetings, grade level team meetings, and intellectual lesson preparation. Teaching Artists and Operations Staff will support arrival and dismissal routines, lunch, and recess duties.

### III. ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN

#### A. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

**Figure III.A.1: Operational Year 1 2022-2023, 120 Students and 20 FTEs<sup>110</sup>**



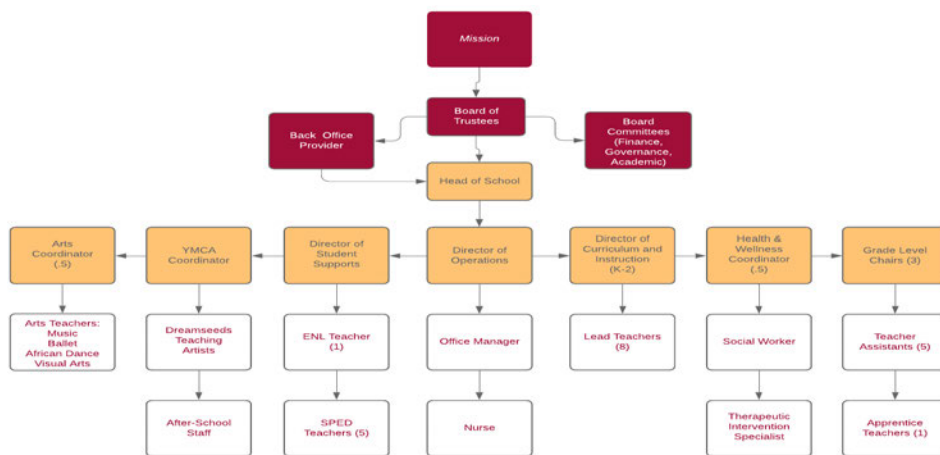
Our organizational structure supports the school’s mission and vision. In Y1, we will begin with 20 FTE employees and at full scale will employ 51 FTEs. Guided by our mission, the Head of School manages the school and school staff and reports to the Board of Trustees as it holds the

<sup>110</sup> All roles represented in gold are members of the leadership team, responsible for supervising other roles within the organization

charter, governs the school, conducts oversight, and reports to the authorizer and Board of Regents on the academic success, fiscal health, and regulatory compliance of the charter school.

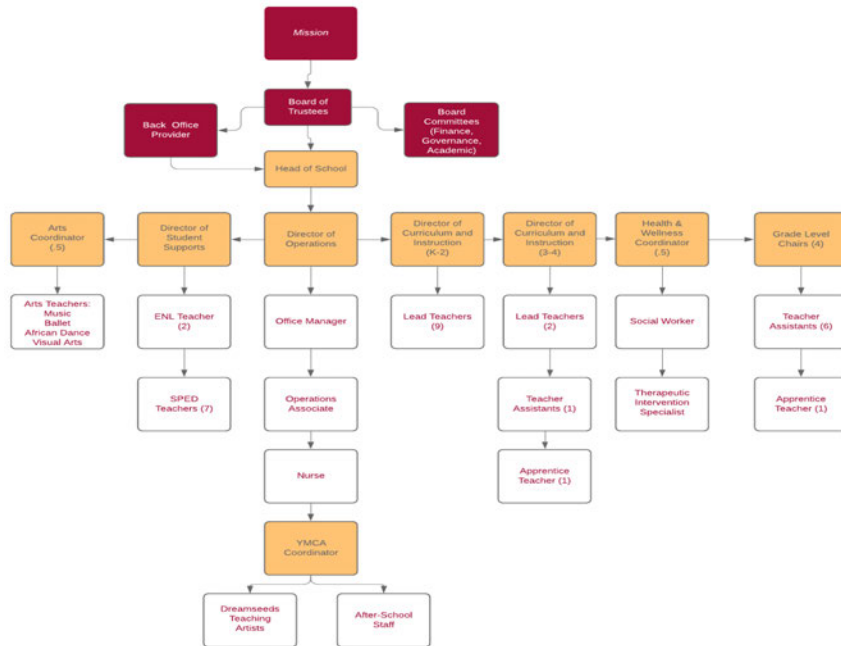
In Y1, the organizational structure includes a Director of Operations, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Student Supports Coordinator (NY certified special education teacher who also provides direct service), Social Worker, ENL Teacher (ESOL certified teacher), and Nurse. Our educational model has a general education (Lead) teacher and teacher assistant (Co-Teacher) per classroom (in Y1 there are two Lead and two Co-teachers in kindergarten and one Lead and one Co-Teacher in first grade). Based on our expected number of students with special needs, we will have one Integrated Co-Teaching (“ICT”) Classroom per grade, with one general education (Lead) teacher and one NY certified special education teacher. Our YMCA Coordinator will supervise all YMCA Staff. Our contracted back office provider works with the Head of School and the Board.

**Figure III.A.2: Operational Year 2 2023-2024, 195 Students and 31 FTEs**



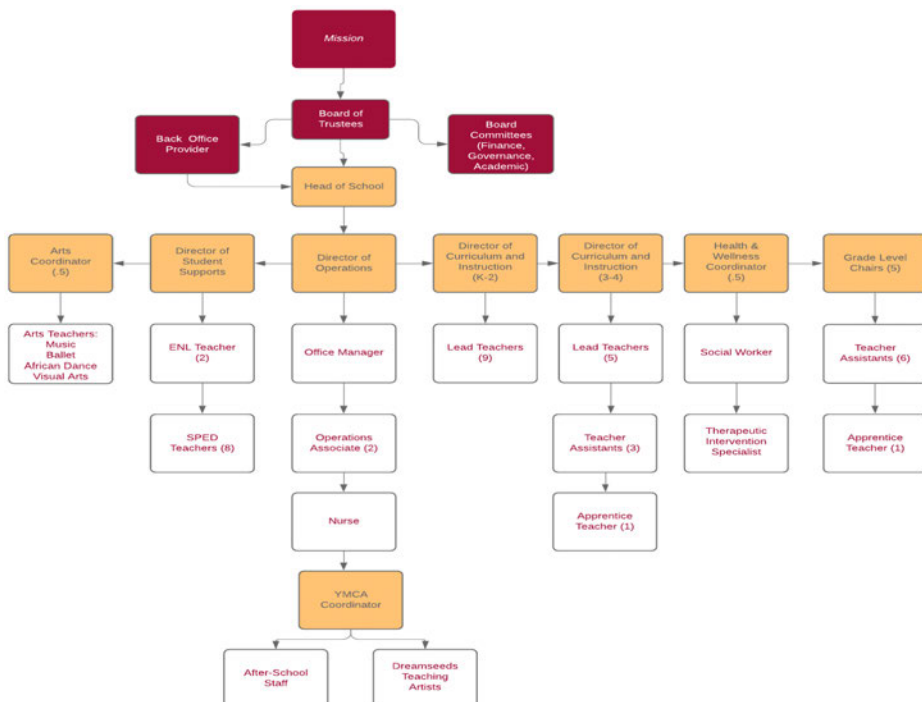
In Y2, we will enroll 75 additional kindergarten students. Our Student Supports Coordinator will transition to the Director of Student Supports, assuming responsibility of compliance for all students with special needs as well as supervising and coaching Special Educators and the ENL Teacher. To accommodate our anticipated student population of 43 students with special needs, and 29 MLLs/ELLs, we have adjusted our organizational plan to include two special education intervention teachers (one per grade level) and one ENL teacher, in addition to the special education teachers in ICT Classrooms. Our DCI will coach two grade levels of Lead Teachers. The HOS will coach the 2nd grade Lead Teachers and will support Grade Level Chairs in coaching Teacher Assistants and the Apprentice Teacher. Our Music Teacher will assume the role of Arts Coordinator, coaching all other performing arts teachers. Our Social Worker will assume the role of Health and Wellness Coordinator supervising, coaching, and collaborating with the Nurse and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist.

**Figure III.A.3: Operational Year 3 2024-2025, 270 Students and 41 FTEs**



In Y3, we will enroll an additional 75 students and add another Director of Curriculum and Instruction who will focus on the Upper Academy (grades 3- 4), as well as an additional ENL and Special Educator outside of ICT Special Education Classroom Teachers to accommodate our anticipated student enrollment of 41 MLL/ELLs and 59 students with special needs. The YMCA Coordinator will begin reporting to the Director of Operations.

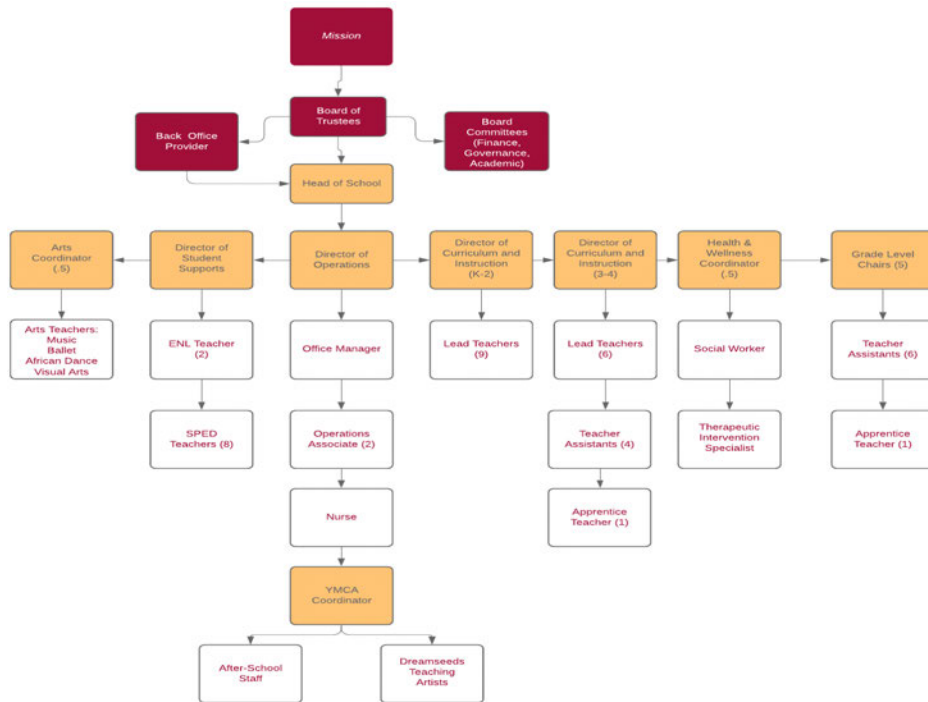
**Figure III.A.4: Operational Year 4 2025-2026, 345 Students and 49 FTEs**



In Y4, we will enroll an additional 75 students. Our DCIs will continue coaching most teachers, and having two DCIs allows for vertical alignment and an increased focus on developmentally

appropriate practices and content as well as knowledge building. Adding an additional Special Education Teacher allows targeted intervention (K-2 will have two Special Education Intervention Specialists and grades 3-4 will have one) to accommodate our anticipated student enrollment of 52 MLL/ELLs and 76 students with special needs.

**Figure III.A.5: Operational Year 5 2026-2027, 375 Students and 51 FTEs**



At full scale we will enroll 375 students and have 51 FTE employees. We anticipate serving 56 MLL/ELLs and 83 students with special needs. Our HOS will coach, supervise, and collaborate with all Directors, Coordinators, and Chairs to ensure vertical alignment and mission integrity.

## **B. BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND GOVERNANCE**

Rochester Excellence Academy will be governed by a diverse, community-based group of professionals with the expertise, skill sets, and commitment to ensure academic, fiscal, and organizational accountability to our authorizer and community stakeholders. The Board of Trustees (“Board”) is comprised of qualified, high-capacity individuals who are mission-aligned and invested in uplifting the children and families of Rochester by providing an innovative, high-quality K-4 school option currently unavailable. Board responsibilities include providing governance and oversight for successful execution of our mission, vision, and academic program, fiscal health and integrity, and attainment of accountability goals. Board members are public stewards responsible for compliance with all Federal and NY State Laws and fiscal, organizational, and academic health of the school in all years. The Board accepts the responsibilities of: ensuring consistent mission execution; maintaining legal and ethical compliance; approving board, school, personnel, and fiscal policies; setting compensation for, hiring, supporting, and evaluating the



Head of School; reviewing monthly academic and financial reports presented by management; reviewing and approving monthly financial statements; reviewing and assessing the school's progress towards goals stated in the charter using given metrics; making annual personal contribution to and participating in annual fund development; reviewing and approving the annual budget; and ensuring and providing oversight of the annual audit, and response to the audit. The Board delegates daily operations to the Head of School, including all hiring. The Head of School will be the only staff member to report to and be evaluated by the Board. **Board Size.** Our Board will consist of between 7 and 15 members and will maintain an odd number for voting purposes. The inaugural Board will serve staggered terms for continuity over time. Upon authorization, we will continue to grow the Founding Board, first bringing on a member with real estate expertise. By Y1, we intend our Board to consist of at least 9 members. **Qualifications.** Board members must be mission-aligned, maintain residency within the Greater Rochester Area, and are committed to Rochester Excellence Academy and our community. Members must have expertise and experience which allow them to serve on one or more committees and provide thoughtful, accountable oversight. They must have the ability to work cooperatively with others and commit to legal and ethical compliance. **Recruitment and Selection.** Upon authorization, we will continue to recruit, vet, and select Board candidates through our professional networks and local organizations to fulfill anticipated growing Board needs. Prospects will be identified, screened, and vetted by our Governance Committee, and participate in an interview with the Board Chair. As indicated in our Bylaws, Board membership will require a 2/3 vote of the full Board conducted during a regularly scheduled Board meeting. Prospective Board members will be required to complete and submit a Conflict of Interest form and will go through a background screening prior to joining the Board. The full Board will review the Conflict of Interest Policy and updated their disclosure forms each year. **Appointment or Election and Terms.** All officers are members of the Board, elected by the full Board. The Governance Committee will annually present Board members up for elections in the upcoming year. In accordance with our Bylaws (**Attachment 5b**) all Officers will serve a one-year term. All officers accept the roles and responsibilities outlined in their job descriptions. In the event of an officer vacancy, the Governance Committee will recommend a Board member to fill the vacancy, which requires Board approval with a 2/3 vote. Officers will hold positions for one year before re-election vote is required. Each year the Board will vote to re-elect existing officers or elect new officers for the upcoming years. Board members can serve up to two three-year terms. **Officers.** The Board will have four officer positions. The **Chair** will preside over all meetings, ensuring the Board adheres to all policies. The **Vice Chair** will perform in the Chair's role in his/her absence or incapacity and fulfill any other responsibilities requested by the Chair. If the Chair can no longer serve in the role, the Vice Chair will fill the role for the remainder of the service term. The **Secretary** will ensure accurate records and minutes of all meetings and committee meetings, and prepare, disseminate, and file meeting minutes, maintain official list of Board members in compliance with Board policy and procedure, and create and post agendas for Board and committee meetings. The **Treasurer** will ensure complete and accurate records of receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer will ensure financial transparency with the Board and public, chair the Finance Committee, and work with the Head of School to ensure appropriate, regular, and timely financial reports are provided to the Board. With the Finance Committee, the

Treasurer will review the annual audit report and provide clarity around key findings and results.<sup>111</sup>

**Committees.** The Board will have four standing committees. The **Governance Committee** is charged with ensuring the healthy functioning of the Board, recruiting and onboarding high-capacity, mission-aligned candidates. Chaired by the Board Chair, the Governance Committee will procure professional learning opportunities for the Board where needed. The **Academic Committee** will define the school’s academic goals and establish a system to regularly track student progress. Each month the Head of School will report academic data to the committee, representing progress toward mastery for each goal. If adequate progress is not made, the Academic Committee will work with the Head of School to identify concerns and implement next steps. The **Development Committee** will lead the fundraising efforts of the Board. The Committee will work closely with the Head of School and will propose development priorities and goals to the Board and lead these efforts with the full support of Board membership. **Conduct.** The Board will approve its Bylaws and Conflict of Interest Policy upon authorization. The Board is accountable to the authorizer and holds the responsibility of ensuring that the school operates according to the content stated within the charter and adhering to all federal and NY state laws and regulations. Rochester Excellence Academy will provide all required documents to the authorizer in accordance to their schedules, timelines, and per individual request. **Promotion of Parental and Staff Involvement in Governance.** Parents and staff will be provided multiple opportunities to give feedback and insight, promoting participation in school governance. All Board meetings will be open to the public in adherence with Open Meeting Law. Meetings will be scheduled one week in advance and public notice will be provided at least 72 hours in advance through social and local media, our school’s newsletter and website, and posted within our school building. We will ensure all staff and parents are provided with the time, location, and agenda of all meetings. There will be a space for public comment within each meeting during which parents, staff, and community stakeholders can directly address any item. Our Secretary will record public comments, including them in meeting minutes available to the public. Surveys will be distributed to families and staff twice annually to solicit insight and feedback. Survey data will be presented to the Board and inform the Head of School’s annual evaluation and the Board’s strategic planning. Families will have ample opportunity to express concerns and inquiries during nightly communication logs, bi-weekly phone calls, monthly coffee events, and conferences. **Compliance with Open Meeting Law.** The Board will comply with New York State Open Meeting Laws. All Board and Committee meetings will be open to the public. The Board will hold at least 12 meetings, all of which will be open to the public. In accordance with §104, notice of all meetings will be posted at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting in a previously designated public location; meeting notices will contain meeting date, time, and place. In accordance with §106, the Secretary will record meeting minutes, making them publicly available for inspection and copying within two weeks of the meeting’s date. Committee meetings will take place at least 10 times per year for standing committees and on an as needed basis for all other committees. **Board Training and Development.** The Board will self-evaluate each year, assessing its effectiveness as a governing body, highlighting strengths, challenges, and growth points. The Board will seek additional PD opportunities from outside organizations that specialize in charter school governance and oversight to strengthen skills and effectiveness. Our Back Office Provider will

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<sup>111</sup> Officer roles are adapted from those of Primary Hall Charter School and informed by BES Fellowship training materials

provide Board development on financial oversight. During our founding year, the Board and Head of School will receive BES Follow On Support which includes audits of meeting effectiveness and meeting minutes, check-ins with the Chair, providing governance resources, and facilitating a Committee Action Planning meeting to set goals and action items. The Board will invest time and resources to build an effective governing body and will hold an Annual Retreat to review the school's and Board's performance, with results informing annual strategic plans. **Accountability.** The Board will hire the Head of School who will be the only employee to directly report to the Board. The Board will conduct an annual evaluation of the Head of School, led by the Board Chair with the support of a member of the Finance and Academic Committees. The Head of School will report the school's academic, cultural, and attendance data, three-month financial projections, budget to actuals, cashflow, and all financial statements on a monthly basis. **Expertise and Background of the Founding Team.** The Team consists of community leaders and professionals unified by our unwavering belief that all students regardless of race, gender, differing abilities, home language, or socioeconomic status can excel when adequately supported. All Founding Team members have proven success in their respective areas of expertise; as a unit we possess the expertise, dedication, experience, and capacity to ensure the effective start-up, governance, and leadership of Rochester Excellence Academy. Professional areas of expertise include educational leadership, charter school operations, governance, law, finance, community development, and fund development. Our Founding Team was assembled by Lead Founder and Primary Applicant Brittany Rumph. Upon intensive PD from BES, through its leadership development Fellowship, Ms. Rumph began connecting with hundreds of Rochester community members in search of potential Founding Team members. With BES support, she identified community members who were mission-aligned, committed to serving the students and families of Rochester, and invested in uplifting the Rochester community. Each candidate engaged in multiple conversations with Ms. Rumph and BES Leaders regarding educational philosophy, initial core beliefs, professional skillsets and experience, the role of board governance in charter schools, and time commitment; each member formally accepted a position on the Founding Team by signing an agreement which outlined their roles and responsibilities pre- and post-authorization. **Brittany Rumph, Lead Founder and Proposed Head of School,** native Rochesterian, RCSD graduate, and first-generation college graduate, has made it her life's mission to positively impact as many Rochester students as possible and prepare them for future success. She has served for the last 11 years as leader, educator, and volunteer within the City of Rochester. Most recently, she founded ROC City Learning Pods to serve children and families in need of support with remote and hybrid learning. Previously she was an Instructional Leader, Grade 4 Teacher, and Summer Academy Director at Uncommon Schools' Rochester Prep West Elementary. Before joining Uncommon as a Founding Kindergarten Teacher, she served at Action for a Better Community's Head Start as a Preschool Teacher, and Hillside Family of Agencies and The Villa of Hope as a Special Education Assistant in self-contained classrooms. Honored to have been selected as a Teach Like a Champion ("TLaC") Fellow with Doug Lemov and serving for three years on the TLaC Team, Ms. Rumph has two BA degrees (Dance and Interdisciplinary Arts for Children, both from The College at Brockport) and MS (Inclusive Early Childhood Education from Nazareth College). She holds two New York State Professional Teacher's Certifications, Early Childhood Education (Birth – 2nd Grade) and Teaching Students with Disabilities (Birth- 2nd Grade).

**Laura Smith, Founding Board Member and Proposed Board Chair**, is Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer of UnboundEd, bringing 25 years of leadership experience in K-12 education. Former NYSED Assistant Commissioner, Ms. Smith is deeply knowledgeable on the critical role the board plays in ensuring academic success and financial and operational health. Her previous experience as Director of Operations for the NYC Charter Center gives her comprehensive understanding of all aspects of planning and management of a charter school's financial and operational responsibilities, and she authored the NYC Charter Center's first Operations Guidebook. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, she served as reviewer of charter school applications for the Louisiana authorizer, focusing on the need for instructional and operational comprehensiveness and coherence in early strategic planning. Working with the San Diego City School District, she supported the conversion of three large comprehensive schools into 15 schools, supporting the hiring and professional development of a principals' cohort and designing the staffing, operational, and financial structures and systems needed to ensure the schools' successful launch and sustainability. In her current role as Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of a national K12 non-profit that supports educators in delivering standards-based, equitable instruction, she ensures the delivery of effective services while overseeing all operations and finances for the \$14M organization, including all federal and state fiscal and operational regulatory requirements. Member of the UnboundEd Board, she has served as Secretary and Treasurer since its inception, planning and managing board meetings in collaboration with the CEO, Chair and General Counsel. Ms. Smith will serve as Chair of the Governance Committee. **Dr. Ashley Cross, Founding Board Member and Proposed Vice-Chair**, is Chief Executive Officer of Generation Two, a local non-profit which links civic engagement, child-centered play, intergenerational relationships within elementary schools, and child advocacy to strengthen a child's social emotional life. She earned a BA in Psychology, MS in Not-for-Profit Management, and has successfully defended her dissertation for her doctorate in Educational Leadership from Oral Roberts University. Dr. Cross developed the first transitional living home for girls aging out of foster care in Tulsa, OK, where she raised over \$1M of funding and resources. She is also currently working as Regional Manager for the Monroe County CarePortal and as Director of a college-prep program through the University of Rochester. Dr. Cross has worked with various nonprofits to launch and revamp programs for vulnerable youth such as a mentoring program, Safe Place Tulsa, 111Project, and CarePortal-Tulsa. Dr. Cross will serve on the Governance Committee. **Vernon Connors, Founding Board Member and Proposed Treasurer**, is Finance Director at Center for Youth Services Inc. He has 25 years of experience in school administration and financial management in both private and public school settings. He served in a variety of organizations, from a small private school as the Business Manager at Bishop Kearney High School to a large urban school district as the Budget Director and Acting Chief Financial Officer for the Rochester City School District. He has a great deal of hands-on business office experience from his time as the Business Manager at Bishop Kearney and as the District Treasurer for the Brockport Central District. In addition, he has extensive administrative experience as the School Business Official for the Lansing Central School District, Budget Director at the Rochester City School District, and Director of Financial & Business Affairs at the Jamestown City School District. **Bonnie O'Keefe, Founding Board Member and Proposed Secretary**, is Associate Partner with Bellwether Education Partners, a national nonprofit with mission to improve education and life outcomes for



underserved students. Since 2016, Ms. O’Keefe has led policy research, advising on a wide range of issues, including state education policies, accountability and assessment systems, and pre-K to 3 education. Co-authoring nine publications at Bellwether, her work has been featured in *The 74 Million*, *Governing Magazine*, *District Administration Magazine*, *Next City*, the *Boston Herald*, WBUR Boston, WABE Atlanta, and the *Hechinger Report*. Prior to joining Bellwether, Ms. O’Keefe worked on the assessment and accountability team at the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education. There, she led assessment policy development for new state tests, supported 200+ schools with training and technical assistance, and served as Co-chair of a multi-state working group on test policies and technology. She worked for DC Action for Children, first as an Education Pioneers fellow, then as Policy Analyst and Senior Policy Analyst, authoring reports on childcare, early intervention, and school attendance, and coordinating the DC KIDS COUNT data project. Prior to her education policy work, she interned in the U.S. Senate and served as Political Programs Coordinator for She Should Run and the Women’s Campaign Fund. Ms. O’Keefe has BA from Williams College and MPP from Johns Hopkins, is native of New York, and has lived in Rochester since 2017. She will serve on the Academic Committee.

**Robert Hoggard, Founding Board Member**, serves as Development Associate for Major Gift Qualification and Cultivation at Rochester Regional Health. He served as Director of Fundraising and Membership at Metro Justice where he fought alongside families for a new code of conduct that prioritized restorative practices in the RCSD and a \$15 statewide minimum wage. In January 2018, he joined Metro Justice as Board member and is now Vice-President. As educator, Mr. Hoggard has taught and mentored students at Leadership Academy for Young Men, Vanguard High School, and Keuka College. His experience in education dovetail into his current pursuit of a Ph.D. in Higher Education at The University of Rochester’s Margaret Warner School of Education and Human Development. At UR, he serves on the campus wide First Year Celebration Committee in support of President Mangelsdorf’s first year and works at Rochester Regional Health as Development Associate for Major Gift Qualification and Cultivation. Mr. Hoggard holds a BA from American Baptist College and MA from Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, studying faith-based institutions in social change. He will serve on the Academic Committee.

**Rashondra Martin, Founding Board Member**, is a Principal Court Attorney for the State of New York Unified Court System. She has practiced in K-12 and has the unique experience of working at two school districts in New York State. She was the General Counsel for Buffalo Public Schools, managing the legal department and provided legal advice and counsel to senior management and various departments within the organization. She also managed risk holistically and proposed practical solutions while balancing legal considerations with educational objectives. During her tenure with Buffalo Public Schools, she provided management and supervision in labor and employment matters, litigation matters, charter schools renewals and Board Governance. Prior to her role with Buffalo Public Schools, she was an Associate Attorney for the Rochester City School District. She drafted and negotiated all contracts and managed a contract portfolio of approximately \$75,000,000.00. The contracts included agreements with charter organizations. In addition, she was responsible for drafting and updating the District’s policies and procedures. She will serve on the Governance Committee.

**Loren Montrallo, Founding Board Member**, is a Program Director at the YMCA of Greater Rochester. He has been a youth development professional with many different roles for over 16 years in the Greater Rochester area. He is a NYS

Certified Teacher with years of experience working with youth who are receiving specialized services. He also has experience writing and implementing individual education plans across multiple grade levels and education programs. As the Program Director at the YMCA of Greater Rochester he has had the opportunity to work with multiple schools across the Greater Rochester area including the Rochester City School District as well as several charter schools across the city. Before working at the YMCA of Greater Rochester he was the Behavioral Specialist for BOCES 2. During his time as the Behavioral Specialist, he worked in partnership with teachers and families, connecting them with individualized behavior plans that helped youth achieve academically, socially, and emotionally. He was also the TCIS (Therapeutic Crisis Intervention in Schools) trainer for the program. He will serve on the Academic Committee. **Aqua Porter, Founding Board Member**, is the Executive Director of the Rochester Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative and formerly retired Vice-President of Channel Operations and Global Channel Strategy at Xerox Corporation. She had a 30+ year career with Xerox, holding positions in Engineering, Marketing, Product Development, Global Purchasing, Manufacturing and Supply Chain Management., Lean Six Sigma and Channel Partner Management. Ms. Porter is a 40-year member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., the first Greek Sorority established by African-American, college-educated women. Member and Vice-President of the Rochester Chapter of The Links Incorporated, Vice-Chair of the Keuka College Board of Trustees, member of the RIT Saunders School Dean's Advisory Council ("DAC"), past Board Chair for the Susan B. Anthony House, Inc., and former Board member of the Camp Stella Maris Board and past member of Jack and Jill, Incorporated. She has served in leadership positions in multiple organizations, including as President and Vice-President of Xerox's Rochester Black Employee Association and former President of Delta Nu Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. She was nominated for the Athena Award and Rochester Women's Network "W" Awards. In 2009, she received the Human Relations Award from Kettering University and was inducted into the National Co-op Hall of Fame in recognition of her professional accomplishments and was honored as a Woman of Distinction by Girl Scouts of Western New York. Living in the shadow of Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony, both residents of Rochester, Ms. Porter hopes to inspire the next generation of leaders by working on initiatives that enable children and women of color to grow and develop into leaders who will be advocates of change, impact community policies and practices, and improve the lives and conditions of those who are continuously challenged by trauma, racism and discrimination. She will serve on the Governance Committee. **Kelli Ragin, Founding Board Member**, is the Assistant Principal at The Academy of Health Sciences Charter School. Kelli has been an educator in Rochester, NY since 2003. She spent 4 years as a paraprofessional and substitute teacher in the Rochester City School District while earning her Master's Degree in Childhood Education, then spent 10 years at True North Rochester Prep, as a teacher, Founding Principal of the second Middle School, and Dean of Students at the High School. She served as Dean of Curriculum and Instruction and Principal at PUC Achieve/ROC Achieve Charter School for 2 years. She is now the Assistant Principal of the Academy of Health Sciences Charter School, after serving 1 year as a founding 5th grade math teacher. She will serve on the Academic Committee. **Jeff Smink, Founding Board Member**, is the President of Cobbs Hill Consulting and has over twenty years of experience in education, with significant roles at the national, state, and local level. For the past decade, he has worked on a variety of early literacy efforts. As a

Senior Consultant with the Campaign for Grade Level Reading, he worked closely with over twenty urban communities across the nation to increase 3rd grade reading proficiency rates, with a focus on school-community partnerships. He also currently works as a Senior Advisor for two national early literacy organizations that provide support to K-3 teachers and parents and have learned a great deal about effective literacy instruction, including the science of reading. He previously served on Rochester Mayor Warren’s Early Learning Council and found that students with successful outcomes in Pre-K were having all of their learning gains erased by 3rd grade. Additionally, he brings significant experience in community engagement and school- community partnerships through his work as a co-founder and Vice President of the National Summer Learning Association. Finally, he has a strong understanding of the Rochester education landscape, having worked as a consultant and volunteer for local organizations such as the Mayor’s Office, Rochester Public Library, and Urban League of Rochester. He will serve on the Academic Committee. **Ernest Ferrullo**, Associate Attorney in Real Estate Development, is currently completing the onboarding process.

### C. MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

If authorized, Rochester Excellence Academy will open in August 2022 employing 20 FTE employees and 51 FTE employees at full scale. All job descriptions, recruitment and hiring plan, and personnel policies are found in **Attachment 8**. The proposed staffing chart is below.

**Figure III.C.1: Proposed Staffing Chart**

Positions	Avg. Starting Salary	FTE				
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Head of School	\$100,000	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Curriculum & Instruction	\$75,000	1	1	2	2	2
Director of Student Supports	\$75,000	0	1	1	1	1
Director of Operations	\$75,000	1	1	1	1	1
Student Supports Coordinator	\$60,000	.5	0	0	0	0
Visual & Performing Arts Coordinator	\$60,000	0	.5	.5	.5	.5
Health & Wellness Coordinator	\$60,000	0	.5	.5	.5	.5
Special Education Teacher	\$55,000	2.5	5	7	8	8
ENL Teacher	\$55,000	1	1	2	2	2
Social Worker	\$55,000	1	.5	.5	.5	.5
General Education Teacher	\$50,000	5	8	11	14	15
Visual & Performing Arts Teacher	\$50,000	2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Nurse	\$50,000	1	1	1	1	1
Teacher’s Assistant	\$45,000	3	5	7	9	10
Therapeutic Intervention Specialist	\$45,000	0	1	1	1	1
Office Manager	\$40,000	1	1	1	1	1



Apprentice Teacher	\$35,000	0	1	2	2	2
Operations Associate	\$35,000	0	0	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>

**Head of School** (“HOS”) is hired by, reports to, and evaluated by the Board of Trustees. The HOS is accountable for executing the mission, vision, and values and ensuring successful delivery of our academic program and reaching all Accountability Goals. Responsibilities of the HOS include management of school-wide academic progress and goals, student and staff culture, communication with families and staff, and school sponsored initiatives and events. The HOS oversees all academic programming, including staff recruitment, professional development, supervision and evaluation, and curriculum modification. The HOS is the public representative for the school, recruiting students, fostering positive community and family relationships, and with members of the Leadership Team maintaining relationships with vendors and service providers. The HOS manages and oversees the school’s budget, adhering to federal, state, and local laws and regulations. All staff are hired by the HOS, and the HOS of school delegates supervision of various roles as the school grows over the charter term. The Back Office Provider, hired by the Board, also reports to the HOS; the contract for this function is ultimately reviewed and annually approved by the Board. In Y1, the Head of School coaches ICT Teachers, Visual and Performing Arts Teachers, the Director of Operations, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, YMCA Coordinator, Student Supports Coordinator, and Social Worker. Each year the HOS releases supervision and coaching responsibilities to the Director(s) of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Student Supports, Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator, Health and Wellness Coordinator, and Grade Level Chairs (master teachers who coach Teacher’s Assistants and Apprentice Teachers). HOS qualifications include: Master’s or Advanced degree; experience in school leadership; ability to assess and respond to data, find trends, and use data to make strategic decisions; strong organization and communication skills; and ability to multi-task and work with a variety of stakeholders. The Board plans to hire Brittany Rumph as **Head of School**. Ms. Rumph has dedicated her career to urban education in her hometown of Rochester; she holds two BAs from the College at Brockport and MEd in Inclusive Early Childhood Education from Nazareth College. She also holds two NYS Professional Teaching Certifications, Birth-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade and Birth-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teaching Students with Disabilities. She was a 2019 Fellow with BES, a national nonprofit recognized for its rigorous, year-long training program on school design and leadership.

**Director of Curriculum and Instruction** (“DCI”), hired in Y1, reports to and is evaluated by the HOS. The DCI coaches General Education Teachers, Teacher’s Assistants, and Apprentice Teachers and works with the HOS to consistently evaluate and revise curricula based on student data. During Y3, we add another DCI to effectively monitor, evaluate, and revise curriculum to meet the individual needs of students in our Lower (K-2) and Upper (3-4) Academies. **Director of Student Supports** (“DSS”) reports to and is evaluated by the HOS. During Y1, this is a dual role for one Special Education Teacher. The DSS evaluates and coaches Special Education Teachers and ESOL/ENL Teachers, monitors and ensures compliance, and ensures all students receive appropriate supports, services, and accommodations. The DSS: creates, implements, and monitors comprehensive school-wide systems for monitoring student achievement, special education assessments and interventions, NYSITELL/NYSESLAT testing, creation of IEPs and 504 Plans for students with special needs and MLL/ELLs; provides professional on special education

programming, systems, and procedures for all staff; and manages the referral process. The DSS leads the Student Supports Team (“SST”) comprised of the Social Worker, Therapeutic Intervention Specialist, all Special Educators, DCI, and HOS. The SST consistently monitors, evaluates, and revises individualized student supports. **Health and Wellness Coordinator** (“HWC”) is a dual role that the Social Worker carries, beginning Y2. The HWC reports to and is evaluated by the HOS. The HWC coaches the Therapeutic Intervention Specialist, Nurse, and works with the Student Supports Team to ensure we are fully addressing students’ social emotional needs, viewing behavior through a skills-deficit lens and working with students to develop lagging skills. **Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator** (“VPAC”) reports to and is evaluated by the HOS. The VPAC is a dual role carried by the Music Teacher beginning Y2. The VPAC coaches other arts teachers and works with classroom teachers on implementing daily arts exploration. **Director of Operations** (“DO”) reports to and is evaluated by the HOS. Coaching the Office Manager and Operations Associate, the DO manages school wide systems, day-to-day operations, and community partnerships. The DO supports implementation of personnel and procedures, ensuring fiscal compliance in collaboration with our Back Office Provider and all operational responsibilities associated with start-up, including facilities, enrollment, materials management, and recruitment. The DO manages daily attendance, student records, nutrition, transportation, vendor relationships, materials, physical space organization, and daily operational tasks. In partnership with the Back Office Provider, the DO supports with the annual audit. **Identifying and Serving Students with Disabilities and MLL/ELLs.** Our staffing model is designed to support our anticipated enrollment of students with disabilities and MLL/ELLs, 22% and 15% of enrollment, respectively. Our Director of Student Supports (“DSS”) manages the Student Supports Team (“SST”): Social Worker, Therapeutic Intervention Specialist, all Special Educators, DCI, and HOS. The DSS works with classroom teachers to tailor instruction and interventions to meet the needs of all students, based on observation and data. The DSS closely monitors student data to identify students who may require additional interventions and may qualify for special education services. For students with IEPs and 504 plans, the DSS coordinates intervention and service provider schedules. The DSS also coordinates and monitors services for students who qualify ESOL/ENL services based on NYSITELL/NYSESLAT testing. **Teacher Recruitment and Retention.** We will recruit qualified, mission-aligned teachers. We will use our relationships with local colleges and universities (Nazareth College, The College at Brockport, University of Rochester, Rochester Educational Opportunity Program, University at Buffalo, Monroe Community College), use online resources, and connect with other local charter schools in our search to locate strong, committed teachers. We will retain teachers by providing weekly individual coaching and PD, supporting individual growth, and we will hire internally whenever possible for leadership positions. We will honor teachers as professional practitioners through collaborative planning, allowing their voices to inform school-wide decisions. We will foster a positive, collaborative, and supportive school community with an openness to feedback. We will offer competitive salaries; teachers with a BA will earn starting salary above the district.<sup>112</sup>

## **C.1. CHARTER MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION - N/A**

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<sup>112</sup> <http://rochesterteachers.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/18-19-Salary.pdf>



## C.2. PARTNER ORGANIZATION(S)

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We believe in the true power of community building and we recognize the vital role that our school and the community together play in the success of our students. We have formed community partnerships with community-based organizations which share the same values, as we believe that it takes a village to raise a child. There are many organizations within Rochester working in individual silos towards the same mission of improving outcomes for our community's children; we have decided to collaborate with multiple community organizations to increase our positive impact. The Greater Rochester YMCA and Rochester Education Foundation share our belief in the power of the arts in supporting academic and social success. Komposition Kids shares our belief in preparing students to meet rigorous demands for college and careers. Restoration Rochester shares our belief that our children and families deserve access to quality healthcare, nutrition, housing, and other resources. We are honored to collaborate with community-based partners to enhance and support our students' educational experience. **The Greater Rochester YMCA.** In November 2019, our Proposed Head of School attended a meeting with the Director of Development and Director of Community Engagement of the Greater Rochester YMCA, with the goal of gaining feedback from experienced community leaders. During the initial meeting, clear mission and vision alignment were evident. The YMCA was energized by the direct correlation between our mission and that of their Dreamseeds Program which had been developed to allow children to build their potential, self-esteem, and creativity through experiencing the arts. Dreamseeds participants choose among several programs designed to encourage youth to develop a positive outlook on life, all with a focus on the arts through leadership and performance opportunities.<sup>113</sup> Similar to the experience of other nonprofits within Rochester, the YMCA realized that access to transportation limited participation, and the YMCA had been looking to partner with a school to make a greater impact. With this synchronicity, our partnership was birthed through clear mission alignment and belief in the power of the arts in supporting academic and social success, especially for students experiencing extreme poverty. In a city rich with the arts, inner city children are often denied access due to affordability. To combat this reality, we have partnered with the YMCA to immerse our students in daily arts exploration. Daily enrichment classes will include Classical Ballet, West African Dance, Visual Arts, and Music; in addition, we will offer 35-minute arts exploration classes taught by local teaching artists, Monday – Thursday, through the YMCA's Dreamseeds Program. Students will choose which genre of arts to explore, including Fine Arts & Graffiti, Breakdancing, Drama & Script Writing, DJing & Production, Poetry, and Spoken Word & Rap. We will offer three different classes which will rotate every quarter. Held at our school facility, and thus without any need for transportation, Teaching Artists of the Dreamseeds program will be supervised by the YMCA Coordinator. Teaching Artists will collaboratively plan with and receive feedback from the Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator beginning in Y2. The YMCA Coordinator will be supervised and coached by the Head of School. The Head of School will include updates on the YMCA Partnerships to the Board within the monthly academic report. The Head of School will evaluate the program's effectiveness twice per year based on the NYS Learning Standards for the Arts. The Board will be debriefed on the evaluation and it will inform the upcoming year's strategic plan. Families indicated the need for

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<sup>113</sup> <https://rochesterymca.org/community-buildings/dreamseeds-teaching-more-than-music/>

extracurricular activities outside of the school day; we have also partnered with the YMCA to offer an on-site afterschool program. The YMCA's Achievement Gap after school program was developed in response to the fact that 1 in 4 children are left home alone after-school; the program gives students a safe place to be after school and focuses on Health & Wellness, Academic Support, STEM, Global Learning, Leadership, and Enrichment.<sup>114</sup> Offering an on-site after school program will assist families with free childcare assistance. Our school day concludes at 4:00pm; following dismissal, students can attend our in-house after-school program until 6:00pm Monday-Thursday.<sup>115</sup> Parents will be responsible for transportation home from the afterschool program; we have made a conservative assumption to include half of our student population in the afterschool programming budget in Y1. Three Dreamseeds Teaching Artists will be compensated at a rate of \$45 per hour, 4 hours per week, for 37 weeks of the school year. The operations of the after-school program will cost \$2,000 per student, which covers living wages for staff, site leadership/coordination, program supplies, family engagement/food & beverage, and other overhead costs such as insurance, payroll, HR, and program administration. Our students will also have access to the YMCA's Power Scholars Academy, a summer learning program which focuses on literacy, math, STEAM, and health in efforts to prevent summer learning loss.<sup>116</sup> Power Scholars participation presents zero cost for the school or families. Additionally, our team has participated in two tours of a recently vacated YMCA Facility, centrally located in Downtown Rochester, and we are in discussion with the YMCA leadership team about leasing space to locate Rochester Excellence Academy within their facility. **Komposition Kids.** In partnership with Komposition Kids, our students will receive bi-weekly career readiness instruction through their Ms. Sow's Career Readiness Curriculum which meets the American School Counselors Association Standards and NYS Career Plan. Students will engage in cooperative groups with hands-on and technology-based experiences. Career Readiness instruction will be delivered by Komposition Kids staff. Staff will be observed and coached by the Head of School who will evaluate the program's effectiveness twice per year based on the NYS Learning Standards for Career Development and Occupational Studies. The Board will be debriefed on the evaluation. Our partnership with Komposition Kids presents no cost to the school. **Rochester Education Foundation.** We have partnered with the Rochester Education Foundation to offer instrumental music lessons through their music instrument donation program. Our 2nd through 4th graders will be able to take instrumental music lessons during non-instructional times throughout the school day, using instruments provided by the Rochester Education Foundation. The Head of School will manage the partnership and will collaborate with the Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator to provide coaching and coordination of instrumental music lessons. **Restoration Rochester.** Our Social Worker will partner with Restoration Rochester to assist families in crisis throughout the school year. Restoration Rochester is a local non-profit organization which provides referrals for emergency family assistance for food, shelter, baby items, clothing, and other resources. They will assist with connecting families with community resources. A Compassion Care Manager is available to assist with care and service coordination. Restoration Rochester's services will be available at no cost to the school.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ymca-y-net-prod/files/photos/pdf/achievement-gap-accelerating-academics.pdf>

<sup>115</sup> No Friday sessions will be provided due to our abbreviated Friday school day and dedicated professional development hours.

<sup>116</sup> <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ymca-y-net-prod/files/photos/pdf/achievement-gap-summer-to-succeed.pdf>

<sup>117</sup> All community-based organization partnership commitment letters in **Attachment 7**.

### C.3 NETWORKED SCHOOLS - N/A

#### D. STAFF SUPERVISION AND DEVELOPMENT

**Instructional Leadership Roles.** In Y1, the Head of school will be primarily responsible for teacher support, supervision, coaching, and professional development (“PD”) and will work with the support of the Student Supports Coordinator and Director of Curriculum and Instruction. In Y2 and beyond, this work will be shared with Grade Level Chairs, the Student Supports Coordinator, Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator, and Director of Curriculum and Instruction (Leadership Team). As the school grows, the Head of School will delegate direct supervision and weekly instructional coaching for teachers to school staff on the Leadership Team. In Y1, the Head of School will directly coach and supervise Integrated Co-Teaching Classroom Teachers and new teachers who require increased support. In Y2 and beyond, this will shift to the Head of School only coaching new teachers who require increased supports and directly supervising the Leadership Team, primarily on their ability to provide adequate instructional coaching for classroom teachers, and to allow appropriate time for executive management tasks. In Y3, we will add a second Director of Curriculum and Instruction to ensure vertical alignment between the Lower and Upper Academies and to allow adequate content knowledge depth required to meet the needs of Upper Academy students. In all years, the Director of Student Supports will support to all Special Education and ESOL/ENL Teachers and the Director of Operations will support operations staff. The Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator will support Teaching Artists during non-instructional periods. The Health and Wellness Coordinator will support school staff in support of the social emotional development of students. Grade Level Chairs will be primarily responsible for supporting Teacher Assistants within their grade level. The Head of School will supervise all individuals who provide instructional coaching for any other school staff member.

**Head of School Development.** The PD plan for our Head of School includes BES Follow On Support, mentorship from leaders of successful independent charter schools, and financial PD from the Back Office Provider. **Teacher PD.** We will provide weekly PD (2 hours per week/72 hours per year) through whole and small group and individual teacher facilitation to all teachers to develop instructional practices, deepen content knowledge, support data analysis and data driven instruction, cultivate positive culture, incorporate the five SEL competencies into instruction, engage in diversity, equity and inclusion work, and promote leadership skills.<sup>118</sup> Investing in the growth of teachers through offering frequent and consistent PD without the challenge of frequently juggling other organization’s schedules or taking on additional personal costs positively impacts teacher retention. External PD sessions will be offered when applicable to our work. **Summer PD.** All teachers will be prepared to support the growth of all students, including those with disabilities and MLL/ELLs. Teacher preparation will begin with our Summer Excellence Intensive, 17 days of practice-based PD focused on mission alignment, staff and student culture, curriculum, responding to data, supporting social emotional development, systems and routines, TLaC taxonomies, daily operations. Our Student Supports Coordinator will deliver PD on supporting the growth of students with disabilities and MLL/ELLs, including interpreting IEPs and 504 plans, differentiating and modifying curriculum, compliance, response to intervention, proper documentation of interventions, identification of students in need of increased supports,

<sup>118</sup> 5 SEL Competencies include Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making For more detail, please see [Section II G School Culture and Climate](#)

collaborating with service providers, and the referral process. The Student Supports Coordinator, Director of Student Supports, and Health and Wellness Coordinator in Y2 and beyond, will collaborate to facilitate PD sessions in response to teacher observations and students' required level of support regarding supporting the growth of all special populations including students with disabilities, MLL/ELLs, and students at-risk of academic failure, at least once each month. **Core Instructional Techniques PD.** We will spend a significant amount of time on taxonomy techniques paired with instructional best practices - together shown to yield increased results for students in high performing charter schools. Techniques are adopted from Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion 2.0*, proven highly effective at Uncommon Schools Rochester Prep West Elementary, the only NYSED Recognition School within the city. Proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph worked as a Fellow for three years with Lemov and the TLAC Team, codifying effective taxonomy technique within an elementary setting.<sup>119</sup> Master teachers will provide instructional coaching to mentees as we know that our foundation will be strengthened through a culture of feedback. **Planning and Practice PD.** On abbreviated Fridays, teachers will engage in collaborative planning and practice, whole group and small group practice-based PD, and data analysis. Weekly PD sessions will be determined by the Head of School with support from the Leadership Team based on weekly observation, trends, assessment preparation, and collaborative grading and analysis. Practice-based PDs will consist of content presentation, rationale, video example or live model, followed by multiple rounds of partner and small group practice with live coaching and in-the-moment feedback.<sup>120</sup> The Head of School, Leadership Team Members, and Grade Level Chairs will deliver feedback during small group practices. There will be instances where it will be necessary to engage in targeted PD in grade level teams to address grade level content and trends. The Head of School and Leadership Team will circulate to support Grade Level Chairs. **Grade Level PD.** Grade Level Teams will have two weekly meetings, one during a teacher preparation block and the other on the abbreviated day before whole group PD begins. Weekly Team Meetings will be held to collaboratively plan for the upcoming week, share best practices, and address grade level trends. Weekly Team Data Meetings will focus on student data; teachers will analyze student work, grade level student data trends, grade level standards, and student progress towards benchmarks, and they will collaboratively action plan in response to student data. Grade Level Team Meetings and Weekly Data Meetings will be facilitated by Grade Level Chairs, supported by Master Teachers. Grade Level Teams may collaborate with the Grade Level Teams above and below them to address student data trends and ensure vertical alignment. **Individual Instructional PD.** All teachers will have an instructional coach, with each teacher observed at least once per week. During observations, the instructional coach may provide live or in-the-moment coaching if feedback could immediately positively impact student achievement. After observations, teachers will meet with their coach to discuss observations and implications on student achievement. Teachers will receive one action step and will practice mastering that step during the meeting; they may also have 1-2 quick hits on easily implemented instructional moves. Teachers will continue mastering a given action step before receiving a new one; we will follow the *Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence* to determine appropriate individual action steps, addressing rigor and management for ample growth in each teacher's individual development and accelerated growth

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<sup>119</sup> <https://teachlikeachampion.com/tag/brittany-rumph/>

<sup>120</sup> Lemov, Doug, Erica Woolway, and Katie Yezzi. *Practice Perfect*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012



in instructional practices and leadership skills. Such approaches will allow us to have internal preference as staff opportunities arise, best ensuring a bench of qualified leaders. **Walkthroughs to Inform PD.** Every week the Leadership Team will perform a whole-school walkthrough, observing instruction and culture and collecting qualitative and quantitative data. Walkthroughs will be completed on different days of the week to ensure accuracy of data collection. Data trends observed during walkthroughs will be addressed during weekly PD sessions on abbreviated Fridays. The Leadership Team may provide live or in-the-moment coaching if intervening would immediately positively impact student achievement. Urgent topics may be addressed during a morning huddle. Each day, the Head of School will do classroom observations. **Data Analysis.** Following all assessments, including NWEA MAP, STEP, and Interim Assessments, Grade Level Teams will collaboratively grade assessments, facilitated by a Leadership Team member. Classroom pairs will complete data analysis of assessment results, identifying progress against benchmarks and goals, trends, gaps, and mastery level of all assessed standards. Grade Level Teams will meet with the Leadership Team to complete a Grade Level Assessment Analysis and Action Plan, including reteaching standards and scheduling such reteaching, curriculum and scope and sequence modification. Reteach standards will be reassessed and analyzed by Grade Level Teams and Leadership Team between assessment rounds. **School Visits.** Our staff will improve their instructional practices by visiting schools, in person and virtually, to glean best practices and visualize excellence throughout our founding years. **Non-Instructional Staff PD.** Non-instructional staff will attend our Summer Excellence Intensive to ensure mission and vision alignment for our school community. Throughout the school year, they will attend weekly PD sessions when they are applicable to their work. They will meet with and be coached by their immediate supervisor. Non-instructional staff may attend external aligned to their needs; BES will provide operational coaching as part of its Follow On Support. **Monitoring the Effectiveness of our PD Plan.** Concluding each PD session, teachers will complete a survey regarding the session's effectiveness; the Leadership Team will analyze survey data to inform upcoming PD sessions. Our goal is to ensure that all PD sessions and delivery methods are beneficial for all teachers. To positively impact students, we begin with investing in and consistently supporting our teachers. Comprehensively, we use four primary tools to monitor the success of our program: (1) Observable teacher growth week to week in response to whole-group training and individualized feedback/coaching. (2) Teacher satisfaction rates on our PD program and retention rates of our best teachers year to year. (3) Family satisfaction surveys regarding the quality of teaching. (4) Student academic data. Of these, we must see strong academic data whole school and across subgroups to consider our PD program successful.<sup>121</sup>

## **E. EVALUATION**

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Rochester Excellence Academy will consistently monitor effectiveness of our Board, school leadership, staff, community partnerships, the academic program, and our fiscal health. We have adopted metrics and goals in accordance with the Charter School Performance Framework which will allow us to track student data and gauge measurable progress towards all goals. Proposed Board Chair Laura Smith has experience assisting charter schools within New York in meeting authorizers' requirements, benchmarks, and goals, and operating in compliance with NYS and

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<sup>121</sup> PD Monitoring plan adopted from those of Primary Hall Charter school along with BES training and resources

Federal law and regulation through her work as Director of Operations of the NYC Charter Office.

**Board Evaluation.** The Board will conduct a mid-year and year-end self-evaluation to assess its strengths and areas of growth. The Board will create an action plan to address evaluation data and make necessary steps to strengthen areas of growth, including recruitment of additional Board members with expertise required to meet the school’s needs.

**Head of School Evaluation.** The Head of School (“HOS”) will be evaluated twice annually, informally mid-year and formally year-end. The HOS will complete a self-evaluation and will attend an evaluation meeting with the Board Chair, member of the Academic Committee, and member of the Finance Committee. The HOS will be evaluated based on the academic, fiscal, and organizational goals outlined within the charter and the primary professional responsibilities outlined in the HOS job description. If the school fails to meet its goals, the Board will take the following steps towards improvement: (1) Determining if external PD is necessary for the HOS; (2) ensuring an improvement plan that is collaboratively developed, implemented, and assessed with the HOS; (3) replacing the HOS if minimal or no improvement is exhibited. Evaluation materials will be stored in the HOS’s personnel file.

**Staff Evaluation.** We will evaluate all school staff twice annually, including teachers, non-instructional staff, the community partnership coordinator, and all school management roles (Directors and Coordinators). Teachers will be evaluated through informal and formal classroom observations, response to feedback, mastery of weekly action steps, progress towards school-wide goals, student growth and achievement data, and family communication. Teachers will be held accountable for metrics outlined in our accountability plan regarding student achievement on STEP, NWEA MAP, and NY state exams. The HOS will conduct all evaluation meetings with his/her direct reports. School management roles, including all Directors and Coordinators, will conduct evaluations for their direct reports with pre-approval from the HOS. The HOS will evaluate all school management roles based on effectiveness of their instructional coaching, leadership skills, school-wide goals, mission and vision alignment, mastery of action steps, and response to feedback. We will invest in our staff and their growth through individually tailored instructional coaching, weekly professional development, soliciting and responding to staff feedback with action, and providing resources. All evaluation materials will be stored confidentially in personnel files. Proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph has used this model to evaluate teachers at Rochester Prep West Elementary in her time serving as an Instructional Leader throughout the school year (for 5 years) and the Summer Academy Director (for 4 years).<sup>122</sup>

**Operational Effectiveness.** We will use BES expertise to conduct annual audit of operational systems (transportation, food services, technology, supplies management, procurement systems, vendor management, tracking systems for attendance and uniforms) and all school procedures including arrival and dismissal. The Director of Operations will manage vendor relationships and evaluate and audit all vendors and service providers. Operational data will be communicated by the Director of Operations to the HOS and be presented to the Board in a monthly dashboard.

**Fiscal Soundness.** Each year, the Board will contract with an independent auditor, a NYS certified CPA, to conduct an annual audit, evaluating our financial management, systems, and procedures. Our annual audit will be conducted in accordance with all local, state, and federal laws including those which address charter schools in the State of NY and NYSED requirements. The auditor will present all data and any findings to the Board of Trustees which will act by making necessary

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<sup>122</sup> For Ms. Rumph’s resume as proposed Head of School, please see [Attachment 8b](#)

changes and ensuring any formal response as may be needed. The Finance Committee will work with school management to make small improvements to address audit findings. **Programmatic Audits and Family Involvement and Satisfaction.** We will solicit feedback annually from staff and families each school year on academic and operational programming, school culture, and family involvement. The Director of Operations will lead survey administration, collection, and data compilation. Survey results will be presented to the HOS, who will present the data to the Board; survey results will inform strategic planning for the upcoming school year. School culture and family satisfaction metrics are outlined in our accountability plan (see **Section IA**). The Director of Operations will track family participation data and feedback throughout the school year. Our goals are to have least 90% of responding families indicating on the annual survey that the school community is safe and respectful, and that they are satisfied with student academic performance and social- emotional growth, with 95% of families responding. We expect to have at least 100% of family members attending at least one school event per year, and at least 80% attending two or more events per year. **Charter School Performance Framework.** We will operate in transparency around our goals and metrics, outlined in our accountability plan, and will communicate our progress to the authorizer, community, staff, and families, at minimum, on an annual basis. We will use the Charter School Performance Framework as a guide to ensure students’ academic and social-emotional well-being and the school’s organizational and operational well-being. If the school is not meeting its goals and metrics, school leadership will seek input from stakeholders and develop a detailed action plan to address areas of growth. Plans will be presented to the Board and executed by the Head of School. The Board will monitor progress in areas of growth identified at each monthly Board Meeting and will determine if further action or consultant services should be used.

## **F. FACILITIES**

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The following table displays facility needs for the charter term. Our facility will include at least one communal space to serve as a cafeteria/gymnasium/auditorium and we will ensure the facility fulfills all ADA requirements and all state and local health, safety, and occupancy requirements. Our Founding Team includes a four-person Facilities Team: Board Chair with experience supporting NYC charter schools meeting all laws and regulations including those pertaining to facilities; Vice Chair with experience founding a non-profit which housed and educated over-aged foster children and included fulfilling facilities’ needs; Treasurer who provided district-wide financial oversight including facility expenses; and one Governance Committee member with expertise in law with capacity to ensure legal compliance throughout our facilities identification and acquisition process. Upon authorization, we will add an additional Board member with expertise in Real Estate. The Facilities Team will be responsible for securing a safe, affordable, and reasonable school facility located within our target community. We expect to secure space that will serve as an incubation space for 1-3 years. We have connected with John Nichols, CEO of Nichols Construction, who has served as strategic partner for multiple local charter schools including Uncommon Schools Rochester Prep campuses and Renaissance Academy School of the Arts and has worked with E3, a local non-profit that supports charter schools, on financing and construction for other local charter school clients (see **Attachment 2c: Nichols Letter of Support**). Like other charter start-ups that often begin in a variety of facility types and aligned with a variety of local facility options within Rochester, we are considering office spaces, retail

spaces, a vacant college, recently vacant school buildings and a recently vacated YMCA Facility. We have connected with Linda Thornton Hillery of Re/Max Plus and will continue this relationship during our facility search within our target community. We will collaborate with local experts to secure a facility no later than January 2022 to allow time for necessary renovations and will secure Certificate of Occupancy prior to opening our doors in August 2022. Based on local costs and school needs of similar size, we have conservatively assumed 90 square feet per student at \$20 per square feet, allocating \$216,000 in our budget for lease costs including renovations; we have allocated an additional \$10,000 for repairs and maintenance in Y1, with a \$2.5K increase in Y2-Y5. We have also allocated \$32,400 for utilities for Y1. We have included modest lease costs in our planning year, assuming two months' rent and associated costs based upon the same square footage and costs. We grow our lease, repair, maintenance, and utility costs out parallel to the rate of our school's overall growth.

## G. INSURANCE

Rochester Excellence Academy will secure First Fidelity Brokerage Insurance for liability, property loss, and accident insurance, including Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability, General Liability, Educator's Legal Liability, Property, Excess Liability, Crime, Accident, Cyber, Special and Fiduciary Insurance. This will include a Directors and Officers ("D&O") Policy. Costs are similar to those of charter schools of similar size in Western New York as shared by local charter leaders and as quoted by Mark Muscatiello, Managing Director of, Education and Non-Profit at First Fidelity Brokerage Inc. All insurance costs are in budget details.

ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL		FFB		Budget						
COVERAGE	DESCRIPTION	LIMITS OF LIABILITY	RETENTION	COMMENTS	2022		2023		2024	
					Y1	Y2	Y1	Y2	Y1	Y2
General Liability	Auto	\$1,000,000 per accident	\$100,000		\$9,200	\$9,200	\$9,200	\$9,200	\$9,200	\$9,200
	Boat	\$1,000,000 per accident	\$100,000		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Fire and Theft	\$1,000,000 per occurrence	\$100,000		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Medical Payments	\$1,000,000 per occurrence	\$100,000		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Product and Completed Operations	\$1,000,000 per occurrence	\$100,000		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Umbrella	\$1,000,000 per occurrence	\$100,000		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Workers Compensation	\$1,000,000 per employee	\$100,000		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Directors and Officers	\$1,000,000 per director/officer	\$100,000		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Professional Liability	\$1,000,000 per occurrence	\$100,000		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Crime	\$1,000,000 per occurrence	\$100,000		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total General Liability</b>					<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>
<b>Total Insurance</b>					<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>

## H. NON-ACADEMIC OPERATIONS

**Health Services.** We will employ a full-time Nurse in all years<sup>123</sup> who will administer all medications and provide all school-based health services. The Director of Operations will oversee the collection of students' health histories and immunization records during Family Orientations; health records will be managed and secured by the Nurse. Upon enrollment, families will be required to submit Immunization Records, Medical Examination Record, and Medical Administration forms. Our Social Worker will work with families experiencing difficulty securing health services by connecting them to local resources. In alignment with NYS Public Health Law 2164, all enrolled students must possess an immunization record that includes immunizations against poliomyelitis, diphtheria, mumps, rubella, measles, pertussis, varicella, Hemophilus

<sup>123</sup> Please see staffing plan in III.A and Nursing cost in Budget details found in Attachment 9.

influenzae type b (Hib), hepatitis, pneumococcal disease, and meningococcal disease, and any required COVID-19 vaccination.<sup>124</sup> All medical records will be stored in a locked cabinet in the Nurse’s Office. The Head of School, Director of Operations, Social Worker, and Nurse will be the only staff members permitted to access medical records. The Nurse’s Office will have sufficient space to provide all health services needs for the school and securely store all medical records.

**Food Services.** We will provide breakfast, lunch, and a snack each day. We will participate in the Federal school breakfast and lunch programs and will follow all nutritional guidelines. We will participate in the RCSD food service program prepared off site and delivered each day. Our Director of Operations will maintain records of food allergies, sensitivities, and religious requirements and will communicate details to our food service provider to provide substitutions.

**Transportation.** We will use RCSD transportation services. RCSD offers transportation to all students in the city, with transportation restricted to the RCSD school calendar. For days that Rochester Excellence Academy is in session but RCSD is not, we will contract with First Student, the bus company to arrange transportation for students.<sup>125</sup> RCSD will provide transportation to all students, including those with transportation needs designated in their IEPs and 504 plans.<sup>126</sup>

**Facility.** The Director of Operations will oversee the facility, including but not limited to, ensuring we maintain a Certificate of Occupancy and remain ADA compliant in all years, ensure safe and secure access to the school and appropriate security measures to restrict access, and that the school remains in good condition with all required resources to meet the needs of all staff and students.

**Non-Academic Operations.** We will use internal and external resources to manage other non-academic operations. We will follow defined procurement procedures when working with external vendors. The Director of Operations will manage all operations pertaining to facilities, technology, and student information; we will use Power School to manage student information. The Director of Operations will maintain all record keeping with the support of our Back Office Provider. The Director of Operations will maintain all student records electronically, and hard copy records will be kept in a locked cabinet located in the main office. Compliance and reporting will be managed by the Director of Operations with support from the Back Office Provider, with direct oversight by the Head of School. All equipment, materials, and supplies will be purchased by the Director of Operations following procedures for procurement.<sup>127</sup> We intend to contract out janitorial services in all years, with all costs reflected in all years.

## **I. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

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The Founding Team consists of deeply invested professional community members who are servant leaders dedicating their time, expertise, and commitment to serving the families of Rochester through many initiatives including: establishing a non-profit to connect families in need of resources with community members and organizations capable of fulfilling their needs; teaching and leading within Rochester’s traditional public and charter schools; providing remote, hybrid,

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<sup>124</sup> <https://www.schoolhealthny.com/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&ModuleInstanceID=295&ViewID=7b97f7ed-8e5e-4120-848f-a8b4987d588f&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=688&PageID=199>

<sup>125</sup> <https://www.rcsdk12.org/Page/49031>

<sup>126</sup> <https://www.rcsdk12.org/Page/49038>

<sup>127</sup> Non-Academic Operations Model adapted from those of Primary Hall Charter School and informed by BES training and resources



and summer learning support for Rochester youth; and volunteering to coach a local inner-city youth cheerleading team. As a Founding Team with deep networks within Rochester’s communities, we have connected with many stakeholders to gather feedback and insight and will continue to build and strengthen community relationships throughout the pre-opening phase. We recognize and value the vital role that community and parent involvement plays in realizing our mission of supporting students in achieving academic and social success. Upon authorization, we will focus on strengthening parent partnerships as we know “regardless of income level, children whose parents take an active interest in their education get better grades, have an easier time socially, and are more likely to graduate from high school and pursue higher learning.”<sup>128</sup> **Family and Community Involvement in the Pre-Opening Phase.** We will continue our relationship with local Head Start and Early Childhood Childcare Centers throughout our pre-opening phase to connect with age-eligible families, including but not limited to, ABC Head Start, YMCA Center for Equity at Lewis Street, Ibero Early Childhood Center, and Volunteers of America Children’s Center. We will continue to hold tabling events, canvass local neighborhoods, attend and host kindergarten readiness and recruitment events. During events at early childhood childcare centers, we will offer information for parents about our school and collect feedback and insight on their expectations of an elementary school. We will also offer access to our application. We will host tabling events at: (a) the City of Rochester Public Libraries; including the Sully Branch in the 14609 neighborhood, Maplewood Branch in 14613, Arnett Branch in 14619, Lyell Branch in 14606 and the Phyllis Wheatley Branch in 14608; (b) E3: and (c) Good Schools ROC Charter Recruitment Events. Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, and using our robust social networking platforms including Facebook and Instagram, our Proposed Head of School will continue hosting virtual kindergarten readiness sessions to support families faced with remote and hybrid instruction. We will continue hosting public meetings and accepting surveys to ensure that our school model and academic programming meets the needs of students and families. Our inaugural lottery will be held April 18, 2022. Families will be notified of the lottery results via email, phone call, and by mail on April 18-19.<sup>129</sup> **Communicating with Families of Enrolled Students.** Upon enrolling our inaugural 120 kindergarten and first graders, the Head of School will begin to send families bi-weekly emails updating them on the development of Rochester Excellence Academy. We will host a series of Family Orientation Events where families will learn the “Excellence Way,” including school expectations and systems, operations, educational philosophy, school and home partnership, interventions and supports available, and commitment to our values-based community.<sup>130</sup> Incoming students will meet the teaching staff and take diagnostic assessments. Parents will complete enrollment paperwork, including the Home Language Survey, and will have time to ask questions of our Head of School and other staff. Our series of Family Orientation Events will serve as the beginning of our home and school partnership. Our Social Worker and Operations Staff will collaborate to ensure that we have updated contact information for all families as parent communication is essential in supporting students on their quest to success. Teachers will complete Home Visits during the third week of our Summer Excellence Intensive (17 days of teacher PD) to build a deeper connection with students and families before the official

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<sup>128</sup> Raymond P. Johnathan, *Wildflowers: A School Superintendent’s Challenge to America*, San Francisco, CA: SF Press, 2018

<sup>129</sup> Lottery dates can be found in **Attachment 4c**

<sup>130</sup> All Family Orientation Sessions can be seen in our Annual Calendar, found in **Attachment 4c**



start of the school year. **Family Involvement after Opening.** Upon the start of the school year, families will receive nightly Excellence Reports including a Life's Work Tracker, behavior tracker, assessment data and home/school communication tracker. Families will be invited to our weekly Community Meeting where we will celebrate our successes, accomplishments, and display knowledge acquired throughout the week.<sup>131</sup> Teachers and Intervention Specialists will complete bi-weekly phone calls to families, and our Head of School will host monthly coffee hours.<sup>132</sup> Monthly newsletters will be sent home updating families on school events, units of study, and achievements. There will be three Family Conferences throughout the school year. We will host multiple family events, student showcases, and student performances approximately every six weeks.<sup>133</sup> **Supporting Families with In-Home Learning.** Families will receive an Excellence Preparation Package at Family Orientation which will include letters and number flashcards, books, leveled reading lists, handwriting practice and lined paper, pencil grips, pencils, pencil sharpener, pencil pouch, school swag, math fluency practice, suggested in-home activities, one free uniform, and diagnostic assessment results. During school breaks, students will receive projects with materials to complete and books to read. During summer break, students will receive an Excellence Preparation Package geared towards preventing summer learning loss which will include all materials needed and a list of beneficial summer programs and online resources. If our home district is mandated to provide hybrid or remote instruction, our families will be equipped with a technology device for each student, individual Wi-Fi units per request, bi-weekly materials, grab and go meals, small group remote instruction for core subjects, small group intervention sessions, small group social circles and will be equipped with continuity of instruction as each curricular choice has an interactive technology component in which will be utilized, all year round, through in-person instruction and weekend life's work. **Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations.** We recognize the vital role that our school and broader community play in the future success of our students. Therefore, we have formed strong community partnerships with community-based organizations that share the same values, as we believe that it takes a village to raise a child. There are many organizations within the City of Rochester working in individual silos towards the same mission of improving outcomes for our community's children; we have decided to collaborate with multiple community organizations to increase our positive impact. The Greater Rochester YMCA and Rochester Education Foundation share our belief in the power of the arts in supporting students' academic and social success. Komposition Kids shares our belief in preparing students to meet the rigorous demands for college and careers. Restoration Rochester shares our belief that our children and families deserve access to quality healthcare, nutrition, housing, and other resources. We have developed a clear and explicit plan for collaboration with our community-based partners to enhance and support our students' educational experience at Rochester Excellence Academy.<sup>134</sup> Restoration Rochester will partner with our school Social Worker to connect families in crisis with resources including emergency assistance for food, shelter, clothing, baby items, public transportation, etc. Rochester Education Foundation will donate musical instruments to enable access to instrumental music lessons for our students in Y2 and beyond. Komposition Kids staff will provide our students with career readiness instruction

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<sup>131</sup> Community Meeting will be held every Friday at 10:45am; please see [Attachment 4a](#)

<sup>132</sup> Monthly Coffee Hour dates can be found in [Attachment 4c](#)

<sup>133</sup> Student performances and family events can be found in [Attachment 4c](#)

<sup>134</sup> Letter of Intent for each CBO Partnership can be found in [Attachment 7](#)

twice per month using their multi-media Ms. Sow's Career Readiness Curriculum. The Greater Rochester YMCA will provide a 35-minute arts exploration block Monday - Thursday during which students will choose from a variety of art forms including Fine Arts & Graffiti, Breakdancing, Drama & Script Writing, DJing & Production, Poetry, and Spoken Word & Rap taught by YMCA artists. We will offer an on-site after-school program focused on health and wellness, academic support, STEM, global learning, leadership, and enrichment. Dismissal is at 4:00pm, Monday – Thursday; students have the option of attending our afterschool program until 6:00pm. Families will be responsible for evening transportation home. Our afterschool program is offered through our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA to assist families with quality childcare. The YMCA's Accelerating Academics after-school program has delivered positive outcomes within communities nation-wide; students who attend the YMCA's Accelerating Academics afterschool program have exhibited an increase in school attainment, improved social-emotional skills, improved self-conduct and self-efficacy.<sup>135</sup> Our students will also have access to attend the YMCA's Power Scholars Academy, an evidence-based summer program developed through a partnership with the YMCA and BellXcel (Building Educated Leaders for Life) which blends rigorous, small-group academic instruction with camp-like enrichment activities focusing on literacy, math, STEM, the arts, and health education.<sup>136</sup>

## J. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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Rochester Excellence Academy's proposed Founding Board consists of high-capacity, well-respected professionals from the Rochester community who bring the collective expertise to responsibly govern the school's charter, following all local, state, and federal laws and regulations, maintaining the public trust, and ensuring the school's fiscal health in all years of the charter term. Beginning in the planning year and throughout all operational years, Rochester Excellence Academy will hire a Back Office Provider with proven experience in charter school fiscal management and compliance within New York State. The Board will approve the annual contract for and annually evaluate the services of the Provider, and will require that the Provider work closely with the Head of School and Director of Operations regarding all aspects of fiscal management and budgetary planning. We are currently considering securing one of two options: (1) Charter School Business Management Inc.<sup>137</sup>, a highly respected New-York based, national provider of accounting and finance back office support and training for charter schools and charter management organizations and (2) EdTec<sup>138</sup>, a national financial and operational consulting firm exclusively for charter schools and with broad experience in NY State. Through contracting with a Back Office Provider, we will ensure clear and strong segregation of duties, limit the opportunity for financial mismanagement, and reduce the number of employees with access to school funds. **Policies.** The Finance Committee will lead the Board in reviewing and adopting rigorous and clear fiscal policies each year, beginning in Y0, with all policies meeting or exceeding GAAP. Prior to the adoption of any policy, the draft policy will be reviewed by an experienced auditor, aligned with generally accepted accounting practices, and in accordance to

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<sup>135</sup> <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ymca-y-net-prod/files/photos/pdf/achievement-gap-accelerating-academics.pdf>

<sup>136</sup> <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ymca-y-net-prod/files/photos/pdf/achievement-gap-summer-to-succeed.pdf>

<sup>137</sup> <http://www.csbm.com/about-us/overview/#XrLbXqhKg2w>

<sup>138</sup> <https://edtec.com/about/>

the NYSED Audit Guide.<sup>139</sup> **Budget Process.** Each December, the Head of School will establish annual priorities for the school, aligned to the mission and vision as outlined in the charter and established by the Board. In that same month, the annual budget for the upcoming school year will be drafted by the Head of School with the technical support of the Director of Operations and Back Office Provider. Our budget will be aligned to our mission, vision, goals, and priorities, and will be informed by input received from school community stakeholders. The budget will reflect enrollment data, student populations (students receiving special education services, MLLs/ELLs, and FRL), and student daily attendance, tracked and managed by our Director of Operations through data tracking systems. In January, the draft budget will be presented to the Finance Committee. Upon review, and within an iterative process, the Finance Committee will recommend revisions ensuring full, clear, conservative, and detailed assumptions for all revenue and expense line items necessary for the final draft. After revisions are made to its satisfaction, and likely in March, the Committee will present the budget to the Board for review and discussion, no later than the April meeting, with approval expected in the regularly scheduled May meeting. Presentation of and approval vote for the proposed budget will occur during regularly scheduled public Board meetings. The Board's role is to adopt a sound, balanced, mission-aligned, and fiscally conservative budget within set timelines to ensure the success of the school and required submission of the approved budget to the authorizer. We will provide NYSED a copy of the approved annual budget and cash flow projections for each fiscal year no later than June 30 as required. **Audits.** We will annually contract an independent auditor to conduct our annual audit and evaluate our financial management systems and procedures. Our auditor will be a NY State Certified CPA or CPA firm with experience working with charter schools within the State of New York; our annual audit will be conducted in accordance with all local, state, and federal laws, including those pertaining to charter schools within New York State and as required by NYSED. The Board will ensure the auditor has all resources to fully conduct the audit and will delegate the task of providing such materials to the Head of School. The auditor will present the audit to the Board at a regularly scheduled public meeting. The Board then will ensure that the school responds to any findings in a timely and sufficient manner. The contracted independent auditor will also be used to conduct other mandatory reporting, including submission of annual 990 with the IRS and A-133 audit.

**Tracking Enrollment, Attendance, FRL, and Special Education.** PowerSchool will be used to track enrollment, attendance, FRL, and special education data. The Director of Operations will maintain internal documents related to enrollment, including lottery, proof of residence, contact information, and verification of FRL eligibility. The Director of Student Supports will maintain timed and dated logs of all special education services and all IEP communications and meetings, along with students' special education files. All files will be kept within locked and secure locations within the school; all electronic file systems will have protected and coded access limited to appropriate staff members.<sup>140</sup> The Head of School and Director of Operations will ensure all student and financial records are protected, keeping them in a locked and/or secured file cabinet. **Financial Oversight Capacity.** The Founding Board consists of dedicated professional community members of Rochester with the expertise, experience, and capacity to provide financial

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<sup>139</sup> <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentoversightplan/otherdocuments/auditguide2018.pdf>

<sup>140</sup> Financial management was informed by that of Primary Hall Charter School and informed by the training and resources of BES

oversight and ensure the school's fiscal health. **Laura Smith, Founding Board Member and Proposed Board Chair**, is Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer of UnboundEd and brings to the board 25 years of leadership experience in K-12 education. As former NYSED Assistant Commissioner, Ms. Smith is deeply knowledgeable on the critical role that a charter school board plays in ensuring its financial and operational health. Her previous experience as Director of Operations for the NYC Charter Center gives her a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of planning and management of a charter school's financial and operational responsibilities and requirements, and she authored the NYC Charter Center's first Operations Guidebook. In her current role as Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of a national K12 non-profit, she ensures the delivery of effective services while overseeing all operations and finances for the \$14M organization, including all federal and state fiscal and operational regulatory requirements. She serves as member of the UnboundEd Board, serving as Secretary and Treasurer since its inception, planning and managing Board meetings in collaboration with the CEO, Chair and General Counsel. Ms. Smith completed The Broad Foundation's Residency in Urban Education and holds an MBA from Northwestern University. **Vernon Connors, Founding Board Member and Proposed Treasurer**, is Finance Director at Center for Youth Services Inc. He has 25 years of experience in school administration and financial management in both private and public school settings. He served in a variety of organizations, from a small private school as the Business Manager at Bishop Kearney High School to a large urban school district as the Budget Director and Acting Chief Financial Officer for the Rochester City School District. He has a great deal of hands-on business office experience from his time as the Business Manager at Bishop Kearney and as the District Treasurer for the Brockport Central District. In addition, he has extensive administrative experience as the School Business Official for the Lansing Central School District, Budget Director at the Rochester City School District, and Director of Financial & Business Affairs at the Jamestown City School District.

## **K. BUDGET AND CASH FLOW**

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In accordance with SED requirements, the Founding Team has developed a pre-opening and 5-year budget that includes all budgetary details, assumptions, and cash flow and which evidences our ability to deliver the academic program in full alignment with the mission, vision, and academic goals outlined within the charter application. We commit extensive resources to our staffing plan that allows us to reach the needs of a variety of learners, and allows us to grow leadership across the organization within a variety of functional areas and across time. We maintain a conservative approach regarding all budgetary inputs, not anticipating any increase in revenue and anticipating annual increases in expenses in all years. Our budget assumes only secured funding and a Charter School Planning Grant as indicated by SED, and we anticipate modest fund development dollars from our Board. All elements of our core program, including our robust Community Partnership with the YMCA, are funded through secure dollars. We maintain a positive cash balance in all years, and in all months within cash flow, and we increasingly reserve dollars as we grow in size to ensure that we are positioned to meet the unexpected needs of our student community as we grow out to full size. We anticipate that our Fund Balance will reach a balance of \$1,114,067, which represents 18% of Total Revenue in FY 2027. **Revenue**. We build all revenue conservatively, assuming flat projections year to year and only assuming secured revenue. The budget is based on an opening enrollment of 120 students, assuming 75 students in kindergarten (with two general education classrooms of 30 students each and one teacher and one

teaching assistant in each classroom and one ICT classroom of 15 students with two teachers, including one with a NY special education license) and assuming 45 students in grade 1 (with one general education classroom of 30 students with one teacher and one teaching assistant and one ICT classroom of 15 students with two teachers, including one with a NY special education license). We will add 75 students per year in our kindergarten classroom and we will backfill in all years. We have projected a per pupil rate of \$13,785 and allotments based upon 95% ADA. We anticipate 20% of students will have special needs, with revenue of \$8,754 per student. We anticipate 90% of students will be eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch and Title I funds @ \$500 per student. We anticipate Federal Nutrition dollars for 90% of our student community, calculated based upon 95% ADA and 187 school days. We remain conservative in assuming a Charter School Planning Grant (“CSP”) of \$800,000, with distribution of \$350K, \$300K, and \$150K across Y0, Y1, and Y2, respectively. Should there be a delay or diminishment in start-up funds, we have secured a letter of commitment from BES in the amount of \$150K to ensure that we are able to meet our core obligations and will build out contingency planning accordingly; please see **Attachment 10**. If CSP funds were more limited, we would: defer hiring some administrative positions starting in our planning year and including appropriate deferrals in all future years; move to a 1.5 teacher/teaching assistant model rather than a 2-teacher model in our general education classrooms (ensuring one teacher and one teaching assistant during all literacy instruction in all classrooms); employ a special education teacher and teaching assistant rather than full second teacher in ICT classrooms; work with a number of vendors to reduce services and costs accordingly; and have the Board take a more proactive and hands-on role in further advancing our fund development efforts. We have conservatively estimated Board contributions at \$20K in all years, but recognize the strength of our Founding Team to go beyond this conservative projection. We build up reserves over the first three years so that we are in the best position to respond to needs of our student community, including personnel, operations, and facility. **Expenses.** We commit a significant percentage of our dollars each year to staffing costs, as we populate both our instructional and support team with staff to meet the wide variety of needs that our students will bring, and as we build an increasingly diverse administrative team to allow for the support and growth of our teachers and the various needs of a successful charter school as it grows in size and complexity. In all years, we average approximately 60% of our expenses for staffing needs. We assume one teacher and one teaching assistant in every general education classroom, and two teachers (one with NY special education classroom) in each ICT classroom; we assume enrichment teachers (dance, music) in all years, and we assume a nurse and social worker in all years. We provide salaries that are competitive on the local landscape in Rochester, with a starting salary of \$50K and \$55K for general education and special education teachers, respectively. We add a dedicated ENL teacher in Y2 and grow our special education teaching staff in response to enrollment. We provide for specialty teachers (music and dance) in all years. We assume 20 FTE positions in Y1 and 52 by Y5. We assume a healthy benefits package, with a 5% retirement match in all years 1-5, along with \$6500 for medical/dental/vision plans, and all assumed costs for Social Security, Medicare, and Workers Compensation according to standard rates. We assume key contracted services for accounting/back office, legal, and payroll, with appropriate annual increases in each. Operationally, we assume all costs that are board-, staff-, student-, and community-facing in alignment with our program. Specifically, we assume all costs to provide



every student with a laptop each year, a total of \$625 per student in a variety of work materials/books, and an additional \$150 per each student with special needs. We assume \$40K starting in Y1 for our assessment program and grow those costs with enrollment. We also assume expenses for additional transportation needs, student enrichment (field trips), student and staff recruitment, staff development, and nutritional costs. We prioritize costs for our Community Partnership with the YMCA, assuming 60 students participating in Y1 and a 20% increase in costs each year, starting with \$139,980 in Y1 and \$290,263 by Y5 for a robust afterschool program and arts instructors as part of our partnership-rich, school-based team. We assume translating costs in all years to ensure we reach, engage, and retain families whose home language is other than English. For our facility, we assume 90 square feet per student @ \$20 per square foot, with major renovations embedded within lease terms, along with insurance costs and utilities in all years. We disburse \$20K per year in Y1-Y5 for dissolution costs, kept in a separate escrow account. **Solvency and Stability.** Cash flow plan for Y0 and Y1 is positive in all months. We do not assume any borrowed funds and meet all obligations with secured, reasonably anticipated revenue. As we conduct fiscal oversight through the Finance Committee and Board, should we see any challenges with cash flow, we would revise budgetary details immediately. If significant enrollment challenges were to occur as cause of fiscal challenge, we would look to benefit from appropriate staffing revisions and other operational costs, always protecting the core academic program. The Board would take on greater responsibility toward more aggressive development goals as needed.

#### **L. PRE-OPENING PLAN**

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The Founding Team understands the numerous and essential tasks required to open our school to families and students in August of 2022. Please see **Attachment 11** for our Pre-Opening Plan.

#### **M. DISSOLUTION PLAN**

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In the event of school closure, we have developed a detailed dissolution plan; please see **Attachment 12**. In accordance with Education Law 2851(2)(t), 2019, and 2020, the Head of School will manage the dissolution process.<sup>141</sup> In Y1 through Y5, we have allocated a \$20,000 reserve per year to be placed in a dissolution escrow account, with funds will be set aside to cover legal and audit expenses associated with dissolution, debts, and unmet financial obligations.

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<sup>141</sup> <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/220>



## ATTACHMENT 1: Admission Policies and Procedures

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School (“Rochester Excellence Academy”) is a tuition-free, open enrollment public charter school. We plan to open with 120 founding students, 75 in kindergarten and 45 in first grade. At full enrollment in 2026-2027, we will have 375 students in kindergarten through fourth grade. We will not discriminate against any applicant or their family based on race, ethnicity, sex, creed, national origin, home language, ability, identity, socioeconomic status, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected status. All admission policies and procedures are in accordance with Education Law 2854.

**Application and Lottery.** Our enrollment window will be January 1, 2022 to April 1, 2022. Our application will be available online through our city-wide common application. In the event that we receive a greater number of applicants than seats available, we will conduct an open public lottery to determine which applicants will receive seats in our founding class. Lottery logistics will be available on our social media accounts and website, local news outlets and radio, flyers, postings and all other advertising available through E3. The lottery will be held by E3, a local non-profit, through their Good Schools ROC Initiative which assists parents in exercising their right to school choice. Parents will be notified of their placement and whether they have received a seat or are placed on the waiting list within 24 hours of the lottery electronically, followed by a physical notification through the U.S. mail. Upon enrollment and only after a family has accepted a seat for their child(ren), Rochester Excellence Academy will collect all necessary information pertaining to students and their families, including health records, IEPs/504s, diagnostic assessment data as well as home language surveys during a series of Parent Orientation Events. The Head of School will lead this process, with support from the Director of Operations. Our Social Worker will work directly with families on obtaining the necessary paperwork to complete enrollment, connecting families with local resources as needed.

**Backfilling.** We will backfill vacant seats in all grades as it reflects our mission to ensure that all students in K-4 are equipped with the necessary skills, habits, and mindsets necessary to achieve academic and social success. Seats vacated in the first, second, and third academic quarters of the year will be filled by students from the ordered waitlist. Seats vacated in the fourth quarter of the academic school year will remain vacant until the next enrollment period.

**Admissions Preferences.** We are committed to enrolling student populations that mirror those of our local district. All age eligible students residing in the City of Rochester will be given preference to available seats at Rochester Excellence Academy; with priority given to students with identified disabilities in efforts of filling seats in our ICT classrooms at each grade level first, any additional seats will be open to students from surrounding districts. Preferences also will be given to siblings of current Rochester Excellence Academy students.

**Siblings.** Siblings are defined as children whose primary guardian(s) are also the primary guardian(s) of other children already enrolled at Rochester Excellence Academy. This is defined as guardian(s) who have custody of children at least 50% of the time and include half-siblings, step-siblings, adopted siblings, or other family members such as cousins, nieces, or nephews being cared for as primary dependents. If a child is selected through the lottery for an available seat, their sibling(s) will be automatically granted enrollment if there is space available in their grade level. Siblings of currently enrolled students will be exempt from future lotteries and will be automatically granted a seat if there is available space at their grade level.



**Table 2: Public Outreach Information**

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Date(s) of Outreach (mm/dd/yy)	Target Stakeholder Group	Description of the Outreach	Location of Outreach	Input Obtained	Action Taken on Input	Number of Attendees
09/03/19	Community Member	Quansai Gibson, Parent and Former PTO President	The Blow Dry Lounge 298 Greece Ridge Center Dr, Rochester, NY 14626	As PTO President, Quansai expressed concerns regarding bullying and other related challenges in local schools. She spoke highly of school leaders who know each child's name and create a positive environment.	Provided insight into developing strong relationships and family partnerships. We will create a positive environment by celebrating academic effort and achievement, as well as exemplification of our core RESPECT values.	1 Parent
09/06/19 09/07/19 10/06/19 10/27/19	Age Eligible Families	Presented information regarding Rochester Excellence to families of youth cheerleaders and football players at a series of local Western New York Pop Warner Games.	Franklin High School 950 Norton St, Rochester, NY 14621  John Audubon School No. 33 500 Webster Ave, Rochester, NY 14609	Multiple families expressed interest in enrolling their children in a high-quality charter school focused on building a strong literacy and math foundation.	Rochester Excellence will continue to foster the relationship with the local Pop Warner League.	~60+ Families
09/09/19	Community Leader	Adrian Hale, Senior Manager Workforce/Economic Development & Education Initiatives	Phone Call	Mr. Hale expressed concerns regarding student outcomes in Rochester Public Schools. He expressed the desire to see discipline systems that empower students to self-regulate, advocate for themselves, and instill leadership skills. He is concerned that schools are limiting students'	Rochester Excellence's discipline policy will ensure that we are developing positive social skills. In response to feedback, we expanded our focus on college and career readiness. We have partnered with Komposition Kid and have adopted their Ms. Sow's Career Readiness Curriculum. Their staff will provide instruction on a bi-weekly basis.	1 Community Leader

				employability and future opportunities.		
9/10/19	Community Member	David McBride, Lead Applicant Believe Rochester Charter School, former Principal Uncommon Schools	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Mr, McBride expressed that many Rochester families and community members are supportive of charter schools. He also suggested connecting with the City of Rochester Public Libraries as they were beneficial places to do community outreach.	Per Mr, McBride's advice we connected with the City of Rochester Public Libraries for community outreach opportunities.	1 Community Member
9/10/19	Community Member	Chris Dunstan, President of CT Dunstan LLC	Phone Call	"Charter schools are the answer to the district's current state." Mr. Dunstan was interested in supporting the school in the future.	Rochester Excellence will continue to update Mr. Dunstan on our progress and how he can continue to support the school and the founding team.	1 Community Member
9/12/19	Community Member	Jason Klimek, Attorney at Boylan Code	Phone Call	Mr. Klimek, a Rochester native, expressed how lack of opportunity for problem solving and redundant worksheets stole his love for learning. He expressed the importance of the arts in student achievement. Playing the bass guitar supported his success in school.	Rochester Excellence shares the belief that participation in the arts support student achievement. We increased the daily arts opportunities for students in our school design.	1 Community Member
9/13/19	Community Member	Hettie Barnhill, Musical Theatre Professor at Nazareth College	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Barnhill expressed the importance of the arts for children, as she began dancing at three years old and attended a performing arts high school, which led to a successful Broadway Career and ultimately her current role as a college professor.	Rochester Excellence shares the belief that participation in the arts support student achievement. We increased the daily arts enrichment opportunities for students in our school design.	1 Community Member
9/14/19	Rochester City School District	Attended a workshop at East High School (EPO) Educational Partnership with the University of Rochester, Houghton Mifflin, UnboundED	East High School (EPO) 1801 East Main Street	Attended a literacy workshop where EAST EPO in partnership with the University of Rochester, Houghton Mifflin, and UnboundEd shared their model	Rochester Excellence will have 185 minutes of literacy each day and have an intentional focus on individualized supports driven by data.	~65 Educators and Community Members, 1 Local



			Rochester, NY 14609	which has proven to make academic gains in literacy for the students of Rochester adding a 70-minute whole school intervention block. We shared our school model as we workshopped with a group of RCSD teachers around Equity in Literacy.		University, 2 National Organizations
9/16/19	Community Members	Joe & Dale Klein, Founding CEO of Klein Steel, Local Charter School Board Members	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Mr. & Mrs. Klein provided advice on selecting board candidates with varying expertise and who will be active in governing the school. They shared their experiences of serving on local charter school boards and made recommendations for potential founding team members.	Bonnie O' Keefe, a referral from Mr. & Mrs. Klein, joined the Rochester Excellence Founding Team.	2 Community Members
9/16/19	Community Member	John Rodriguez, Organizational Development Consultant at Palacio Consulting Group	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Mr. Rodriguez explained that to create change for Rochester students all stakeholders must collaborate. John believes that we must focus on career in addition to college. He shared that we should encourage and empower students to lead in global communities. He believes that all students aren't required to return to Rochester to serve the community, if they are creating change in any community around the world.	Rochester Excellence revised the mission and vision, broadening our view on successful futures which includes vocational trades, careers, and entrepreneurship based on feedback from Mr. Rodriguez and others.	1 Community Member
9/17/19	Community Organization	Anthony Hall, Youth Intervention Gang Specialist at Pathways to Peace	Phone Call	Mr. Hall explained that we must address the effects of poverty on our children; to increase student achievement we must ensure that our schools address hunger, are trauma informed, and solicit parent involvement in creative ways. Mr. Hall is interested in supporting our school.	Rochester Excellence has included both a Social Worker and a Therapeutic Intervention Specialist into our staffing model as we realize that students may face daily adverse childhood experiences due to poverty. We will keep Mr. Hall updated on our progress and consider him a friend of the school.	1 Community Member

9/18/19	Community Members	Attended an event hosted by the Center City Community Coalition, a panel explaining both current and future education options for families who commit to living and working in downtown Rochester.	Eastman School of Music 26 Gibbs Street Rochester, NY 14604	Center City residents expressed excitement about adding additional school choices for the students of Rochester. Many connections were made where individuals expressed interest in Rochester Excellence including the Director of Music for the Eastman School, Director of Development at the Carlson YMCA, Special Projects Coordinator of E3, and an employee of the Northeast Charter Association.	Rochester Excellence later connected with the YMCA's Director of Development and the Special Projects Coordinator of E3. We will continue to foster these relationships and would consider a school location in Center City for the families in Rochester.	~40 Community Members and Community Organizations
9/19/19	Community Member	Jim Palozzi, local attorney	Phone call	Mr. Palozzi expressed that building a strong literacy foundation is important for elementary school students. He is interested in being a supporter of our school.	Rochester Excellence commits to maintaining a relentless focus on literacy. We will keep Mr. Palozzi updated on our progress and will consider him a friend of the school.	1 Community Member
9/19/19	Community Members	Attended Rochester Area Community Foundation's Annual Luncheon	Riverside Convention Center 123 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604	Met many Rochester community members including Maya Crane of Rochester Area Foundation, with whom we later connected. LeVar Sanders, Director of Work Based Learning at the Villa of Hope, expressed a need for career readiness education within schools so that students would have viable options and employable skills after high school graduation.	Rochester Excellence has committed to partnering with Komposition Kids, a local non-profit, which will offer all of our students career readiness instruction using their Ms. SOW's Career Readiness Curriculum, twice per month. We revised our mission and vision, broadening our view on successful futures which includes vocational trades, careers, and entrepreneurship, based on feedback.	~150 Community Members
9/19/19	Community Member	John Nichols, Founding Partner of Nichols Construction Team	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Mr. Nichols explained that he supports Rochester Excellence's mission and vision. He also believes in the lead applicant as she is a native of the community. He is interested in assisting with facilities needs in the future and	John Nichols has been actively seeking possible facilities for Rochester Excellence.	1 Community Member



				will work as a friend and connector of the school during the early stages of development.		
9/19/19	Community Member	Alex Amorese	Phone call	Mr. Amrose believes in Rochester Excellence's mission and would like to support the school with legal needs in the future.	None	1 Community Member
9/20/19	Community Member	Jason Klimek and Jennifer Aronson-Jovcevski, Associates of Boylan Code LLP	Village Bakery and Café 145 Culver Road Rochester, NY 14620	Ms. Aronson-Jovcevski represents many charter schools in the Rochester Area. She believes in the school's mission and would like to work with the school in the future. During the early stages of development, she offered her support as a friend and connector for the school.	None	2 Community Members
10/07/19	Community Leader	Dr. Paul Miller, Chief Executive Officer/Principal of Green Tech High Charter School	Phone call	Dr. Miller is a native Rochesterian who now is the Head of School at a high performing, all boys, middle and high school in Albany, NY. He explained that, similarly to Rochester, his sixth-grade students entered school with pre-k - third grade level reading and math skills. His student population consists of 97% black males and has achieved a 92-97% graduation rate with a 100% college acceptance rate. He explained that they achieved this through daily builtin RTI interventions. He suggested incorporating small group instruction , project-based learning, and holding consistently high expectations.	Rochester Excellence will provide individualized supports for all students to support their growth through using data driven instruction, small group and individual interventions, and a daily, school wide RTI block. Our RESPECT Core Values ensure that we maintain high academic and behavioral expectations for everyone in our school community.	1 Community Leader

10/09/19	Community Leader	Anna Hall, CEO of Northeast Charter Schools Network, Former COO of Uncommon Schools Rochester	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms.Hall offered advice on working alongside key community stakeholders. We talked about a possible pre-k start and what it would take.	Rochester Excellence continues to value and seek partnership opportunities within the Rochester community.	1 Community Leader
10/09/19	Community Organization	Ann Michael Henry, Volunteer with E3 Rochester	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Henry gave advice on joining the community collaboration of charter schools. She explained the services that her non-profit offers which includes marketing, collaboration meetings with other charter leaders, a unified online application, assistance with compiling student and family information, and access to enrollment data.	Upon authorization, Rochester Excellence will join the Rochester Charter Schools Collaborative group through E3 Rochester and will be added to E3's city wide charter application, increasing accessibility for all families.	1 Community Member
10/09/19	Community Organization	Bryan Hickman, Co-Founder of E3 Rochester	E3 Rochester 255 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Mr. Hickman offered advice on board development. He was interested in hearing about the Lead Applicant's success with getting students in Rochester to read on grade level as some of the charter schools in which he works with are struggling to accomplish this. He offered to be a connector to other individuals and offered a tour of Vertus all boys charter school.	Rochester Excellence's founding team are individuals committed to serving the students and families of Rochester by responsibly governing and overseeing the charter. They understand the magnitude of their responsibilities according to charter law and the NYSED Framework.	1 Community Leader
10/11/19	Community Organization	Luis Perez, CEO of Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association	Video Conference	Mr. Perez explained that we need a school focused on literacy. He also explained the importance of collaborating with community organizations to increase the positive impact for students and families. He offered to be a supporter and connector for our school.	Rochester Excellence has a relentless focus on building a strong literacy foundation for the students of Rochester. We have also partnered with multiple community-based organizations to enhance the educational experience for our students and families. Perez's Summerleap Program will be a summer option for our students and families.	1 Community Leader

10/13/19	Age Eligible Families	Presentation at Western New York Pop Warner's Inner-City Cheer and Dance Showcase	John James Audubon School No. 33 500 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Our Lead Applicant was given the opportunity to introduce herself and our school model to over 400 inner city families, during a local cheer and dance competition. She solicited feedback and distributed our contact information to interested families. Families expressed interest in enrolling in our school.	Rochester Excellence will continue our relationship with the Western New York Pop Warner Association as they support many inner-city families.	~over 400 Community Members
10/15/19	Community Leader	Dr. Donna Marie Cozine, Chief Education Officer of Renaissance Charter School of the Arts	Phone call	Dr. Cozine explained how her school integrates the arts. She explained their model of arts integration, skills-based classes, and after school opportunities. She invited our Lead Applicant into her school for a visit.	Rochester Excellence will have arts integration in the classrooms through our STEAM Centers and will also have cross curricular connections between Content Areas and the Arts.	1 Community Leader
10/16/19	Community Organization	Carmen, Librarian at Rochester Public Library Sully Branch	Rochester Public Library Sully Branch 530 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Ms, Carmen explained that each day after school the library is full of children who tend to stay until the library closes at 7 pm. She explained that children arrive at the library unattended and hungry. She said that older siblings walk the younger siblings to the library or students walk over after school. She suggested that we attend the Beechwood Community Meetings as there are many active community members whom are looking to improve their community.	Rochester Excellence will continue our relationship with Sully Library Branch. We will be intentional in engaging parents through daily logs home, bi-weekly phone calls, a monthly onsite parent event, and an annual home visit for incoming students. Through our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA we are offering an in-house afterschool program with tutoring, snacks, and physical activities until 6pm.	1 Community Member
10/16/19	Community Organization	Johanna & Mark, Library Manager and Youth Librarian at Rochester Public Maplewood Branch	Rochester Public Library Maplewood Branch 1111 Dewey Avenue	Ms, Johanna and Mr, Mark informed the Lead Applicant that they serve a large group of children whose home language is not English. The Maplewood area is full of families who have recently moved to Rochester from different countries and speak	Rochester Excellence's school and staffing model are designed to support students whose second language is English. We will prioritize hiring and retaining staff with TESOL Certifications. Our classroom environment, taxonomy, and pedagogical practices support	2 Community Members

			Rochester, NY 14613	<p>many different languages. Students come to the library each day hungry and without parent supervision. In many cases, older siblings accompany their younger siblings. The library provides snacks, computers, and tutors. The staff noticed that children consistently perform below grade level in ELA. They noted that students come into the library, each day, and stay until it closes. Lastly, they suggested that their students need additional ELA intervention and social emotional support inside of school. The staff gave permission to table at the library to garner support.</p>	<p>the success of all students including SPED and ELL/MLL. Through our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA we are offering an in-house afterschool program with tutoring, snacks, and physical activities until 6pm.</p>	
10/16/19	Community Organization	Children’s Librarian and Library Manager of Rochester Public Library Phyllis Wheatley Branch	Rochester Public Library Phyllis Wheatley Branch 33 Dr. Samuel McCree Way Rochester, NY 14608	<p>The Children’s Librarian and the Library Manager explained that they have a teen population that come into the library to use the computers. However, they urge that teens complete their homework first. They also provide tutors geared towards assisting K-6 students. Students who live close to the library come to the library, unattended, and often stay to close. Students often arrive hungry. The library provides snacks for children. They wished that Rochester would revert to having neighborhood schools to eliminate gang related violence in schools, reduce long bus rides, and would strengthen the sense of community. They complained that most of the elementary</p>	<p>Rochester Excellence has chosen both the Southwest and Northwest Quadrants of the city as our target population, recognizing that most of Rochester’s Elementary schools are located on the east side of the city.</p>	2 Community Members

				schools were located on the east side of the city or in the neighboring suburbs. The staff granted permission to table at the library to garner support.		
10/17/19	Community Organization	Mariah, Library Manager of Rochester Public Library Sully Branch	Rochester Public Library Sully Branch 530 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Ms. Mariah explained that because her library is connected to a school, students who live in the neighborhood come to the library after school and remain until it closes. She explained that she rarely saw parents. She expressed that 99% of students want to learn but have life's worries weighing on them. She suggested that schools increase their mental health supports for students. She also wished that Rochester would revert to having neighborhood schools. She granted permission to table at the library.	Rochester Excellence is designed to support students in developing adequate social skills and positive mindsets. We support students' mental health through our daily SEL lesson, daily mental health check ins, daily mindfulness moments, conflict resolution curriculum, mindfulness room, and staffing model which includes a Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist.	1 Community Member
10/17/19	Community Organization	Bruce, Library Manager of Rochester Public Library Arnett Branch	Rochester Public Library Arnett Branch 310 Arnett Boulevard Rochester, NY 14619	Mr. Bruce explained that students often come to the library to use the computers as they do not have internet access at home. He suggested aligning our school schedule with the local district's calendar for ease of childcare for families.	Rochester Excellence will align its school vacations with RCSD's calendar for ease of childcare for families. Students will have internet access during the school day.	1 Community Member
10/17/19	Community Leader	Rodney V. Brown, CEO of <i>Southwest Tribune</i> Newspaper	1872 Café 431 West Main Street Rochester, Ny 14608	Mr. Brown expressed the need for culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy within our city schools. He explained that children need to see themselves in the curriculum so that they have an entry point and their culture is affirmed, giving students something of which to be proud. Following our	Rochester Excellence will use Uncommon Schools' ELA Curriculum which was specifically written to be rigorous and culturally relevant for students in urban areas. Our Board Chair is the Co-Founder and COO of UnboundEd which focuses on equity in education and culturally relevant pedagogies. We	1 Community Leader

				meeting Mr. Brown published an article in the local <i>Southwest Tribune</i> urging the community to support the development of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School resulting in numerous individuals, organizations, and elected officials offering their support.	will lean on her knowledge to ensure that our curriculum, environment, and pedagogical practices are equitable and inclusive of all students. We will continue our relationship with Mr. Brown as he is a key supporter and connector for our school.	
10/17/19	Community Leader	Wade Norwood	Phone call	Mr. Norwood advised building a strong board for our school including good people, with diverse skills and expertise, and who can make difficult decisions. He suggested that we connect with The Urban League of Rochester, Superintendent of East High/University of Rochester Educational Partnership Organization, City Hall Employees, and the ROC the Future Initiative. He finished by explaining that families need to see the school as a part of their family.	Rochester Excellence's Founding Board is comprised of individuals with varying backgrounds and expertise, can make difficult decisions, and committed to serving our students and family by responsibly overseeing and governing REA. We have connected with all community organizations in which Mr. Norwood suggested. We have also attended community events to begin to build our relationship with families.	1 Community Leader
10/17/19	Community Organizations	Attended the Community Foundations Board and Volunteer Expo connecting with Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative, Junior League of Rochester, The Greater Rochester YMCA, Literacy Rochester, Allendale Columbia Private School, ROC City Rotary Club, 501WMain Inc., and The Boys and Girls Club of Rochester.	Temple B'rith Kodesh 2131 Elmwood Avenue Rochester, NY 14618	Our school's information was distributed, and each organization was given a brief introduction of our school model and outreach plan. Calvin Eaton, of 501WMain Inc., explained that Rochester needed a charter school that promotes student's creativity. Lindsay Brown of Allendale Columbia Private School requested that we connect in the future.	Rochester Excellence has a robust arts program that supports students' academic and social success. Our cross curricular collaboration helps students develop creative problem-solving skills.	10 Community Members



10/18/19	Community Leader	Shaun Nelms, Superintendent of East High School/University of Rochester Educational Partnership Organization and Director of the William & Sheila Konar Center for Urban Education Success at the University of Rochester	East High EPO 1801 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14609	Mr. Nelms explained that students arrived at East High School with literacy levels multiple years below grade level. Therefore, they modeled the school as a lower school, grades 7 – 9, and upper school, grades 10 – 12. The lower school focuses heavily on reading remediation. East EPO had to extend their school day to encompass the level of remediation necessary for student growth. He expressed the importance of adequate mental health support needed in school for the students of Rochester. East EPO has 11 counselors and 7 social workers. The entire staff is trained and utilizes Restorative Practices which has strengthened relationships between students, staff, and families. He suggested that students need space for curiosity.	Rochester Excellence has an extended school day which allows for 185 minutes of literacy instruction. We are relentlessly focused on building a strong literacy foundation for our students; Therefore, students will be prepared to meet the demands of middle school and high school. Our environment, staff model, core values, and daily practices were designed to support students’ social emotional development and mental health. We support students’ mental health through our daily SEL lesson, daily mental health check ins, daily mindfulness moments, conflict resolution curriculum, mindfulness room, and staffing model which includes a Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist. Our robust Arts Program, cross curricular collaboration, inquiry-based Science and Math Curriculum, and STEAM Centers encourage students’ creativity and curiosity. Scholarship is one of our RESPECT values, “I am eager to know, learn, and question new things.” Which encourages students to question and explore new things	1 Community Leader
10/19/19	Age Eligible Families	Held a small listening circle with four mothers.	Kay Royal’s Beauty Bar 1053 South Clinton Avenue Rochester, NY 14620	Our listening circle consisted of mothers whose children attended local suburban district schools and charter schools. All moms intentionally opted out of sending their children to our local school district. They enjoy the extracurricular clubs offered at their children’s school, the caring	Rochester Excellence will offer a free afterschool program for families through our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA. Our students will have access to technology during their independent literacy block and during STEAM Centers. Through our partnership with the Rochester Education	4 Community Members

				<p>staff, and access to technology. They would like to see a school with more after school activities, a diverse staff, and access to instrumental music before middle school. One mother explained that she pulled her child from a local charter school as she loved the high level of rigor, however, felt the structure was too restrictive for her son who has ADHD. She felt as if the school was unwilling to make the necessary accommodations to meet her son's needs.</p>	<p>Foundation our students will have access to instrumental music. We will seek, support, and retain teachers of color as we value their importance within our community. All our staff will engage in ongoing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work throughout the school year. We value the uniqueness of all students and vow to ensure that our environment, pedagogical practices, and curriculum support the growth of everyone.</p>	
10/22/19	Community Organization	Yversha Roman, Senior Relationship Manager and Latino Leadership Development Coordinator and 26 <sup>th</sup> District County Legislator	United Way 75 College Avenue Rochester, NY 14607	<p>Ms. Roman attended RCSD for grades K-8 and private school for high school. Through her work she has visited many different schools in the Rochester area and explained that she could see the disparities in both quality and culture between various schools. She would like to see a school with a welcoming environment and a focus on supporting students' social emotional development, where teachers focused on building a relationship with students and bilingualism is appreciated, and students have access to a robust STEM Program.</p>	<p>Rochester Excellence will celebrate our ELL/MLLs and their families. Our signage and letters sent home will be available in both English and Spanish, as Spanish is the second most used language in the city of Rochester. Retaining both ELL/MLL students and TESOL will be a key priority each year.</p>	1 Community Leader
10/22/19	Community Members	Attended the United Way's African American Leadership Development Program	Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center 123 East Main Street	<p>Distributed our school's information and discussed our school model with community members during the networking portion of the panel discussion.</p>	.	~20 Community Members

			Rochester, NY 14604			
10/22/19	Community Members	Attended the United Way's United for Impact Panel	Strong National Museum of Play 1 Manhattan Square Drive Rochester, NY 14607	Distributed our school's information and discussed our school model with community members during the networking portion of the panel discussion. Community members expressed interest in bringing our school model to Rochester. John Rodriguez of Palacio Consulting Group expressed that he would like to see students have access to a robust STEM Program. Nydia Padilla of the Rochester City School District expressed that she would like to see students involved in the arts.	Rochester Excellence has incorporated STEAM Centers, an investigative, hands-on, Science Curriculum, and a robust arts program.	4 Community Members
10/23/19	Community Organization	Leah Kazmierski, Founder of Restoration Rochester	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Kazmierski explained that she pulled her daughter from a charter school that did not fit the needs of her daughter as there was minimal structure. She suggested that children need a balance of structure and choice. She is interested in having her organization serve as a resource for the future families of Rochester Excellence.	Rochester Excellence will adopt routines and procedures from Doug Lemov's <i>Teach Like a Champion 2.0</i> to create a safe and predictable environment that maximizes every minute of the school day.	1 Community Member
10/24/19	Community Organization	Attended the New York Charter Association Conference	Marriott Syracuse Downtown 100 East Onodaga Street Syracuse, NY 13202	Distributed school information and discussed best practices upon meeting Ashley Dame, Assistant Education Director, and Fred Dicks, Dean of Students, of Discovery Charter School. They expressed that their school community was experiencing several challenges. Ms. Dame	Rochester Excellence will invite critical friends, with education expertise, in from our community to provide our leadership team with feedback.	2 Community Members

				requested that our lead applicant visit their school as a critical friend and provide the leadership team with feedback. Our lead applicant agreed and later visited Discovery Charter School.		
10/25/19	Age Eligible Families	Held a small listening circle with two mothers.	City of Rochester Adams Street Recreation Center 85 Adams Street Rochester, NY 14608	The mothers expressed that having movement opportunities throughout the day, male teachers, frequent teacher communication, and teachers of color were most important to have in a school. One mom explained that she had to pull her student from a local charter school as she felt that they were unable to make necessary accommodations due to his ADHD diagnosis. She believed that he needed more movement opportunities throughout the day than the school allowed. Another mom explained that she would like to see a more in-depth music program within a school.	Rochester Excellence will ensure that our environment supports all students. We will ensure that our school day, curriculum, instructional methods, and structures in place are responsive to the needs of all students. Our students will experience an in-depth music program through our music teacher's daily instruction, additional music instruction through our partnership with the YMCA, and access to musical instruments through our partnership with the Rochester Education Foundation.	2 Community Members
11/11/19	Community Leader	Gregory Paul Salmon, Managing Shareholder at The Law Offices of Gregory Paul Salmon, P.C.	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	As a former high school drop out of RCSD and now judge /lawyer, Mr. Salmon suggested that teachers must adapt their instructional methods to truly meet the needs of students as he felt this was the deficit for him as a student. He also suggested incorporating financial literacy.	Rochester Excellence prioritizes tailoring instruction to meet individual student needs through daily assessments, modifying lessons to respond to student data, data driven instruction, six-week assessment intervals, team planning, and small group instruction.	1 Community Leader
11/12/19	Community Members	Attended the Urban League's Equity & U Luncheon	Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center	Engaged in a facilitated table discussion about equity in Rochester. A local pastor explained that all sectors must work together to uplift our community. A community	Rochester Excellence believes that it takes a village to raise a child and we value our community partnerships. Our Social Worker will work as a connector for families to available resources	15 Community Members

			123 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604	member explained that children in our community need mentors and families need connectors to the many resources that are available within the city, of which families may not be aware.		
11/13/19	Community Leader	Geoffrey Rosenberger, Managing Director & Financial Analyst of Lily Pond Ventures, LLC and Board Chair of Uncommon Schools' Rochester Prep	Lily Pond Ventures, LLC 7 Lily Pond Lane Rochester, NY 14534	Mr. Rosenberger advised building a board of individuals who have the time, effort, and are mission aligned. He suggested finding an individual with fund development experience. He also advised hiring teachers who are mission aligned and have the capacity to start a school from scratch.	Rochester Excellence's Founding Board is comprised of individuals who have the time, effort, and are mission aligned. Board member Robert Hoggard has experience in fund development.	1 Community Leader
11/14/19	Community Leaders	Jackie Campbell & Larry Marx, Alliance Director & Chief Executive Officer of ROC the Future	ROC the Future 1 South Washington Street Rochester, NY 14614	Ms. Campbell suggested connecting with families and faith-based organizations. Mr. Marx suggested connecting with United Way, Ibero American Action League, and The Children's Institute. Both Ms. Campbell and Mr. Marx stressed the importance of having diverse teaching staff and culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy.	Rochester Excellence is committed to recruiting, supporting, and retaining a diverse teaching staff. As advised, we have connected with our local United Way and Ibero American Action League. We will use Uncommon Schools' ELA Curriculum which was specifically written to be rigorous and culturally relevant for students in urban areas. Our Board Chair is the Co-Founder and COO of UnboundEd which focuses on equity in education and culturally relevant pedagogies. We will lean on her knowledge to ensure that our curriculum, environment, and pedagogical practices are equitable and inclusive of all students.	2 Community Leaders
11/14/19	Community Leaders	Ashley Cross, Natalie Domino, and Leah Kazmierski, College Readiness Counselor of University of Rochester, Youth Ministry of Bethel Christian Fellowship	Bethel Christian Fellowship 321 East Avenue	Ms. Cross spoke about the literacy deficits in her high school students making it difficult to connect them with opportunities post high school graduation. Ms. Domino spoke about the literacy	Rochester Excellence has an extended school day which allows for 185 minutes of literacy instruction. We are relentlessly focused on building a strong literacy foundation for our students;	3 Community Leaders

		Church, and Founder of Restoration Rochester, respectively	Rochester, NY 14604	deficits that her students displayed in her after-school tutoring program at the church's ROC City Kids Program. Ms, Kazmierski spoke about the power of collaboration to strengthen our educational system in Rochester.	Therefore, they will be prepared to meet the demands of middle school, high school, and beyond.	
11/15/19	Community Leader	Natalie Sheppard, Commissioner of Rochester City School District	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Sheppard stated that the three most important elements of school that we should focus on should be safety, rigor, and extracurricular activities.	Rochester Excellence commits to providing grade level appropriate curriculum for all students. We will tailor instruction to the needs of individual students to ensure adequate growth. Our shared RESPECT Core Values create a positive, supportive, celebratory, and safe environment for staff, students, and families. Through our partnership with the YMCA, we will offer our students a variety of art classes to explore during the school day and afterschool recreation opportunities.	1 Community Member
11/15/19	Community Organization	Sarah Fitts-Romig, Director for the City of Rochester's Public Toy Library, Sub-committee member of ROC the Future, SummerLeap Science Curriculum Developer, and Former RCSD Teacher	City of Rochester Public Toy Library 851 Joseph Avenue Rochester, NY 14621	Ms. Fitts-Romig expressed her concern regarding kindergarten through second grade classrooms being developmentally inappropriate and explains that the push for rigor alone is the reason she left the teaching profession. She suggested having opportunities for child-centered play in the classroom and increased hands-on learning.	Rochester Excellence's lower elementary (K-2) students will have 20 minutes of daily cooperative play within our STEAM Centers. The City of Rochester Public Toy Library has offered the usage of hands-on science kits for our students, at no cost.	1 Community Member
11/16/19	Age Eligible Family	Amanda Williams, mother of 3 children who has chosen to homeschool	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Williams explained that she took her children out of public school because she did not feel as if they were getting the proper support needed. One of her daughters has ADHD and her	Rochester Excellence is committed to tailoring instruction to meet the needs of each student through frequent assessments, data driven instruction, and small group instruction. We will offer an ICT	1 Community Member



				school struggled to accommodate the school day and teaching style to meet her needs. She would like to see our school offer hot breakfast, individualized attention for each student, smaller class sizes, foreign language, a diverse teaching staff, and mental health support.	classroom of 15 students per grade level. We are committed to recruiting, supporting, and retaining a diverse teaching staff. Our staffing model includes a social worker and therapeutic intervention specialist. We will support positive social emotional development through daily read alouds, a daily mental health check-in, our RESPECT Core Values, daily mindfulness moments, and through the usage of our mindfulness room.	
11/18/19	Community Organization	Ashley Gannt, Lead Organizer for New York Civil Liberties Union and State Organizer for Just Leadership USA	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Gannt expressed her concerns about Rochester schools having low expectations for students. She would like to see our school have high expectations for students, connect with the community and parents, and offer extracurricular opportunities.	Rochester Excellence will maintain high academic and behavioral expectations for all students. When a student presents a lagging skill, rather academic, behaviorally, or socially we commit to supporting that student in the growth of that skill. We value our community and parent partnerships as we believe it takes a village to raise a child. We will work to build a strong partnership with families through constant communication and in-house events. We will continue working with our local YMCA, Rochester Education Foundation, and Komposition Kids, as well as seeking other community-based partnerships.	1 Community Leader
11/19/19	Community Organizations	Attended SUNY Brockport Rochester Educational Opportunity Center's: Poverty Studies and Economic Development's MPA Meet and Greet/Panel Discussion	SUNY Brockport REOC 161 Chestnut Street Rochester, NY 14604	Our school's information was distributed, and each community member was given a brief introduction of our school model and outreach plan.		6 Community Members

11/20/19	Age Eligible Family	Alia Muhammad, mother of 2 children	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Muhammad explained that she moved to a suburban area of Rochester in search of a quality education, however, she was met with racial tension. Therefore, she moved back to the City of Rochester and sent her children to a charter and private school. She loved the rigorous curriculum offered at the charter school, however she felt as if the heavily structured culture limited her daughter's creativity. She would like to see our school have a diverse teaching staff, have culturally relevant curriculum, and offer STEM or STEAM Exploration.	Rochester Excellence is committed to recruiting, supporting, and retaining a diverse teaching staff. We will use Uncommon Schools' ELA Curriculum which was specifically written to be rigorous and culturally relevant for students in urban areas. Our Board Chair is the Co-Founder and COO of UnboundEd which focuses on equity in education and culturally relevant pedagogies. We will lean on her knowledge to ensure that our curriculum, environment, and pedagogical practices are equitable and inclusive of all students. In partnership with the YMCA, we offer our students a robust arts program. Our core content teachers and arts' teachers will plan together to ensure that there is cross curricular collaboration. Our lower elementary has STEAM Centers in each classroom and all grades will use Amplify Science Curriculum which is based on inquiry, experimentation, and incorporates both hands on and virtual learning opportunities.	1 Community Member
11/20/19	Community Organization	Ericka Wilson, Producer at WHEC TV and Chairwoman of the Finance Committee for Rochester Association of Black Journalists	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Wilson expressed that teachers must build a strong relationship with students. She would like to see a school which offered extracurricular activities, arts involvement, and science fairs in which she believes keeps students engaged in school. She is interested in covering Rochester Excellence in a new segment to help garner support.	Rochester Excellence teachers will be dedicated to building a strong relationship with all students. Through our partnerships with the YMCA and Rochester Education Foundation, we are offering a robust arts program during the school day and afterschool. The YMCA will also offer additional recreation opportunities at our in-house afterschool program.	1 Community Leader

11/20/19	Community Organization	Attended Urban League's Learning Circle	Antioch Baptist Church 304 Joseph Avenue Rochester, NY 14605	Two mothers explained their difficulty with navigating single parenthood in the city of Rochester. They would like to see a school with high expectations, consistent parent communication, and a school that considers single families when planning events.	Rochester Excellence commits to holding all students to high expectations and providing individualized supports to aid students in meeting our high academic and behavioral expectations. We will communicate with our families daily through a log, at least monthly via phone, monthly events with the school leader, and through three family conferences.	5 Community Members
11/21/19	Community Organizations	Attended ROC the Future's: The State of Our Children	Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center 123 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604	Distributed our school's information and gave a brief overview of our school model and academic program to community members. Joi DiGennaro-McMurty, Executive Director of Friendship Children's Center, suggested continuing the use of Highscope's Six Steps of Conflict Resolution and focusing on the SEL Triangle Model as most incoming kindergarteners would be familiar with these models through their work in both Early Pre-kindergarten and Universal Pre-kindergarten.	Rochester Excellence will use Highscope's Six Steps of Conflict Resolution and will support students developing their five SEL competencies, from the SEL Model Triangle.	~20 Community Members
11/21/19	Community Leader	Nydia Padilla-Rodriguez, Director of Community Partnerships at Rochester City School District and Founder/Artistic Director of Borinquen Dance Theatre	Rochester City School District Central Office 131 West Broad Street Rochester, NY 14614	Ms. Padilla-Rodriguez expressed that she would like to see our school focus on building a strong literacy foundation. She also suggested viewing the Arts as a CORE subject as she believes its within our "Human Fabric" which allows students to express themselves creatively and produces valuable transferable skills. Lastly, she stated that to create a positive school culture	Rochester Excellence offers a robust arts program both during the day and afterschool, through our partnership with the YMCA. Our core content teachers and arts teachers will plan together to ensure that there is cross curricular collaboration. Our school-wide commitment to our RESPECT Core Values will contribute to positive school culture.	1 Community Leader

				we must teach and guide CORE values, as they may not be taught in the home, and incorporate systems in which will allow students to develop self-regulation. Through this approach she believed that we may have a low suspension rate.		
11/22/19	Community Organization	Megan DeFranco and James Smith, Director of Development and Director of Development and Community Engagement at the Greater Rochester YMCA	YMCA of Greater Rochester Association Office 444 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. DeFranco wanted to hear more about our school model as she was intrigued by a brief introduction at the Center City Coalition Panel Discussion. Mr. Smith explained that the Greater Rochester YMCA had been searching for opportunities to push into schools in order to serve children whom do not get to visit the YMCA. He suggested incorporating their Dreamseeds Program into our school model as it focused on the arts and building leadership skills. He also offered to incorporate an aquatics program to address water safety for our students.	Rochester Excellence has partnered with the Greater Rochester YMCA to offer a robust arts program and afterschool program for our students.	2 Community Leaders
11/22/19	Age Eligible Families	Held a small learning circle with two mothers who chose to homeschool their children	City of Rochester Adams Street Recreation Center 85 Adams Street Rochester, NY 14608	Rachel explained that she felt as if the school environment was not accommodating for her child with special needs. She would like to see a school that is active in the broader community and teaches Rochester's History. Tracey explained that her son has cerebral palsy and had experienced both racism and discrimination in school; therefore, she chose to homeschool him. She would like to see a school which teaches	Rochester Excellence will ensure that our academic programming, curriculum and instruction, and staffing model supports the growth of all learners, especially students with special needs. We offer an ICT classroom of 15 students at each grade level. We will also prioritize recruiting, supporting, and retaining SPED Certified teachers. We will use Uncommon Schools' ELA Curriculum which was specifically written to be rigorous and culturally relevant for students in urban areas.	2 Community Members

				black history and explores other world viewpoints.	Our Board Chair is the Co-Founder and COO of UnboundEd which focuses on equity in education and culturally relevant pedagogies. We will lean on her knowledge to ensure that our curriculum, environment, and pedagogical practices are equitable and inclusive of all students. We will explore the history of the City of Rochester within our Social Studies Curriculum.	
11/23/19	Community Members/Age Eligible Families	Attended the I am H.E.R (Humble, Educated, Respected) Woman’s Empowerment Event	Carmen Clark Lodge 777 Westfall Road Brighton, NY 14620	Tabled during the event and presented our school model and academic programming to a group of parents. Collected several signatures of support.		~35 Community Members
11/24/19	Community Members	On-air interview at 105.5 The Beat local radio station with Host Racqui B.	16 West Main Street Rochester, NY 14614	Our Lead Applicant was interviewed, on-air, where she provided an in-depth explanation of our school model, staffing model, academic programming, her background and experience, proposed board members, and solicited feedback. She also provided our school’s contact information. Lastly, the host allowed community members to call in and ask questions or give comments. Several community members called in reminiscing about their experiences they have had when Ms. Rumph was either a teacher or leader in their child’s school. Community members were eager to show support for Rochester Excellence Academy.		Hundreds of Community Members

12/2/19	Community Organization	Invitation to observe Discovery Charter School	Discovery Charter School 133 Hoover Drive Rochester, NY 14615	Our Lead Applicant observed classrooms and provided feedback to Discovery's Leadership Team, in efforts to support their goals for school culture improvement and academic growth. She observed a 3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> Grade ICT Classroom which provided ample individualized supports. She also observed the effectiveness of a Lead Teacher and Teacher Assistant co-teaching model. The leadership team advised choosing effective curriculum upon authorization as they initially planned to develop their own curriculum which proved to be unsuccessful and they are now searching for effective curriculum, years after authorization.	Rochester Excellence will adopt an ICT classroom per grade level. The other two classes will be co-taught with a Lead Teacher/Teacher assistant model. We have selected curriculum which has proven to be successful within the Greater Rochester and/or other urban areas with similar student populations. Our team will consistently monitor, accommodate, and evaluate our curriculum choices for relevance and effectiveness.	8 Community Members
12/05/19	Community Member	Chris Fox, Vice President of Sales and Development at SMP	Phone call	Mr. Fox expressed concern regarding Rochester schools. He suggested that our school have a strong Science and Math component to prepare students for careers in the future.	Rochester Excellence has a relentless focus on building a strong math foundation through Cognitively Guided Instruction, direct instruction, and inquiry based lessons which focus on building students' conceptual understandings. Our Science curriculum allows students to question, explore, and experiment to solve real life scenarios.	1 Community Member
12/07/19	Community Members	Attended Youth For Peace's Christmas Giveback for families effected by violence	John Marshall High School 180 Ridgeway Avenue	We tabled at the event and presented our school model, academic programming, and solicited feedback. Antonia of Enhanced Outlook Global Media explained that Rochester is desperately in need of quality	Rochester Excellence is committed to serving the Rochester Community to meet the need for high quality school options.	~50 Community Members



			Rochester, NY 14615	schools. Several signatures of support were collected.		
12/07/19	Community Members	Attended The City of Rochester's Liberty Pole Lighting & Kick-Off of the ROC Holiday Village	Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Park 252 Court Street Rochester, NY 14607	Distributed our school's information and gave a brief overview of our school model and academic program to community members.		~250 Community Members
12/16/19	Community Organization	Walter Larkin, Jr. and Malcolm Lee, Chief Executive Officer and Athletic Director of University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men	U Prep 1290 Lake Avenue Rochester, NY 14613	Mr. Larkin and Mr. Lee urged the importance of building a strong and diverse board and school leadership team. They spoke of the importance of having mission aligned individuals who have expertise in all domains of the school's operations, academic programming, and fiscal management.	Rochester Excellence's Founding Board is comprised of mission aligned individuals whom have the time, effort, and expertise to provide oversight for the school. Our Lead Applicant will hire a Director of Operations and Director of Curriculum and Instruction during Year 0 to ensure a strong start for the founding year.	2 Community Leaders
12/16/19	Community Organization	Kelly McDermott, Community Liaison at the University of Rochester	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. McDermott was interested to learn about the school model after meeting our Lead Applicant at a previous education reform panel attended. She is hoping to find a way to partner with our school to improve the physical and mental healthcare options for our students.	We will continue to build our relationship with the University of Rochester as they are a great resource for our students and families.	1 Community Member
12/16/19	Community Organization	Ida Perez, Director of Ibero's Early Childhood Center	777 Clifford Avenue Rochester, NY 14621	Ms. Perez explained that in many Early Pre-K and Universal Pre-K programs families have a Family Support Associate which supports families in meeting all their basic needs including financial resources, physical and mental health resources, housing resources, and education. She suggested having at least one employee dedicated to support	Rochester Excellence prioritizes family partnerships and are committed to support both our students and families. Our Social Worker will support families by connecting them to resources within our community to meet their needs. We will use Highscope's Six Steps of Conflict Resolution and will support students in developing their	1 Community Member

				families as they rely on that connection which seems to get lost when kindergarten begins. She suggested that we study and adopt the SEL Pyramid Model, the importance play, the role of the arts, and incorporate Highscope's six steps of conflict resolution into our model.	five SEL competencies, from the SEL Model Triangle.	
12/17/19	Community Organization	Maya Crane, Program Officer of Equity at The Rochester Area Community Foundation	Ugly Duck Coffee 89 Charlotte Street Rochester, NY 14607	Ms. Crane advised that parent engagement and community engagement are very important in the success of a school. She shared her experience navigating Special Education in Rochester. She also advised getting a coach for our lead applicant to help navigate founding year.	Rochester Excellence will partner with parents keeping them updated, soliciting feedback, and inviting them into our school. We value our community partnerships and we will actively seek more partnership opportunities support our students and families. We will prioritize recruiting, supporting, and retaining teachers with Special Education Certifications. BES will provide a follow-on support for our school leader throughout year 2 of operation.	1 Community Leader
12/18/19	Community Organization	Mary Louise Musler, Co-Director of the Early Training Academy through The Children's Institute	The Children's Institute 274 North Goodman Street Rochester, NY 14607	Ms. Musler explained that she would like to see charter schools collaborate with the Universal Pre-kindergarten community to increase the effectiveness of the kindergarten transition.	Rochester Excellence has adopted Highscope's six steps of conflict resolution, incorporated STEAM centers which mirror Pre-k Centers, incorporated 20 minutes of daily cooperative play, and shares a focus on supporting the 5 SEL Competencies. Our Lead Applicant has also joined the Early Training Academy's Advisory Committee to begin bridging the gap between charter schools and the Rochester City School District.	1 Community Leader
12/18/19	Community Organization	Holli Budd and Alicia Jinks, Chief Executive Officer and Program Officer of the Farash Foundation	Farash Foundation 255 East Avenue	Ms. Budd and Ms. Jinks are supporters of our school. They suggested connecting with the City of Rochester to inquire about	We have reached out to get the schedule for The Academy of Health & Sciences Charter School's board meetings. We plan to attend	2 Community Members

			Rochester, NY 14604	cohabitation. They also suggested attending a monthly board meeting for The Academy of Health & Science Charter School to gain insight into founding year expectations.	to gain insight into Year 1 expectations.	
1/3/19	Community Organization	Jamila Smith, Workforce Development Manager of Finger Lakes Performing Provider System	Spot Coffee 200 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	Ms. Smith suggested that our school host community events to build a relationship with the broader community. She also suggested considering expansion to build a high quality K-6 option. Jamila hopes to collaborate with our school to increase the physical health of our students by providing an on-site Nurse Practitioner.	Rochester Excellence will continue to work with Ms. Smith hoping our collaboration works out. We will work as a team to ensure that we are connecting with the broader Rochester Community.	1 Community Member
1/9/20	Elected Official	Mayor Lovely Warren of the City of Rochester and Sandra Simon Director of Special Projects and Education Initiatives for the City of Rochester	City Hall 30 Church Street Rochester, NY 14614	Mayor Warren is a supporter of Rochester Excellence. She suggested that we have curriculum that requires mastery before moving on and that each student's progress is tracked. She requested that parents have access to their student's progress, throughout the school year. She would like to see a diverse teaching staff who take time to build relationships with each student. Ms. Simon suggested that we have a plan to support homeless students as Rochester's homelessness rate is rising.	Rochester Excellence will use STEP to track reading mastery levels. Math skills will be tracked through daily exit tickets and interim assessments. Student data will be communicated to parents through daily communication logs and bi-weekly phone communication. Families will be updated on students' present levels of performance, benchmarks, and instructional methods to support student growth. We are committed to recruiting, supporting, and retaining diverse teaching staff. Our School Social Worker will work to support all students and families, including families facing homelessness.	2 Community Leaders
1/15/20	Community Member	Linda Thornton Hillery, Realtor of Re/Max Plus	Phone call	Ms. Hillery is an enthusiastic supporter of Rochester Excellence. She believes that teacher and leader diversity is	Rochester Excellence will prioritize recruiting, supporting, and retaining a diverse teaching staff. We will	1 Community Member

				essential in a school located in an urban area. She expressed the need for high quality educational options in Rochester.	continue to work with Linda in the future.	
1/20/20	Age Eligible Families	Attended the Rochester Rams Football and Cheerleading League Annual Banquet	John Audubon School #33 500 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	We tabled and presented our school model and academic programming. We also solicited feedback and collected several signatures of support.		~150 Community Members
1/28/20	Community Organization	Lawrence Forte of Komposition Kids	Video Conference	Mr. Forte expressed the importance of career readiness curriculum beginning in elementary school.	Rochester Excellence formed a partnership with Komposition Kids. Their staff will provide career readiness instruction, for our students, twice a month.	1 community Member
2/4/20	Community Organizations	Attended the Advisory Committee for the Early Learning Training Academy	Ibero Children's Center 777 Clifford Avenue Rochester, NY 14621	RCSD Early Childhood Teachers and community organization Pre-Kindergarten teachers expressed the importance of a developmentally appropriate early childhood educational experience. They hope to improve the relationships with traditional public and charter schools to improve the Pre-K to Kindergarten transition.	Rochester Excellence will continue our relationships with our local early childhood centers to improve students and families' Pre-k to Kindergarten Transition. Our Lead Applicant joined the advisory committee.	4 Community Organization
2/7/20	Community Organization	Lindsey Brown, Director of SummerLeap at Allendale Columbia Private School	Phone call	Ms. Brown advised collaborating with as many community organizations and schools as possible. She suggested sharing our school model, developments, and successes with the broader Rochester community. She invited our Lead Applicant to be a critical friend to both Allendale Columbia Private School and RCSD School #17, observing and providing feedback to the leadership teams. Ms. Brown	Rochester Excellence will continue to seek community-based organizations and schools to increase our number of partnerships, to enhance the support of our students and families. Our Lead Applicant will observe at both Allendale Columbia Private School and RCSD's School #17 and will provide feedback based on observation and best practices. We will continue our relationship with Mr. Brown.	1 Community Leader

				hopes to form a future partnership.		
2/19/20	Community Members	Held a Public Meeting to solicit feedback.	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Families expressed the importance of parent communication throughout the school year and a strong literacy focus. Students expressed the importance of feeling heard and supported, relationship building, and the desire to learn cursive.	Rochester Excellence is committed to constant parent communication through initial home visits, daily communication logs, bi-weekly phone calls, and three family conferences. We devote 185 minutes to daily literacy instruction. Teachers will take the first week of school to build a strong relationship with each student and will nurture this relationship throughout the year through family meetings and individual check-ins.	11 Community Members
2/19/20	Community Organization	Interview with Spectrum News	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Spectrum News attended our public meeting and interviewed our Lead Applicant. The interview was aired on our local news two days later.		1 Community Organization
2/25/20	Elected Official	Councilwoman Lashay Harris of Rochester's City Council and Career Pathways Coordinator at Rochester City School District	1872 Café 431 West Main Street Rochester, NY 14608	Councilwoman Harris explained that the 11 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> graders in her program often drop the program or are unable to be placed into a career field post-graduation as they lack the literacy foundation required to pass the civil service exam. She suggested having a literacy focus for our school.	Rochester Excellence has a relentless focus on building a strong literacy foundation beginning in kindergarten through devoting 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction.	1 Community Leader
3/14/20	Community Organization	Presented at the St. Paul Holiness Church's Annual Scholarship Banquet	RIT Conference Center 5257 West Henrietta Road	We presented our school model and key design elements to the banquet attendees. We also distributed our school and contact information, requesting feedback.	Rochester Excellence will continue our relationship with the St. Paul Holiness Church's Congregation Members.	~80 Community Members

			Henrietta, NY 14467	Many community members offered signatures of support.		
3/18/20 3/19/20 3/20/20	Community Members	Partnered with Community Leaders to provide emergency childcare for families due to school closures	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Our Lead Applicant partnered with Dr. Mary Bisbee-Burrows to offer emergency childcare which included literacy and performing arts instruction.		4 Community Members
3/18/20	Community Member	Marvin Creative Writing Teacher at Urban Choice Charter	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Mr. Marvin expressed the importance of building a strong literacy foundation in the early elementary grades to negate the need for intense remediation in middle and high school, which Rochester is experiencing now. He suggested building relationships with families and students is essential for academic success.	Rochester Excellence has a relentless focus on building a strong literacy foundation beginning in kindergarten through devoting 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction. We will build and continue to nurture relationships with our families through constant communication, opportunities to provide feedback, as well as social and celebratory gatherings.	1 Community Member
3/20/20	Community Member	Jamayne Fleming Home School Advisor for Young Women's College Prep Charter School	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Mr. Fleming expressed the need for connecting with families to increase student achievement.	Rochester Excellence Academy will begin building a relationship with parents through Parent Orientation Events and Home Visits. We will continue building relationships with families as we partner in supporting the growth of their child.	1 Community Member
4/25/20	Community Organization	Attended Restoration Rochester's Virtual Situation Room Community Meeting	Via Google Meet	Community members from multiple community-based organizations expressed the current community needs and we brainstormed ways we could band together to meet the needs of children and families of our community during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Rochester Excellence Academy developed a virtual Kindergarten Readiness Series, streamed on social media, to assist parents with 3-5 year old children with homeschooling and kindergarten readiness activities.	Multiple Different Organizations



5/4/20	Community Organization	Attended Restoration Rochester's virtual Community Collaborative Meeting	Via Google Meet	Community organizations were introduced to the Care Portal which links specific family needs with community resources.	Rochester Excellence Academy has formed a partnership with Restoration Rochester to assist our families in crisis.	Multiple Different Organizations
5/4/20	School Leadership	Video Conference with Wanda Perez Brundage Founding Principal of Academy of Health Sciences Charter School	Via Zoom	Mrs. Perez-Brundage provided advice on building family relationships, having a plan for distance learning, and setting/maintaining high expectations for students. She expressed the need for filling academic gaps due to her fifth-grade start.	Rochester Excellence Academy will have a relentless focus on providing increased and extended literacy supports for all students to build a strong literacy foundation by the end of third grade, to prevent academic gaps as our students move on to middle school. We will continue our relationship with Mrs. Perez-Brundage throughout our journey.	1 Community Member
5/18/20	Age Eligible Families	Hosted a virtual Kindergarten Readiness Session via Social Media for parents of 3-5 year old children	Via Facebook Live	In response to our current pandemic, our Head of School hosted the first of a series of Kindergarten Readiness Sessions to assist parents prepare their 3-5 year old children for kindergarten in the fall. The session was viewed by 665 community members.	We will continue to host weekly Kindergarten Readiness Sessions for parents of 3-5 year old children during the COVID-19 pandemic.	665 Community Members
6/7/2020	Community Members	Speaker at the Black Education Matters Peaceful Protest	Liberty Pole Rochester, NY 14604	Our Head of School was a featured speaker at the Black Education Matters Peaceful Protest with a host of other local black educators.	Community members expressed the importance equity in schools and the importance of social justice within education. Equity and social justice will remain the core and driving force of our school and community work.	100+ Community Members
7/11/20	Age Eligible Families	Read Aloud and Participated in the Black Kids Matter March	Highland Park Playground 180 Reservoir Avenue Rochester, NY 14620	Our Head of School delivered an interactive read aloud at the Black Kids Matter Rally and provided details about Rochester Excellence.	Community members expressed the importance equity in schools and the importance of social justice within education. Equity and social justice will remain the core and driving force of our school and community work.	80 Community Members

7/24/20	Community Members	Tabled at The Melanin Public Market	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Provided our school's information to community members in attendance and requested feedback.	We will continue to visit the local Melanin Public Market to connect with community members	100 Community Members
8/14/20	Community Members	Video Conference with Maya Crane (Rochester Area Community Foundation) Deb Hamner (Greater Rochester Parent Leadership Training Institute) Felecia Drysdale (Rochester City School District) Shanai Lee (Uncommon Schools	Via Zoom	Our Lead Founder, Brittany Rumph, connected with multiple community members to discuss supporting students and families through the 2020-2021 school year as the Rochester City School District and many local charters were only offering remote	Our Lead Founder developed ROC City Learning Pods, with the oversight of an advisory committee, in partnership with the Rochester Public Libraries to support children and families. She will continue to serve as the Program Director throughout the 2020-2021 school year.	5 Community Members

		Rochester Prep) Ashley (Child Time Learning Centers)		instruction, which left families in crisis.		
8/26/20	Community Organization	Presenter at the Racial Growth Webinar hosted by the Rochester Area Community Foundation	Via WebEx	Our Lead Founder, Brittany Rumph, delivered a presentation addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic for underprivileged families living in inner city Rochester.	Through the webinar Ms. Rumph connected with local philanthropists and secured funding to operate ROC City Learning Pods. Our team will continue to foster relationships with local philanthropists in efforts of inspiring individuals to continue to support initiatives that uplift the children and families of Rochester.	100+ Community Members
9/14/20	Community Organizations	Attended the Community Collaborative hosted by Restoration Rochester	Via Zoom	Multiple community organizations discussed systems integration and streamlining processes that provide resources for those in need within our community. The collaborative ended with time to network with each other.	Rochester Excellence Academy has formed a partnership with Restoration Rochester to assist our families in crisis.	Multiple Community Organizations
10/27/20	Community Organization	Presenter at the Joe U. Posner Breakfast hosted by the Rochester Area Community Foundation	Via Zoom	Our Lead Founder, Brittany Rumph, delivered a presentation addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic for underprivileged families living in inner city Rochester.	Through the webinar Ms. Rumph connected with local philanthropists and secured funding to operate ROC City Learning Pods. Our team will continue to foster relationships with local philanthropists in efforts of inspiring individuals to continue to support initiatives that uplift the children and families of Rochester.	100+ Community Members
12/15/20	Community Organizations	Presenter at the Digital Divide Virtual Briefing	Via Zoom	Our Lead Founder, Brittany Rumph, delivered a presentation addressing the impacts of the digital divide for underprivileged families living in inner city Rochester. Multiple community organizations brainstormed ideas and actions that could be taken to ensure digital access for all of Rochester's families.	Our team reviewed and revised our plan surrounding digital access to ensure that our families are not affected by the digital divide. We will ensure that all families have a technology device and internet access allowing students to access virtual instruction.	Multiple Community Organizations

12/17/20	Community Organizations	Meeting with Jacquetta Harris and Melissa Berrien of Rochester Housing Authority	Via Zoom	Harris and Berrien expressed their concerns with the lack of support experienced by children and families engaged in remote instruction.	Our team reviewed and revised our plan to address remote instruction, ensuring that all curricular choices had digital components and families possessed devices allowing internet accessibility.	Community Organization
1/18/21	Community Member	Meeting with Duwaine Bascoe	Via Zoom	Bascoe stressed the need for quality education options for the children of Rochester. He also shared best practices for charter school boards.	Our team has continued to connect with multiple charter school boards for best practices and lessons learned to strengthen our ability to provide governance and oversight.	Community Member
1/19/21	Community Organization	Attended Vertus Charter School's Monthly Board Meeting	Via Zoom	Our team attended Vertus Charter School's Monthly Board Meeting as observers. Vertus' Board Members extended the invitation to connect at any point for guidance.	Our team learned the importance of codifying systems and procedures to ensure effective transitions of employees.	Community Organization
1/25/21	Community Organization	Attended Academy of Health Sciences Charter School's Monthly Board Meeting	Via Zoom	Our team attended Academy of Health Sciences Charter School's Monthly Board Meeting. The ACHS Team extended an invitation to connect for guidance.	Our team will continue to connect with ACHS to learn best practices.	Community Organization
1/29/21	Community Organization	Interview regarding education inequities and Rochester's Black History Roots with WHEC News 10	Via Zoom	Our Lead Founder participated in an interview with two local district superintendents regarding education and Black History in Rochester. Ms. Rumph also shared the future plans for Rochester Excellence Academy		Community Organization
2/1/21	Community Organization	Attended the Monthly Community Collaborative hosted by Restoration Rochester	Via Zoom	Multiple Organizations discussed racial justice, racial inequities in our area, and systems integration. The meeting ended with a networking session.	Rochester Excellence Academy has formed a partnership with Restoration Rochester to assist our families in crisis.	Multiple Community Organizations
2/10/21	Community Organization	Attended the A Tale of Two Cities: Redlining and Racist Policies in Rochester, NY hosted by the Rochester Area Community Foundation	Via Zoom	Two presenters discussed the history of redlining and other racist policies in Rochester, NY and their impact on our community, today.	Our team is committed to ensuring that our policies, practices, procedures, curriculum, and outlook are developed with an anti-racist lens. We will continuously self-evaluate and seek feedback to	Community Organization

					ensure that all voices in our community are acknowledged, heard, and valued.	
2/17/21	Community Organization	Tour of the Greater Rochester YMCA Carlson Metro Center	444 East Main Street Rochester, NY 14604	Kevin Fitzpatrick of the Greater Rochester YMCA expressed a desire to lease space in their centrally located facility to Rochester Excellence Academy as that facility is no longer in use.	Our Founding Team will be taking a second tour on Tuesday May 4, 2021. We are considering leasing space in the Carlson YMCA as it is centrally located and would strengthen our partnership with the Greater Rochester YMCA.	Community Organization
3/24/21	Community Member	Meeting with Darin Price	Via Zoom	Darin expressed the importance of quality school options and access to the arts. He suggested partnering with the Hochstein School of Music and Dance.	Rochester Excellence Academy has a robust arts program as we value the arts and their proven ability to support both academic and social success. We plan to explore a potential partnership with Hochstein.	Community Member
4/28/21	Community Members	Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School's Public Meeting	Via Zoom live streamed on Facebook	The proposed full founding team, including proposed board members and head of school, hosted a community meeting. Our team discussed our school model, timeline, and took questions.	We will continue to connect with community members to ensure that our school model is tailored to the needs of the community.	264 Community Members
6/28/21	Elected Official	Meeting with NYS Assembly Member Demond Meeks and Miriam Valdor-Copa	Via Zoom	Assembly Member Demond Meeks expressed the importance of supporting families in efforts of having children thrive, he asked many questions to fully understand our school model and financial plan. Miriam explained her frustration experienced in a previous position at a local charter school with working in partnership with the local district throughout the referral process for students suspected of having a disability. She explained that many children/families were lost in the process.	Supporting our families is top priority as we understand the vital connection between student and family success. Our team will foster a relationship with each family beginning with an initial home visit and frequent communication. We have also had experience with working with our local district and helping families navigate the referral process; we will fully support and advocate for families and look forward to partnering with the district to ensure that our students have the proper supports.	1 Elected Official 1 Community Member

7/11/21	Age Eligible Families	Attended the Annual Forever Essence Beauty Pageant	250 Cumberland Street Rochester, NY 14605	We attended the annual Forever Essence Beauty Pageant, a local youth pageant held in honor of the late Essence Alexander. We tabled, provided information on our school model, and connected with families 1:1. Moms of rising kindergartens expressed concern for their children's safety at school as there has been multiple homicides near school property in Rochester.	Safety of our staff and students is a top priority. Our Leadership and Operations Team will partner with local authorities, community organizations, and neighbors to develop a safety plan ensuring the safety of our staff and children.	100+ Community Members
10/2020-06/2021	Community Members	Developed and Operated ROC City Learning Pods at four local public libraries throughout the city of Rochester	Phillis Wheatley Library Branch  Lyell Avenue Library Branch  Charlotte Library Branch  Lincoln Library Branch  Rochester, NY	Our Lead Founder partnered with local libraries to develop, secure funding, and operate ROC City Learning Pods, providing free in-person learning support for the students who reside in Rochester, throughout the full 2020-2021 school year. Our local school district provided remote instruction with no hybrid option in which left families in crisis. Families expressed the need for a safe place for their children to go while they worked and expressed the need for secure internet connection.	Our team learned a great deal with this hands-on experience of supporting families throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our continuity of instruction plan, which provides remote and hybrid instruction, was greatly influenced by our ROC City Learning Pods experience.	145 K-6 Families
07/2021-08/2021	Community Members	Developed and Operated ROC City Learning Pods' Literacy, Arts, and SEL Enrichment	Lyell Avenue Library Branch 956 Lyell Avenue Rochester, NY 14606	In response to families expressed concerns about school re-entry and interrupted learning, Our Lead Founder developed, secured funding, and operated a (in-person) free summer enrichment program which focused on supporting literacy skills,	We have gained experience supporting students with interrupted learning and have attended professional development sessions regarding addressing interrupted learning while continuing to provide access to grade-level appropriate curriculum.	K-6 students and families within the city of Rochester



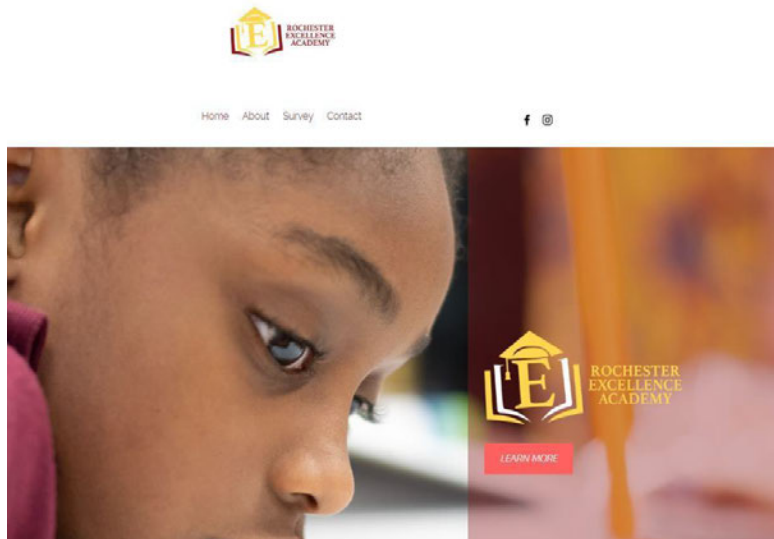
				developing the 5 SEL Competencies, and provided access to the arts for K-6 students residing within the city of Rochester.	We are prepared to support students with interrupted learning.	
7/12/21-7/16/21	Community Members	Volunteered at the Legacy Village Kids Camp	Legacy Drama House 112 Webster Avenue Rochester, NY 14609	Our Lead Founder provided Daily (in-person) SEL lessons for K-6 students. Students were eager to engage in discourse regarding their emotions during these uncertain times of the pandemic.	Our team recognizes that supporting the development of students' 5 Social Emotional Competencies is just as important, if not more important during the times in which we are living in, as supporting academic achievement. Our school model was developed with SEL support in the forefront.	K-6 students and families residing in the city of Rochester



## ATTACHMENT 2b: Evidence of Public Review Process

### Figure 1: Rochester Excellence Academy Website

<https://www.rocexcellenceacademy.org/>



#### ABOUT US

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School is a proposed K-4, tuition free, public charter school for the young leaders of Rochester.

#### OUR MISSION

Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all K-4 scholars with the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for school, career, and life success.

#### OUR CORE BELIEFS

<p>All students can achieve at high levels with individualized supports.</p> 	<p>Literacy is the key that opens doors of opportunity. We offer 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction.</p> 	<p>It takes a village to raise a child. We value our parent and community partnerships.</p> 
<p>Rigorous academics drives student achievement.</p> 	<p>Access to the arts supports academic achievement and social emotional development.</p> 	<p>Character is developed in a community based on values.</p> 

**Figure 2: Rochester Excellence Academy Fliers – English and Spanish**

# ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY

A proposed K-4 public charter school for the students of Rochester



## Our Mission

Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college, career, and life.

## We Believe

- Every child can succeed with the right supports.
- Excellence is not an accident.
- Rigor drives student achievement.
- Literacy is the key that opens doors of opportunity.
- Character is developed in a community based on values.
- All children deserve access to the arts.
- It takes a village to raise a child.

## Join Our Board

We are looking for mission-driven leaders with backgrounds in law, education, finance, real estate, and more for our founding team.

## Spread the Word

Share our mission and plans with parents, educators, and community leaders.

## Contact


Brittany Rumph, Lead Founder  
(585) 867-1034 | [brumph@bes.org](mailto:brumph@bes.org)

### About the Lead Founder

Brittany Rumph is a native Rochesterian who has dedicated her career to positively impacting the children of our community. She was both a teacher and instructional leader at Rochester Prep – West Elementary with a track record of success. Brittany obtained a Bachelor of Arts from The College at Brockport and a Master's of Science in Education from Nazareth College. Brittany, a Fellow with BES, will empower and educate Rochester's leaders of tomorrow.

### Why BES?

BES is a national non-profit organization that identifies and prepares excellent leaders to transform education in their communities. Over more than two decades of operation, BES has prepared leaders to found 175+ high-performing schools in 45 cities across 21 states and Washington, DC, educating 55,000+ students each year -- of whom 78% qualify for free/reduced lunch, and 93% identify as students of color. BES invests in school leaders so that they can invest in their teams and students, delivering on the promise of an excellent education for every child.



Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School es una propuesta de grados K-4, libre de matrícula, escuela charter pública para los jóvenes líderes de Rochester.

Creemos que todo lo que un niño necesita para tener éxito ya está dentro de ellos. Cuando se apoya correctamente todos los estudiantes pueden superar. Por lo tanto, la excelencia no es un accidente. A través de académicos rigurosos, una comunidad basada en valores, y apoyos individualizados Rochester Excellence Academy equipa a todos los académicos de kindergarten a cuarto grado con las habilidades y mentalidades necesarias para el éxito en la escuela, la escuela superior, la universidad, la carrera y la vida.

### Creencias básicas

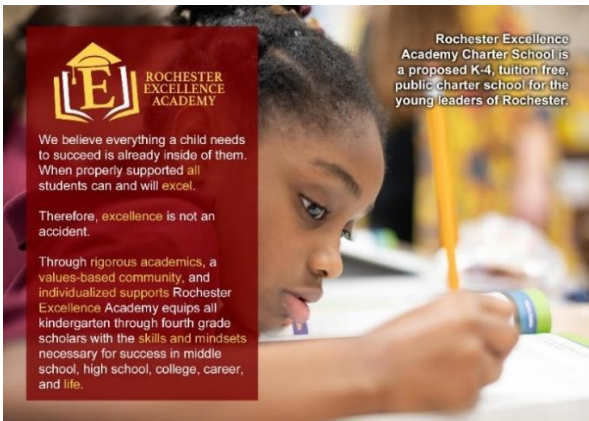
<p>Todos los estudiantes pueden lograr en niveles altos con apoyos individualizados.</p> 	<p>La alfabetización es la clave que abre las puertas de las oportunidades. Ofrecemos 185 minutos de instrucción diaria de alfabetización.</p> 	<p>El acceso a las artes apoya el logro académico, y el desarrollo emocional social.</p> 
<p>Académicos rigurosos impulsa el logro de los estudiantes.</p> 	<p>El carácter se desarrolla en una comunidad basada en valores.</p> 	<p>Se necesita un pueblo para criar a un niño. Valoramos nuestras asociaciones para padres y comunidades.</p> 

Aprende más de nuestro programa. Solicitar para ser un Voluntario. Asocíate con nosotros. Aprende más de nuestro programa. Solicitar para ser un Voluntario. Asocíate con nosotros.

**Stay connected:**  
[/ROCEXCELLENCEACADEMY](https://www.facebook.com/ROCEXCELLENCEACADEMY)  
[@roc.excellence.academy](https://www.instagram.com/roc.excellence.academy)  
[www.rocexcellenceacademy.org](https://www.rocexcellenceacademy.org)

**Contactenos:**  
 Brittany Rumph, Principal Fundadora  
 (585) 867-1034  
[brumph@bes.org](mailto:brumph@bes.org)

Fill out our community survey @ <http://bit.ly/ROCEXCELLENCE>



Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School is a proposed K-4, tuition free, public charter school for the young leaders of Rochester.

We believe everything a child needs to succeed is already inside of them. When properly supported all students can and will excel.

Therefore, excellence is not an accident.

Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college, career, and life.

### CORE BELIEFS

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<p>Rigorous academics drives student achievement.</p> 	<p>Access to the arts supports academic achievement and social emotional development.</p> 	<p>Character is developed in a community based on values.</p> 

**Stay connected:**  
[/ROCEXCELLENCEACADEMY](https://www.facebook.com/ROCEXCELLENCEACADEMY)  
[@roc.excellence.academy](https://www.instagram.com/roc.excellence.academy)  
[www.rocexcellenceacademy.org](https://www.rocexcellenceacademy.org)

**Contact Us:**  
 Brittany Rumph, Lead Founder  
 (585) 867-1034  
[brumph@bes.org](mailto:brumph@bes.org)

Fill out our community survey @ <http://bit.ly/ROCEXCELLENCE>

### Figure 3: Rochester Excellence Academy Survey and Analytics

Stakeholders in the community were given the opportunity to provide input into the design of the proposed charter school. ROC Excellence Academy has collected 160 surveys from community members. Our online survey is available to the public through our website, social media pages, and through scanning a QR code located on our flier. All community input obtained through surveys, meetings, listening circles, and community events has been documented in **Table 2: Public Outreach Information**.

The image shows a screenshot of a survey form titled "Rochester Excellence Academy Survey". The form is displayed in a window with a title bar that says "Section 1 of 2" and "Rochester Excellence Academy Survey". Below the title bar, there is a "Form description" field. The main content area features an "Image title" field with a preview of a banner for "ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY". The banner text reads "A proposed K-4 public charter school for the students of Rochester" and includes a photograph of three children in a classroom. To the right of the image is a vertical toolbar with icons for adding, deleting, moving, and zooming. Below the image, there are four form fields: "Name \*" (Short answer text), "Email \*" (Short answer text), "Are you a parent or legal guardian of a school age child? \*" (radio buttons for Yes and No), and "Are you a parent or legal guardian of a child between the ages of 3 - 5 ? \*" (radio buttons for Yes and No).

Are you satisfied with the education options for Kindergarten - 4th Grade students in your neighborhood? \*

Yes

No

---

What are the 3 most important things you want to see in your child's elementary school? \*

Short answer text

---

Would Rochester benefit from a K- 4 public, tuition-free charter school focused on building a strong literacy and math foundation, supporting students' social emotional development, and providing access to the arts? \*

Yes

No

---

Parents/Guardians Only: Given the opportunity, Would you enroll your child in a K - 4 public, tuition- free charter school focused on building a strong literacy and math foundation, supporting students' social emotional development, and providing access to the arts?

Yes

No

---

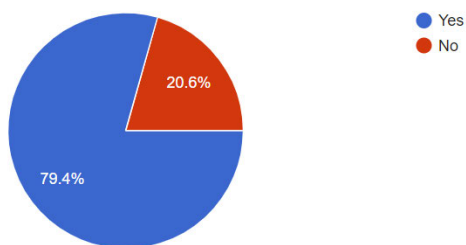
Are you interested in joining our volunteer email list? \*

Yes

No

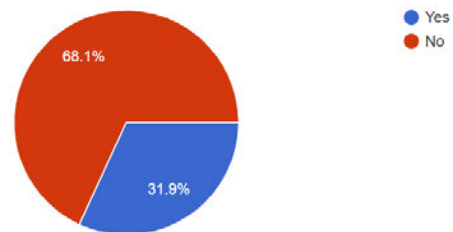
Are you a parent or legal guardian of a school age child?

160 responses



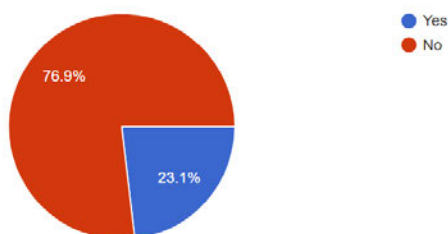
Are you a parent or legal guardian of a child between the ages of 3 - 5 ?

160 responses



Are you satisfied with the education options for Kindergarten - 4th Grade students in your neighborhood?

160 responses





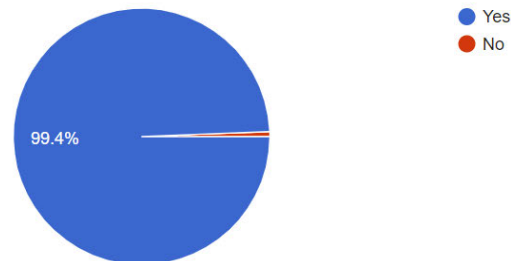
What are the 3 most important things you want to see in your child's elementary school?

160 responses

- Discipline. A caring and nurturing staff. A curriculum and activities that are comparable to the better schools in the area
- Sports, enhanced and reading programs
- Better Grades and better pay for teachers
- Reading fundamentals thoroughly taught, educators who care, results and changes made when students receive poor evaluations.
- Arts, Good Academics and teachers who truly care and are attentive to children's needs
- Culturally relevant instruction, historically accurate curricula, and school-wide restorative practices
- More activities for adhd kids, different way of learning for kids that has learning disabilities or adhd, more communication .
- Progress with standardized testing. Emotional support. Teachers who look like the students and CARE!

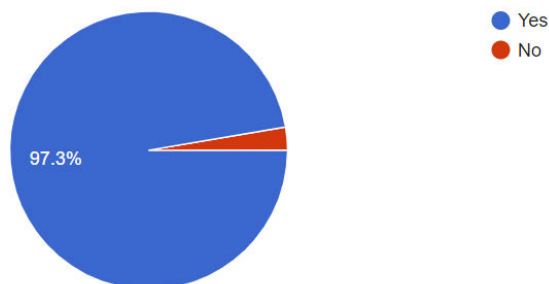
Would Rochester benefit from a K- 4 public, tuition-free charter school focused on building a strong literacy and math foundation, supporting students' social emotional development, and providing access to the arts?

160 responses



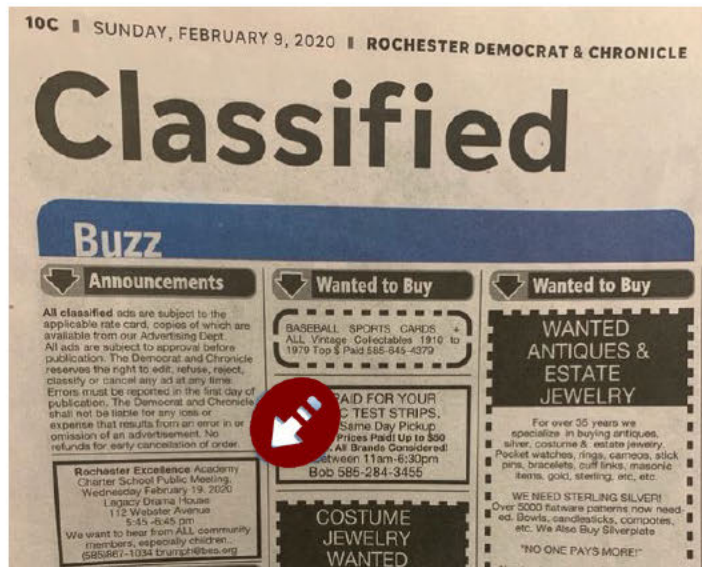
Parents/Guardians Only: Given the opportunity, Would you enroll your child in a K - 4 public, tuition- free charter school focused on building a strong literacy and math foundation, supporting students' social emotional development, and providing access to the arts?

148 responses



**Figure 4: Public Meeting Notifications**

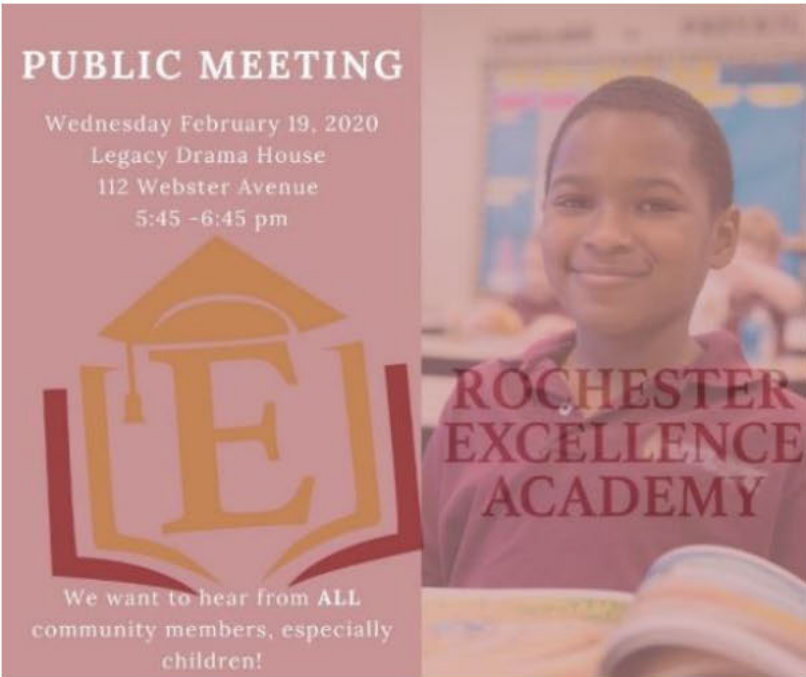
At least one public meeting with stakeholders in the community in the school district in which the proposed charter school is to be located. Reasonable public notice should be provided to community stakeholders. To date, ROC Excellence Academy has held one public meeting on February 19, 2020 at the Legacy Drama House. The public meeting was advertised for three weeks in the local newspaper, both print and online, as well as through posted meeting dates on the local news channels' community calendars and through our social media pages.



# Classified


585-454-1111  
classified.democratandchronicle.com

**Figure 5: Public Meeting Flier – English and Spanish**



**PUBLIC MEETING**

Wednesday February 19, 2020  
Legacy Drama House  
112 Webster Avenue  
5:45 -6:45 pm



**ROCHESTER  
EXCELLENCE  
ACADEMY**

We want to hear from ALL  
community members, especially  
children!

The flier features a photograph of a young girl smiling in a classroom setting, with the text 'ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY' overlaid on the right side.



**REUNIÓN PÚBLICA**

Miércoles 19 de febrero de 2020  
Legacy Drama House  
112 Webster Ave  
5:45 – 6:45 PM



**ROCHESTER  
EXCELLENCE  
ACADEMY**

¡Queremos saber de todos los  
miembros de la comunidad,  
especialmente de los niños!

The flier features a photograph of a young girl smiling in a classroom setting, with the text 'ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY' overlaid on the right side.

# REUNIÓN PÚBLICA

Miércoles 28 de abril de 2021  
via Facebook Live  
@ROCExcellenceAcademy  
6:30 - 7:15 PM



Queremos saber de todos los miembros de la comunidad, especialmente de los niños!



# PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday April 28, 2021  
via Facebook Live  
@ROCExcellenceAcademy  
6:30 - 7:15 pm




We want to hear from ALL community members, especially children!





Figure 6: Public Meeting Sign In-Sheet

February 19, 2020




**ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY**

**Our Mission:** Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary to succeed in middle school, high school, college, career, and life.

We believe everything that a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them. When properly supported all students can and will excel. Therefore, excellence is not an accident.

Public Meeting  
February 19, 2020

	Name / <i>Nombre</i>	Zip Code / <i>Código Postal</i>	Phone Number / <i>Número de Teléfono</i>	E-Mail / <i>Correo Electrónico</i>	Age of Child(ren) / <i>Edad del Niño(s)</i>
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					



**ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY**

**Our Mission:** Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary to succeed in middle school, high school, college, career, and life.

We believe everything that a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them. When properly supported all students can and will excel. Therefore, excellence is not an accident.

Public Meeting  
February 19, 2020

	Name /	Zip Code /	Phone Number /	E-Mail /	Age of Child(ren) /
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

**Figure 7: Community Events**

Presentation at the Western New York Pop Warner Cheerleading Competition

October 13, 2019 at John James Audubon School No.33





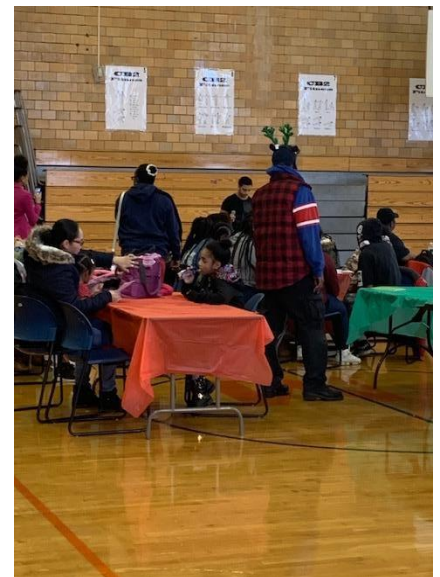
Tabling event at the I am H.E.R. Women's Empowerment Event

November 23, 2019 at Carmen Clark Lodge



Tabling Event at Roc The Peace's Holiday Event

December 7, 2019 at John Marshall High School



Western New York Pop Warner Youth Football Game Series

September 6 – October 27, 2019 at James John Audubon School No.33 and Benjamin Franklin High School



United Way's African American Leadership Development Luncheon

Lead Founders of Rochester Excellence Academy and Innova Girls Academy

October 22, 2019 at Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center





Tabling at WNY Pop Warner's Rochester Rams Youth Banquet

January 20, 2020 at John James Audubon School No. 33



City of Rochester Holiday ROC Village Event

December 07, 2020 at Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Park



St. Paul Holiness Believer's Church Annual Scholarship Banquet

Pictured with Minister Eliza Jane Britton

March 14, 2020 at Rochester Institute of Technology Conference Center



Legacy Drama House's Family Assistance Program:

Pandemic Emergency Childcare

March 18- 20, 2020 at Legacy Drama House



IN RESPONSE TO OUR CURRENT SCHOOL CLOSURE/CRISIS

LEGACY DRAMA HOUSE

LEGACY VILLAGE  
**KIDS & FAMILY**  
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

LED BY EDUCATOR  
MS. BRITTANY RUMPH, MS, ED

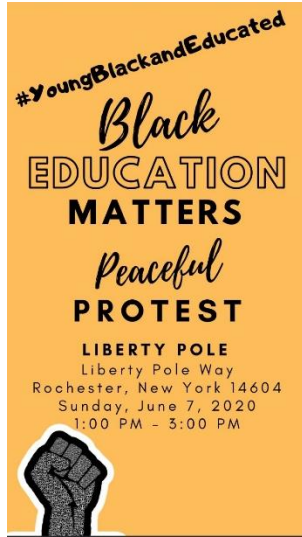
SERVING K-4TH

<b>CURRICULUM</b> ARTS & LITERACY BASED CURRICULUM SUBJECT AREAS: • LITERACY • MUSIC • DANCE • ART • DRAMA • STEM	<b>PROGRAM</b> PROGRAM DAYS/HOURS/FEEES: MONDAY - FRIDAY 8:00AM - 4:00 PM \$20.00 A DAY 4:00PM - 6:00PM (AFTER HOURS) \$10.00	<b>VILLAGE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED</b> TEACHERS NURSES RETIRES AND YOU! IT TAKES A VILLAGE.
---	---	--

SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT, CENTRALLY LOCATED / LIMITED SPOTS AVAILABLE, FIRST COME- FIRST SERVED

LEGACY DRAMA HOUSE 112 WEBSTER AVE ROCHESTER, NY  
APPLICATIONS MAY BE REQUESTED VIA LEGACYDRAMAHOUSE@GMAIL.COM  
AND IN PERSON AT 8:00 AM ON PROGRAM DAYS

Speaker at the Black Education Matters Peaceful Protest  
June 7, 2020



Interactive Read aloud and Participation in the Black Kids Matter Rally  
Highland Park Playground  
July 11, 2020





Tabling Event at The Melanin Market  
July 24, 2020



Presented at the Racial Equity Growth Webinar  
August 26, 2020

## Brittany Rumph



Brittany is a native Rochesterian who has dedicated her career to positively impacting the children of our community. Brittany, a Fellow with BES and Lead Founder of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, will empower and educate Rochester's leaders of tomorrow.



## Racial Equity Growth Fund





ROC City Learning Pods  
October 2020- June 2021



ROC City Learning Pods: Summer Enrichment  
June 2021 – July 2021

**ROC CITY LEARNING PODS**

FREE K-6TH GRADE LITERACY, SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ARTS ENRICHMENT  
JULY 6TH - AUGUST 13TH  
9AM -12:30 PM  
LYELL AVENUE LIBRARY  
956 LYELL AVENUE

Materials Provided

Culturally Responsive Instruction

Free Breakfast and Lunch

Identity Affirming Curriculum

Brittany H. Rumph MSEI, Program Director  
roclearningpods@gmail.com



Tabling at the Forever Essence Beauty Pageant

July 11, 2021



Social Emotional Lessons at the Legacy Village Kids Camp

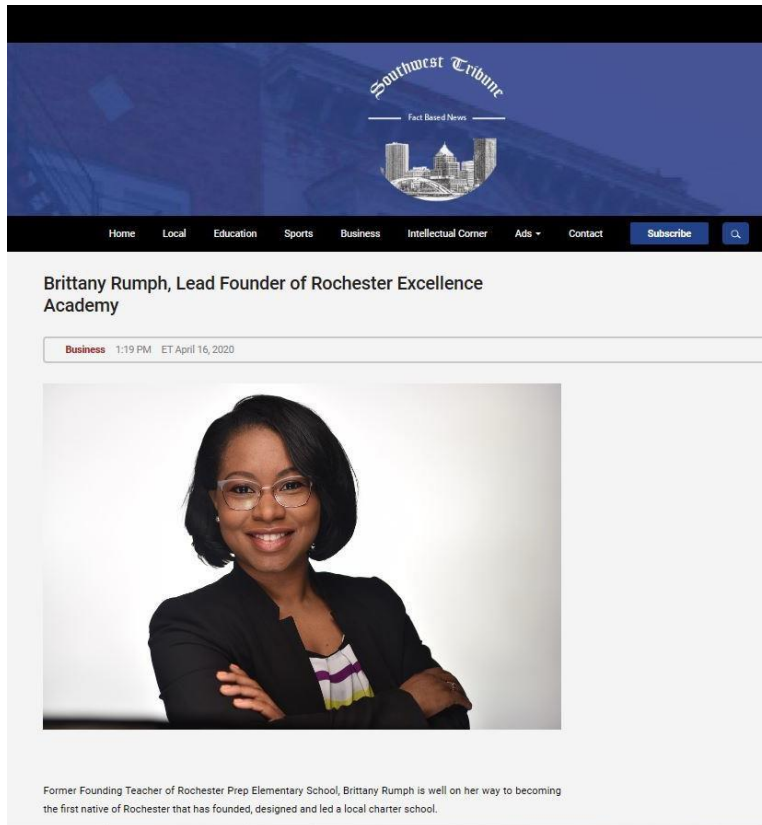
July 12- 16, 2021



**Figure 8: Media Outreach**

Article in the *Southwest Tribune* newspaper

<http://southwesttribune.com/news/brittany-rumph-lead-founder-rochester-excellence-academy/>





Live interview on 105.5 The Beat Radio Station

November 24, 2019



Interview with Spectrum News

February 12, 2020



Southwest Tribune Interview  
August 2020



SOUTHWESTTRIBUNE.COM

Inching Closer: To Become the First Native of Rochester to have Founded, Designed, and Led a Charter School - ...

WXXI Interview  
November 2020



WXXI NEWS.ORG

Free learning pods provide much-needed option for city families



Finding a safe and productive learning environment for their children has been a challenge for families across the country since the start of the pandemic.



Brittany Rumph gives first-grader T'Aires Cheek a visual reminder that his next virtual class begins in 10 minutes.

CREDIT MAX SCHULTE/WXXI NEWS

Some families pooled their resources to hire tutors or retired teachers to work with a small group of students in one location.

But other parents can't afford to take on the cost. Last spring, they had to choose between working and staying home to help teach their kids.

Educator and charter school founder Brittany Rumph says this was the case for many Rochester families, and that's why she created ROC City Learning Pods.

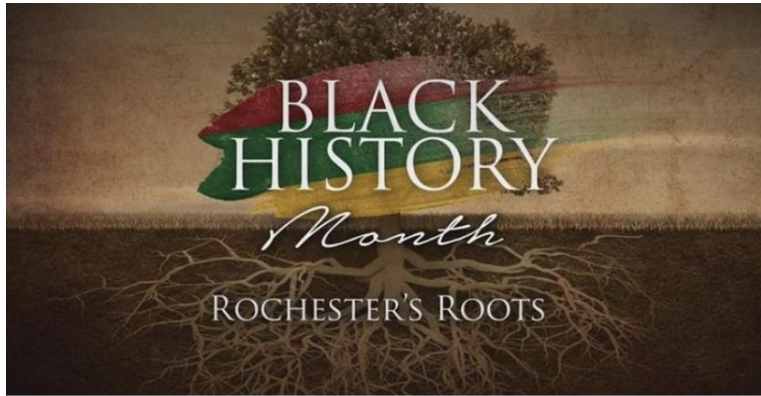
"There were families who called me in tears who just didn't know where they were going to send their child," she said. "They were banking on having that hybrid option."



Kaleb Wilcoxson, a kindergartner, shows his work to

Thanks to a grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation, any student who lives in the city of Rochester can enroll in the program for free.

WHEC News 10 Interview  
February 2021



WHEC.COM

**Rochester's Roots: Educators weigh in on how Black history should be handled in local schools**







## Facebook Profile

**ROCHESTER EXCELLENCE ACADEMY**  
A proposed K-4 public charter school for the students of Rochester

**Rochester Excellence Academy**  
Elementary School

Home About Photos Community More

Like Search

**About** See All

- 553 people like this
- 563 people follow this
- <http://rocexcellenceacademy.org/>
- (585) 867-1034
- Typically replies within a day
- Send Message
- [brumph@bes.org](mailto:brumph@bes.org)
- Elementary School

Create Post

Photo/Video Check in Tag Friends

**Rochester Excellence Academy**  
May 18 at 2:58 PM · 🌐

Happy Monday from Rochester Excellence Academy!

Our full application submission date is Friday, bringing us one step closer to opening our doors to serve the children and families of our community! ... See More

**Rochester Excellence Academy**  
February 21 · 🌐

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever had." ~ Margaret Mead

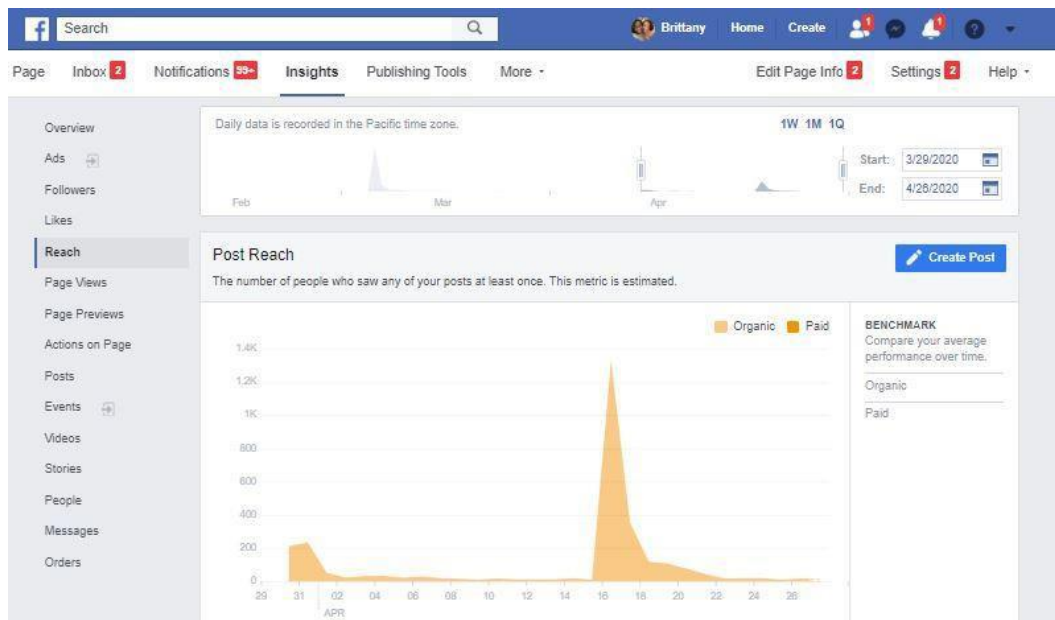
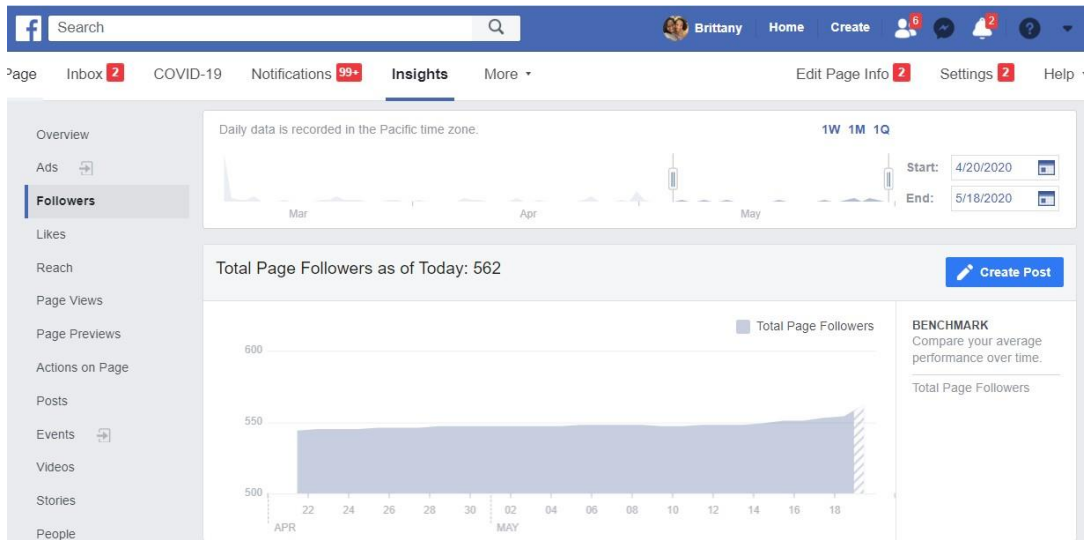
Meet Our Founding Board! Whom are deeply committed to serving the students and families of our community by responsibly governing and overseeing Rochester Excellence Academy.

Brittany Rumph, Lead Founder  
Laura Smith, Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer of UnboundEd  
Ashley R. Cross, Steps to College Director, University of Rochester and Doctoral Candidate  
Robert Kyle Hoggard, Development Associate for Major Gift Qualification & Solicitation, Rochester Regional Health Foundations and Doctoral Candidate  
Carleen Pierce, Chief Financial Officer  
Aqua Porter, (Retired) Vice President, Global Channel Business Systems and Operations of Xerox  
Riley Cahart, Tax Services Manager of Flaherty Salmin LLP  
Craig Carson, Managing Attorney of the Law Office of Craig D. Carson PLLC  
Bonnie O' Keefe, Senior Analyst of Bellwether Education Partners

We believe that everything a child needs to succeed is innately inside of them. When properly supported, all students can and will excel. Therefore, excellence is not an accident.



# Facebook Data





## Virtual Kindergarten Readiness Series



## Heart ROC Social Media Campaign Feature

February 10, 2020



**Figure 10: Email Correspondence**

RE: Gratitude from Rochester Excellence Academy



Warren, Lovely A  
To: Brittany Rumph



Reply Reply All Forward ...

Tue 1/14/2020 11:31 AM

You forwarded this message on 1/14/2020 11:32 AM.

Congratulations Brittany. I'm very proud of the work your looking to do in our City. Good luck with everything.

Lovely

Lovely A. Warren, Mayor  
City of Rochester



Re: Media & Rochester Excellence Academy (REA)



Wilson, Ericka  
To: Brittany Rumph



Reply Reply All Forward ...

Tue 11/19/2019 10:23 AM

You replied to this message on 11/19/2019 11:34 AM.

Brittany,

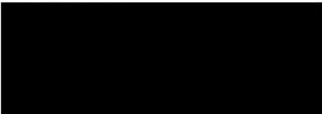
You're an Angel!  
I appreciate you for all you have done and are doing. Bless you.

I've passed your information along to Kaci Jones, one of my Reporters at News10NBC. She's planning to pitch a story to Editors that we can incorporate you into. She's going to be in touch.

But, would you like to meet tomorrow, Wednesday, 11/20 after 2:15p at Spot Coffee?

Let me know.  
Thanks again for your time and attention, Sis. Looking forward to meeting you.

Ericka E. Wilson



RE: Rochester Excellence Academy Founding Board



Walida Monroe  
To: Brittany Rumph

Reply Reply All Forward ...

Tue 10/29/2019 1:09 PM

You replied to this message on 10/29/2019 2:21 PM.

Yes, thank you. Secure funding, building governance, parent engagement, contracts in the best interest of adults and not students, stringent disciplinary protocol, lack of early intervention services, and the inability of meeting students where they are has been my major advocacy regarding charters. Charters school are major funding sources off the backs of our children in my opinion. A lot of times the RCSD owns the building and the school is paying them rent. I support the work that you are doing. Parents have the right to choose what they feel is best for them and their children, I do not judge any ones choices nor do I knock down anyone trying to make a difference for our children. Early childhood education is critical to workforce and economic development as well. This is why having students reading before 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is vital.

Parents should be included in any foundation regarding their children (suggestion to have at least 2 parents on your board, preferably parents of children who will be attending the school if it is not a conflict of interest). It is important board members truly support and understand the barriers and issues parents and students face, and have the ability to come up with recommendations and solutions. We can talk further when you return; I will connect you will some people through networking.

May God Continue to Bless you in your efforts and I pray your school will be the BEST EVER!!!!!! ☺

Contact Information



Patrice Anderson  
To: Brittany Rumph

Reply Reply All Forward ...

Wed 11/6/2019 9:40 PM

You replied to this message on 11/7/2019 2:44 PM.

Good Evening Brittany,

I love your vision and I want to help in any way I can. I'm currently a mental health therapist at Genesee Mental Health. Prior to this, I worked as a Probation Officer for 6 years; 5 of those I did investigation reports for sex offenders.

My email contact information is

My phone number is

I will help in any way I can. I think what you're doing is important and awesome.

Thank you for the opportunity,  
Patrice

RE: Thank you and Dreamseeds at the Y



Megan DeFranco  
To: James Smith; Brittany Rumph

Reply Reply All Forward ...

Fri 11/22/2019 2:52 PM

You replied to this message on 11/26/2019 3:41 PM.

Yes, thank you Brittany! Very informative meeting! We are here to support you and look forward to hearing more about your progress.

Thank you for your passion to help our youth in Rochester!

Megan



## Great meeting you at the Brockport Event Tuesday!



Ed D [REDACTED]  
To: Brittany Rumph

Reply Reply All Forward ...

Thu 11/21/2019 3:33 PM

You replied to this message on 11/26/2019 3:29 PM.

Good afternoon Brittany,

It was a pleasure meeting you through Kim Russell at the IPSED Brockport event downtown! Exciting to learn about your successful history as as a RCSD SOTA graduate, your BES Fellowship, and your focus on locating a K-4 school the Center City, Rochester Excellence Academy!

So many connections related to my work with the Rochester Coalition for Public Education work and the refugee families and students I help support. It was a very worthwhile evening!

Feel free to keep in touch and let me know how I can help.

Sincerely,

- Ed

Ed Donnelly

[Friends of RIA Inc.](#), Chair/Director

[Rochester International Academy](#), Advisory Board Member,

[Rochester Refugee Resettlement Services](#), Education Volunteer

Retired, Hilton CSD/Northwood REACH Gifted/Talented Program Teacher

## Support



Hollomon, Keisha [REDACTED]  
To: Brittany Rumph

Reply Reply All Forward ...

Thu 11/7/2019 7:01 PM

[Suggested Meetings](#)

[+ Get more add-ins](#)

Hello Brittany!

First and foremost congratulations again! You are my Sherol. I'd love to serve on your board. Let's talk my cell number is [REDACTED] messings.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

## Charter School



Jose E. Rivera [REDACTED]  
To: Brittany Rumph

Reply Reply All Forward ...

Tue 9/17/2019 3:55 PM

Hello Ms. Rumph

thank you for taking the time to speak with me.

I am excited about your plans for the Rochester Excellence Academy and look forward to learning more as you move closer to your goal.

kind regards

Jose Rivera

## Connecting



Veronica Rush

To: Brittany Rumph

You replied to this message on 11/8/2019 12:20 PM.

Suggested Meetings

Fri 11/8/2019 11:03 AM

Reply Reply All Forward

Get more add-ins

Hello Brittany,

Thank you for the amazing words you shared! This is great news that you and your team are creating a space for our students here in Rochester.

Here is my email [redacted]. Please contact me via email when you are available! My morning on the weekday are the best time to chat after 10:30 my days are pretty jam packed.

## Thank you and Dreamseeds at the Y



James Smith

To: Brittany Rumph

Cc: Megan DeFranco

You replied to this message on 12/5/2019 2:10 PM.



Fri 11/22/2019 1:17

Reply Reply All Forward

Hi Brittany,

Thank you for a wonderful presentation today. Your energy and passion is contagious. I look forward to continuing the conversation and wish you the best of luck at every step. 😊

Attached is the outline I promised for Dreamseeds at the Y. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Talk soon and a blessed weekend.

**James C. Smith**  
Director of Development and Community Engagement  
YMCA of Greater Rochester – Association Office  
[444 East Main Street | Rochester, NY | 14604](http://444 East Main Street | Rochester, NY | 14604)

## Re: Thank You



Janet Sunkin

To: Brittany Rumph

Hello Brittany,  
Thank you for meeting with me and sending the follow-up information. I was awed by your fellowship and look forward to exploring Cognitively Guided Instruction.

I hope to put the materials you sent to good use over the next few weeks as I travel about in the community. I'll let you know the results of my conversations.  
Best Regards,  
Janet

Fri 9/13/2019 11:19 AM

Reply Reply All Forward

Thank You! External Inbox x



**Jennifer Leonard** [Redacted]

Oct 27, 2020, 10:01 AM



to Mary, Maya, Andrew, Donna, me, [Redacted]

Thank you for an excellent **Joe U Posner** Conversation – informative, timely, and important.

Congratulations, Ashley and Brittany, on your work to lift children’s educational opportunities and their social and emotional health. Way to go! Our children and community are fortunate to have your wisdom and support.

Randy, thanks for hosting and for epitomizing the caring and engaged philanthropist!

And Team RACF, thanks for your smooth execution in our new Zoom format – outstanding!

Thanks again to all -- Jennifer



**Jennifer Leonard**  
President & CEO  
Rochester Area Community Foundation  
[Redacted]

**ATTACHMENT 2c: Evidence of Community Support**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
1	Dr. Mary Bisbee-Burrows	CEO	Legacy Drama House
2	Rodney Brown	Executive Director	Brown Publishing LLC Southwest Tribune
3	Hollis Budd	Executive Director	Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation
4	Steven Cole	Managing Partner	Adams and Leclair LLC
5	Theodore Conyers	Small Business Owner	AGMedia Group
6	Melvin Cross, Jr.	Lead Pastor	Glory House International
7	Dominique Curry	Parent	Rochester Resident
8	Erika Dooley	Teacher; Charter School Board Member	The Academy of Health Science
9	Paul Dudley	President	ID Sign Systems
10	Jamayne Fleming	Home School Advisor	Young Women's College Preparatory School (YMCP)
11	Tanisha Gamble-Snead	Social Worker	University of Rochester Medical Center
12	Ashley Gantt	Community Advocate	NY Civil Liberties Union (Genessee Valley)
13	Councilman Gruber	Council Member	City of Rochester
14	Adrian Hale	Senior Manager, Talent Strategy, Workforce Development, and Education Initiatives	Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce
15	Jessica Hilaire-Hartwich	Airman	Niagara Falls 914 <sup>th</sup> Refueling Wing, U.S. Airforce
16	Jeffrey S. Hill	Ordained Elder	Jefferson Avenue Seventh-day Adventist Church
17	Brendan J. Hobbs	"Concerned Citizen"	Rochester Resident
18	Gerard Iglesia	Retired Teacher	Rochester City School District
19	Paulina Incardona	Teacher	Exploration Charter School
20	Morisha Johnson	Parent	Rochester Resident
21	NaQuanda Jordan	Social Worker	Rochester Resident
22	Joe Klein	Chairman	Klein Steel Services
23	Walter Larkin	CEO	University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men
24	Doug Lemov	Educator, Author	Teach Like a Champion
25	Davne' McCleary	School Social Worker	West Ridge Elementary School
26	Trelawney McCoy	Vice President	Western NY Pop Warner Youth League
27	Rev. Dr. Jonathan McReynolds	Senior Pastor	Aenon Baptist Church
28	Kernell Miller	Small Business Owner	Custo Print
29	Anquesha Murray	CEO	Autumn Rise Foundation

30	Jonathan Ford Nichols	Founding Partner	Nichols Construction Team
31	Jessica Odasz	Owner, Director	Odasz Dance Theatre
32	Luis Perez	President and CEO	Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association (GRSLA)
33	Wanda Perez-Brunadge	Founding Principal	Academy of Health Sciences Charter School
34	Katrina Quinn	Parent	Rochester Resident
35	LaShonda Robinson	Grade Level Chair	KIPP: Academy Chicago Primary
36	Natasha Robinson	Teacher	Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men – West Campus
37	Christopher Rush	Program Director	Champion Academy
38	Veronica Rush	Lead Mediator	The Center for Youth
39	Jamila Smith	Workforce Development Program Coordinator	Finger Lakes Performing Provider System
40	Julia Tedesco	President and CEO	Foodlink
41	Shammel Turnbore	Dean of Students	Rochester Preparatory West Elementary Charter School
42	Victoria Van Voorhis	CEO	Second Avenue Learning
43	Emily Volpe	Principal	Rochester Preparatory West Elementary Charter School
44	Erin Walsh-Hagan	Assistant Director of the BES Fellowship	BES
45	Cheryl Wearen	Youth Director	God’s Bouquet of Saints Ministries
46	Sofia Williams	Teacher	Eugenio Maria De Hostos Charter School
47	Erica Woolway	Educator, Author	Teach Like a Champion Uncommon Schools
48	Janise Wright	Teacher	KIPP: Academy Chicago Primary





May 18, 2020

Mr. David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am so ecstatic to write this letter of support for the new, exciting and upcoming Rochester Excellence Academy. As a highly skilled and visionary trailblazer, I am positive that with Ms. Brittany Rumph at the leadership helm, academic greatness will be achieved amongst the pupils.

I was privileged to have the unique opportunity to have her facilitate and lead in the design of my organization's (Legacy Drama House) emergency education program in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. What I experienced was a professional that's excited about our future leaders' educational success. Her passion, attention to detail and willingness to be a beacon to the underserved, privileged and all children in between was evident.

In addition, I am confident in the school's talented Board of Directors. Personally, I have known Mr. Leslie Harvey for over two decades as a trustee at the Aenon Missionary Baptist Church. I recognize him to be professional, financially astute, and prudent in assuring that the church's finances are in order as well as the social needs of the congregants met. These financial skillsets are easily transferable to an academic environment.

As such, I stand firmly behind Ms. Rumph, the Board of Directors and the Rochester Excellence Academy. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask.

Best Regards,

*Dr. Mary Bisbee-Burrows*

Mary Bisbee-Burrows, EdD





David Frank

Executive Director, NYSED's Charter School Office

89 Washington Avenue

Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I'm writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed K-4 tuition free, public charter school for young leaders of Rochester.

Like many other media-outlets around the country, as owner and executive director of Brown Publishing LLC and Southwest Tribune Newspaper, we are obligated by our journalistic craft to report on the effectiveness and health of our local educational systems. And, year-after-year, we are continuing to struggle with educating our most vulnerable, attending low performing schools in our urban municipalities composed of a high number of students, who reside in impoverished communities and neighborhoods.

My analysis to fix our broken educational systems, I believe begins with a change in culture.

The leadership at Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School believes,

- All students can achieve at a high level with individualized support and that literacy is the key that opens up opportunity, offering 185 minutes of daily instructions.

Rochester Excellence also believes, "It takes a village to raise a child and value parents and community partners and rigorous academics drives student achievement, access to the arts supports academic

achievement and social emotional development and character is developed in a community-based environment.

The core beliefs mentioned above pertaining to Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School is based on culture change.

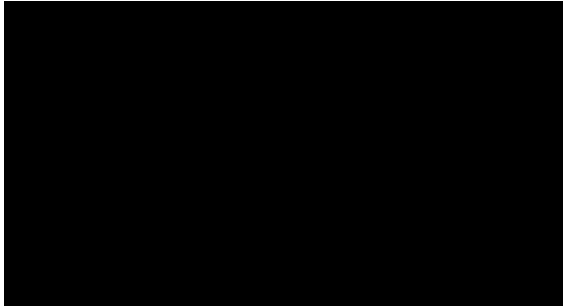
I had the privilege to meet Rochester Excellence Lead Founder Ms. Rumph and was very impressed with her educational background as a teacher in the classroom and as an instructional coach to her peers.

However, what I was most impressed with was her tenacity and courage to take on a much needed and difficult work.

Like many others in my community I have no doubt, if Ms. Rumph is given the opportunity to educate our youth, she will have the community by her side, knowing she has the knack and drive to succeed in assuring our children receive a quality education and develop impeccable characters.

Rodney Brown, executive director of Brown Publishing LLC and Southwest Tribune Newspaper

*Rodney Brown*





David Frank  
Executive Director  
Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

April 15, 2020

Dear Mr. Frank,

On behalf of the Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation, it is my pleasure to provide our full support of Rochester Excellence Academy (REA) Charter School's submission to NYSED for the creation of a K-4 charter school in Rochester.

This proposed charter school in Rochester will add greatly to the Rochester Charter sector and provide young leaders and their families another choice for quality education. REA Charter School will help fill the void of quality seats in Rochester, especially in one of the most vulnerable and underserved neighborhoods in the city. By partnering with community-based organizations it expands their reach and engagement within the catchment. Additionally, it will compliment Rochester's existing charter ecosystem.

I have the privilege of knowing members of REA's board and have the utmost confidence that they will work closely with the school leader and her team to ensure that the fundamental school framework and overarching philosophy are implemented and maintained. Along with a strong board, REA has strong alignments and supports throughout the community.

The Farash Foundation endorses REA's proposed plan to launch a high-quality charter school for grades K-4 in Rochester.

Sincerely,

*Hollis S. Budd*

Hollis S. Budd  
Executive Director  
Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation



Mr. David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
New York State Education Department  
Albany, NY 12234

May 8, 2020

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed K-4 school that would open for the 2021-22 academic year and serve students primarily in the city of Rochester. I am the Managing Partner of Adams Leclair, a Rochester-based law firm. We provide commercial litigation services to individuals and businesses.

Families in Rochester deserve access to more high-quality education options. For too long, a high-quality education has eluded most families in Rochester. Those with the financial means to leave, often do. Based on 2018-19 assessment results, Rochester City School District has an average math proficiency score of 19% versus the New York State average of 52%, and reading proficiency score of 17% versus the New York State average of 50%.

We must have more high-quality education options for families if we ever hope to see our beloved city re-establish a healthy and sustained economic foundation. All children in Rochester - regardless of where they live or their family's financial circumstances - deserve a rigorous and socially supportive education that prepares them for college or a career. I believe Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will provide that option.

Respectfully,

Steven Cole  
Managing Partner



May 19, 2020

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am wrtllng this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4, tuition free public charter school for the young leaders of Rochester NY.

With Brittany's approach on education and using excellence as the foundation of school I know this school will impact the lives of families in our community.

I have worked for Brittany Rumph for the past year, and in that time I have had the opportunity to work on her visual concepts and ideas for proposed charter school which has been enlightening and rewarding.

I am happy to extend my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy.

Sincerely,  
Theodore Conyers

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Theodore Conyers', is written below the typed name.





Glory House International  
1 Exchange Blvd, Rochester NY 14608  
gloryhouse@ghiny.org  
www.ghiny.org

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter with excitement and in support of the Rochester Excellence Academy which is a proposed k-4 charter school for families of Rochester, NY. In the midst of an educational crisis, Rochester families are in need of a quality, culturally competent, and innovative school that can teach and equip our students. Rochester Excellence Academy's mission is to equip student k-4 with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college, career and life. Equipping our families to look beyond the moment and prepare our children for their future is an essential skill that helps pull communities out of poverty and strive for more. Students and families deserve an organization that will be invested in their present and future well-being.

As an educator for 13 years in the city of Rochester, I have seen educators both succeed and fail at serving our children. Those who have succeeded believed that every child could succeed, not only in theory but in practice. This organization's core belief spells out the intentionality and value that it takes to rear a scholar that will be successful in their academic career which will prepare them to be a contributing member of society.

I am happy to extend my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy. It is my hope that this institution will be open in the fall of 2021 to serve and equip families.

Sincerely,

Melvin C. Cross Jr. M.Div  
Lead Pastor of Glory House International



May 18th, 2020

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School office  
89 Washington Ave  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear David Frank,

I am written this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy K-4 charter school in Rochester NY.

My name is Dominique Curry, I am a mother/wife raising two African American men who could benefit from this charter program. I believe in the core values this chart has to offer, so much so I am willing to entrust my children's education. To know me is to know I am big on making sure my boys are equipped in this world as black men. I honestly deem Brittany Rumph's passion for our children and her own inspiring. I find her very trustworthy and smart to execute this program with grace and accordance. I can't wait to be on the parent board when it opens!

Sincerely,  
Dominique Curry

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

May 8, 2020

**Re: Support for Rochester Excellence Academy**

Dear Mr. Frank:

I am thrilled to share my support of Rochester Excellence Academy. I am a charter school teacher in Rochester and a board member at The Academy of Health Sciences. Over the last year I have come to know the dedication and thoughtful planning Brittany and her team have put into designing a successful, innovative school - they have my enthusiastic support. The unique design of this school will equip our students in Rochester with the foundational skills and tools they will need to lead lives of value and service to our community.

The holistic approach of REA's model will give families in Rochester hope for bright futures for our children. The academic plan is carefully crafted to address students' individual needs with rigor, and it will also inspire them to set attainable goals toward meaningful careers. The community partnerships with the YMCA, Rochester Education Foundation, Restoration Rochester and Komposition Kids, to name a few, will further support students toward meeting goals. Our families in Rochester need a successful school we can trust to set high expectations for our children. This is that school.

The thoughtful, innovative design of this school, along with the support of our community organizations gives me full confidence that Rochester Excellence Academy will be successful! I look forward to this school opening in 2021. As a Rochester City School District graduate and parent, I am deeply committed to the success of our students. Rochester needs new answers and our children need this school.

Sincerely,

Erika Dooley

Erika Dooley

Signature:



Erika Dooley (May 8, 2020)

Email:





Mr. David Frank  
Charter School Office  
New York State Education Department  
Albany, NY 12234

May 19, 2020

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed Rochester, NY K-4 charter school that would begin serving students in the 2021-22 school year. I am the President of ID Sign Systems, a design and manufacturing firm based in Rochester. We develop signage solutions and are leaders in architectural signage, lighting, and design.

I have long believed that families in Rochester need access to high performing schools. All too often, a student's academic success is based on where they attend school. Rochester Excellence Academy's focus on rigorous instruction and social-emotional support will provide families with a high-quality and supportive option. Laura Smith, the proposed board chair, is a personal friend who has devoted her career to providing effective and equitable education options for all students. I am confident that she will lead and support the board and school effectively.

All families in Rochester need access to high performing schools and I strongly support Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Dudley', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Dudley  
President



## Young Women's College Prep

133 Hoover Drive  
Rochester, NY 14615  
(585) 254-0320

**May 4th, 2020**

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed k-4 public charter school for the students of Rochester.

My name is Jamayne Fleming and I am a Home School Advisor at Young Women's College Preparatory Charter School (YWCP). I am a product of the Rochester educational system. My dream has always been to help youth navigate through life successfully. In 2006 I went off to college to receive a degree in Social Work. After college I returned to Rochester in hopes to find a job working with the youth. I believe that parents and students should have access to free public schools with quality education that's located in their own neighborhood. Living in Rochester its hard to find a quality school for your child to attend that's not going to cost you money.

All children can achieve at high levels with individual supports if they have access. Children should be able to express themselves through art and still receive a quality education. I had the opportunity to attend a Town Hall meeting for the Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School. The staff was able to explain their mission and vision of the school thoroughly.

At the end of the meeting I had the privilege to meet Brittany Rumph and learn more about her glorious institute and her plans to provide a quality education to the children in Rochester. I was blown away by Ms. Rumph passion for education for all students but most importantly the students in our community. I was touched because Ms. Rumph clearly understands the barriers our children face that block them from receiving a quality education. I believe the school model Ms. Rumph is presenting will help so many inner city children in the Rochester area.

I am pleased to extend my support and recommendation for the illustrious Rochester Excellence Academy. Ms. Rumph will be an amazing leader and Rochester Excellence Academy will be in high demand in the Rochester area.

Sincerely,

Jamayne Fleming

May 4, 2020

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter Schools Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed K-4 public charter school for students and families in Rochester, NY. Our families in Rochester deserve access to quality education for their children. As a Social Worker who has worked with the youth and families in the Rochester area for over ten years, there is a clear need for high quality education with a focus on literacy, character development and community partnerships.

I've had the privilege to speak with Brittany Rumph and learn more about her application and vision for Rochester Excellence Academy. I was impressed with her passion for education and dedication to our students. I am also impressed by her school model proposal. She has a heart for the families and children in Rochester.

I am happy to extend my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy. I believe Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will be a very successful choice for our families and students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tanisha Gamble-Snead". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tanisha Gamble-Snead

Ashley Gantt  
Community Advocate, New York Civil Liberties Union (Genesee Valley)  
121 N. Fitzghu St.  
Rochester, NY 14604

I am writing to show my support for the Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4 Public charter school for the students of Rochester.

My Name is Ashley Gantt. As a former student of the Rochester Charter School of Science and Technology as well as the Rochester City School District and now as a community advocate who works on education justice at the New York Civil Liberties Union, I know firsthand the impact that charter schools can have on the academic and social development of students. As an adolescent, the support, accountability, structure, and challenge that charter school provided helped shape my experience and perspective when I entered high school in the Rochester City School District. As an adult now working on education justice I know what implications it can have for students who do not receive those same supports, and a fair shot at a learning environment that supports them as well as provides structure and pushes them to rise to the occasion.

I've had the opportunity to meet Miss Brittany Rumph and hear her vision, passion, and hope for our community and its students. Our students deserve that. I can tell you that Rochester Excellence Academy would serve as a lifeline for our community. I gladly extend my support with hope and excitement that families and students will soon experience educational excellence.

Sincerely,

Ashley A. Gantt





Mitch Gruber Councilmember At-Large  


May 20, 2020

Dear New York State Education Department,

I am writing to you to give my support to Rochester Excellence Academy. I have learned about the Building Excellent Schools model, and am particularly impressed with the work that Brittany Rumph has done to prepare this charter application.

I am most impressed with how intentionally they listened to members of the community. The proposed board of trustees is a qualified group of people. Many of them are already involved in various boards across the city. They all know what sound governance looks like. They are dedicated to being data-driven in their decision-making. I am also impressed with how focused they will be on the social factors that impact academic achievement. They are dedicated to hiring social workers and therapists to address deep-seated issues that take place in their communities.

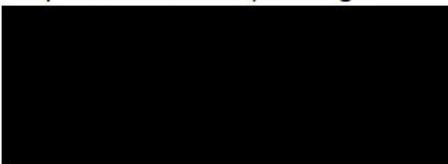
Finally, I am impressed with their commitment to partnering – not competing – with the Rochester City School District. They have taken real steps to work with RCSD, including inviting a district employee to serve on their Board.

I stand ready to partner with Brittany, her team, and the Rochester City School District to improve educational outcomes. I believe this application speaks to what Rochester needs right now.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Mitch Gruber, PhD  
City Councilmember, At-Large  




May 6, 2020

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4 charter school for the families Rochester.

A native to Rochester and experienced local educator, Brittany Rumph has seen first-hand the skills students need to gain access to future college and career opportunities. Ms. Rumph has also seen the many ways families in our community struggle when they don't receive the academic tools necessary for their child's success, school, work, and life.

As a mother, first and foremost, and as a former classroom teacher, Ms. Rumph is dedicated to creating a safe environment for students to grow in academic rigor and strong interpersonal values.

Rochester is first in the nation for having the most children living in extreme poverty. Excellence Academy will immerse students in rigorous academics by leveraging high-quality instruction. We will utilize a model developed to support the 5 SEL Competencies and provide students with access to the arts through daily classes like Ballet, West African dance, Music and the visual arts. Students attending Rochester Excellence will grow into multicultural, well-rounded, autonomous thinkers that will grow to support the community surrounding them.

Ms. Rumph's experience and knowledge as a teacher has produced a philosophy that, "two is greater than one", regarding teaching. Each school classroom will be conducted by a two-teacher model. The school days as well as the school year will be extended to maximize learning and alleviate summer learning loss. English literacy will be guided and taught through small group instruction. This method will ensure our ability to tailor the necessary needs for individual student reading levels; Math instruction will be employed through directly, using inquiry-based lessons and guided instruction. Rochester Excellence Academy students will have ample individualized supports to ensure academic and social success.

The Rochester Excellence Academy Founding Board is full of a dedicated, diverse, group of community members with the collective expertise to effectively govern the charter.

It is my utmost pleasure to extend my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy. I trust that Brittany Rumph will lead Rochester Excellence Academy in achieving its mission of closing the opportunity and performance gaps for children using arts and academic rigor. We will guide and inspire students to become great thinkers and doers, within their communities and beyond.

Thank you,



Adrian I. Hale

Senior Manager, Talent Strategy, Workforce Development, & Education Initiatives

Dear Mr. Frank

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter school, a Proposed 4-k public Charter school, for the young leaders of Rochester New York.

My name is Jessica Hilaire-Hartwich I am an airman at the Niagara Falls 914th refueling wing in the United States Air Force. I am also a mother of 5 children born and raised in Rochester New York.

I believe that there are very important ingredients with being successful when raising a child and the most important ingredient in my opinion is education and allowing a child to properly socialize amongst peers. With options of proper education and early enough introduction to socializing we will be arming our children with beneficial tools for success.

I have had the privilege of meeting and witnessing the passion and dedication of Brittany M Rumph towards opening up this charter school. I believe that she will take into account every detail and implement levels of learning as well as developing our children here in Rochester New York.

I am more than happy to give my support and recommendation to Rochester Charter school. I truly believe that Brittany will be a great school leader and Rochester Excellence Academy Charter school will be a number one choice for families in Rochester, New York. It is my hope that Rochester Excellence Academy Charter school will be open Fall 2021.

Sincerely,

Jessica Hilaire-Hartwich



**May 5<sup>th</sup> 2020**

**David Frank  
Executive Director for  
NYSED's Charter School Office**

Dear Mr. Frank

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed K-4 ,tuition free, public charter school for the young leaders of Rochester.

My name is Jeff Hill, I was born and raised through my formative years in Rochester NY. and Sanford Fl. I was educated from 4<sup>th</sup> grade to my high school at Brockport Campus School , Middle , High School. I was bussed daily from Rochester. The experiences of being in the Rochester public school system in my home area allowed me the foundation to grow and have a solid base for my life. I believe that our future leaders need a school in their home town where they can build their foundation. I have been employed as an account specialist at Sutherland Global Services for 8 years, a overnight stocker at Christmas Tree Shops and More for 2 and a half years and an Ordained Elder at Jefferson Avenue Sda Church Since 2016.

I Have had the opportunity to participate in mentoring activities with Ms. Brittany M. Rumph side by side in the past year. Have seen her fire and passion for the school and the youth of our world. I will support and assist in any way I am able to make this a success. It is my hope and prayer that Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will be open in the fall of 2020 as a beacon of light for our community as we come out of this global situation we are currently involved in.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey S. Hill

May 15, 2020

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

This letter is to voice support for Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4 charter school to serve the betterment of children's education in Rochester, New York. This proposed academy is simply about rigorous academics, values-based community and individualized support. The need for this type of school and its tenants of learning and existence in the city of Rochester is painfully obvious. I am not of any particular esteemed position, but I am a well-informed and concerned citizen. For the past five years, I have worked professionally in child welfare. Simply put, our children deserve much more than what has been the status quo that continues to prove its failure time and time again. It cannot be overstated how much change is needed, and that includes new ideas, new leadership and new approaches to 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

The Rochester Excellence Academy would operate in partnership with Building Excellent Schools (BES), a national non-profit organization that partners with identified educators and leaders in a region and provides them with the resources and the structure needed to provide quality education. The leaders that are behind the vision for Rochester Excellence Academy are intelligent, integral and the breath of fresh air needed to make significant educational strides for Rochester's children. They are not just educators, but they are individuals who can connect with and relate to the various challenges many children face while furthering their education.

With the Rochester Excellence Academy, there is ample opportunity to change the city's educational landscape. Politics, partisanship and lobbying can no longer take precedence over the lives of innocent children. I would like to turn on my local news and hear something other than failure as it pertains to state and local education. It is time for a change in narrative and I believe this is one of the ways to do so. I stand behind and fully support the Rochester Excellence Academy being granted permission to operate in the city of Rochester. I humbly and fervently ask that you do the same.

Sincerely,

Brenden J. Hobbs  
Concerned Citizen

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Ave.  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank:

It is my great pleasure to write this letter in support of the Rochester Excellence Academy in their application to become a Charter School.

My name is Gerard Iglesia, and I am a retired teacher from the Rochester City School District (RCSD). I have firsthand knowledge and experiences of the difficulties in urban public education. Now, more than ever, there is a demand for quality educational options in Rochester, NY. The RCSD, which has a long history of struggles with student academic achievement, now finds itself without a Superintendent, probable massive teacher layoffs, and an \$87 million deficit for the upcoming year. With the Coronavirus pandemic and the resultant unemployment, households may struggle to pay tuition at private schools.

It is against this dismal backdrop that a ray of hope appears in the form of Rochester Excellence Academy. The Academy offers the necessary ingredients for a successful school: an emphasis on literacy, individual student support, community partnerships, access to the arts, rigorous academic standards and an environment that stresses the development of its students' character. What will make these ingredients work together is the leadership of the Academy's lead founder, Brittany Rumph.

I have had the great pleasure of following Ms. Rumph's journey from diligent high school student to the passionate educator on the cusp of opening a school that will surely have a positive impact on the lives of many students in the Rochester community. Ms. Rumph is truly on a mission to give city students an education that will prepare them for success.

Sincerely,

Gerard Iglesia



April 16, 2020

To whom it may concern.

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4, tuition-free, public charter school for the young leaders of Rochester with a mission to equip all scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success.

My name is Paulina Incardona, and I have lived in Rochester, NY for the past two decades. I have been an educator in the community for over 16 years. Throughout this time, schools, parents, and teachers have evolved; however, one thing that I have noticed has remained the same is the severity of the educational, social, economic, and social-emotional gaps that our inner-city families face compared to their suburban counterparts.

As a community, there have been numerous efforts, incentives, and dare to say reforms that have come to better our community, most of which have not been as effective as they've proposed. My personal belief is that a lot of the struggle is based on the impenetrable infrastructure of the Rochester City School District. As a former educator in the RCSD, I have come across countless teachers, families, parents, and students who have shared a strong interest in change and concern to close gaps that have been plaguing our inner city for years.

Being a current employee of a local charter school myself, it is my belief that charter schools are given the autonomy to do an authentic needs assessment of our city and do what is in the best interest of our children, our families, and the community as a whole. I am looking forward to the new innovative drive and mindset that Rochester Excellence Academy will bring to our city in the near future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paulina Incardona

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**Morisha Johnson**



May 2, 2020

**David Frank**

Executive Director  
NYSED, Charter School Director  
89 Washington avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

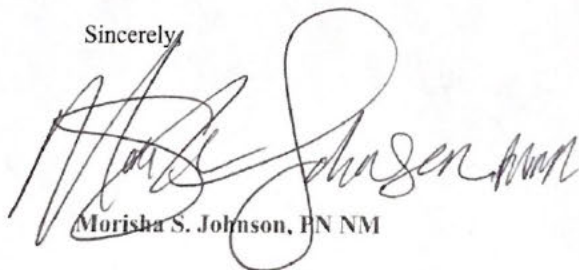
I am writing this letter to support Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4 high quality, college preparatory public charter school for young leaders in Rochester NY.

I grew up in the city of Rochester NY. I am the 3rd oldest of 9 children in a very poor family. School has always been an outlet for me. I attended public school in the city of Rochester throughout grade and high school. I graduated in 2005. I have always excelled in school, however never being challenged completely. When I became a mom I vowed that I would ensure the best education for my daughter, however I had a low paying job and couldn't afford the best education at the time my daughter entered school. I turned to Charter school.

Charter school gave my daughter a great education for free! The support from the school, the way the teachers loved their jobs showed how much they cared for the students all played a part in our choice for charter. One of the teachers there was Ms. Brittany Rumph, her dedication and compassion towards the students, their education and the school itself goes beyond measures. Although we absolutely loved the charter school, we knew the spots are limited and not everyone who desires to go charter can go. Once I graduated college and began my nursing career, I understood that I was financially stable and I placed my daughter in private school to open a spot for another well deserving family to have the same educational opportunity as we did.

I am honored to extend my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy. I wholeheartedly believe Ms. Brittany will be an excellent leader and the Rochester Excellence Academy will be a very successful school choice for our families and students. I am very excited to see the next steps in the school and its opening process.

Sincerely,



Morisha S. Johnson, FN NM

May 19, 2020

David Frank

Executive Director, Charter School Office

89 Washington Avenue

Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,


I am writing a letter of support for Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4, tuition free, public charter school for families in Rochester, NY. Our families in Rochester deserve access to quality education for their children. Rochester Excellence Academy will provide a once in a lifetime opportunity for a number of families.

My name is NaQuanda Jordan and I'm a Social Worker. Unfortunately, I know all too well the challenges and obstacles that families face in a city like Rochester. Rochester is a city that is plagued with violence, poverty and low educational attainment. I grew up in the inner city of Rochester and was fortunate enough to receive a well-rounded education which prepared me to ultimately obtain a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and a master's degree in Social Work. Unfortunately, I cannot attribute my educational or career success to the Rochester City School District. My family had to seek alternative educational opportunities for me in the form of suburban and private education. During this time charter schools were not prevalent. Enriched and rigorous public academic opportunities have slowly but steadily decreased over the years in this area due to an array of issue. However, families should not have to suffer or sacrifice solid academic opportunities for their children due to the fact that they reside in the inner city and are unable to afford to live in a suburban area or pay for private school.

I'm writing this letter of support for Rochester Excellence Academy as I know that the Lead Founder, Brittany Rumph is very passionate about creating an innovative academic environment to support children and families and to improve academic outcomes in the Rochester area. The core beliefs of Rochester Excellence Academy will place them in the best position to meet their intended goals.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "NaQuanda L. Jordan". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a solid black horizontal line.

NaQuanda L. Jordan, MSW

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter in support of the Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a BES primary school for children growing up in impoverished homes in Rochester. Our children and families deserve better than what they are receiving in the Rochester City School District (RCSD). According to Sean Reardon of Stanford's 2017 study, students in the RCSD had the lowest rate of 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade academic growth of the nation's largest 200 cities. The district has deteriorated since Professor Reardon's research.

As former Chair of Mayor Bob Duffy's Rochester Literacy Committee, I spent three years embedded in the RCSD. What I experienced was not only district academic failure, but the district adding trauma to the students, all while blaming the parents.

Brittany Rumph will start and run a school that combines strong, rigorous academics with deep concern for every student. The social, emotional, and physical needs of the students will also be ably addressed. I have been privileged to observe Brittany receiving BES training in Boston. I have been privileged to meet with Brittany a number of times. She is an impressive leader. I have also met with some of Brittany's board members. These board members are passionate about the students, have a variety of necessary skills, and are hard-nosed and will hold Brittany and the school accountable.

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will prepare students for college, career, and life. Opening this BES school is a matter of life and death to the children in Rochester.

Sincerely,



Joe Klein  
Chairman  
Klein Steel Service

105 Vanguard Pkwy.  
Rochester, New York 14606  
TF: 800.477.6789  
T: 585.328.4000  
F: 585.328.0470

1050 Military Road  
Buffalo, New York 14217  
TF: 877.449.5059  
T: 716.826.6060  
F: 716.826.6743

1 General Motors Drive  
Syracuse, New York 13026  
TF: 888.454.3102  
T: 315.454.3165  
F: 315.454.3645

P.O. Box 3713  
Albany, New York 12203  
TF: 877.847.1843  
T: 518.326.3232  
F: 518.326.1694

Walter Larkin Jr.,

Chief Executive Officer

1290 Lake Avenue  
Rochester, NY 14613  
Phone: 585-672-1280  
[Walter.Larkin@Uprep.org](mailto:Walter.Larkin@Uprep.org)

Date: Tuesday, April 14, 2020

To: Mr. David Frank, Executive Director for NYSED's Charter School Office

Re: ROC Excellence Academy

I am writing this letter in support Rochester Excellence Academy K-4 school for the families in Rochester, New York.

My name is Walter Larkin Jr. and I am the Chief Executive Officer at University Preparatory Charter School (UPREP) for Young Men in Rochester, New York. I am a lifelong resident and I have been an educator/administrator here since 1998. My community has one of the lowest poverties and graduation rates per capita in New York State. Through research, we know that this trajectory can change if students are provided with literacy, numeracy, and social skills in the early grades.

The parents in the Rochester community deserve options to ensure that their children have access to the same free quality education as those in the surrounding suburban districts. It is my belief that the ROC Excellence Academy will help bridge this gap for Rochester underrepresented populations.

I had the privilege of meeting with Ms. Brittany Rumph several times throughout the application process. I have found her always concerned, always ready to help students and fellow educators, always willing to go that extra distance to make certain that everything is handled with efficiency – to the ultimate benefit of the student or teacher involved. Add to this the accuracy, professionalism, dispatch, and effectiveness with which she performs her daily responsibilities and you have someone especially worthy of consideration for any school district.

It is an honor to recommend Rochester Excellence Academy, I know that Ms. Rumph will be a great leader and change agent for the Rochester community. It is my hope that the Rochester Excellence Academy will open to families in the fall of 2021. The City of Rochester needs and welcomes them.

Sincerely,



Walter Larkin Jr.

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed K-4 charter school for families of Rochester, NY. I had the pleasure of working with their Proposed Head of School, Brittany Rumph, as she previously served as a Teach Like a Champion Fellow for three years with our team. During the fellowship, Brittany was a outstanding Kindergarten Teacher and Instructional Leader at Rochester Prep West Elementary. Teachers around the world have had the chance to glean instructional best practices through video footage of her meticulous instruction. As a native Rochesterian and committed educator, I have no doubt that Brittany will be an inspiring and dedicated leader.

I have spent most of my career trying to build the highest quality schools for students not born to privilege. My intent has been to create such high-quality learning more specifically in New York state. In continuing with that goal, I helped found Rochester Prep and grow it to multiple campuses and have worked with schools and districts across New York to train teachers. Because of this, I know how difficult it is to turn good intentions into good schools. It's far easier said than done and only the most committed and most clear-minded of teams can hope to pull it off. Rochester Excellence Academy, I believe, is just such a team, and I sincerely believe that it will successfully provide a high-quality option for Rochester's students and families.

Rochester Excellence Academy's commitment to providing a robust literacy program, with over three hours of literacy instruction every day, will allow all students to read on grade-level by third grade. The promise to deliver guided instruction and inquiry-based lessons in math will guide students to not only understand the importance of math comprehension but also to understand problem solving skills in other subjects. Exposure to a rigorous and engaging academic program is what too many students in Rochester have been denied. Having come from a background of data driven instruction and team leadership and coaching, Brittany Rumph will ensure her teachers are continually being coached and developed so that high-quality instruction is happening in every class each day. My team is also committed to offering support through curriculum consulting to ensure that the best curriculum is delivered to the students of Rochester. By utilizing instruction of the arts via dance, visual arts and music, students will receive the opportunity of being well-rounded well before going into middle school. Students at Rochester Excellence Academy will be taught the importance of exploration and be given the capability to greatly impact the community around them.

Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports, Rochester Excellence Academy will deliver on their promise to equip all students. Students will form the skills, habit, and mentality essential for academia, career and beyond. Students and families of Rochester deserve access to schools committed to academic achievement and social awareness. Ms. Rumph's school will able to provide all this and more for their community.

Sincerely,



Doug Lemov



May 15, 2020

To whom it may concern:

I am excited to write a letter in support of the Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4 charter school expressly designed to serve the students in Rochester, NY.

The education system in the city of Rochester is under great scrutiny right now. Many students are not succeeding in school, and graduation rates are disappointing to say the least. The children in the city of Rochester deserve to have a quality education that many are unfortunately unable to access given the academic resources currently available. Rochester's students deserve access to a rigorous curriculum that will prepare them for the real world, and to have a holistic approach to education that will enable them to succeed by supporting not only the student but the whole family. Rochester's students are in dire need of a new, innovative, and effective approach to education. I believe the Rochester Excellence Academy embodies each of these qualities and more, and I have no doubt that this charter school would provide many students the ability to achieve what they otherwise would not without it.

As an elementary school social worker, I am very much aware of the social-emotional needs of students and how they can impact learning either positively or negatively. The Rochester Excellence Academy has a comprehensive approach to education that not only addresses student's academic needs, but also their social-emotional development, providing opportunities for character and leadership development which are paramount for students to succeed not only from grades K-4, but beyond. For these reasons, I am overjoyed to give my greatest support and highest recommendation for the Rochester Excellence Academy.

My kindest regards,

Davne' McCleary, LMSW



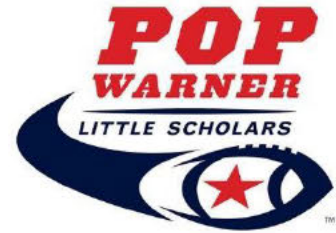
Dear David Frank,

I am writing in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed K-4 charter school for families of Rochester, NY. I had the honor of watching the Proposed Head of School, Brittany Rumph, develop as she previously participated as a youth cheerleader within our organization and returned to serve the youth of our community as a volunteer cheerleading and dance coach for the Rochester Rams, for the past 8 years. During her time of serving, Brittany has led her team of inner-city youth to become National and Global champions. She has embodied the vision of tenacity, hard work, perseverance and the art of practice to show her team how to succeed even in the performing arts. As President of the Rochester Rams and Vice President of the Western New York Pop Warner Youth Sports and Scholastic League, I have no doubt that Brittany will succeed in leading her school and team to success in the opening of Rochester Excellence Academy.

My career has revolved around leading the Rochester Rams League in which we have created the avenue for kids to participate in football, cheerleading, academic support and mentorship. My intent has been to create an avenue for children to mature and learn through sports and creative arts in partnership with academic support. The Rochester Rams has served Rochester's inner-city youth for over 50 years. It has become evident as I have worked with Brittany that her experience of being a dancer and educator has shown her the importance of the connection between creativity, the arts and academics. Rochester Excellence Academy is being created with the intent to utilize performing arts like dance and music to support the learning of their students.

Rochester Excellence Academy will work to maintain a partnership with the YMCA to provide a safe place for students to learn and work after school. By partnering with the YMCA and using the Rochester Rams' support, students will have a deeply enriched education connecting both arts and academics. Rochester Excellence Academy's commitment to providing a robust literacy program, with over three hours of literacy instruction every day, will allow all students to read on grade-level by third grade. Too many students in Rochester have missed the opportunities of diverse and engaging education provided through the collaboration of the arts and academia. Much of their suburban counterpart schools have been fortunate to enhance the opportunities for their students by having sports, performing arts and academics work together collectively in their curriculums. The Rochester Rams are committed to supporting Rochester Excellence as another engagement for students to get involved. By utilizing instruction of the arts via dance, visual arts and music, students will receive the opportunity of being well-rounded well before going into middle school.

Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and connection to the arts within Rochester from the YMCA and other avenues, Rochester Excellence Academy will deliver on



their promise to equip all students. Students will form the ability to think creatively and accept the many different approaches to their learning. Students and families of Rochester deserve access to schools committed to academic achievement, societal and artistic awareness.

Sincerely,

Trelawney McCoy

Trelawney McCoy

Trelawney McCoy (May 20, 2020 18:50 EDT)





Reverend Dr. Jonathan J. H. McReynolds, Senior Pastor  
175 Genesee Street Rochester, NY 14611 – 585-436-0990  
Email: [abrown@aenonmbc.org](mailto:abrown@aenonmbc.org) / Website: [www.aenonmbc.org](http://www.aenonmbc.org)

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May 7, 2020

David Frank  
Executive Director  
Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I, Rev. Dr. Jonathan J. H. McReynolds, Senior Pastor of the Aenon Baptist Church Rochester, New York write this letter of support for the Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School which will house students in K-4 Grades tuition free. This program will help to develop young leaders for the Rochester Community

I believe the Mission for the Rochester Excellence Academy has been set to equip our young people with knowledge and skills that will prepare them for future success in the classroom and beyond.

I am a firm believer in good quality education and this age group is where it all begins. I along with the Aenon Church Family are happy to support the Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School achieve its educational goals.

Sincerely,  
In His Divine Service

*Jonathan J. H. McReynolds*

Rev. Dr. Jonathan J. H. McReynolds, Senior Pas



May 18, 2020

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy, the proposed K-4, tuition free Charter School for the young leaders of Rochester, NY.

I am Kernell Miller, Owner of Custo Print, a custom apparel company servicing Rochester, NY since 2013. As an active participant in my 4 children educational process, I have witnessed the extreme need for quality public education. The availability of choice allows parents to increase the potential for greater success of their young leaders. I applaud the passion and willingness of Mrs Rumph and her team to serve Rochester in this capacity. Finding the need and creating the solution to empower our community to combat the many educational battles.

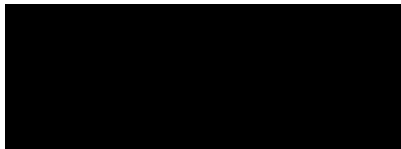
I am happy to extend my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy. I believe Mrs. Brittany Rumph has the dedication and perseverance to make Rochester Excellence Academy a staple of Rochester's educational growth. Equipping tomorrows youth with foundational skills and mindsets necessary to succeed throughout their academic career.

Sincerely,

Kernell Miller

Owner of Custo Print

Rochester, NY



# AUTUMN RISE FOUNDATION, INC

**From the desk of  
Ms. Anqesha Murray, BA**

**To David Frank,  
Executive Director for NYSED's Charter School Office**

It is my pleasure to write in support of the application of Ms. Brittany Rumph for the New York State Education Department's 2020 Charter Application. I have known Ms. Rumph for over a decade and believe her leadership, mentorship, and dedication will make her an outstanding lead founder. I was taught by Ms. Rumph when I was fifteen years of age and the lessons taught to me have carried on with me into adulthood. As is evident in her resume, Ms. Rumph has excelled throughout her educational career and with many notable accomplishments that I will not repeat here. I will focus on my experiences with Ms. Rumph, primarily related to her guidance and role in motivating me to aspire for excellence: which demonstrates the qualities she possesses that are required for instructing the youth and leading a team. I have had the pleasure to observe Ms. Rumph as my instructor as well as a supportive mentor while I navigate life after high school.

Ms. Rumph is a warm, intelligent, and engaging individual who teaches others by example. She is inclusive to all students and comes prepared for all types of situations after having researched relevant topics so she can provide adequate insight. Ms. Rumph is articulate, well organized, and well-read and utilizes her knowledge effectively in leadership settings. In high school, Ms. Rumph taught me to express myself through movement while also teaching me discipline, push past my mental boundaries, and to dedicate myself to my passion. Following my experience as her student, I used what she taught me to give back to other women in my community through my nonprofit the Autumn Rise foundation, Inc. She is by far one of the most influential people in my life and one of the most motivated people I have ever met. I had the privilege to learn about Ms. Rumph's application to open a high-quality charter school in Rochester, New York. Her passion to create change and build a solid educational foundation for the youth is most admirable. I believe that the school model she is proposing will benefit the Rochester youth and close the achievement gap.

In conclusion, I am happy to extend my support and recommendation for the Rochester Excellence Academy. I believe Ms. Rumph is an excellent lead founder and will be a successful choice for families and students. It is my hope that the Rochester Excellence Academy will open to families in the fall of 2020.

Sincerely,



**Anqesha Murray, CEO**  
**a.murray@autumnrise.org**  
**(585) 319-9696**



Mr. David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Ave.  
Albany, NY 12234

RE: Rochester Excellence Academy

Dear Mr. Frank:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of the establishment of Rochester Excellence Academy (REA) to serve students in the City of Rochester.

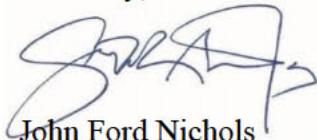
That there is need for quality and supportive education in Rochester is undeniable. It is imperative that families be allowed alternatives to the extreme underperformance pervasive in the RCSD.

Rochester Excellence Academy will offer that choice. As you know, an organization is only as strong and effective as its leader. I've had the opportunity to meet with Brittany Rumph on several occasions to discuss her vision for REA. Over the course of those meetings, I've come to believe in Ms. Rumph's passion, capability and determination to create a safe and stable environment for students to learn and thrive.

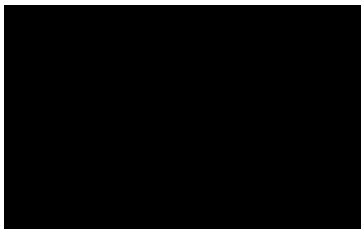
Our firm has served as Strategic Partners to many Charter Schools in Rochester. We've renovated multiple buildings for Uncommon Schools (Rochester Prep). We performed three phases of renovations for Rochester Academy Charter School of the Arts. We've worked with E3 to provide financing and construction resources to the schools they advise and support. We believe strongly in the Charter School movement – and will continue to support Rochester Excellence Academy as they birth and grow.

I am grateful for the opportunity to recommend that a Charter be granted to Rochester Excellence Academy.

Sincerely,



John Ford Nichols  
Founding Partner



David Frank,

I write to lend my support to Brittany Rumph, current educator and the founder of the Rochester Excellence Academy. As a small business owner and director of a performing arts school in Rochester, I am always seeking out educational programs that widen the horizons of my, and all other students in the Rochester area. I am especially interested in programs that spur educational and artistic achievement. Having had the opportunity to work with Brittany, I can unequivocally affirm that the Rochester Excellence Academy and Ms. Rumph would be a great addition to our educational community. Her vision is unique and will provide educational opportunities in a plethora of ways.

I am especially impressed with the vision Ms. Rumph has in raising the level of excellence in education here in Rochester. Even more important is her objective to foster the creativity of both teachers and students. The proposed approach of the Rochester Excellence Academy is truly refreshing and exactly what this city needs. I am impressed by Ms. Rumph's passion for education and am in full support for this amazing plan for a school which will give the families in Rochester a unique educational option for their children.

Given the above, it is my opinion that the Rochester Excellence Academy should be approved. I am happy to help facilitate this process in any way needed. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best Wishes,  
Jessica Odasz

May 21, 2020

**Board of Directors**

*Kathleen DaBoll-Lavoie  
Dean, School of Education,  
Nazareth College*

*Larry Frye  
Head of School,  
Harley School*

*Conger Gabel  
Board Chair*

*Mary-Jo Gabel  
Member at Large*

*Mick Gee  
Head of School,  
Allendale Columbia  
School*

*Josh Gewolb, Partner, Harter  
Secrest & Emery LLP*

*Tom Hernandez, Dean,  
School of Education, Health,  
& Human Services,  
The College at Brockport*

*Clayton Jones,  
Assistant to the President,  
Government Relations,  
Monroe Community College*

*Brent Brian, Dean,  
Warner School of Education,  
University of Rochester*

*Joe Martino, CEO,  
Education Success Network  
(ESN)*

*Dennis Showers, Interim,  
Ella Cline Shear School of  
Education, SUNY Geneseo*

Re: Letter of Support  
Rochester Excellence Academy - Rochester, NY

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association (GRSLA), I write this letter of support regarding the Rochester Excellence Academy to be led by Ms. Brittany Rumpf.

As an organization long concerned about the plight of students in the Rochester City School District, an educational opportunity as proposed by Rochester Excellence Academy is a much welcomed and needed option students and families deserve, and have been desiring.

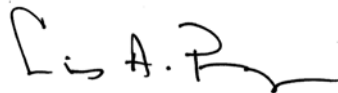
In New York State, approximately 14 students out of every 100 that begin in kindergarten graduate from college. In Rochester, NY less than 60% of high-school students graduate in four years, and in 2019, only 17% of third graders were proficient in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade literacy. According to the 2019 Monroe County Youth Risk Behavior Survey which captures growing concern over traumatic stress as measured in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), nearly two in three (66%, pg.9) Rochester-area children have had at least one traumatic experience that threatens to harm their health, emotions and grades.

Rochester Excellence Academy evidence-based key design elements, coupled with a host of academic and community-building best practices, will give students and their parents facing such challenging circumstances, the knowledge, life-skills, grit, support, and HOPE to succeed in both school and life.

In addition, in a community mired by generational poverty, Rochester Excellence Academy becomes an instrument of equity and potential structural change that addresses the opportunity gap and changes the life-trajectory of its students.

This is something we wholeheartedly support.

Respectfully,



Luis A. Perez, LMSW  
President and CEO



Wanda Perez-Brundage, M.Ed.



May 10, 2020

Re: Rochester Excellence Academy

Dear David Frank,

Please accept this letter of support for Rochester Excellence Academy (REA) and its application to be chartered in the City of Rochester.

As you are aware, the students and families of Rochester need increased educational choice and academic excellence. While the opening of a charter school doesn't automatically provide excellence, it is my belief that the opening of a charter school led by an effective school leader and board with a sound educational design and community support like REA is one of the most impactful and effective actions we can take to improve outcomes for students in our city.

For that reason, I am enthusiastically expressing my support for Rochester Excellence Academy. REA core beliefs and key community partnerships will ensure an effective school experience for its students and families. REA's mission to equip all students reflects its belief that all students can and will excel. I also support the opportunity to work with REA's lead founder, Brittany Rumph, as a member of the Rochester charter school leader community. Ms. Rumph has the experience, expertise, and mindset to execute and contribute significantly to Rochester's academic success.

In conclusion, I look forward to hearing of REA's successful charter application and look forward to seeing Rochester's students benefit from having access to increased educational opportunity and excellence. Thank you very much for your consideration of my support.

With utmost respect,



Wanda Perez-Brundage, M.Ed.  
Founding Principal  
Academy of Health Sciences Charter School

May 18, 2020

Mr. David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, New York 12234

I am writing in full support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed kindergarten through fourth grade school for the students, families and the community of Rochester, New York.

As a Rochester native and currently an educator in Rochester, New York, I have witnessed the needs of our students surpass the capacities to provide for them. I have been given the opportunity to serve Rochester families as an educator and community partner as I am also a very active member of the local church community and other human service agencies.

I have the utmost confidence Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will deliver on its mission of rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports that Rochester Excellence Academy will equip all kindergarten through fourth grade students with the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for school, career, and life success.

The students, families and the community of Rochester, New York deserve the right to attend and have a high-quality school that will engage all students with a rigorous curriculum and great instruction, with teachers and leaders who care deeply about the educating every child, regardless of race, socio-economic status, disability, or first language.

In closing, I know that Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will provide high-quality options for Rochester's students and families; I believe Miss. Rumph will provide such a school. I fully endorse Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School.

Sincerely,

KaTrina MK Quinn, MS



**KIPP** ACADEMY

CHICAGO PRIMARY

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter on behalf of Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4 public charter school for the families of the city of Rochester, NY. The families in the city of Rochester deserve a school that will provide a high quality and rigorous education for their children that will prepare them to be successful throughout their academic career and life.

I had the privilege and honor of working alongside its founder Brittany Rumph for five years at Rochester Prep West. In that time, I witnessed firsthand her dedication, passion, and joy for not only teaching the children in her class but also her leadership in motivating a team of teachers toward achieving academic success in their classrooms.

Additionally, Ms. Rumph has forged strong relationships with organizations and leaders in the community that will allow Rochester Excellence Academy to offer their students additional services outside of the school environment. These efforts are in direct alignment of the school's core belief that it takes a village to raise a child.

I am happy to extend my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy. It is my hope that it will be opened for the families of the city of Rochester in the Fall of 2021.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

*LaShonda N Robinson*

4144BFB6F53B40C...

LaShonda Robinson





**URBAN PREP CHARTER ACADEMY  
FOR YOUNG MEN  
WEST CAMPUS**

May 18, 2020

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank:

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4, tuition free, public charter school for the young leaders of Rochester, that will engage them through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports.

I am very fortunate to have received the opportunity to participate in the Urban Suburban Program and graduate from the Penfield School District. As a student there, I gained invaluable skills that led to me becoming the first person in my immediate family to graduate from college and drove me to earn a Master of Arts in Teaching and a Master of Arts in Inner City Studies.

If it were not for Penfield, I know that I would not be in my 14th year as a high school English teacher in Chicago or as passionate about providing my students with a transformative education like the one that I received there. Therefore, I know that Rochester Excellence Academy will provide that for their students based on their belief that all students can and will excel.

I am happy to extend my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy. I believe that Ms. Brittany Rumph will be a focused, game changing leader and it is my hope that Rochester Excellence Academy will be open to families in Fall of 2021.

Sincerely,

Natasha M. Robinson  
English Teacher  
Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men - West Campus  
[nrobinson@urbanprep.org](mailto:nrobinson@urbanprep.org)



David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

It is my pleasure to write a letter of support for Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School. I am choosing to support this proposed charter school because I believe it is time for Rochester to put the academic needs of our students first. Supporting a charter school that will ensure our elementary students have the skills and mindset to be successful as they progress through school, will benefit the students futures, and the future of Rochester.

In working with our teens in Rochester, I see firsthand how detrimental it is to a teen's schooling experience if they are not adequately prepared for school. This preparation starts in elementary school. In our program we mentor teens who are not at the reading level according to their grade, and also don't have foundational math skills that are needed to be successful in middle and high school. We have done a disservice to our students if we continue to progress our students through school when they are not academically ready. Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School has committed to ensuring students are prepared to continue their educational journey by providing rigorous academics, and individualized support.

I support Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School because I believe in its founder. Having worked with Brittany Rumph in the school setting, I am confident that she has the skillset to lead her staff in helping the children in Rochester receive a great education. Ms. Rumph is smart, detail oriented, a critical thinker, and she loves the children of Rochester. I have no doubt that every decision that is made at Rochester Excellence Academy, will be made with the betterment of the children in mind.

I am happy to extend my support and recommendation for the Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School.



**Chris Rush**

Program Director

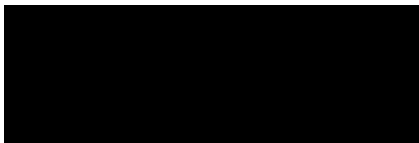
Champion Academy Extreme Mentoring & Empowerment Initiative

**O:** 585.571.7057 x1000 | **M:** 585.330.4148 | **F:** 585.371.8259

[www.ChampionAcademyRoc.org](http://www.ChampionAcademyRoc.org)



Veronica Rush  
Lead Mediator



Dear, David Frank, Executive Director for NYSED's Charter School Office

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy which is a proposed charter school for young leader's grades K-4.

Our families in Rochester New York deserve access to a quality education our children. I enjoyed learning about the core beliefs such as value based community, rigorous academics, and individual support that Rochester Excellence Academy offers. I believe that Rochester Excellence Academy with Brittany's leadership will close the achievement gap in Rochester and drive students to achieve their fullest potential with social and emotional development, character development and high level of support.

I had the pleasure of meeting Brittany Rumph last year. Brittany has a passion for our young leaders that is unmatched. I believe that Rochester Excellence Academy with Brittany's leadership will focus on individualized attention to students needs and commit to student's achievement, engaging families, and community partnership.

I am happy to extend my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy. It is my hope that Rochester Excellence Academy will be open soon to families in Rochester New York.

Thank You,  
*Veronica Rush*

April 11, 2020

Jamila Smith, MSM



Dear David Frank,

Please accept this letter of support for *Rochester Excellence Academy* Charter School. Rochester has a rich history of creating solutions and programming to address the needs of some of our community's most vulnerable people. Despite these resources, we are still challenged to meet the educational, social-emotional, and financial needs of some of our community's most vulnerable - *our children*. The issues and barriers that our children face every day are complex, and requires adaptable, innovative, and strategic solutions to effect meaningful and impactful change.

Through personal and professional experiences with the Rochester City School District, I have gained a deep understanding of the issues impacting our youth's ability to learn and grow into their fullest potential. I've learned that our youth are intelligent, creative, resilient, and eager for success. The proposed mission of *Rochester Excellence Academy* demonstrates the understanding of the needs of our children through curriculum, arts, and school culture that prepares our children for a future of leadership and success.

It is with great pleasure, that I support the mission of *Rochester Excellence Academy*, as it aligns with my own personal mission and values. It takes a village to raise a child, and I understand the impact of positive influence on a child's life in the formative years. *Rochester Excellence Academy* creates great opportunity for the village to embrace, and engage our children, promoting a nurturing journey to success.

I look forward to supporting *Rochester Excellence Academy* in any capacity necessary, and excited to see the growth of our students through the school's curriculum of strong academics, career readiness, and social-emotional development.

Much success,

- Jamila Smith, MSM



April 17, 2020



David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing to you to offer Foodlink’s enthusiastic support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School – a proposed K-4, tuition free, public charter school for the young leaders of Rochester.

Foodlink is a regional nonprofit based in Rochester, with a mission of leveraging the power of food to end hunger and build healthier communities. We share a common belief with REA – and a desire to set our city’s youngest residents up for success, both in the classroom and in life.

REA Charter School promises rigorous academics and a values-based community. This unique school environment aims to equip all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college and beyond.

I am happy to extend our organization’s support of REA, and am confident this institution will be a valuable asset to the Rochester community.

Sincerely,

Julia Tedesco  
President & CEO

David Frank

Executive Director, Charter School Office

89 Washington Ave

Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy charter School, a proposed K-4 high quality, charter school for the families located in the "Fatal Crescent" of Rochester, NY.

My name is Shammel Turnbore and I am the Dean of Students at Rochester Prep West Elementary School (Rochester Prep). I have been serving the youth at Rochester Prep since 2015. Throughout my career at Rochester Prep, I have witnessed the extreme need for a quality education and quality choices for Rochester families and students. Parental choice for education has had a positive impact on students and families residing in the Rochester, NY area. Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will serve as an impactful and needed school choice for the Rochester area.

I had the privilege to work with Brittany Rumph when she served as the Kindergarten grade level chair at Rochester Prep West Elementary School. She is passionate about education and brings excitement to the classroom, which ultimately better serves our youth. I also believe the school model that she is proposing will meet the needs and help close the achievement gap that we currently have here in Rochester.

I am happy to extend my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy. I believe Brittany Rumph will be a great school leader and Rochester Excellence Academy and will be a very school choice for the families and students residing in the Rochester area. It is my hope that Rochester Excellence Academy will be open to families in fall of 2021.

 Recoverable Signature

X Shammel Turnbore

Shammel Turnbore  
Dean of Students

Signed by:  Rochester Prep West Elementary School



May 9, 2020

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
New York State Education Department  
89 Washington Ave.  
Albany, NY 12234

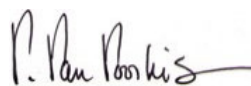
Dear Mr. Frank,

I write this letter to demonstrate my strong support of Rochester Excellence Academy. Brittany Rumph is an accomplished educator with experience in charter schools and a fellow with the BES program. The proposed Board Chair, Laura Smith, is a nationally recognized educator. She has served in leadership roles at NYSED, the NYC schools, Amplify, Sesame Street and most recently as co-founder of UnboundEd. The expertise and passion of these two leaders will enable them to create a school that is committed to rigorous academics with a strong focus on character, and values. The inclusion of the arts as an integral component of the curriculum is well supported by research.

My strong support for the Academy is rooted in my experience. As a former classroom teacher and founder of an education focused company, I have done primary research, funded by the NSF and the Department of Education with a focus on creating products and services which promote mastery and create opportunity for equity across the education landscape. In addition, I serve on the board of Vertus, a charter school in the city of Rochester. I see first-hand how many of our students have not had an opportunity to master essential literacy and numeracy skills and have had little or no exposure to the arts. The Rochester community could benefit from the strong pedagogical background of the team and the careful consideration given to the development needs of students this formative time.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,



Victoria Van Voorhis, CEO

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed K-4 charter school for students and families in the city of Rochester, New York.

I have worked in urban education for the last fifteen years and in Rochester for thirteen of those years. During that time, I have seen firsthand the need for educational opportunities for students and their families who live here. The city of Rochester has highly concentrated areas of poverty (especially child poverty), and there are high rates of violence in our community. These factors along with others have undoubtedly contributed to the fact that our Rochester City School District continues to rank the lowest in the state for academic proficiency as measured by our state assessments and graduation rates. What is also frustrating and heartbreaking about these facts is that school districts in our local suburbs just miles away have drastically different academic outcomes. Furthermore, our national health crisis only amplifies the disparities in our communities and highlights the urgent need for educational options for our city's children.

The need can be met with schools like Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School under leaders like Ms. Brittany Rumph. Ms. Rumph is a passionate advocate for our city's children who lives and breathes the mission of closing the achievement gap in Rochester. Ms. Rumph also has a background that is rich with teaching and leading experience from pre-K to grade 4. I have no doubt that her school will provide students and their families with a high-quality option that can alter the trajectory of their education and their future.

I am pleased and proud to support Ms. Rumph and her school. I believe she will be a strong school leader and that Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will be a great choice for Rochester families. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

*Emily Volpe*

Emily Volpe  
Principal

Rochester Prep Elementary West Campus



Rochester Prep 89 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12234 Phone: (518) 462-1111 Fax: (518) 462-1112 www.rochesterprep.org	Rochester Prep 89 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12234 Phone: (518) 462-1111 Fax: (518) 462-1112 www.rochesterprep.org	Rochester Prep 89 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12234 Phone: (518) 462-1111 Fax: (518) 462-1112 www.rochesterprep.org	Rochester Prep 89 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12234 Phone: (518) 462-1111 Fax: (518) 462-1112 www.rochesterprep.org	Rochester Prep 89 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12234 Phone: (518) 462-1111 Fax: (518) 462-1112 www.rochesterprep.org	Rochester Prep 89 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12234 Phone: (518) 462-1111 Fax: (518) 462-1112 www.rochesterprep.org
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May 20, 2020

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
New York State Department of Education  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank:

It is with great pleasure that we support the charter application for Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School and the leadership of Lead Founder and proposed Head of School Brittany Rumph.

BES is a nationally recognized non-profit, whose flagship program, the BES Fellowship, trains high-capacity individuals to design, found, lead, and sustain high-performing schools. Brittany, a Fellow with BES, is an ambitious leader who has a deep commitment to the students and families of Rochester. Brittany was born and raised within Rochester's Northeast Quadrant, the proposed location of Rochester Excellence. She attended and graduated from Rochester City School District and spent six years teaching and leading with Uncommon Schools, True North Rochester Prep. Brittany also served as a Teach Like a Champion fellow where she developed curriculum, coached teachers, co-designed and led professional development, and evaluated teacher effectiveness.

Brittany has spent the Fellowship year deeply immersed in studying high performing schools nationally and has completed leadership residency at a high-achieving elementary charter school incubated and supported through BES - RISE Prep Mayoral Academy in Woonsocket, RI - where she was part of the leadership team, immersed in all daily operations of the school.

Brittany is steadfast in her commitment to founding, leading, and sustaining a high-achieving school for the students of Rochester. Her clear vision, proven track record as a teacher in Rochester, and her ability to engage a variety of community stakeholders position her to lead an academically rigorous, values-based school designed to support all students with the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for success in school, career, and life. With her team, Brittany has established powerful community partnerships that will infuse the arts and extended supports into the proposed school.

It has been an honor to work alongside Brittany and we have the utmost confidence in her leadership and the intentionally designed model proposed for Rochester Excellence Academy. It is without reservation that we support Brittany and the application for Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Erin Walsh-Hagan'.

Best,  
Erin Walsh-Hagan  
Assistant Director of the BES Fellowship



[REDACTED]

David Frank  
Executive Director Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy K-4 charter school for families here in Rochester NY. Our families here in Rochester deserve the opportunity to have access to quality education for our children. Rochester Excellence Academy believes everything a child needs to succeed is already inside of them. When they are properly supported, all students can and will excel. Therefore Excellence won't be an accident. Rochester Excellence Academy believes through rigorous academics a values-based community, and individualized supports Rochester Excellence Academy will equip all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills and mindsets necessary for success in middle school, high school, college, career, and life. I had the pleasure of meeting Brittany Rumph through Rochester Prep; I am a witness of how hard she works for scholars to reach their goals.

Rochester Excellence Academy is the school we know that will push our scholars to reach goals through rigorous academics. Students can achieve high levels with individualized supports which are very important. Each child learns differently and with this plan in place we can assure the scholar is set up with appropriate tools needed to succeed. Brittany is aware that literacy is the key that opens doors of opportunity. Rochester Excellence Academy will offer 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction. In most charters there is not much time centered around art, however Brittany has set in place time for scholars to access arts supports, academic, achievement, and social, emotional and development.

There was a saying a long time ago it takes a village, well at Rochester Excellence Academy Brittany believes that it still does. I believe Rochester Excellence Academy Charter will be the village of today and tomorrow. This charter school must happen. We have scholars waiting to be taught by the team at Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School.

Best,  
Cheryl Wearen  
[REDACTED]



*Believe, Achieve, Succeed*

**Chief Executive Officer/Chairman** -Julio Vázquez  
**Executive Director** – Magaly Rosario

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May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, a proposed K-4, tuition free, public charter school for the young leaders of Rochester.

My name is Sofia Williams, a 1<sup>st</sup> grade ELA teacher at EMHCS, who is very familiar with the importance of a wholesome and holistic education. I have been teaching since 2014 and I have always wanted to experience an entire school's untiring work ethic, towards ensuring students are successful in all aspects of their well being to initiate valuable members of society. Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School has already made its mark in the community. Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School believes excellence is no accident, everything a child needs is already inside them. These are not just words; they are actions that have already been implemented by the school by involving and listening to the community in shaping the core essence of this organization. It's unwavering belief in Rochester's children is a breath of fresh air. Guaranteeing collaboration with families, rigorous academics, access to the arts, character development based on values, individualized support and literacy will in turn produce continuous academic and character success. This school has already inspired and motivated families indisputably. I trust it will provide students in the city of Rochester with access to quality education, character development, arts integration and opportunity based on its steadfast founders.

I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with the Lead Founder, Brittany Rumph in education and she has without a doubt advocated and exemplified the core beliefs of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School in her personal and professional life. It is with great pleasure to write this letter, supporting a school that I believe will provide great substance for Rochester families. Our families in the city of Rochester have been fighting for people to be responsive to their needs. Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School has been assembled by

**Grades K-5** Zimbrich Campus, 27 Zimbrich Street, Rochester, New York 14621 585-544-6170  
**Grades 6-8** Joseph Campus, 1069 Joseph Avenue, Rochester, Rochester, NY 14621 585-697-7115  
**Grades 9-12** Kodak Campus, 343 State Street, Building 10, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Rochester, NY 14650 585-544-6170 ext. 7500  
[www.emhcharter.org](http://www.emhcharter.org)

the community deliberately and extending the invitation to approve this proposed public charter school will undeniably impact the community one family at a time!

I am delighted to exhibit my support and recommendation for Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School. It is my hope to see this in fruition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sofia W".

Sofia Williams  
1<sup>st</sup> Grade ELA Teacher  
EMHCS



Erica Woolway

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

To Whom it May Concern

I am honored to write a letter in support of the Rochester Excellence Academy which is a proposed k-4 charter school for families of Rochester, NY. I had the pleasure of working with Brittany Rumph as part of her work as a Teach Like a Champion Fellow from 2015-2017. In that capacity, Brittany brought a ton of passion and insight to her work, at the time as a Kindergarten teacher in Rochester, NY. As a school leader with Building Excellent Schools, I have no doubt that she will bring the same level of commitment and dedication to her school.

Especially with the state of our country in the midst of the COVID crisis, I know that the City of Rochester needs that many more strong educational opportunities for families to choose from. With Brittany's leadership, Rochester Excellence Academy could provide a stellar education both in the immediate future and many years from now.

I thoroughly support and recommend Rochester Excellence Academy to open in the fall of 2021 to serve and equip families with the excellent education they need and deserve. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Erica Woolway

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



**KIPP** ACADEMY

CHICAGO PRIMARY

May 18, 2020

David Frank  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Mr. Frank,

I am writing this letter in support of Rochester Excellence Academy, a proposed K-4 public charter school based in Rochester, NY.

Growing up, my parents instilled and were insistent upon the importance of education for me. They believed that it took a village to raise a child and chose schools where a true village could be created. These schools maintained excellent academic achievement as well as cultivated love. School often provides stability and safety for students. It is a place where students know what to expect, are pushed to achieve academically and be prepared to navigate through life. I am confident that the students at Rochester Excellence Academy will be pushed to their highest level of academic achievement as well as character development rooted in a culture of love.

The families in Rochester deserve a school that encompasses all of these qualities and more. The mission of Rochester Excellence Academy serves to provide the resources necessary offer rigorous instruction, build meaningful relationships with parents and community partners and support individual student needs. While academics are of paramount importance, Rochester Excellence Academy will also provide access to the arts in order to support social emotional development. I know this to be true based on what I know about the lead founder, Brittany Rumph.

I had the privilege of being mentored by Ms. Rumph going into my senior year of college. Her mentorship has positively impacted my professional journey as an educator. I've witnessed her expertise and passion as an instructor, which then transferred seamlessly as a leader. As the lead founder of Rochester Excellence Academy, I am confident that she will undoubtedly foster a team culture of love, compassion and support that will extend to her scholars.

I am honored to extend my support and recommendation to Rochester Excellence Academy. I know it will be a quality option for the students and families of Rochester and it is my hope that it will open in the fall of 2021.

Sincerely,  
Janise Wright

### ATTACHMENT 3: Course Descriptions

<b>Course Descriptions</b>	
<b>Course</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Interactive Read Aloud</b>	Teachers model fluent reading with appropriate expression and metacognition, thinking aloud as they read. Students develop active listening and reading comprehension skills through whole group discussion which includes factual, inferential, and critical thinking text-based questions. Based upon strong academic ELA results in the elementary grades serving a similar population of need, Amplify Core Knowledge Curriculum, paired with culturally relevant texts, will be used as it aligns to the NYSNGLS. Lower Academy students (K-2) will have a daily 10-minute SEL focused interactive read aloud and a 20-minute interactive read aloud based on the NYSNGLS for ELA. Upper Academy students (3-4) will engage in a daily 10-minute SEL focused interactive read aloud.
<b>Phonics</b>	Direct instruction in small group of 5-10 students, mastering phonological and phonemic awareness, traditional phonics, reading fluency, Dolch sight words, spelling, word work, and vocabulary. Phonics instruction is the foundation for literacy built in the early elementary years. Based upon its successful use by multiple schools serving a similar population of need, Lower Academy (K-2) teachers use Wilson Foundations Curriculum and Amplify Core Knowledge Curriculum, which aligns to the NYSNGLS, to provide a multi-sensory approach to teaching phonics, in daily 45-minute intervals.
<b>Guided Reading</b>	Teachers begin with a mini lesson modeling a key decoding and reading comprehension skill followed by a short group practice. Students then apply this skill to a shared leveled text, independently, with individual feedback and guidance from the teacher. Students then retell and discuss the text with the whole group. Guided Reading groups are homogeneous and consist of 3-5 students. Based upon strong academic ELA results in the elementary grades serving a similar population of need, Amplify Core Knowledge Curriculum will be used as it aligns to the NYSNGLS. Lower Academy students (K-2) will engage in three 20-minute Narrative Guided Reading Lessons per week. Upper Academy students (3-4) will engage in three 20-minute Narrative Guided Reading Lessons and three 20-minute Informational Text Guided Reading Lessons per week.
<b>Reading Comprehension</b>	Teachers model fluent reading with appropriate expression and metacognition, thinking aloud. Students continue exploring the same reading comprehension skill introduced during Read Aloud, whole group, during small group rotations. Small groups are homogeneous and consist of 5-10 students. Reading Comprehension lessons consist of an introduction or review of a reading comprehension skill, verbal group application of the skill embedded in a read aloud and comprehension conversation and conclude with an independent written response to text which allows for independent application. Based upon strong academic ELA results in the elementary grades serving a similar population of need, Amplify Core Knowledge Curriculum will be used as it aligns to the NYSNGLS. Upper and Lower Academy students will engage in two 45-minute Reading Comprehension Lessons per week.
<b>Independent Literacy Block</b>	Students are assigned targeted books to read independently, complete writing tasks, complete word work tasks, and engage in computer work during the independent literacy block. Texts chosen include a book of interest and leveled texts. Writing tasks include name writing, written response to texts, narrative, opinion, and informational pieces. Word work is tailored to meet individual needs and is developed by classroom teachers, with final approval from the Director of Curriculum & Instruction to ensure NYSNGLS alignment, to supplement our Wilson Foundations curriculum. Each student has access to computers and uses technology-based literacy programs, such as RAZ-kids, EPIC, and Amplify Core Knowledge's Digital Component, to increase their literacy skills. Students are



	responsible for holding themselves accountable, practice responsible decision-making, and sustained productivity. Lower and Upper Academy students will engage in a daily 45-minute independent literacy block.
<b>Shared Writing</b>	Teachers model using the writing process to develop a narrative writing piece. Teachers think aloud throughout each step of the writing process and prompt student thinking by asking for feedback and feigning ignorance. Students provide ideas for the illustrations and written text. After students provide their invented spelling of desired words, the teacher gives correct spelling. Lower Academy students (K-2) will engage in a daily 15-minute Shared Writing Lesson developed internally by the Head of School and Lower Academy Director of Curriculum & Instruction.
<b>Independent Student Writing</b>	Students independently go through the writing process using their teacher's models, anchor charts posted around the room, knowledge gained through Amplify Core Knowledge, and phonics skills. Students are given a topic and are responsible for developing illustrations and text for their writing pieces. Writing pieces include opinion, informational, and narratives. Teachers circulate during independent writing delivering written feedback and conferencing with students to aid them in mastering NYSNGLS ELA standards for writing. Lower and Upper Academy students will engage in a daily independent writing block.
<b>Grammar</b>	Teachers deliver traditional grammar lessons. Teachers introduce and model a skill or concept, students practice applying the skill or concept together, and the lesson concludes with student independent practice, which allows for independent application. During independent practice, teachers will monitor and give written feedback to support students in mastering NYSNGLS ELA standards for writing. Upper Academy students (3-4) will engage in daily 10 -minute grammar lessons.
<b>Math Fluency</b>	Students engage in introduction and review of basic Mathematics to build a solid foundation, promote automaticity, and enable sophistication of complex math strategies during problem-solving. Instructional practices for Math Fluency include Calendar Math, oral drills, timed fluency drills, spiral review, and weekly assessments. Upper and Lower Academy students will engage in a daily 15-minute math fluency skills practice.
<b>Math Lessons</b>	Math lessons are primarily inquiry-based and aligned to the NYSNGLS. Lessons begin with the teacher providing the parameters of a task, followed by student independent or group work time, and concluding with a whole group mathematical discourse. During student work time, teachers collect data, give written feedback, and prompt students to explain their thinking. During Discourse, the teacher charts student thinking and given strategies. Students identify conceptual understandings or big ideas gained from the task. Charts with student thinking and conceptual understandings are posted in the room as anchor charts for student reference. Based upon strong academic Math results in the elementary grades serving a similar population of need, Eureka Math Curriculum will be used as it aligns to the NYSNGLS. Lower and Upper Academy students will engage in a daily 45-minute math lesson.
<b>Cognitively Guided Instruction</b>	Teachers read or tell a mathematical story. Students retell the story. Students may act out the story to gain understanding. Students independently solve the problem in the story using their strategy of choice. During student work time, both teachers circulate collecting student data, delivering written feedback, and prompting students to explain their thinking to aid in student mastery of the NYSNGLS for math. Teachers strategically choose 2-3 students to share their strategies, to push the classes thinking by addressing a misconception or promoting sophisticated strategies. Students then engage in a whole group mathematical discourse. Students identify conceptual understandings gained from the problem-solving block; teachers chart these and post them in the room as anchor charts for students to reference. Teachers will follow the CGI Model outlined in Carpenter, Fennema, Franke, Levi, and Empson's <i>Children's Mathematics: Cognitively Guided Instruction</i> . Lower and Upper Academy students will engage in a daily 45-minute CGI block.



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Science</b></p>	<p>Through Amplify Science Curriculum, students engage in experiments and investigations of real-life phenomena. Students engage in hands-on experiments, virtual investigations, and gain scientific knowledge through literacy. Students work independently and in small groups. Amplify Science is used in surrounding districts including East Irondequoit and West Irondequoit with great success. Lower Academy students (K-2) will have 20 minutes of exploration in our STEAM Centers. Students engage in purposeful play and group collaboration in our Visual Arts, Dance, Music, and Science centers. Our science centers will include WXXI Science Kits from the City of Rochester’s Toy Library to increase students’ hand-on science exploration and cooperative group learning, which is used successfully in Rochester’s Universal Pre-kindergarten classrooms. Daily 30-minute Social Studies and Science Lessons will alternate unit by unit, about every 6 weeks, for Lower and Upper Academy students.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Social Studies</b></p>	<p>Students gain knowledge of themselves, their community, and the world in which they live through curriculum internally created by the HOS and Directors of Curriculum and Instruction; curriculum is aligned to the NYSNGLS and ensures cultural relevance. The HOS, Lower Academy DCI, and Upper Academy DCI will use the NYSNGLS, narrative texts and informational texts to guide the creation of our social studies curriculum. Students explore connection to their community and the world. Students also explore History and Geography. Our Social Studies curriculum will build upon knowledge gained through Amplify Core Knowledge Curriculum. Daily 30-minute Social Studies and Science Lessons will alternate unit by unit, approximately every six weeks, for Lower and Upper Academy students.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Enrichment</b></p>	<p>Students explore the arts creating, producing, presenting, performing, responding to, and making cross-curricular connection aligned to the NYS Learning Standards for the Arts. Enrichment classes include Classical Ballet, West African Dance, Visual Arts, and Music, for 45 minutes daily for all students. Classes are instructed by Teaching Artists. Students also explore an art form of their choice for the last 35 minutes of the school day through our partnership with the YMCA of Greater Rochester. The YMCA Dreamseeds program offers rotating instruction in Fine Arts &amp; Graffiti, Breakdancing, Drama &amp; Script Writing, DJing &amp; Production, Poetry, and Spoken Word &amp; Rap.</p>



### ATTACHMENT 3a: Student and Teacher “Day in the Life”

**Jaquan is a kindergarten scholar at Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School.** It is the sixth week of school. At 7:00 am. Jaquan eagerly skip counts by 2s on his car ride to school, showing off to his mother what he has been learning, and he can’t wait to display his mastery of skip counting by 2s during this morning’s Calendar Math lesson. His mom pulls up to a line of cars in front of the school as soon as the car comes to a complete stop. Mr. Jones, the school’s Social Worker, approaches the car opening the door and says with a bright smile, “Good Morning, Ms. Snow. Good Morning, Jaquan,” and he assists Jaquan with exiting the car safely.<sup>1</sup> Jaquan walks up the short sidewalk and school steps with his maroon folder, holding his completed homework and signed Excellence Report under his left arm as his teachers have shown him. He is greeted by the warm greeting of the Head of School standing in the main entrance. “Good Morning Jaquan,” says Ms. Rumph as she stretches out her elbow for a morning elbow bump.<sup>2</sup> She explains, “Let’s try that again, Jaquan, and this time you’ll say, ‘Good Morning, Ms. Rumph’ while looking confidently into my eyes. That’s the proper way we greet each other every morning.” Jaquan jumps right into the greeting practice and nails it with a huge smile. Ms. Rumph praises his growth and welcomes him into the school. Jaquan enters the school, proceeding down the hall lined with school staff every step of the way who are matching the warm and welcoming tone of the Head of School. Each staff member greets him with a simple and soft, “Good Morning, Jaquan,” without the elbow bump. Jaquan is ushered along the hallway lined with huge college flags hanging from the ceiling. When he reaches his classroom door, he sees as he always does Ms. Latimer standing directly beneath the Hampton University flag and Ms. White seated at her table working one on one with a student on decoding strategies. Jaquan gets the chance to practice his scholarly greeting again and this time he gives the teacher eye contact and remembers on his own to say good morning. Ms. White praises his scholarly voice and smile, welcomes him into the classroom, and receives his maroon folder. The soft sounds of smooth jazz music fill the air. He walks to the closet hanging his backpack and coat on the hook labeled with his name. Before heading to his table, he places his picture under the “I’m struggling” column on the Feelings chart and proceeds to grab his breakfast. At his table spot, he places his breakfast on his nameplate as he has been taught, and then grabs his Morning Work folder out of his pocketed seat sack which is the next step of his morning routine. Once seated, Jaquan begins eating his breakfast silently as others around him had already begun their Morning Work. While completing his Morning Work Ms. Latimer, leaves her post at the doorway, to approach him for a quick check-in, in response to his indication of a struggle on the Feelings Chart. Jaquan explains that though he was excited to be at school he had begun to miss his mom. Ms. Latimer explains that missing loved ones is completely fine and reminds him that he is going to have an amazing time at school and before he knows it the time will fly by. She suggests taking out his photograph of his mother out of his backpack and placing it next to his name or grabbing a class stuffed buddy to sit with him. Jaquan decides to grab his favorite stuffed Hampton U Perseverance Pirate. At **7:20 am** Ms. White says quietly, “Last bites. 1, 2, 3 all eyes on me.” Matching her tone as students have been taught, the class responds, “1, 2 eyes on you.” Ms. White instructs all class environmental service providers to begin their duties. Students with that weekly occupation begin clearing all tables of trash. Once trash is collected, Ms. White calls over eight students to her U-shaped table and Ms. Latimer calls over seven students

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<sup>1</sup> Details of arrival, particularly distancing and use of masks, may be part of morning arrival and other systems. As we are planning an August 2022 opening, which is 14 months away from the writing of this charter, it is not yet clear what systems will be needed. We will monitor closely all system and procedural modifications throughout our planning year and implement accordingly and as needed.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Elbow bump will likely replace handshake.



to her U-shaped table. The remaining students know their job is to grab a math fluency worksheet from their intervention folder as they are three weeks away from their Interim Math Assessment. Each group of students are working on sharpening a different math skill to prepare for the upcoming assessment. At **7:45 am**, following a swift four-step routine that keeps the morning focused and successful each day, scholars quickly stand from their chairs and prepare to transition to the rainbow carpet with 30 squares. “Yesterday, we transitioned to the carpet in one minute,” explains Ms. White. “Today, I challenge you to transition to the carpet in 55 seconds. I know you can do it.” Scholars accept the challenge and begin swiftly and orderly making their way around the edges of the carpet while chanting. As the last scholar files into place, all of their faces light up as they realize that they’ve achieved their goal of beating the given time. Scholars celebrate for two seconds with a whole group choral “We did it!” dance break and then sit down with hands folded and tucked neatly into their laps as Ms. White scans for strong scholarly posture and all students in the middle of their assigned squares. Family Meeting begins with a read aloud of *Thelma the Unicorn* by Aaron Blabey, delivered by Ms. Latimer. In the story, a horse becomes a unicorn and quickly learns life was better when he was himself. After the Read Aloud, a class discussion begins about our CORE Value of Excellence; each scholar knows, “I go above and beyond every day. I only present the best version of myself.” Students explain how they exhibit Excellence. Jaquan explains, “I show Excellence by greeting all adults with a warm smile and eye contact when I see them for the first time of the day.” Ms. White steps in to deliver another Read Aloud, this time focusing on identifying the talking characters and the setting of the narrative text. While reading, Ms. White frequently stops to pose pre-planned thinking questions to the group. Jaquan answers a question by explaining that he thinks that the duck is a talking character in the story. Ms. White asks all other students to evaluate his answer; students display their thumbs on their chest with their evaluation. Ms. White then asks Jaquan, “What is the definition of a talking character?” The class wiggles their fingers towards Jaquan, sending him positive waves of support. Jaquan pauses to think, “. . . Talking characters are... are... people, animals, or objects talking in the story.” “So, is the duck a talking character?” asks Ms. White. Jaquan explains, “No, he’s not.” Ms. Whites mimics stretching a piece of slime out with her hands. Jaquan knows that gesture means to stretch it out and explain. “No, the duck is not a talking character because he does not talk in the story. He is just sitting in the pond.” Ms. White says, “He worked it out!” The class chorally responds, “He worked it out!” At the end of Read Aloud, Ms. White instructs the classroom’s Technical Support Team to complete their duties. Students with that occupation for the week grab computers and headphones and set them up for the independent literacy block. The class splits into three groups and transitions to their first literacy group while softly chanting Wilson Foundations Letter Sounds. Jaquan is with Ms. Latimer first as his group goes through a series of oral drills including Wilson Letters and letters sounds, 10 new Dolch sight words and review words, and the vowel song. They then work on spelling CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words and finally collaboratively read a leveled text with an emphasis on holding a pattern and 1:1 matching. After their small group work, Jaquan’s group transitions to the independent literacy block where he works on reading a leveled text, a text of his choice, practices typing his 10 new Dolch sight words, and finally plays interactive literacy games on Raz-kids on his Chromebook. Jaquan’s last group is with Ms. White, continuing to work on identifying talking characters and the setting of a narrative text. After group practice during a Read Aloud, Jaquan has a written response with an illustration to complete regarding the setting at the end of the story. After literacy rotations, at **10:35 am**, Ms. Latimer leads students in a whole group movement break where the class gets to be silly and dance to their favorite Go Noddle Dance-a-longs. Students then

transition to their carpet spots attempting to beat their previous transition time of 55 seconds. Jaquan excitedly waves at Ms. Rodriguez, an ENL Teacher, who enters the room. Ms. Rodriguez joins the class on the carpet, sitting between Jaquan and his favorite classroom buddy Abdili. Jaquan loves when Ms. Rodriguez joins the classroom for writing, as she assists Abdili and the children surrounding him when it is time for them to identify letter sounds in given words within Ms. White's narrative stories. Ms. White reveals the narrative topic of the day: "Tell about a time you felt afraid." Ms. White describes the time she was afraid to drive home from school in a snowstorm. She asks the class for suggestions regarding her illustration. She thinks of two matching sentences which describe the time she was afraid. Students eagerly volunteer to attempt the spelling of each word as they are working hard at segmenting words in phonics. Jaquan is called on to spell the word "was"; he takes a second to think and stretch out the word was on his finger, "w...u...z..." and then gazes at the word wall and recalled that was it is Dolch sight word. He excitedly says, "It's a sight word! WAS!" Once the class attempts to spell all of the words in both sentences, they compare their spelling to the actual words, and then they celebrate spelling all sight words and two CVC words correctly. Students transition back to their tables for independent writing where their topic is "Tell about a time you were surprised." Smooth jazz music fills the air again as students compose narrative writing pieces. Both teachers circulate giving written feedback on basic writing conventions, collecting student data on mastery of conventions and invented spelling, and conferencing with students on connecting their illustration and writing. The smooth jazz music slowly fades away; students realize that writing is over. They neatly place their unfinished writing pieces into their writing folders and tuck the folder into their seat sack. Students line up and quietly walk through the hallway to the cafetorium. Everyone greets Ms. Snow, grabs their lunch, and enjoy conversations with their classmates, using restaurant voices which means that the students right next to them are the only ones that can hear their voice! Ms. Latimer and Ms. White head to the teachers' cafe to eat their lunch. After lunch, students come into the classroom and begin exploring the STEAM Centers. Jaquan chooses to explore the Science center where he works with three classmates to build simple machines. Both Ms. Latimer and Ms. White observe the scholars play and explore, unless they are invited into play. After cleaning up, Ms. Laitmer leads them in "Moments of Peace." Each student finds a place anywhere in the room to sit, stand, or lay down for two minutes, the lights are turned off, spa music is playing, and the teacher is encouraging scholars to take deep breaths. Scholars transition out of Moments of Peace and back to their carpet spots for Calendar Math. At **12:05 pm**, Ms. Latimer guides students through Calendar Math full of whole group math skills practice including calendar, skip counting, and shapes. At **12:20 pm**, Ms. White tells the story of the day: "Shana'e had 10 grapes for snack. At snack time, she wasn't very hungry and only ate 6 of her grapes. She put the rest of her grapes back into her lunch pail. How many grapes are in her lunch pail?" Ms. White then reveals the story problem and reads it off a pre-written chart. Three scholars retell the story problem. They then act out the problem using pictures of grapes and Ms. White's lunchbox. After, acting it out, scholars briskly return to their tables which have the math story problem on it. Some scholars pull out their cubes to solve it, while others choose to use their pencil and paper. Both teachers circulate giving written feedback on each scholar's paper. Scholars have been taught to respond to that feedback through their work and not their words. Jaquan receives a delta at the top of his paper indicating he has forgotten to write his name. Two scholars are chosen to share their strategy with the class. As they share their strategies Ms. White is silently representing their work on huge graph paper. The remaining scholars then move into a discussion about the two strategies and develop an applicable big idea. That chart is immediately hung on a clothesline on the side of the room for

future reference. Ms. White then chooses a scholar to model a math game with her - Roll and Record. Students are then paired up and spend time playing the game as both teachers circulate, observing and pushing scholars to explain their thinking behind each decision. At the end of the game, two pairs are welcomed to the front of the room to share their strategies during the game; Partner Group A explains that they use their fingers to count the dots on the dice to determine their individual totals, after rolling and, then use the number line to determine who has more; Partner Group B explains that they used mental math whenever they rolled at least one 5 on the die, they would recognize it was 5 dots from the formation of the dots, start at 5 and count on mentally to find their total, also using the number line to determine who had more based on who was closer to the number 12, realizing it was the highest possible total. As they share, Ms. White represents their strategies on a large chart paper. The remaining scholars have a group discussion surrounding the presented strategies and develop an applicable big idea for the day “We can ‘hold’/conserve one number and count on to find the total of two numbers.” The chart is then hung up for future reference. At **1:40 pm**, Jaquan transitions to the restroom with Ms. Latimer and a group of boys to swiftly change into sweatpants to allow for a safe range of movement during West African Dance Class. Ms. White and the girls meet them in the dance studio where they are welcomed with rhythmic drumming. Students stand in their assigned spots and jump directly into a warmup routine. Students engage in a call and response song and movement sequence, *Funga Alafia*, both stationary and traveling around the room. While students are enjoying West African Dance Class, Ms. White and Ms. Latimer attend a weekly data meeting led by their Grade Level Chair Ms. Lee regarding kindergarten math data from the previous week. After class, students stop for a well-deserved water break. At **2:35 pm**, upon their return to the classroom, students sit at their tables, and Ms. White asks the classroom Nutritionists to pass out snack. Students enjoy snack time and conversation, using a restaurant voice. At **2:43 pm**, the environmental service providers clean up snack as the class transitions to the carpet for a science lesson with Ms. Latimer. During Science, Jaquan works with his group to investigate pollution by humans. They listen to a short video, read a book collectively, and record facts regarding human pollution, using mostly illustrations with some invented spelling in their Science journals. They then begin pre-planning for their “Stop the Pollution” campaign which will include a group visual and persuasive presentation in which they will present all the facts they learned about pollution, during Community Meeting at the end of the unit. Upon storing their science materials away, students take turns getting their belongings out of the closet, hang them on their chairs, and collect their maroon Life’s Work Folders from their cubbies. After pack-up, students line up to attend their chosen arts course for the month of October. Jaquan chose to attend Music Production. He is excited to continue exploring making original beats using a Digital Audio Workstation. While students are exploring different art forms, both Ms. Latimer and Ms. White begin inputting student data into the online school-wide trackers and modify the next day’s lessons to address new student data. After class, Jaquan quickly returns to his classroom to prepare for dismissal. Smooth Jazz music fills the air while students wait to be called for dismissal. Jaquan reads *Party Shapes*, from Scholastics First Little Readers Level B, as he waits for his mother. Hearing his name called over the walkie-talkie, he says goodbye to both teachers and walks down the hallway until he arrives at the front door where the Head of School wishes him a good evening and the Enrichment teacher ushers him into his mother’s car. While he’s happy to see his mother, he realizes many of his classmates stayed after school for the YMCA Program and asks his mother to sign him up. She loves Jaquan’s excitement and agrees to sign him up for the after-school YMCA Program starting next week.



## ATTACHMENT 3b: Optional Curricular Materials

In response to resounding interest and excitement from multiple community stakeholders, Rochester Excellence Academy has partnered with the YMCA of Greater Rochester in response to the expressed need for increased access to arts and extracurricular curricular activities for students. That partnership informs unique aspects of our curriculum.

**Dreamseeds.** The YMCA’s Dreamseeds program was developed to allow young people to build their potential, self-esteem, and creativity through experiencing the arts. Dreamseeds participants choose among several programs designed to encourage them to develop a positive outlook on life, through focusing on the arts with leadership and performance opportunities.<sup>1</sup> Local Teaching Artists from the Dreamseeds program will offer an additional 35-minute daily arts exploration block within the school, Monday through Thursday throughout the school year, during which students will choose from a variety of art forms to explore including: Fine Arts & Graffiti, Breakdancing, Drama & Script Writing, Djing & Production, Poetry, and Spoken word & Rap.

**Accelerating Academics.** The YMCA will also offer an optional afterschool program through their Accelerating Academics, offered within our school building. The after-school program will be staffed by YMCA staff, Monday through Thursday, and will focus on providing students with a safe place to go in the afternoon, helping them realize who they are and what they can achieve through their participation in a balanced program built on academic intervention, health, and enrichment programming. The program has proven to improve students’ social-emotional skills, increase attachment, improve school conduct, and increase self-efficacy see **Figure 3b.2**.

**Power Scholars Academy.** The YMCA will also offer access to its summer program, an evidence-based summer program developed through a partnership with the YMCA and BellXcel (Building Educated Leaders for Life), which blends rigorous, small-group academic instruction with camp-like enrichment activities focusing on literacy, math, STEM, the arts, and health education. Their summer program has proven to improve students’ confidence and attitude towards school and learning. Power Scholars Academy’s participants have exhibited growth in both reading and math skills see **Figure 3b.3**.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://rochesterymca.org/community-buildings/dreamseeds-teaching-more-than-music/>.

Figure 3b.1: YMCA Dreamseeds Program



## INDIVIDUAL IMPACT

Dreamseeds allows kids to build their potential, self-esteem and creativity through experiencing the arts. Dreamseeds participants choose among several programs designed to encourage youth to develop a positive outlook on life. It focuses on the arts with leadership and performance opportunities.

### MINDSET

- CREATIVITY
- ENERGY
- CONFIDENCE
- FOCUS

### SKILLSET

- LEADERSHIP
- PROBLEM-SOLVING
- PUBLIC SPEAKING
- ARTS LITERACY

rochesterYMCA.org

*Dreamseeds* is a free performing arts program for anyone ages 9-18. Programs are designed to empower participants through hip-hop culture. We provide a variety of fun programs to meet all interests and spark creativity.

### OUR PROGRAM OFFERINGS

#### Fine Arts & Graffiti Expression

5-7 pm, Mondays | This program explores the history of art forms and styles throughout time to promote different forms of artistic expression.

#### Cultural Dance & Drum Circle

7-8 pm, Thursdays or 1-2 pm, Saturdays | This program teaches cultural knowledge to produce and perform as a unit between dancers and drummers.

#### MC Check 1, 2, 3, 2

5-7 pm, Mondays | MCs will be given the tools to confidently pick up their rhyme book and express themselves through poetry, spoken word, rap, singing, and all other forms of verbal expression.

#### B-Boying & Dance

7-8 pm, Tuesdays | Dancers will learn the art of choreography while exploring how their emotions fuel the way we dance.

#### Jazz Band

5-7 pm, Mondays | This program will introduce, build on, and teach youth how to play the instruments of their choice, and teach them the history of jazz band along the way.

#### Intro to Music, DJing & Production

7-8 pm, Tuesdays | To be a producer means to understand how sounds, rhythms and melodies create a work of art rooted in music theory.

#### Lights, Camera, Action!

5-7 pm, Thursdays | Actors will learn about the art of acting, script writing, and self-expression.

For more information, contact Devin Anglin, Arts Enrichment Coordinator:  
585-623-0717 or [devin\\_anglin@rochesterymca.org](mailto:devin_anglin@rochesterymca.org)

Find Us Online:  
[rochesterYMCA.org/programs/dreamseeds](http://rochesterYMCA.org/programs/dreamseeds)

YMCA of Greater Rochester  
Dreamseeds Group

@ymcagrochester





Figure 3b.2: YMCA Accelerating Academics Afterschool Program

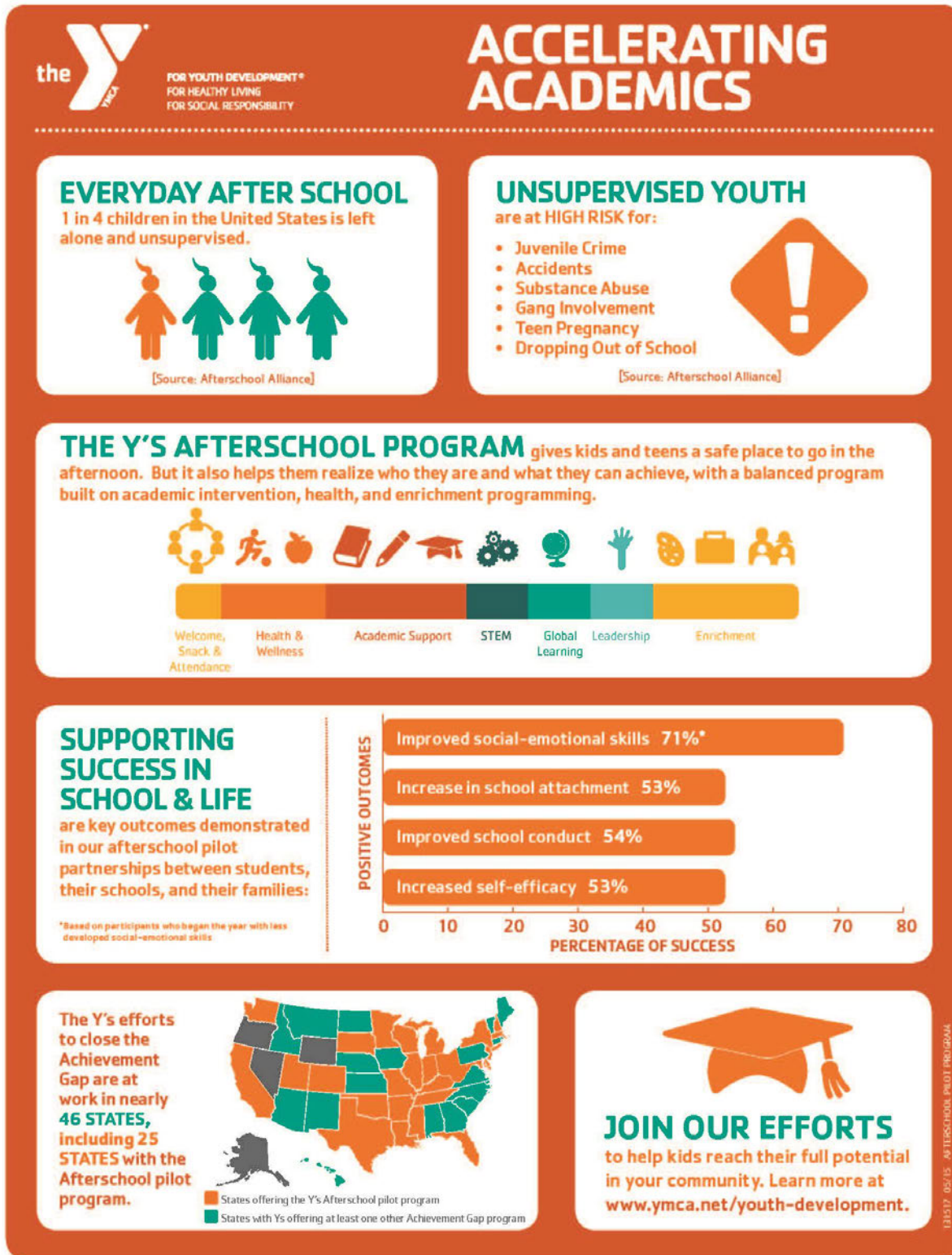





Figure 3b.3: YMCA Power Scholars Academy Summer Program




FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# SUMMER TO SUCCEED

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### SUMMERTIME MEANS ENRICHMENT

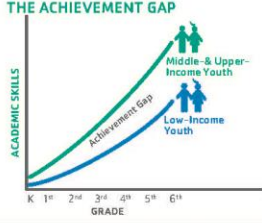
—camping, travel, and field trips—for many youth. But it is often a time of learning loss for many students, especially those from low-income families.



### ACHIEVEMENT GAP WIDENS OVER TIME








Kids from low-income families often start school unprepared. Despite progressing at the same rates during the school year, gaps widen each summer—and students fall farther behind their peers.

#### THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP



### POWER SCHOLARS ACADEMY™


a pilot partnership between the Y and the national nonprofit BELL (Building Educated Leaders for Life), doesn't just tackle summer learning loss—it builds strong youth, academically, physically, and emotionally. The program partners with local schools to support K-8 students in literacy, math, enrichment activities in STEM and the arts, along with a health curriculum.


Breakfast & Community Time
Literacy
Math
Lunch & Recreation
STEM
Arts
Health

### WE'RE EXCITED

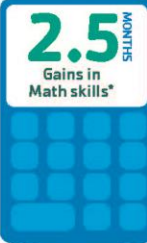
by what we've been able to accomplish in just six weeks during the summer:




**1,190**  
Children  
in 10 sites in 2014



**2.5**  
MONTHS  
Gains in Reading\*



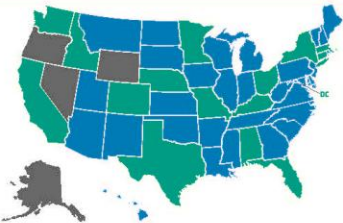
**2.5**  
MONTHS  
Gains in Math skills\*




**92%**  
Parents report improvements in scholars' confidence and attitude toward school and learning

\*Results from computer adaptive Star Enterprise Assessments for scholars in need of academic intervention that scored in the lowest quartile at the start of the summer.

The Y's efforts to close the Achievement Gap are at work in nearly 46 STATES, including 15 STATES, plus Washington, DC, with the Power Scholars Academy™ pilot program.



■ States offering the Power Scholars Academy™ pilot program  
■ States with Ys offering at least one other Achievement Gap program



### JOIN OUR EFFORTS

to help kids reach their full potential in your community. Learn more at [www.ymca.net/youth-development](http://www.ymca.net/youth-development).

131517\_05/15\_POWER SCHOLARS ACADEMY™



### ATTACHMENT 3c: Exit Standards

**ELA.** Locate and refer to relevant details and evidence when explaining what a text says explicitly/implicitly and make logical inferences. Determine a theme or central idea of text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize a text. In literary texts, describe a character, setting, or event, drawing on specific details in the text. In informational texts, explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts, including what happened and why, based on specific evidence from the text. Determine the meaning of words, phrases, figurative language, academic, and content-specific words. In literary texts, identify and analyze structural elements, using terms such as verse, rhythm, meter, characters, settings, dialogue, stage directions. In informational texts, identify the overall structure using terms such as sequence, comparison, cause/effect, and problem/solution. In literary texts, compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations. In informational texts, compare and contrast a primary and secondary source on the same event or topic. Identify information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, timelines, animations, illustrations), and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text. Explain how claims in a text are supported by relevant reasons and evidence. Recognize genres and make connections to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. Read grade-level text with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. Write an argument to support claim(s), using clear reasons and relevant evidence. Write informative/explanatory texts to explore a topic and convey ideas and information relevant to the subject. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. Create a poem, story, play, artwork, or other response to a text, author, theme, or personal experience. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to respond and support analysis, reflection, and research by applying the grade 4 Reading Standards. Conduct research to answer questions, including self-generated questions, and to build knowledge through investigating multiple aspects of a topic. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from multiple sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners, expressing ideas clearly, and building on those of others. Paraphrase portions of information presented in diverse formats (e.g., including visual, quantitative, and oral). Identify and evaluate the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points. Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace and volume appropriate for audience. Include digital media and/or visual displays in presentations to emphasize central ideas or themes. Distinguish between contexts that call for formal English versus/or informal discourse; use formal English when appropriate to task and situation. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. Acquire and accurately use general academic and content-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

**MATH.** Use the four operations with whole numbers to solve problems. Interpret a multiplication equation as a comparison. Represent verbal statements of multiplicative comparisons as multiplication equations. Multiply or divide to solve word problems involving multiplicative comparison, distinguishing multiplicative comparison from additive comparison. Use drawings and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem. Solve multistep word problems posed with whole numbers and having whole-number answers using the four operations, including problems in which remainders must be interpreted. Gain familiarity with factors and multiples. Find all factor pairs for a whole number in the range 1–100. Recognize that a whole number is a multiple of each of its factors. Determine whether a given whole number in the range 1–100 is a multiple of a given one-digit number.

Determine whether a given whole number in the range 1-100 is prime or composite. Generate and analyze patterns. Generate a number or shape pattern that follows a given rule. Identify and informally explain apparent features of the pattern that were not explicit in the rule itself. Generalize place value understanding for multi-digit whole numbers. Recognize that in a multi-digit whole number, a digit in one place represents ten times what it represents in the place to its right. Use place value understanding to round multi-digit whole numbers to any place. Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic. Fluently add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers using a standard algorithm. Multiply a whole number of up to four digits by a one-digit whole number, and multiply two two-digit numbers, using strategies based on place value and the properties of operations. Illustrate and explain the calculation by using equations, rectangular arrays, and/or area models. Find whole-number quotients and remainders with up to four-digit dividends and one-digit divisors, using strategies based on place value, the properties of operations, and/or the relationship between multiplication and division. Illustrate and explain the calculation by using equations, rectangular arrays, and/or area models. Extend understanding of fraction equivalence and ordering. Explain why a fraction  $\frac{a}{b}$  is equivalent to a fraction  $\frac{a \times n}{b \times n}$  by using visual fraction models, with attention to how the number and size of the parts differ even though the two fractions themselves are the same size. Use this principle to recognize and generate equivalent fractions. Compare two fractions with different numerators and different denominators. Build fractions from unit fractions by applying and extending previous understandings of operations on whole numbers. Understand a fraction  $\frac{a}{b}$  with  $a > 1$  as a sum of fractions  $\frac{1}{b}$ . Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication to multiply a whole number by a fraction. Understand decimal notation for fractions, and compare decimal fractions. Express a fraction with denominator 10 as an equivalent fraction with denominator 100, and use this technique to add two fractions with respective denominators 10 and 100. Use decimal notation for fractions with denominators 10 or 100. Compare two decimals to hundredths by reasoning about their size. Recognize that comparisons are valid only when two decimals refer to the same whole. Record the results of comparisons with the symbols  $>$ ,  $=$ , or  $<$  and justify with conclusion. Solve problems involving measurement and conversion of measurements from a larger unit to a smaller unit. Know relative sizes of measurement units: ft., in.; km, m, cm. Use the four operations to solve word problems involving distances, intervals of time, liquid volumes, masses of objects, and money. Apply the area and perimeter formulas for rectangles in real world and mathematical problems. Represent and interpret data. Make a line plot to display a data set of measurements in fractions of a unit ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{8}$ ). Solve problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions by using information presented in line plots. Geometric measurement: understand concepts of angle and measure angles. Recognize angles as geometric shapes that are formed wherever two rays share a common endpoint, and understand concepts of angle measurement. Measure angles in whole-number degrees using a protractor. Sketch angles of specified measure. Recognize angle measure as additive. When an angle is decomposed into non-overlapping parts, the angle measure of the whole is the sum of the angle measures of the parts. Solve addition and subtraction problems to find unknown angles on a diagram in real world and mathematical problems. Draw and identify lines and angles, and classify shapes by properties of their lines and angles. Draw points, lines, line segments, rays, angles (right, acute, obtuse), and perpendicular and parallel lines. Identify these in two-dimensional figures. Recognize a line of symmetry for a two-dimensional figure as a line across the figure such that the figure can be folded along the line into matching parts. Identify and name triangles based on angle size (right, obtuse, acute). Identify and name all quadrilaterals with 2 pairs of parallel sides as parallelograms. Identify and name all quadrilaterals with four right angles as rectangles. Identify line-symmetric figures and draw lines of symmetry.



## ATTACHMENT 4: Student Discipline Policy

The Rochester Excellence Academy community will use our **RESPECT** core values to guide our mindsets, decisions, and actions. All systems and routines maximize instructional minutes, ensuring classrooms and educational spaces operate in a predictable manner, promoting safety, security, and success; students feel safe and successful when there are known expectations that they are capable of meeting. Rochester Excellence Academy is committed to treating all students with dignity and respect in a learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. Our discipline policy is designed to support students' safety, physical, and emotional well-being.

**Positive Behavior Intervention and Support.** We will use a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports ("PBIS") approach to support students in meeting high behavioral expectations. PBIS begins with explicitly taught expectations, including teacher modeling and identifying when expectations are met. When a student exemplifies one of our core values or meets behavioral expectations, teachers will pause instruction and use the model as a teachable moment. Positive behaviors and mindsets will be rewarded through our token system and praised publicly. Our Lower Academy students (K-2) can earn RESPECT Rewards and Upper Academy students (grades 3-4) can earn Scholar Dollars for meeting or exceeding behavioral and academic expectations. Rewards will be collected, tracked, and exchanged for a variety of incentives. PBIS is a tiered intervention approach, allowing us to implement increased individualized supports to aid students in meeting our high expectations, as needed.

**Discipline Approach.** We view any behavior outside of our given expectation as a gap in the 5 SEL Competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making, or as a direct result of trauma.<sup>1</sup> In preparing students for future success we realize that rigorous academics alone is not enough, especially for students who reside in a city which ranks number one in the nation for children living in extreme poverty.<sup>2</sup> Living in poverty has many potential negative impacts on children, often referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACEs. Research tells us that constant exposure to "harsh or unstable environments can create biological changes in the growing brains and bodies of infants and children."<sup>3</sup> These brain changes may impair a child's ability to regulate their thoughts and feelings, as well as make it difficult to manage emotions and process information. We will support student's inability to meet behavioral expectations in the same way that we address an inability to meet academic expectations - with individualized supports collaboratively developed and supported by the Student Supports Team, Classroom Teachers, and Families.<sup>4</sup> Teachers will provide reminders for students throughout the day as we support students' ability to self-regulate. Reminders will be delivered when students fail to meet our high behavioral expectations and are disrupting the learning environment. Our goal is to deliver the least invasive reminders, as possible, often utilizing non-verbal gestures and individual private corrections.

**Behavior Management System.** In grades K-2, we will use a color yardstick with the name of each child that can move with the teacher across learning stations and public spaces and in grades 3-4 a color pocket chart located in the classroom to track behavior. Visual representations of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://casel.org/core-competencies/>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.actrochester.org/tinymce/source/Census%20Update%202018.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Tough, Paul. *Helping Children Succeed What Works and Why*. NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Student Supports Team consists of Head of School, Student Supports Coordinator, ESOL Intervention Specialists, Special Education Specialists, and Social Worker.



rewards and consequences allows students to develop their self-regulation skills. This system will require that teachers give consistent feedback to students regarding their behavior and offer support for redeeming misbehavior. Throughout the school day students can see their behavioral status and are able to make improvements if needed.

**Figure 4.1: Behavior Management System (K-4)**

Blue - Kindergarten	Students are excelling, with 0 reminders, and are exceeding academic and behavioral expectations.
Bronze - Grade 1	
Silver - Grade 2	
Gold - Grade 3	
Platinum - Grade 4	
Green - All Grades	Students are consistently following academic and behavioral expectations and may require 1-2 individual reminders.
Yellow - All Grades	Students are struggling to follow academic and behavioral expectations and may require 3- 4 individual reminders.
Red -All Grades	Students are not following academic and behavioral expectations and require more than 4 reminders.

Throughout the school day if a student earns three Respect Rewards/Scholars Dollars, s/he is awarded with a color change; if s/he receives three reminders in one period, s/he receives a color change down. Colors are fluid throughout the day; there is always opportunity for students to make choices that will move their status up on the color stick/chart. The purpose is to support students in regulating themselves and establish a culture of achievement. All students will have a nightly Excellence Report which includes a behavior tracker which requires a signature each night. These reports will be filled out daily by classroom teachers. The color that students end the day with will be recorded in the nightly report, along with communication from the teacher if deemed necessary. Students who end each day on blue or green will receive a Respect Reward or Scholar Dollar.

**Behavioral Data.** Internally, behavior system results are analyzed daily by teachers and the Student Supports Team (Social Worker, Therapeutic Intervention Specialist, Director of Students Supports, and Head of School). The Team will look for any consistent trends with specific students and action plan the best interventions and supports. The data will be used to identify the specifics around behavioral challenges: (1) What time of day is this student receiving consequences? (2) Is there a trend in a certain subject or with a particular teacher? The answers to these questions will help the Team devise a behavioral plan for any students who have Tier 2 or 3 interventions. If a student continuously demonstrates behavioral challenges, s/he will receive additional behavioral supports. If a student is persistently struggling with behavior, the classroom teachers will collaborate with the Student Supports Team to create a Behavior Improvement Plan. Once an appropriate plan is developed, the plan will then be presented to the parent/guardian of the child, during a Collaborative Student Supports Meeting. These plans may include a checklist, daily progress report, reflection-based check in/check out procedure, an identified teacher mentor, or incentive systems taped on a student's desk. Intervention plans will be executed to fidelity, and the progress of the plan will be tracked regularly to monitor progress. The Social Worker, Therapeutic Intervention Specialist, and classroom teachers will meet to determine the plan's effectiveness after six weeks of implementation.

**Disciplinary Action.** If a student does not respond to the Tier 2 and 3 interventions and is also disrupting the learning environment, disciplinary action will be taken. At this time the student will meet with the Social Worker and Therapeutic Intervention Specialist who will determine next

steps. The student's academic success will always be our main priority; we will seek options that permit the student to remain in the classroom. If there is a more egregious offense (harassment, fighting, threats) the student may be assigned an In or Out of School suspension; the Team will meet with the student and family to outline the incident and discuss consequences.

**Short-Term Suspension.** A short-term suspension is a suspension equal to or fewer than 10 school days. When a short-term suspension is given, we will provide the student and parent with oral and/or written notice with an explanation of the behaviors that led to the consequence. Parents have a right to an informal hearing during which the Student Supports Team explains the reason for the suspension. The student can use this opportunity to deny the charge, at which time, the school staff member must share evidence for the school's decision regarding the student's behavior. We intend for all informal hearings to occur prior to the suspension, unless the student poses a threat to students or to the learning environment. If this is the case, the student is granted an opportunity for the informal conference as soon as possible. The Head of School must attend all informal hearings. **Checklist for Short-Term Suspension.** The school will provide written and/or oral notification of short-term suspension, including: number of days; behavior that led to the suspension; and results of informal hearing with Head of School and student/parent during which both have opportunity to share their version of the incident and provide proof or explanation.

**Long-Term Suspension/Expulsion.** A long-term suspension is a suspension of greater than 10 school days. Rochester Excellence Academy will provide the student and parents with written notice of the long-term suspension, including the behaviors that led to the consequence. The written notice will include information about the suspension, including instructions regarding how to schedule a hearing, if the student or parent chooses to do so, including their right to secure counsel, confront, and cross examine witnesses, and call his or her own witnesses to verify his/her version of the incident. A record of the hearing will be maintained, and the hearing officer's decision is appealable to the Board of Trustees and then to the authorizer, pursuant to Education Law Section 2855(4).

**Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion Procedures and Appeal Process.** In the case of long-term suspension or expulsion, we will follow a set of procedures that comply with all applicable laws and is as follows: (1) The student is immediately removed from class/school as needed. (2) The student is informed of the charges against him/her as well as the evidence of those charges; where applicable, the student has the opportunity to explain his/her version of events. The Head of School immediately notifies a guardian of the child in person or on the phone and sends written confirmation by personal delivery or express mail within 24 hours of the decision to suspend or expel, and sets a date for a formal hearing and notifies guardians in writing of the date, time, and place of the hearing, as well as, the charges against the student, a summary of the supporting evidence, their right to be represented (at their own expense) by an attorney at the hearing, present evidence, and question witnesses. The Head of School will preside at the hearing and make a decision as to the student's status and issues a written decision which is sent to the student's guardians, the Board of Trustees, and put in the student's permanent file. If the Head of School finds that long-term suspension or expulsion is indicated, the guardians of the student may appeal this decision to the Board of Trustees within 10 days of the decision to suspend or expel. Such appeal is heard at the discretion of the Chair; in such cases the guardians are once again notified in writing of the of the date, time, and place of the hearing, as well as the charges against the student, summary of the supporting evidence, their right to be represented (at their own expense) by an attorney at the hearing, present evidence, and question witnesses.



**Students with Disabilities.** Rochester Excellence Academy will provide methods and strategies for serving students with disabilities in compliance with all federal laws and regulations. We expect that all students, including those with disabilities, will follow our school culture expectations and code of conduct, with the understanding that violations will cause the school to respond with relevant disciplinary procedures. We will adhere to all federal policies and regulations regarding students with disabilities as noted in Education Law §2854(1)(b) and IDEA and will discipline students with behavior plans in compliance with those plans.

**Suspension Policies for Students with Disabilities.** If the student is being suspended for less than or equal to 10 consecutive or cumulative days, the student is subject to the same due process requirements as short-term suspension (see above). If, however, a student with a disability is receiving a suspension for longer than 10 cumulative days throughout the school year, Rochester Excellence Academy must make a determination as to whether a pattern of removal exists constituting a change of placement. If we determine that there is a pattern of removal, a Manifestation Determination Review is required.

**Alternative Instruction.** We will provide alternative instruction in accordance with New York’s compulsory education law when students are removed from school. Suspended students are eligible for alternative instruction for one-hour per day for students in grades K-4. To arrange this instruction, the school will reach out to the parent with proposed dates, times, and locations, and the parent is required to follow-up to confirm.

**Gun-Free Schools.** Consistent with the federal Gun-free Schools Act, any Rochester Excellence Academy Student who is determined under this subdivision to have brought a firearm to or possessed a firearm to school shall be suspended for a period of not less than one calendar year.

**Policies Against Harassment, Bullying, and Intimidation.** We are committed to creating a safe learning environment for all students and strictly prohibits from any Harassment, Intimidation, or bullying. We will abide by the NY State Dignity for All Students Act which “seeks to provide the State’s public elementary and secondary school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function.”<sup>5</sup> This also includes cyber bullying.

**Definition of Harassment, Bullying, and Discrimination.** *Harassment* and *Bullying* are the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, that: (a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or (b) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; or (c) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or (d) occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property. Acts of harassment and bullying shall include, but not be limited to, those acts of discrimination based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. For the purposes of this definition the term “threats, intimidation or abuse” shall include verbal and non-verbal actions.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact/>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/discipline-compendium/New%20York%20School%20Discipline%20Laws%20and%20Regulations.pdf>.

**Response to Harassment, Bullying, and Discrimination.** If harassment, bullying, or discrimination are reported to any teacher, we will respond accordingly: (1) All relevant information will be passed to the Head of School and Student Supports Team; (2) The Head of School will conduct an investigation and inform all students and parents that they are part of a case regarding harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination. Once the investigation is complete, the Head of School will assign a consequence to student(s) accused of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination. The consequence will depend on severity of the behavior and is at the discretion of the Student Supports Team and Head of School. If the consequence exceeds a 5-day suspension, the Head of School must be informed and give consent. If the consequence exceeds a 10-day suspension, the Head of School must be informed, give consent, and share with the Board of Trustees. The accused student(s) may not return to school until they have had parent conference with the Head of School and presented a formal, written apology to the student they wronged. The incident must be documented for the school and, if requested, shared with the local Police Precinct.

**Student/Parent Harassment, Bullying, and/or Discrimination Report.** Rochester Excellence Academy encourages any student or parent to report harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination their child is facing at school. To report, a student/parent must follow the following guidelines: (1) Report the incident to the Head of School, and include details of incident (name of students, location, time, behaviors). (2) The Head of School will document the information and save it in school files. (3) The Head of School will conduct an investigation and be in contact with the reporting parent within 5 school days with next steps.

**Harassment, Bullying, and/or Discrimination Retaliation Policy.** Rochester Excellence Academy will not tolerate any form of retaliation in response to a student who has filed a harassment, bullying and/or discrimination report. “Interference with, intimidation of, and/or retaliation against any individual, including a student, parent, or guardian, for filing a complaint, filing a grievance, or opposition discrimination is strictly prohibited.” Retaliation will lead to additional consequence determined by the Student Supports Team and Head of School.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> All Student Discipline Policies were informed by those of Primary Hall Charter School.

### Attachment 4a: Student Schedule

Time	Sample K-2 Schedule (including ICT classrooms): Monday-Thursday
7:10	Arrival/Breakfast
7:25	Start of School Day
7:25 - 7:45	Intervention Block
7:45 - 8:00	Family Meeting
8:00 - 8:20	Read Aloud
8:20 - 9:05	Literacy Rotation I
9:05 - 9:50	Literacy Rotation II
9:50 -10:35	Literacy Rotation III
10:35 - 10:45	Movement Break
10:45 - 11:00	Shared Writing
11:00 - 11:15	Independent Writing
11:15 - 11:35	Lunch
11:35 - 11:55	STEAM Centers
11:55 - 12:05	Moments of Peace
12:05 - 12:20	Math Fluency/Calendar Math
12:20 -1:05	CGI (Math)
1:05 - 1:50	Math Lesson
1:50 -2:35	Arts Block
2:35 - 2:45	Snack
2:45 - 3:15	Science (6 week unit)/Social Studies (6 week unit)
3:15 - 3:50	Arts Exploration
3:50 -4:00	Pack Up
4:00	Dismissal

Time	Sample K-2 Schedule (including ICT classrooms): Friday
7:10	Arrival/ Breakfast
7:25	Start of School Day
7:25 - 7:45	Intervention Block
7:45 - 8:00	Family Meeting
8:00 - 8:20	Read Aloud
8:20 - 9:05	Literacy Rotation I
9:05 - 9:50	Literacy Rotation II
9:50 - 10:35	Literacy Rotation III
10:35 - 10:45	Movement Break
10:45 - 11:20	Community Meeting
11:20 - 11:40	Lunch
11:40 -12:00	STEAM Centers
12:00 - 12:15	Math Fluency/Calendar Math
12:15 - 12:50	CGI (Math)
12:50 -1:00	Pack Up
1:00	Dismissal

Time	Sample 3rd/4th Grade Schedule (including ICT classrooms): Monday-Thursday
7:10	Arrival/Breakfast
7:25	Start of School Day
7:25 - 7:45	Intervention Block
7:45 - 8:00	Family Meeting
8:00 - 8:20	Shared Reading
8:20 - 9:05	Literacy Rotation I
9:05 - 9:50	Literacy Rotation II
9:50 -10:35	Literacy Rotation III
10:35 - 10:45	Movement Break
10:45 - 11:15	Grammar/Writing
11:15 - 11:35	Lunch
11:35 - 11:55	Recess
11:55 - 12:05	Moments of Peace
12:05 - 12:20	Math Fluency/Spiral Review
12:20 -1:05	CGI (Math)
1:05 - 1:50	Math Lesson
1:50 -2:35	Arts Block
2:35 - 2:45	Snack
2:45 - 3:15	Science (6 week unit)/Social Studies (6 week unit)
3:15 - 3:50	Arts Exploration
3:50 -4:00	Pack Up
4:00	Dismissal

Time	Sample 3rd/4th Grade Schedule (including ICT classrooms): Friday
7:10	Arrival/ Breakfast
7:25	Start of School Day
7:25 - 7:45	Intervention Block
7:45 - 8:00	Family Meeting
8:00 - 8:20	Shared Reading
8:20 - 9:05	Literacy Rotation I
9:05 - 9:50	Literacy Rotation II
9:50 - 10:35	Literacy Rotation III
10:35 - 10:45	Movement Break
10:45 - 11:20	Community Meeting
11:20 - 11:40	Lunch
11:40 - 12:00	Grammar/Writing
12:00 - 12:15	Math Fluency/Spiral Review
12:15 - 12:50	CGI (Math)
12:50 - 1:00	Pack Up
1:00	Dismissal



**ATTACHMENT 4b: Sample Weekly Teacher Schedule**

<b>Sample K-2 Teacher Schedule (including ICT classrooms): Monday-Thursday</b>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>Lead Teacher</b>	<b>Co-Teacher</b>
7:10	Start of Teacher Day	Start of Teacher Day
7:10-7:25	Provides small group and individual interventions	Greets students, checks homework and logs, supervises breakfast
7:25 - 7:45	Provides small group and individual interventions	Provides small group and individual interventions
7:45 - 8:00	Leads Family Meeting	Supports Family Meeting
8:00 - 8:20	Prepares for Literacy Rotations	Leads Read Aloud
8:20 - 9:05	Leads Reading Comp/Guided Reading	Leads Phonics and/or Guided Reading
9:05 - 9:50	Leads Reading Comp/Guided Reading	Leads Phonics and/or Guided Reading
9:50 -10:35	Leads Reading Comp/Guided Reading	Leads Phonics and/or Guided Reading
10:35 - 10:45	Prepares for Writing	Leads Movement Break
10:45 - 11:00	Leads Shared Writing	Supports Shared Writing
11:00 - 11:15	Leads Independent Writing	Supports Independent Writing
11:15 - 11:35	Lunch/Prep	Lunch/Prep
11:35 - 11:55	Prep	Facilitates STEAM Centers
11:55 - 12:05	Leads Moment of Peace	Supports Moment of Peace
12:05 - 12:20	Supports Math Fluency/Calendar Math	Leads Math Fluency/Calendar Math
12:20 -1:05	Leads CGI	Supports CGI
1:05 - 1:50	Leads Math Lesson	Supports Math Lesson
1:50 -2:35	Prep: Intellectual Prep, Team Meeting	Prep: Intellectual Prep, Team Meeting
2:35 - 2:45	Prep	Supervises Snack
2:45 - 3:15	Supports Science/Social Studies	Leads Science/Social Studies
3:15 - 3:50	Prep: Intellectual Prep, Coaching Meeting	Prep: Intellectual Prep, Coaching Meeting
3:50 -4:00	Supervises Pack Up and Dismissal	Supervises Pack Up and Dismissal
4:00	End of Teacher Day	End of Teacher Day



<b>Sample K-2 Schedule (including ICT classrooms): Friday</b>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>Lead Teacher</b>	<b>Co-Teacher</b>
7:10	Start of Teacher Day	Start of Teacher Day
7:10-7:25	Provides small group and individual interventions	Greets students, checks homework and logs, supervises breakfast
7:25 - 7:45	Provides small group and individual interventions	Provides small group and individual interventions
7:45 - 8:00	Leads Family Meeting	Supports Family Meeting
8:00 - 8:20	Prepares for Literacy Rotations	Leads Read Aloud
8:20 - 9:05	Leads Reading Comp/Guided Reading	Leads Phonics and/or Guided Reading
9:05 - 9:50	Leads Reading Comp/Guided Reading	Leads Phonics and/or Guided Reading
9:50 - 10:35	Leads Reading Comp/Guided Reading	Leads Phonics and/or Guided Reading
10:35 - 10:45	Prep	Leads Movement Break
10:45 - 11:20	Participates in Community Meeting	Participates in Community Meeting
11:20 - 11:40	Lunch/Prep	Lunch/Prep
11:40 -12:00	Supports STEAM Centers	Facilitates STEAM Centers
12:00 - 12:15	Supports Math Fluency/Calendar Math	Leads Math Fluency/Calendar Math
12:15 - 12:50	Leads CGI	Supports CGI
12:50 - 1:00	Supervises Pack Up and Dismissal	Supervises Pack Up and Dismissal
1:00 - 2:00	Intellectual Prep, Team Meetings	Intellectual Prep, Teams Meeting
2:00-4:00	Professional Development	Professional Development
4:00	End of Teacher Day	End of Teacher Day

<b>Sample 3rd/4th Teacher Schedule (including ICT classrooms): Monday-Thursday</b>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>Lead Teacher</b>	<b>Co-Teacher</b>
7:10	Start of Teacher Day	Start of Teacher Day
7:10-7:25	Provides small group and individual interventions	Greets students, checks homework and logs, supervises breakfast
7:25 - 7:45	Provides small group and individual interventions	Provides small group and individual interventions
7:45 - 8:00	Leads Family Meeting	Supports Family Meeting
8:00 - 8:20	Leads Small Group Shared Reading	Leads Small Group Shared Reading
8:20 - 9:05	Leads Narrative Guided Reading	Leads Informational Guided Reading/Vocabulary
9:05 - 9:50	Leads Narrative Guided Reading	Leads Informational Guided Reading/Vocabulary
9:50 -10:35	Leads Narrative Guided Reading	Leads Informational Guided Reading/Vocabulary
10:35 - 10:45	Prep	Leads Movement Break
10:45 - 11:15	Leads Grammar/Writing	Supports Grammar/Writing
11:15 - 11:35	Lunch/Prep	Lunch/Prep

11:35 - 11:55	Prep	Supervises Recess
11:55 - 12:05	Leads Moment of Peace	Supports Moment of Peace
12:05 - 12:20	Monitors Math Fluency/Spiral Review	Monitors Math Fluency/Spiral Review
12:20 - 1:05	Leads CGI	Supports CGI
1:05 - 1:50	Leads Math Lesson	Supports Math Lesson
1:50 - 2:35	Prep: Intellectual Prep, Team Meeting	Prep: Intellectual Prep, Team Meeting
2:35 - 2:45	Prep	Supervises Snack
2:45 - 3:15	Supports Science/Social Studies	Leads Science/Social Studies
3:15 - 3:50	Prep: Intellectual Prep, Coaching Meeting	Prep: Intellectual Prep, Coaching Meeting
3:50 - 4:00	Supervises Pack Up and Dismissal	Supervises Pack Up and Dismissal
4:00	End of Teacher Day	End of Teacher Day

Time	Sample 3rd/4th Schedule (including ICT classrooms): Friday	
	Lead Teacher	Co-Teacher
7:10	Start of Teacher Day	Start of Teacher Day
7:10-7:25	Provides small group and individual interventions	Greets students, checks homework and logs, supervises breakfast
7:25 - 7:45	Provides small group and individual interventions	Provides small group and individual interventions
7:45 - 8:00	Leads Family Meeting	Supports Family Meeting
8:00 - 8:20	Leads Small Group Shared Reading	Leads Small Group Shared Reading
8:20 - 9:05	Leads Narrative Guided Reading	Leads Informational Guided Reading/Vocabulary
9:05 - 9:50	Leads Narrative Guided Reading	Leads Informational Guided Reading/Vocabulary
9:50 - 10:35	Leads Narrative Guided Reading	Leads Informational Guided Reading/Vocabulary
10:35 - 10:45	Prep	Leads Movement Break
10:45 - 11:20	Participates in Community Meeting	Participates in Community Meeting
11:20 - 11:40	Lunch/Prep	Lunch/Prep
11:40 - 12:00	Leads Grammar/Writing	Supports Grammar/Writing
12:00 - 12:15	Monitors Math Fluency/Spiral Review	Monitors Math Fluency/Spiral Review
12:15 - 12:50	Leads CGI	Supports CGI
12:50 - 1:00	Supervises Pack Up and Dismissal	Supervises Pack Up and Dismissal
1:00 - 2:00	Intellectual Prep, Team Meetings	Intellectual Prep, Teams Meeting
2:00-4:00	Professional Development	Professional Development
4:00	End of Teacher Day	End of Teacher Day

ATTACHMENT de 2022-2023 Académic Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Key

P in y & La y Day of School for Sufena

P oficio on - Devce ofpment Days

Blue of c on on Days

No School - No School

Assessment W odays

F in y Encomen in

May 2022

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

June 2022

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Important Dates

Ma ch 5 - July 17 Camaro ng lin o Sess on

Ap 1 2021 App cut on Decal me

Ap 21 2021 School List o y

Ap 21-22 Not For on of La y e Reas to July 29 Fam y O on on #1 Staff PD

August 1 23 Staff Summe Inst ste

August 5 Fam y O on on #2 S aff PD

August 12 Fam y O on on #3 Sta PD

August 15-19 Fam y Home V s a

August 24 F at Day fo S ufena

August 25 -26 Student O on on

September 5 No School Labo Day

September 7 NWEA Map Test ng BOY

September 9 Onco Home fo Fam es

September 14 NWEA Map Test on

September 23 Month v Collee Hou

September 26-October 7 STEP Round 1

October 10 No School Ind anson Peon e Day

October 18 Pub c P oficio on Devce ofpment Sess on

October 11 PD - Data Day

October 14 Month v Collee Hou

October 26-27 In e v Math Test

October 28 PD - Data Day

November 3-4 Fam y Confe onces #1

November 11 No School Vite on Day

November 18 Month v Collee Hou

November 19 Pub c P oficio on Devce ofpment Sess on

November 25 25 No School Thurold v ng B eak

December 5-14 STEP Round 2

December 15 W ne Pe fo mance

December 19-30 No School W ne Reces

January 7 Pub c P oficio on Devce ofpment Sess on

January 16 No School MLK 1 Day

January 25 NWEA MAP Test ng MOY

January 27 Month v Collee Hou

Feb in y 1 NWEA MAP Test ng MOY

Feb in v 6 16 STEP Round 3

Feb in v 10 Month v Co for Hou

Feb in v 17 PD - Data Day

Feb in v 18 Pub c P oficio on Devce ofpment Sess on

Feb in y 20 No School P e dent s Day

Feb in y 20-24 No School M d-W ne Reces

Ma ch 18 Month v Collee Hou

Ma ch 30- Ap 13 STEP Round 4

Ap 1 Pub c P oficio on Devce ofpment Sess on

Ap 6 7 In e v Math Test

Ap 14 No School Good F day

Ap 17 PD - Data Day

Ap 22 Month v Collee Hou

Ap 23-28 Fam y Confe onces #2

May 19 Month v Collee Hou Sp ng Pe fo mance

May 20 Pub c P oficio on Devce ofpment Sess on

May 25-26 Ma h le e v Test ng

May 29 No School Memo s Day

May 31 PD Da s Day

June 5-16 STEP Round 5

June 15-16 NWEA MAP Test on EOY

June 21 Last Day of School fo S ufena

June 22-23 S aff PD

July 2022

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

n euc onna Days 0 PD Days 0

August 2022

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

n euc onna Days 5 PD Days 17

September 2022

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

n euc onna Days 21 PD Days 0

October 2022

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

n euc onna Days 18 PD Days 2

November 2022

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
27	28	29	30			

n euc onna Days 18 PD Days 0

December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

n euc onna Days 12 PD Days 0

January 2023

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

n euc onna Days 20 PD Days 0

February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

n euc onna Days 14 PD Days 1

March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

n euc onna Days 23 PD Days 0

April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

n euc onna Days 19 PD Days 1

May 2023

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

n euc onna Days 20 PD Days 1

June 2023

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

n euc onna Days 16 PD Days 2

Total last net on Days 187

Total PD Days 38

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE**

**ATTACHMENT 5a: NEW APPLICANT AND PROSPECTIVE  
SCHOOL TRUSTEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET  
(For New School Applications Only)**

**Applicant Group Members (“AG”):** The term Applicant Group is newly applied to include those individuals formerly identified as *lead applicants* and those participating in the planning of the application to establish the proposed charter school; those who will comprise the initial board of trustees; and those who will become school employees—anyone who is involved in the development of the Letter of Intent and the Full Application. All members, including prospective board members, must provide the background information where indicated for Applicant Group Members.

**Prospective BOT Members (“BOT”):** Service on a public charter school board of trustees (“board”) is a position of great trust and responsibility. As a member of a public charter school’s board, you are charged with overseeing the education of all students enrolled in the school, as well as the expenditure of public monies directed to the charter school. To properly evaluate proposed board members, please provide full and complete background information where indicated for proposed board members.

Note: Additionally, prospective members of the Board of Trustees are required to undergo a criminal background check via a fingerprint scan arranged by and at the expense of the State Education Department. ***The inability or unwillingness of any member of the applicant group to promptly undergo the required criminal background check via fingerprint scans within the timeframe requested in advance of the Board of Regents meeting shall be grounds for terminating an application or denying a charter recommendation.***

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**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS**

**Member Name:** Kelli Ragin

**Proposed Charter School Name:** Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

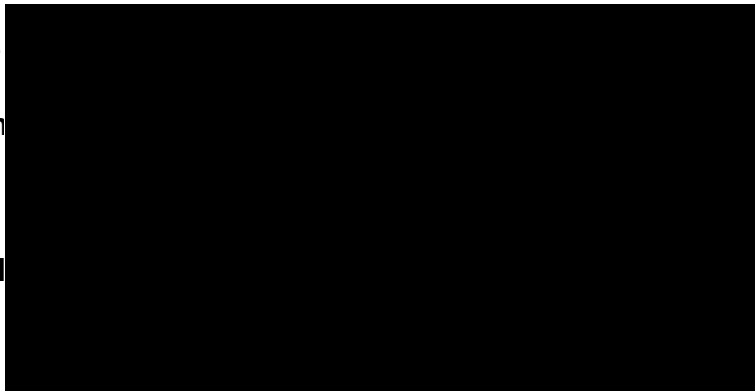
**E-Mail Address:**

**Home Telephone:**

**Home Address:**

**Business Telephone:**

**Business Address:**





*Please note that this document is considered a public record and as such, may be made available to members of the public upon request under the Freedom of Information Law. Personal contact information provided above will be redacted.*

### **Background Information – All Applicant Group Members**

1. Please provide your educational and employment history. You may do so by attaching a résumé. **Note:** Individuals are not required to have degrees or education credentials to serve on a charter school's Board of Trustees. This documentation is for identify verification only.

**Résumé Attached**

Copy of Diploma, Transcript or Supporting Documentation Attached

If education credentials are not available, please submit a signed and notarized letter stating the highest level of education obtained and the reason why the documentation cannot be provided.

2. Please indicate how you became aware of the opportunity to join the applicant group.

I became aware of this opportunity from the Lead Founder of the School, Brittany Rumph. I knew she was planning to open a school and have followed her journey throughout the process.

3. Please affirm that you have read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute.

**I affirm.**

4. Please affirm that you have read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies. If your team has not yet submitted a full application, please affirm that you will commit to read and understand the charter school application, the charter school board's by-laws and all proposed policies at the time of its submission for review.

**I affirm.**

## Statement of Intent—All Applicant Group Members

5. Please provide a personal statement regarding the experience and skills that you bring to the table.

I have been an educator in Rochester, NY since 2003. I spent 4 years as a paraprofessional and substitute teacher in the Rochester City School District while earning my Master's Degree in Childhood Education, then spent 10 years at True North Rochester Prep, as a teacher, founding principal of the second Middle School, and Dean of Students at the High School. I served as Dean of Curriculum and Instruction and Principal at PUC Achieve/ROC Achieve Charter School for 2 years. I am now the Assistant Principal of the Academy of Health Sciences Charter School, after serving 1 year as a founding 5<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher.

I believe my experience and skills in instructional practices, curriculum development, instructional coaching, and school administration will be beneficial while serving on the Board of Trustees.

6. Please provide a personal statement regarding your role, responsibilities, and commitment in relation to the development and preparation of the application (as a member of the applicant group), and/or in relation to the operation of the charter school (if you are a member of the proposed initial board of trustees).

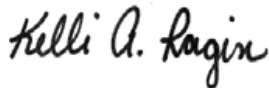
I am passionate about urban education and improving the achievement outcomes for children in Rochester. I was the first in my family to attain two college degrees and it is my hope that all children will receive the education they deserve that gives them better choices in life. To make that happen we need schools that will adequately prepare our kids to choose to be the best they can be. As a member of this board, I will work to ensure that our students are receiving the best education possible, that holds them to high academic standards and allows them to grow as scholars and good citizens.

7. Please provide any other information that you feel is pertinent to the Department's review of your background.

Kelli A. Ragin

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Printed Name



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Signature

5/26/21

---



Date

### Background Information—Proposed Board of Trustees Only

8. Please affirm that you are or will be at least eighteen years old at the time of your appointment/election to the board.

**I affirm.**

9. Please indicate whether you have ever been convicted of a misdemeanor and/or felony in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

**This does not apply to me.**  Yes.

If the answer to this question is yes, please provide the following details regarding your conviction(s): (1) the name of the criminal offense(s); (2) whether the criminal offense(s) was a misdemeanor or felony; (3) the facts and circumstances surrounding your conviction(s); (4) the date(s) of your conviction(s); and (5) the date(s) of disposition(s).

10. Please indicate if you currently have any criminal charge(s) pending against you in state or federal court in any jurisdiction.

**This does not apply to me.**  Yes. If yes, please provide an explanation.

11. What board position(s) and/or offices(s) will you hold? (e.g., member, parent representative, vice-president, Finance committee, etc.): member, Academic Committee

12. Please explain why you wish to serve on the board.

I want to be on this board because the children of Rochester deserve an excellent education at schools where they are safe to engage in scholarly habits and critical thinking that leads to success in life. I believe charter schools are a way to make that happen. It takes a school leader with the drive and passion for urban education who is willing to hold students to high academic and behavior expectations. I believe Brittany Rumph is that leader and I am excited to help her see it through.

13. Please indicate whether you have previously served or are currently serving on a board of a school district, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 1, above). In addition, please describe any other experience, knowledge or skills you feel is relevant to service on the charter school board.

**This does not apply to me.**  Yes. (Include description here):

## Conflict of Interest - Proposed Board of Trustees Only

14. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any of the other prospective board members.

**I / we do not know any such persons.**  Yes.

If your answer is yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

15. Please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other family member knows any person who is a proposed charter school employee.

**I / we do not know any such persons.**  Yes.

If yes, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship here:

16. Please indicate if you, your spouse, or other family member or any corporation, business or other entity in which you, your spouse or other family member serve as an employee, officer, or director or own a controlling interest in, plans to contract or do business with, the proposed charter school, including but not limited to, the lease of real or personal property to the proposed charter school.

**No.**  Yes.

If yes, please describe the nature of the contract or business and, if applicable, the relationship of the person to the corporation, business or entity involved:

17. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider (a management company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit), please indicate whether you, your spouse, or any family member knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If your answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Yes.

**Not applicable because the School does not/will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.**

I / we do not know any such persons.

18. If the charter school is partnered with an educational service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member has a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, please provide a detailed description.

Yes.

**Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.**

I / we have no such interest.

19. If the charter school is partnered with an educational services provider, please indicate if you, your spouse or other family member anticipates conducting, or is conducting, any business with the provider. If so, please indicate the precise nature of the business that will be conducted.

Yes.

**Not applicable because the School will not contract with a management company or charter management organization.**

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.

20. Please indicate the potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests (if any) that would, or are likely to, exist should you be approved for service on the charter school's board.

**None**  Yes

21. Please explain how you would handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the charter school's board are involved in working for their own benefit, or the benefit of their friends and family.

22. Please indicate whether you, your spouse or other family member is a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or is otherwise associated with, any organization which filed an application in conjunction with the charter school, i.e., is partnered with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to the previous items 16-23, you may so indicate.

**This does not apply to me, my spouse or other family members.**

Yes.

### **Educational Philosophy -Proposed Board of Trustees Only**

23. Please explain your understanding of the charter school's mission and/or philosophy. The school's stated mission is "Through rigorous academics, a values-based community, and individualized supports, Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School equips all kindergarten through fourth grade scholars with the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for school, career, and life success." As I read this, I believe Rochester Excellence Academy will prepare students to be successful in life by ensuring the students are academically and emotionally prepared to be great citizens of their communities. The school values individual and corporate strengths and will leverage them to ensure academic achievement.

24. Please explain your understanding of the educational program of the charter school. The educational program emphasizes literacy, as it is foundational to academic success in all subject areas. The arts will be an essential part of the program to enhance the academic and social emotional learning of all students. There will also

be multi-tiered systems of support in order to meet every student's instructional needs. Lastly, all teachers and students will be held to high academic expectations, beginning with implementing a rigorous curriculum driven by NYS standards for learning.

25. Please indicate what you believe to be the characteristics of a successful charter school. Please provide the specific steps you think the board of the charter school will need to take to ensure that this charter school is and remains successful.

A successful charter school meets the educational needs of its students by ensuring that rigorous learning happens every day so that students are mastering the state learning standards. The board of the charter ensures this is happening by monitoring student progress as outlined by the goals proposed within the charter of the school. Not only must ensure the academic success of the school, but it must also make sure that the school is being fiscally responsible so that resources are allocated appropriately to support the success of the academic program. The board must work with the school leaders to build community partnerships that enhance the academic program in order to promote well-rounded, college and career ready scholars. Ultimately, it is the board who is responsible to ensure the school is meeting living up to its charter.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE—PROPOSED TRUSTEES ONLY**

I, **Kelli A. Ragin** state that I am the applicant for board member approval and I have read the questionnaire and any supporting documents and know the contents thereof; that the same is true to my knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true and further acknowledge that I am aware of the fact that, pursuant to Penal Law §175.30, a person who knowingly offers a false instrument for filing to a public official or public servant is guilty of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

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Signature *Kelli A. Ragin*

5/26/2021  
Date



**Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School By-Laws**

**ARTICLE I**

**Name, Location, Mission, and Objectives**

Section 1: The name of the organization is Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School (hereinafter “The Corporation”).

Section 2: The purpose for which the Corporation is organized is to establish and operate a Charter School (the “Charter School”) to ensure academic and life success for students in grades K-5 in Rochester, NY.

**ARTICLE II**

**Membership**

The Corporation has no members. The rights which would otherwise vest in the members vest in the Directors of The Corporation (hereinafter the “Trustees”). Actions which would otherwise require approval by a majority of all members or approval by the members require only approval of a majority of all Trustees or approval by the Board.

**ARTICLE III**

**Board of Trustees**

Section 1: The Board of Trustees shall consist of at least seven (7) Trustees and no more than fifteen (15) Trustees. All Trustees shall have identical rights and responsibilities.

Section 2: Board members shall be sought who reflect the qualities, qualifications and diversity determined by the Board and delineated in the Job Description of the Board of Trustees.

Section 3: The Corporation’s nominating committee, known as the Governance Committee, shall present a slate of potential Trustees and officers for election by the Board of Trustees. This slate shall be presented at the annual meeting of the Board.

Section 4: Trustees shall serve a term of three (3) years from the date of their appointments, or until their successors are seated. A full three-year term shall be considered to have been served upon the passage of three (3) annual meetings. After election, the term of a Trustee may not be reduced, except for cause as specified in these bylaws. No Trustee shall serve more than two (2) consecutive, three-year terms. Initial Trustees shall serve staggered terms to balance continuity with new perspective.

Section 5: The initial Board of Trustees will serve staggered terms. The initial Board shall consist of at least two Trustees who will serve a one-year term (ending in [Spring-Winter 20224](#)), at least three Trustees who will serve a two-year term (ending in [Spring-Winter 20232](#)), and at least three Trustees will serve a three-year term (ending in [Spring-Winter 20243](#)).

Section 6: Any vacancy occurring in the Board of Trustees and any position to be filled by reason of an increase in the number of Trustees may be filled, upon recommendation of a qualified

candidate by the Governance Committee, by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the seated Trustees. A Trustee elected to fill the vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of his/her predecessor in office.

Section 7: A Trustee may resign at any time by filing a written resignation with the Board Chair.

Section 8: In accordance with New York State Education Law subdivision 226(8), the Board may remove or suspend from office by vote of a majority of the entire Board any Trustee, Officer, or employee engaged under special contract, on examination and due proof of the truth of a written complaint by any trustee, of misconduct, incapacity or neglect of duty, provided that at least one week's previous notice of the proposed action shall have been given to the accused and to each trustee by Registered Mail.

Section 9: Members of the Board of Trustees:

- a. Shall serve without compensation. However, the Board may approve reimbursement of a Trustee's actual and necessary expenses while conducting business on behalf of the Corporation.
- b. Shall serve the Corporation with the higher degree of undivided duty, loyalty, and care and shall undertake no enterprise to profit personally from their position with the Corporation.
- c. Shall ensure that all participation in Board work is bound by the Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality policy statements.
- d. Shall have no direct or indirect financial interest in the assets or leases of the Corporation; any Trustee who individually or as part of a business or professional firm is involved in the business transactions or current professional services of the Corporation shall disclose this relationship and shall not participate in any vote taken with respect to such transactions or services.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Principal Office**

The Corporation's principal office shall be at 125 Governor Terrace, Rochester, NY 14609 or at such other place as the Board may select by resolution or amendment of the Bylaws. The Secretary shall note any change in office on the copy of the Bylaws maintained by the Secretary.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Meetings of the Board**

Section 1: The annual meeting of the Board of Trustees shall occur in the last quarter of the fiscal year. There shall be at least 12 regular monthly meetings of the Board held each year. Notice of Annual Meetings and Regular Meetings shall be given to each Trustee at least thirty (30) days in advance and Trustees shall also receive a written agenda a reasonable time in advance of each meeting. Meetings may be held without additional notice if the Bylaws fix the time and place of such Meetings or if the Board has established a meeting calendar.

Section 2: Special Meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the Chair or by a majority of the Board filing a written request for such a meeting with the Chair and stating the object, date, and hour, therefore. Special Meetings shall be held upon four (4) days' notice by first-class mail

or 48 hours' notice delivered in the United States mail, addressed to the recipient at the address shown for the recipient in the Corporation's records, first-class postage prepaid; when personally delivered in writing to the recipient; or when faxed, emailed, or communicated orally, in person or by telephone, to the Trustee or to a person whom it is reasonably believed will communicate it promptly to the Trustee.

Section 3: The Board shall select its own meeting format in any method allowed by the laws of the State of New York. Any such meeting, whether regular or special, complying with Sections 1 or 2 of Article V shall constitute a meeting of the Board of Trustees and shall subscribe to the policies, procedures, and rules adopted by the Board.

Section 4: An absentee Board member may not designate an alternate to represent him or her at a Board meeting. The Board will create and maintain a written policy regarding Trustee absences from Board Meetings.

Section 5: The Board shall comply with New York Open Meetings Law and Article 7 of the Public Officers Law as follows:

1. All meetings of the Board of Trustees and all committees of the Board will be open to the general public.
2. A calendar of all scheduled Board meetings will be posted at the school as soon as it becomes available.
3. The Charter School will provide notice of the time and place of any Board meeting that is scheduled more than one week in advance to the news media and shall conspicuously post such notice in one or more public locations at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting.
4. The Charter School will provide the time and place of any Board meeting that is scheduled less than one week in advance to the news media (to the extent practicable) and will conspicuously post such notice in one or more public locations at a reasonable time in advance of the scheduled meeting.
5. To the extent possible, the Charter School will publicly post notices of Board meetings immediately after each meeting date is determined.
6. For the purposes of determining a quorum, Trustees must be physically present at the meeting; members not physically present may join discussions via electronic means but may only vote by video conference and not by phone conference.
7. Written minutes will be recorded of all Board meetings. Minutes will include:
  - a. The date and time of the meeting.
  - b. A list of Trustees in attendance and those absent, either excused or otherwise;
  - c. A summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions, and any other matters formally voted upon;
  - d. A record of how each Trustee voted on each matter; and
  - e. In the case of an executive session, the minutes will include a record of the final determination of any action that was taken.
8. Minutes of open sessions will be available to the public upon request from the Secretary within two weeks of the date of the meeting; minutes of executive sessions will be available within one week of the meeting.
9. All executive sessions shall be conducted as part of an open meeting; they are not considered separate meetings per se. An executive session may be called via motion

and majority vote by the Board; the motion must specifically identify the general area or areas to be considered.

10. All Trustees may participate in the executive session, and the Board may authorize others to be present as well.
11. No public funds may be appropriated during an executive session.
12. An executive session can only be conducted by the Board for consideration of one or more of the following matters:
  - a. Matters which imperil the public safety if disclosed;
  - b. Any matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer;
  - c. Information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would imperil effective law enforcement if disclosed;
  - d. Discussions regarding proposed or pending litigation;
  - e. Matters which apply to school employees or collective negotiations that are within the scope of Article 14 of the Civil Service Law;
  - f. The medical, financial, credit, or employment history of a particular person or corporation;
  - g. The preparation, grading, or administration of examinations; and
  - h. The proposed acquisition, sale, or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value.

Section 6: Board Meetings shall be held at The Corporation's principal office, which will be the school site once the school has opened.

Section 7: A majority of the Trustees present at a meeting, whether or not a quorum, may adjourn the meeting to another time and place.

Section 8: Notice of a meeting need not be given to a Trustee who signs a waiver of notice or written consent to holding the meeting or an approval of the minutes of the meeting, whether before or after the meeting, or attends the meeting without protest prior to the meeting or at its commencement, of the lack of notice. The Secretary shall incorporate all such waivers, consents and approvals into the minutes of the Meeting.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Committees and Task Forces**

Section 1: A Board resolution shall appoint committees or task forces of the Board, except the Governance Committee. Committees may be composed of Trustees or community members, or both. The Board may prescribe the need and/or the composition of such committees.

Section 2: There shall be a standing nominating committee, known as the Governance Committee. This committee shall be composed of at least three (3) persons recommended by the Chair and elected by the Board of Trustees at its annual meeting. Each committee member shall serve a term of two (2) years, and these terms shall be staggered to ensure continuity of committee membership. The committee shall elect its own chair.

Section 3: The duties of the Governance Committee shall be:

- a. To study the qualifications of candidates and present a slate of the best qualified as nominees for the vacant Trustee positions on the Board;

- b. To present a slate of nominees for Officers to the Board for election at the annual meeting;
- c. To recommend candidates to the Board to fill vacancies that arise outside the regular nominating process;
- d. To provide orientation and ongoing governance development to Trustees;
- e. To oversee a Trustee assessment process to ensure optimum performance; and
- f. To recommend the appointment of a past Chair to the Board, if necessary, in the interests of continuity.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Action by the Board**

Section 1: A majority of the entire number of Trustees then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2: Standard of Care:

1. Performance of Duties: Each Trustee shall perform all duties of a Trustee, including duties on any committee, in good faith, with undivided loyalty and with that degree of diligence, care, and skill, including reasonable inquiry, as an ordinary prudent person in a like position would use under similar circumstances.
2. Reliance on Others: In performing the duties of a Trustee, a Trustee shall be entitled to rely on information, opinions, reports, or statements, including financial statements and other financial data, presented or prepared by:
  - a. One or more Officers or employees of The Corporation whom the Trustee believes to be reliable and competent in the matters presented;
  - b. Legal counsel, public accountants or other persons as to matters that the Trustee believes are within that person's professional or expert competence; or
  - c. A Board Committee on which the Trustee does not serve, duly designated in accordance with a provision of The Corporation's Charter of Bylaws, as to matters within its designated authority, provided the Trustee believes the Committee merits confidence and the Trustee acts in good faith, and after reasonable inquiry when the need is indicated by the circumstances, and without knowledge that would cause such reliance to be unwarranted.
3. Investments: In investing and dealing with all assets held by The Corporation for investment, the Board shall execute the standard of care described in Article VII Section 2, and shall consider among other relevant considerations the long- and short-term needs of the Corporation in carrying out its purposes, including its present and anticipated financial requirements. The Board may delegate its investment powers to others, provided that those powers are exercised within the ultimate direction of the Board.

Section 3: Every Trustee has the right to inspect and copy all books, records and documents of every kind and to inspect the physical properties of The Corporations, provided that such inspection is conducted at a reasonable time after reasonable notice, and provided that such right of inspections and copying is subject to the obligation to maintain the confidentiality of the reviewed information, in addition to any obligations imposed by any applicable federal, state or local law.

Section 4: Every Trustee has the right to participate in the discussion and vote on all issues before the Board or any Board Committee, except that a Trustee shall not be permitted to participate in the discussion and vote on any matter involving such Trustee relations to: (a) a self-dealing transaction; (b) a conflict of interest; (c) indemnification of that Trustee uniquely; or (d) any other matter at the discretion of a majority of the Trustees then present.

Section 5: Every Trustee has a duty to maintain the confidentiality of all Board actions which are not required by law to be open to the public, including discussions and votes which take place at any Executive Sessions of the Board. Any Trustee violating this confidence may be removed from the Board.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Officers**

Section 1: There shall be four (4) elective Officers of the Board: a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

1. Chair. Subject to Board control, the Chair has general supervision, direction and control of the affairs of The Corporation, and such other powers and duties as the Board may prescribe. If present, the Chair shall preside at Board meetings.
2. Vice Chair. If the Chair is absent or disabled, the Vice Chair shall perform all the Chair's duties and, when so acting, shall have all the Chair's powers and be subject to the same restrictions. The Vice Chair shall have other such powers and perform such other duties as the Board may prescribe.
3. Secretary. The Secretary shall: (a) keep or cause to be kept, at The Corporation's principal office, or such other place as the Board may direct, a book of minutes of all meetings of the Board and Board Committees, noting the time and place of the meeting, whether it was regular or special (and if special, how authorized), the notice given, the names of those present, and the proceedings; (b) keep or cause to be kept a copy of the Corporation's Charter and Bylaws, with amendments; (c) give or cause to be given notice of the Board and Committee meetings as required by the Bylaws; and (d) have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board may prescribe.
4. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall: (a) keep or cause to be kept adequate and correct accounts of the Corporation's properties, receipts and disbursements; (b) make the books of account available at all times for inspection by any Trustee; (c) deposit or cause to be deposited the Corporation's monies and other valuables in the Corporation's name and to its credit, with the depositories the Board designates; (d) disburse or cause to be disbursed the Corporation's funds as the Board directs; (e) render or cause to be rendered to the Board, as requested but no less frequently than once every fiscal year, an account of the Corporation's on financial transactions and financial condition; (f) prepare or cause to be prepared any reports on financial issues required by an agreement on loans; (g) serve as Chairperson of the Finance Committee; and (h) have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board may prescribe.

Section 2: The Governance Committee shall present nominations for Officers to the Board for Board review and vote. The nominated Officers shall be Trustees.



Section 3: The Board shall elect the Officers annually at the Annual Meeting or a Regular Meeting designated for that purpose or at a Special Meeting called for that purpose, except that Officers appointed to fill vacancies shall be elected as vacancies occur.

Section 4: A Trustee may hold any number of offices, except that neither the Secretary nor Treasurer may serve concurrently as the Chair.

Section 5: Officers shall take office immediately following the close of the meeting at which they are elected and the term of office for an Officer shall be one year or until their successor assumes office. A Trustee may serve more than one (1) term in the same office, but not more than three (3) consecutive terms in the same office.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Non-Liability of Trustees**

The Trustees shall not be personally liable for The Corporation's debts, liabilities, or other obligations.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Indemnification of Corporate Grants**

The Charter School may, to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by and in accordance with standards and procedures provided by § 721 through § 726 of the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law and any amendments thereto, indemnify any person made, or threatened to be made, a party to any action or proceeding by reason of the fact that he, his testate or intestate was a Director, Officer, employee or agent of The Corporation, against judgements, fines, amounts paid in settlement and reasonable expenses, including attorneys' fees.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Self-Dealing Transactions**

The Board Members shall not engage in any self-dealing transactions, except as approved by the Board. "Self-dealing transaction" means a transaction to which the Corporation is a party and in which one or more of the Trustees has a material financial interest ("interested Trustee(s)"). Notwithstanding this definition, the following transaction is not a self-dealing transaction, and is subject to the Board's general standard of care: A transaction which is part of a public or charitable program of the Corporation, if the transaction (a) is approved or authorized by the Board in good faith and without unjustified favoritism; and (b) results in a benefit to one or more Trustees or their families because they are in a class of persons intended to be benefitted by the program.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Other Provisions**

Section 1: The fiscal year of the Corporation begins on July 1 of each year and ends June 30.

Section 2: Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Board may adopt a resolution authorizing any Officer or agent of the Corporation to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of or on behalf of the Corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorized, no Officer, agent or employee shall have any power to bind the Corporation by any contract or engagement, to pledge the Corporation's credit, or to render it liable monetarily for any purpose or any amount.

Section 3: Except as otherwise specifically provided by Board resolutions, checks, drafts, promissory notes, orders for the payment of money, and other evidence of indebtedness of the Corporation may be signed by the Board Chair, the Executive Director, or Treasurer. Such items for amounts of \$5,000.00 or greater must be signed by two of these individuals.

Section 4: Unless the context otherwise requires, the general provisions, rules of construction, and definitions contained in the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law and the Education Law shall govern the construction of these Bylaws. The captions and headings in these Bylaws are for reference and convenience only and are not intended to limit or define the scope or effect of any provisions.

Section 5: Any Trustee, Officer, or Committee member having an interest in a contract, other transaction or program presented to or discussed by the Board or Board Committee for authorization, approval, or ratification shall make a prompt, full and frank disclosure of his or her interest to the Board or Committee prior to its acting on such contract or transaction. Such disclosure shall include all relevant and material facts known to such person about the contract or transaction that may reasonably be construed to be adverse to the Corporation's interest. The body to which such disclosure is made shall thereupon determine, by majority vote, whether the disclosure shown that a conflict of interest exists or can reasonably be construed to exist. If a conflict is deemed to exist, such person shall not vote on, nor use his or her personal influence on, nor be present during the discussion or deliberations with respect to, such contract or transaction (other than to present factual information or to respond to questions prior to the discussion). The minutes of the meeting shall reflect proceedings, including the disclosure made, the vote thereon and, where applicable, the abstention from voting and participation. The Board may adopt formal policies requiring:

1. Regular annual statements from Trustees, Officers and employees to disclose existing and potential conflicts of interest; and
2. Corrective and disciplinary actions with respect to transgressions of such policies. For the purpose of this section, a person shall be deemed to have an "interest" in a contract or other transaction if he or she is the party (or one of the parties) contracting or dealing with the Corporation, or is a Director, Trustee or Officer of, or has a significant financial or influential interest in the entity contracting or dealing with the Corporation.

Section 6: Whenever any provisions of the Bylaws is in conflict with the provisions of the Charter, the provisions of the Charter shall control.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **Amendment**

A majority of the Trustees may adopt, amend or repeal these Bylaws subject to approval by the Charter Entity.

**CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY**

The undersigned does hereby certify that the undersigned is the Secretary of the Charter School, an education Corporation duly organized and existing under the law of the State of New York; that the foregoing Bylaws of said Corporation were duly and regularly adopted as such by the Board of Trustees of said Corporation; and that the above and foregoing Bylaws are not in full force and effect.

\_\_\_\_\_, Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ATTACHMENT 5c: Code of Ethics

### Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

#### Code of Ethics

##### Policy

The Board of Trustees (the “Board”) and senior staff of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School (“Rochester Excellence Academy”) must: conduct their affairs in the best interests of the school; avoid conflict, or the appearance of conflict, between their personal interests and those of Rochester Excellence Academy; and ensure that they do not receive improper personal benefit from their positions.

Accordingly, the Rochester Excellence Academy Board has adopted the following procedures to govern Rochester Excellence Academy decision-making processes. Moreover, Board members, experts, advisors, and Rochester Excellence Academy staff of any level are subject to the gift policy set forth below.

- Trustees, officers, or employees of external organization shall hold no more than 40 percent of the total seats comprising the Board of Trustees.
- Trustees shall make all appropriate financial decisions whenever a grievance of conflict of interest is lodged against them.
- Trustees, officers, and employees may never ask a subordinate, a student, or a parent of a student to work on or give to any political campaign.
- Trustees, officer, and employees will exercise the highest degree of care not to disclose confidential information, including but not limited to:
  - Student records
  - Financial information
  - Personnel records
  - Payroll records
- Trustees, officers, and employees will observe rules of behavior and conduct. Unacceptable conduct includes, but is not limited to:
  - Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
  - Falsification of documents
  - Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace or while on duty
  - Use of tobacco or tobacco products on school grounds
  - Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
  - Violation of safety or health rules

##### Conflict of Interest Procedures and Definitions

1. Board members shall disclose to the Board their interest, as defined below, with respect to a transaction the Board is considering. Such transactions include contracts and the provision of services. The disclosure of an Interest may be made orally or in writing. A Board member has an Interest if the Board member or, to the Board member’s knowledge, the Board member’s family member (including parent, grandparent, spouse, sibling, child, grandchild, niece, or nephew), or close business associate (i) is employed by, or (ii) holds a fiduciary, significant owner or senior position with, any entity or person with which

Rochester Excellence Academy is considering a transaction. Unless the Board requests their presences, Board members with Interests shall recuse themselves from the Board's consideration of the relevant transaction. In no event shall Board members vote on transactions in which they have a financial interest. The nature of the Interest and the individual's recusal, or Board determination not to recuse, shall be recorded in the appropriate minutes. In addition, the Board expects Board members to disclose close friendships with (a) any person with whom Rochester Excellence Academy is considering a transaction, and (b) any person who has a significant position in an entity with which Rochester Excellence Academy is considering a transaction.

2. Rochester Excellence Academy staff (including, but not limited to, the Head of School or any other employee, expert or advisor who is in a position to influence a decision in which he/she has an Interest) shall disclose to the Head of School if there is any real or presumed conflict of interest. Unless it is determined that there is not conflict of interest, the staff member shall recuse herself or himself from the decision-making process. The Procedures set forth in the preceding sentence shall also apply to any Board member who has knowledge that s/he has an Interest in a transaction being considered by Rochester Excellence Academy below the Board level. The nature of the Interest and the individual's recusal, or the Chair's determination not to require recusal, shall be memorialized in writing. In addition, the persons listed in the first sentence of this paragraph shall disclose close friendships with (a) any person with whom Rochester Excellence is considering a transaction, and (b) any person who has a significant position in an entity with which Rochester Excellence is considering a transaction.
3. No Board member or staff member shall accept or solicit payments for expense associated with Rochester Excellence Academy-related travel, meals, or other professional activity from actual or potential suppliers of Rochester Excellence Academy. No Board member or staff member shall receive or solicit a gratuitous payment or article of monetary values worth \$75 or more from actual or potential suppliers of services or good for Rochester Excellence Academy, except (a) gifts presented to Rochester Excellence Academy where the recipient is representing Rochester Excellence Academy and thereafter presents the gift to Rochester Excellence Academy, or (b) gifts that are motivated solely by a family or personal relationship, but are in no way connected with the recipient's official Rochester Excellence Academy duties. In general, a recipient should make every effort to decline to accept gifts on behalf of Rochester Excellence Academy, but, in cases where it would be considered ungracious to do so, should make clear that the gift is being accepted on behalf of, and will be given to, Rochester Excellence Academy.
4. Additional Conflict of Interest Provisions for all Trustees, Officers, and Employees:
  - a. The conflict of interest provisions of the New York General Municipal Law are applicable to charter schools to the same extent those provisions (Gen. Municipal Law §§ 800-804, 804-a, 805, 805-a, 805-b, 806) are applicable to school districts. All trustees, officers, and employees shall comply with such laws.
  - b. No trustee, officer or employee shall:
    - i. Directly or indirectly, solicit any gift, or accept or receive any gift having a value of 75 dollars or more, whether in the form of money, service, loan, travel,

entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or in any other form, under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence him, or could reasonably be expected to influence him, in the performance of his official duties or was intended as a reward for any official action on his part;

- ii. Disclose confidential information acquired by him in the course of his official duties or use such information to further his personal interests;
  - iii. Receive, or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before any agency of his municipality, whereby his compensation is to be dependent or contingent upon any action by such agency with respect to such matter, provided that this paragraph shall not prohibit the fixing at any time of fees based upon the reasonable value of the services rendered;
- c. Trustees, officers, and employees must disclose any contract with not-for-profit entities, such as charter management organizations, partners and founding organizations.
- d. Any officer or employee who has, will have, or later acquires an interest in—or whose spouse has, will have, or later acquires an interest in—any actual or proposed contract, purchase agreement, lease agreement or other agreement, including oral agreements, with the municipality of which he or she is an officer or employee, shall publicly disclose the nature and extent of such interest in writing to his or her immediate supervisor and to the governing body thereof as soon as he or she has knowledge of such actual or prospective interest. Such written disclosure shall be made part of a set forth in the officially record of the proceedings of such body.

All trustees, officers, and employees of the school will be given a copy of the Code of Ethics upon their employment or association with the school.



## ATTACHMENT 7: Partnership Information

### Table of Contents

Organization	Document
Rochester YMCA	Letter of Intent
Rochester YMCA	501c3 Status
Rochester Education Foundation	Letter of Commitment
Rochester Education Foundation	501c3 Status
Restoration Rochester	Letter of Commitment
Restoration Rochester	501c3 Status
Komposition Kids	Letter of Commitment
Komposition Kids	501c3 Status



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David Frank  
Executive Director  
Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

May 5, 2020

Letter of Intent

Dear Mr. Frank,

We at the Greater Rochester YMCA are happy to partner with Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School to serve the students and families of the Rochester community. We share the belief that children and families of our community deserve access to quality programming, including educational, artistic, and health programming. Through our Dreamseeds Program we will offer a variety of arts classes instructed by local teaching artists. We will offer in-house after school programming, details below:

Dreamseeds:

- 3 Teaching Artists @\$45 per hour
- Monday – Thursday for one hour
- 37 weeks of instruction

After-school Programming:

- \$2,000 per child, including:
  - Program Coordinator wages
  - Program Staff wages
  - Program Supplies
  - Family Engagement
  - Food and Beverages
  - Human Resources
  - Payroll
  - Insurance
- Serving 60 children in Year 1
- Monday – Thursday
- Parents assume evening transportation responsibility

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will be responsible for all programming cost and fees. Our programming in Year 1 will be \$139,980 and assumes a 20% increase each year. Our programming staff will work with the Head of School to ensure that our program consistently meets the needs of students and families.

Sincerely,

Todd Michel Waite,  
Vice President-Youth Development

**Internal Revenue Service**

**Date:** August 9, 2004

YMCA of Greater Rochester  
% Finance Officer  
444 Main Street  
Rochester, NY 14604-2508

**Department of the Treasury  
P. O. Box 2508  
Cincinnati, OH 45201**

**Person to Contact:**  
Ronnie Clemons 31-04020  
Customer Service Representative  
**Toll Free Telephone Number:**  
8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. EST  
877-829-5500  
**Fax Number:**  
513-263-3756  
**Federal Identification Number:**  
16-0743242

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is in response to your request of August 9, 2004, regarding your organization's tax-exempt status.

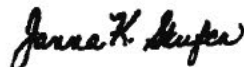
In April 1934, we issued a determination letter that recognized your organization as exempt from federal income tax. Our records indicate that your organization is currently exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our records indicate that your organization is also classified as a public charity under section 509(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our records indicate that contributions to your organization are deductible under section 170 of the Code, and that you are qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Internal Revenue Code.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely,



Janna K. Skufca, Director, TE/GE  
Customer Account Services



**ROCHESTER  
EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION**

250 Mill Street  
Rochester, NY 14614  
585-271-5790

info@rochestereducation.org  
rochestereducation.org  
rochestercan.org

David Frank  
Executive Director  
Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

May 5, 2020

Dear Mr. Frank,

My organization, Rochester Education Foundation, supports arts education opportunities for district and charter school students in Rochester. We look forward to providing instruments at no cost to the proposed charter school, Rochester Excellence Academy, in year two of its programming.

We share the belief in the power of the arts to support both academic and social success for students- especially those experiencing poverty. We believe that the applicant will expand opportunities for students to experience this growth through the proposed charter school.

Our Arts Opportunities Fund is dedicated to providing greater access for students. To that end, we have provided nearly 3,000 instruments to students, classrooms, and community partners, provided scholarships for arts lessons, and more.

We would be thrilled to provide the Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School with musical instruments for in-school instrumental music lessons in year two of programming and beyond. While we rely on donations from individuals to provide instruments, we are confident that we would be able to provide this critical resource to the school. This would require no cost to the school.

We look forward to providing the gift of music for the future Rochester Excellence Academy Students. Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Stuart Hencke  
Executive Director

**Board of Directors**

Todd Allen  
Cheranceo  
Christine Casanuovo-Adams  
Diane Case  
Ed Cavaer

Adrienne Cooper  
Julie Cook  
Kathy Dexter  
Lorraine Frack  
Fernando Garrido-Ferrari


Tony Green  
Marty Jacobson  
Sara Key  
Joe Levy

Ian Mortimer  
Bob Nease  
Dedre Strutz  
Mark Wagner

**Advisory Council**

Dan Burns  
Walter Cooper, Ph.D.  
Jennifer Leonard

P.O. Box 2508  
Cincinnati OH 45201

In reply refer to:   
Mar. 18, 2010 LTR 4168C E0  
27-0132133 000000 00

00027678  
BODC: TE

ROCHESTER EDUCATION FOUNDATION INC  
% PAT BRAUS  
250 MILL ST  
ROCHESTER NY 14614



025479

Employer Identification Number:   
Person to Contact:   
Toll Free Telephone Number: 

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your Mar. 09, 2010, request for information regarding your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that your organization was recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(03) of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in December 2005.

Our records also indicate that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are described in section(s) 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

Beginning with the organization's sixth taxable year and all succeeding years, it must meet one of the public support tests under section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) or section 509(a)(2) as reported on Schedule A of the Form 990. If your organization does not meet the public support test for two consecutive years, it is required to file Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation, for the second tax year that the organization failed to meet the support test and will be reclassified as a private foundation.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

ROCHESTER EDUCATION FOUNDATION INC  
% PAT BRAUS  
250 MILL ST  
ROCHESTER NY 14614

Sincerely yours,

*Michele M. Sullivan*

Michele M. Sullivan, Oper. Mgr.  
Accounts Management Operations I





**Restoring and Elevating Life**

David Frank  
Executive Director  
Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

May 5, 2020

Letter of Intent

Dear Mr. Frank,

We at Restoration Rochester are happy to partner with Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School to serve the students and families of the Rochester community. We share the belief that the children and families of our community deserve access to quality healthcare, nutrition, housing and all other resources. We will partner with the school's Social Worker to connect families in crisis with resources within our community. We offer support through providing referrals for physical, psychological, and spiritual needs. Our offered services include:

- Emergency Assistance Referrals:
  - Food
  - Clothing
  - Shelter
  - Baby items
  - Bus passes
  - And other resources
- Compassion Care Management
  - Care and Service Coordination

Our partnership with Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will require no cost from the school, in all years. We look forward to servicing the students and families of Rochester through our partnership.

Sincerely,



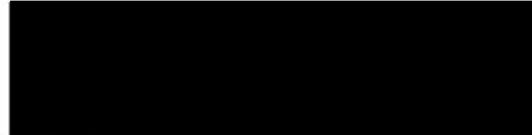
Leah Kazmierski  
Founder/CEO

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

MAR 25 2020

Date:



RESTORATION ROCHESTER INC  
112 W SPRUCE ST  
EAST ROCHESTER, NY 14445-0000

Contact Person:  
CUSTOMER SERVICE ID# 31954  
Contact Telephone Number:  
(877) 829-5500  
Accounting Period Ending:  
December 31  
Public Charity Status:  
509(a)(2)  
Form 990/990-EZ/990-N Required:  
Yes  
Effective Date of Exemption:  
September 06, 2019  
Contribution Deductibility:  
Yes  
Addendum Applies:  
No

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to [www.irs.gov/charities](http://www.irs.gov/charities). Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

Letter 947

RESTORATION ROCHESTER INC

Sincerely,

*Stephen a. martin*

Director, Exempt Organizations  
Rulings and Agreements

David Frank  
Executive Director  
Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

May 6, 2020

## Letter of Intent

Dear Mr. Frank,

We at Ubiquity Inc. are happy to partner with Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School to serve the students and families of the Rochester community. We share the belief that all children, especially those living in impoverished neighborhoods, benefit from mentorship and guidance. Both organizations also believe in the importance of equipping children with the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for success in future careers, beginning in the early childhood years. Our Komposition Kids Program will offer:

- Career Readiness Instruction
  - Utilizing our Ms.Sow's Career Readiness Program
  - Staffed by our Program Staff
  - Twice a month throughout the school year
- Access to our Mentorship Program
  - Outside of school
  - Including: basketball and soccer league, group outings, and academic support

Our partnership with Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School will require no cost from the school, in all years. We look forward to partnering to support the future Rochester Excellence Academy Students.

Sincerely,

FILING RECEIPT

CITY NAME : UBIQUITY INC.

DOCUMENT TYPE : DOMESTIC (NOT-FOR-PROFIT) CORPORATION TYPE: B COUNTY: MONR

SERVICE COMPANY : SERVICO SERVICE CODE: 35

FILED: 12/19/1995 DURATION: PERPETUAL CASH #: 951219000182 FILM #: 951219000

ADDRESS FOR PROCESS

EXIST D

FFREY BENJAMIN  
REDWOOD RD.  
CHESTER, NY 14615

12/19/95

REGISTERED AGENT



FILER	FEES		PAYMENTS	
DAVID BERLOWITZ		100.00		100
16 MAIN ST. EAST, SUITE 310	FILING :	75.00	CASH :	0
ROCHESTER, NY 14614	TAX :	0.00	CHECK :	0
	CERT :	0.00	BILLED:	100
	COPIES :	0.00		
	HANDLING:	25.00	REFUND:	0

1025 (11/89)





Internal Revenue Service

Department of the Treasury

P. O. Box 2508  
Cincinnati, OH 45201

Date: February 21, 2001

Ubiquity, Inc.  
95 Kingsgate South  
Rochester, NY 14617

Person to Contact:  
Ms. E Eckert 31-07436  
Customer Service Specialist  
Toll Free Telephone Number:  
8:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. EST  
Fax Number:  
513-263-3756  
Federal Identification Number:  
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam:

This letter is in response to your telephone call of February 21, 2001, requesting a copy of your organization's determination letter. This letter will take the place of the copy you requested.

Our records indicate that a determination letter issued in April 1996, granted your organization exemption from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. That letter is still in effect.

Based on information subsequently submitted, we classified your organization as one that is not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because it is an organization described in sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Our classification was based on the assumption that your organization's operations would continue as stated in the application. If your organization's sources of support, or its character, method of operations, or purposes have changed, please let us know so we can consider the effect of the change on the exempt status and foundation status of your organization.

Your organization is required to file Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, only if its gross receipts each year are normally more than \$25,000. If a return is required, it must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of the organization's annual accounting period. The law imposes a penalty of \$20 a day, up to a maximum of \$10,000, when a return is filed late, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay.

All exempt organizations (unless specifically excluded) are liable for taxes under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (social security taxes) on remuneration of \$100 or more paid to each employee during a calendar year. Your organization is not liable for the tax imposed under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA).

Organizations that are not private foundations are not subject to the excise taxes under Chapter 42 of the Code. However, these organizations are not automatically exempt from other federal excise taxes.

Donors may deduct contributions to your organization as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to your organization or for its use are deductible for federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.



Ubiquity, Inc.  
[REDACTED]

Your organization is not required to file federal income tax returns unless it is subject to the tax on unrelated business income under section 511 of the Code. If your organization is subject to this tax, it must file an income tax return on the Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return. In this letter, we are not determining whether any of your organization's present or proposed activities are unrelated trade or business as defined in section 513 of the Code.

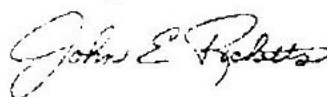
The law requires you to make your organization's annual return available for public inspection without charge for three years after the due date of the return. You are also required to make available for public inspection a copy of your organization's exemption application, any supporting documents and the exemption letter to any individual who requests such documents in person or in writing. You can charge only a reasonable fee for reproduction and actual postage costs for the copied materials. The law does not require you to provide copies of public inspection documents that are widely available, such as by posting them on the Internet (World Wide Web). You may be liable for a penalty of \$20 a day for each day you do not make these documents available for public inspection (up to a maximum of \$10,000 in the case of an annual return).

Because this letter could help resolve any questions about your organization's exempt status and foundation status, you should keep it with the organization's permanent records.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

This letter affirms your organization's exempt status.

Sincerely,



John E. Ricketts, Director, TE/GE  
Customer Account Services

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APPENDIX B

The purpose or purposes for which this corporation is formed are as follows:

- To organize job-training programs in the community.
- To establish scholarship assistance to high school students.
- To build networks via businesses and educational resources.
- To encourage mentor support from role models in the community.
- To improve the quality of academic standards for students.
- To organize grassroots programs that build stronger relationships between the younger and older generations in the community.
- To implement services that encourage parent-student involvement.
- To encourage churches to support businesses that provide job opportunities to disadvantaged individuals and adolescents.
- To create internship programs through a business consortium.
- To provide students with career paths assistance from various resources in the community.
- To assist and train disabled individuals who are socially and economically disadvantaged.
- To build and renovate suitable housing for disabled and handicapped citizens.
- To establish Individual Residential Alternative housing in urban communities.
- To develop employment opportunities for disabled and undereducated citizens.
- To improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities.
- To organize grassroots programs that build stronger relationships between churches, state (sponsored programs), local businesses and the urban community.
- To implement services that provide positive outlets and awareness in the community.
- To create internship programs through a business consortium.
- To work with students in high school who have been viewed or labeled as "Learning Disabled".
- To work collectively with local organizations whose interests are to support disabled citizens.
- To do any other act or thing incidental to or connected with the foregoing purposes or in the advancement thereof, but not for the pecuniary profit or financial gain of its members, directors, or officers.

Nothing herein shall authorize this Corporation, directly or indirectly, to engage in or include among its purposes any of the activities mentioned in Not-for-Profit Corporation Law Section 404 (b) through (v).

In furtherance of its corporate purposes, the corporation shall have all general powers enumerated in Section 202 of the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, together with the powers to solicit grants and contributions for corporate purposes.

Ubiquity, Inc. Fiscal Policy

The name of the corporation is Ubiquity, Inc. The corporation is organized exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and the Articles of Incorporation. The Corporation shall have no capital stock, its object and purpose being solely of a benevolent character, and not for individual pecuniary gain or profit to its members.

The business, property, and affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by the Board of Directors which shall have the power to initiate and approve plans and programs for the purposes stated in the Articles of Incorporation; manage all lands, building, equipment, securities, and all other properties of the Corporation; adopt the annual budget of the Corporation; borrow money, raise and disburse funds, invest and reinvest funds of the Corporation; make contracts; appoint and delegate the power to hire employees of the Corporation; perform all other duties and have such other powers as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the Corporation.

The officers of the Corporation are empowered to borrow an amount up to, but not exceeding \$50,000 within the powers vested in the Executive Committee by the Bylaws providing that full disclosure of all terms of said borrowing are brought to the full Board at its next meeting and that the purposes for which said monies are to be used are consistent with the purposes of the Corporation and are fiscally prudent. Any amount exceeding \$50,000 must be brought to the full Board for its approval following a full disclosure of all pertinent information.

The treasurer shall receive all monies of the Corporation and have custody thereof; deposit the funds of the Corporation in or more banks selected by the Board of Directors, to be disbursed in accordance with the direction of, and upon the signatures of, persons designated by the Board of Directors; keep a full account of all monies received and paid out and make such reports thereof to the President and the Board of Directors as they may require; receive and have custody of all deeds, securities, notes, contracts and other financial papers of the Corporation and place them for safekeeping in the safe deposit vaults of a bank designated by the Board of Directors and under such rules of access as the Board of Directors shall determine; keep full account of all deeds, securities, notes, and financial papers of the Corporation, make such reports thereof to the President and the Board as they shall require; cause the books of account of the Corporation to be audited at least once annually by a public accountant; sign such papers as may be required by his/her office or as may be directed by the Board; and perform such other duties as may be incidental to the office. The Treasurer may be required by the Board to give such bonds, as they shall determine for the faithful performance of his/her duties.

Treasurer Vicki Leason

President Jeffrey Bays

Secretary Robert Jones

Witness Annie Jones

Vic-President Sharon Tubbin

DATED 3/2/03

**ATTACHMENT 8a: Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures**

**Figure 8a.1: Proposed Staffing Chart**

Positions	Avg. Starting Salary	FTE				
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Head of School	\$100,000	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Curriculum & Instruction	\$75,000	1	1	2	2	2
Director of Student Supports	\$75,000	0	1	1	1	1
Director of Operations	\$75,000	1	1	1	1	1
Student Supports Coordinator	\$60,000	.5 <sup>1</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0
Visual & Performing Arts Coordinator	\$60,000	0	.5 <sup>3</sup>	.5	.5	.5
Health & Wellness Coordinator	\$60,000	0	.5 <sup>4</sup>	.5	.5	.5
Nurse	\$60,000	1	1	1	1	1
Special Education Teacher	\$55,000	2.5	5	7	8	8
ENL Teacher	\$55,000	1	1	2	2	2
Social Worker	\$55,000	1	.5 <sup>5</sup>	.5	.5	.5
General Education Teacher	\$50,000	5	8	11	14	15
Visual & Performing Arts Teacher	\$50,000	2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Teacher's Assistant	\$45,000	3	5	7	9	10
Therapeutic Intervention Specialist	\$45,000	0	1	1	1	1
Office Manager	\$40,000	1	1	1	1	1
Apprentice Teacher	\$40,000	0	1	2	2	2
Operations Associate	\$35,000	0	0	1	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>52</b>

**Job Descriptions of Administrative and Instructional Staff<sup>6</sup>**

**HEAD OF SCHOOL**

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Board of Trustees*

**Qualifications**

- Experience in educational leadership and management of adults and students
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- Proven track record of academic success against ambitious metrics
- Ability to assess data, find trends, and use information to make strategic decisions
- Experience in budgetary planning and effective allocation of school resources
- Demonstrated ability to engage a variety of community stakeholders
- Strong organizational skills and ability to multi-task
- Minimum of Master's or Advanced Degree preferred

<sup>1</sup> This .5 position will be shared with a .5 Special Education Teacher position below.

<sup>2</sup> In Y2 and all future years, this Coordinator role will transition into a Director of Student Supports position, shown above.

<sup>3</sup> This .5 Coordinator role will be shared with the other .5 complimentary teaching position shown below.

<sup>4</sup> This .5 role will be shared with that of the Social Worker shown below.

<sup>5</sup> The Social Worker position absorbs that of the Health and Wellness Coordinator role, and combined remains 1 FTE.

<sup>6</sup> Staffing model informed by Uncommon Schools Rochester Prep West Elementary and Primary Hall Charter School.



## **Responsibilities**

- Recruit and hire mission-aligned and results-oriented individuals to fill all positions
- Supervise, train, and support school's Leadership Team
- Create, monitor, and sustain culture of academic excellence
- Train, support, and evaluate the Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- Lead development, adoption, and execution of rigorous curriculum
- Lead development and execution of data-driven instruction to ensure student achievement.
- Manage and oversee Director of Operations as well as all other staff including representatives of all outsourced business functions and community partnerships
- Lead staff development and administrative meetings
- Lead recruitment/hiring/training/retention of all staff; involve other roles as applicable
- Observe all teachers weekly, supported by Leadership Team Members, in all years
- Draft and provide evaluations of all staff members;
- Work with DCI/Director of Operations/Student Supports Coordinator evaluating positions
- Implement all personnel policies
- Serve as primary spokesperson for school to internal and external constituents
- Support and work with all Board committees, providing information, data, reports, and context necessary to assist in effective governance
- Manage financial resources in alignment with school priorities and goals;  
Work with Director of Operations to ensure accuracy of all financial documents
- Manage all partnerships with community-based organizations
- Coordinate, manage, and ensure compliance with state-mandated instruction, assessment, and reporting, including requirements for English Learners
- Establish, monitor, and direct culture of school by monitoring academic program and implementation of discipline code to ensure safe, and focused school environment
- Develop and communicate strategic plan for the school
- Serve as authorizer liaison

## **DIRECTOR CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

---

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Head of School*

### **Qualifications**

- Minimum of three years working in urban education with history of significant gains in Student performance and/or growth
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- Experience in leadership and management of both adults and students
- Ability to assess data, find trends, and use information to make strategic decisions
- Strong knowledge of NYSNGLS in all relevant grades and subjects
- Bachelor's Degree Required, Master's Degree preferred

### **Responsibilities**

- Create scope and sequence for Math, ELA, SS, and Sci for every grade level a minimum of one year in advance
- Coach designated teachers on lesson plan internalization, execution of lessons, implementation of data into instruction
- Assist in teacher hiring with Head of School



- Coordinate with Director of Student Supports on IEP process
- Seek out most effective, research-based (supplemental) curriculum programs for school to draw upon and use, from computer-based to textbook-based
- Coach teachers on executing daily, weekly, and interim assessments and analysis and highly responsive action plans that bring 100% of students to mastery of 100% of instructional objectives such that all students masters every standard

## **DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SUPPORTS**

---

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Head of School*

### **Qualifications**

- At least 3 years Special Education teaching experience with demonstrated success
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- NYS Teaching Students with Disabilities Certification
- College Diploma

### **Requirements**

- Create and execute comprehensive school-wide systems for monitoring all student achievement and noting of any students falling behind adequate progress
- Coordinate all special education testing and creation of IEPs and 504s plans
- Maintain accurate, complete, neat, and organized special education files for every student
- Ensure strict confidentiality of personal student records and data
- Train staff in school's special education systems and procedures, from identification to monitoring, accommodations and modifications, IEP Team and referral processes
- Ensure all students are given appropriate services daily, weekly, quarterly, annually
- Coordinate schedules of all special student support staff, including contracted services
- Ensure all students in need of special education testing are tested/given appropriate plans
- Ensure school is in compliance with all state and federal special education laws/regulations
- Ensure all qualified students are identified and are given appropriate special services
- Coordinate new special education referrals

## **DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**

---

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Head of School*

### **Qualifications**

- Three or more years of customer service or administrative experience
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- Strong organizational abilities and detail-oriented
- Knowledge of office equipment/services including computers, printers, copiers, fax machines, phones, software
- College degree preferred but may be substituted for relevant experience

### **Responsibilities**

- Maintain accurate, complete, neat, and organized student files
- Coordinate admissions, enrollment, and waitlist procedures
- Conduct community outreach and engagement

- Collect, enter, and maintain school data in administrative database
- Create purchase orders, track shipments, and follows up on administrative needs with vendors, including ordering, receipt, inventory, and maintenance of supplies
- Work with Office Manager to maintain accurate attendance records and follows-up with families when students are not present at school
- Coordinate all school mailings
- Ensure strict confidentiality of personal student and staff records and data
- Support Office Manager in operational duties, including lunch distribution, recess, and inventory and distribution of supplies
- Maintain enthusiastic greetings of all stakeholders (in person, phone, email, U.S. mail), provide information and direct communication thoughtfully
- Communicate to all school stakeholders in thoughtful, calm, and knowledgeable way
- Remain familiar with school policies, procedures, and operations.
- Draft, edit, and translate documents, as needed
- Complete other responsibilities as requested by Head of School

## **COORDINATOR OF STUDENT SUPPORTS**

---

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Head of School*

### **Qualifications**

- At least 2 years Special Education teaching experience with demonstrated success
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- NYS Teaching Students with Disabilities Certification
- College Diploma

### **Requirements**

- Assist in the creation and execution comprehensive school-wide systems for monitoring all student achievement and noting of any students falling behind adequate progress
- Assist with coordination of all special education testing and creation of IEPs and 504s plans
- Maintain accurate, complete, neat, and organized special education files for every student
- Ensure strict confidentiality of personal student records and data
- Train staff in school's special education systems and procedures, from identification to monitoring, accommodations and modifications, IEP Team and referral processes
- Ensure all students are given appropriate services daily, weekly, quarterly, annually
- Assist with coordination of schedules for all special student support staff, including contracted services
- Ensure all students in need of special education testing are tested/given appropriate plans
- Ensure school is in compliance with all state and federal special education laws/regulations
- Ensure all qualified students are identified and are given appropriate special services
- Coordinate new special education referrals

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS COORDINATOR<sup>7</sup>**

---

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Head of School*

### **Qualifications**

- At least 2 years of experience providing arts instruction for children
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- At least a high school diploma or equivalent; College Diploma preferred

### **Requirements**

- Create and deliver engaging, effective lessons plans to students that are effective per data
- Create lesson plans aligned to the NYS Learning Standards for the Arts
- Modify lesson plans and instruction to meet the needs of individual students
- Create opportunities for student performances and showcases
- Assess and evaluate student growth; create and execute action plans at class-wide, group-wide and individual basis in response to student data
- Collaborate with Special Education and ENL Teachers to meet the needs of all students
- Collaborate with Classroom Teachers to develop cross curricular connections
- Consistently model RESPECT Values
- Provide weekly instructional coaching for Teaching Artists

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS COORDINATOR<sup>8</sup>**

---

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Head of School*

### **Qualifications**

- At least 2 years of experience working with students and families in an urban environment
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- College Diploma

### **Requirements**

- Work closely with Head of School to establish a positive, structured, achievement-oriented, and creative school culture
- Support teachers to hold all students to high and consistent behavioral expectations
- Serve as point person for dealing with behavioral crisis-intervention and acute behavioral issues
- Collaborate with Restoration Rochester, local CBO, to provide family resources in crisis
- Act as resource to teachers in instructional practice, especially as it relates to discipline, relationships with students, classroom management, and school culture
- Assist teachers, students, and parents in the effective creation and implementation of individual behavior plans
- Lead staff efforts to ensure all students have excellent attendance and arrive at school on time, and working aggressively with students and parents to ensure excellent attendance
- May participate in summer home visits highlighting the responsibilities of parents, teachers, and students
- Help to reinforce the effective use of a school-wide behavior plan, including managing the school's PBIS token system

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<sup>77</sup> Position is .5FTE, shared with .5FTE teaching role.

<sup>8</sup> Position is .5FTE, shared with .5FTE Social Worker role.

- Remain highly present and visible during school hours, relentlessly ensuring the school has an exceptional school culture
- Circulate proactively throughout classrooms and hallways during the day, to gain valuable context on student behavior and help support positive school culture
- Monitor behavioral reflection desk visits, Mindfulness Room visits, in-school and out-of-school suspensions
- Keep accurate student discipline records, documenting all conferences, suspensions, and phone calls for behavior
- Provide weekly instructional coaching for the Therapeutic Intervention Specialist

## **NURSE**

---

*Hired by Head of School and evaluated by and reports to Director of Operations*

### **Qualifications**

- Strong planning, problem solving, organizational, communication and interpersonal skills.
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- Registered Nurse in the State of New York

### **Requirements**

- Administer first aid and emergency treatment to students
- Prepare and maintain health records for school authorities
- Coordinate and participate in a variety of student care activities: medication administration, records data for medical record.
- Monitor and ensure appropriate inventory and tracking of medical supplies
- Collaborate with the Director of Operations to replenish medical supplies, as required.
- Evaluate student care and plan of care
- Collaborate with Health and Wellness Coordinator to ensure proper student care
- Comply with quality assurance, HIPAA, infection control, safety and other company policies

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER**

---

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Head of School in Y1; Hired by Head of School and evaluated by and reports to Director of Student Supports in Y2 and beyond*

### **Qualifications**

- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- College Diploma
- NYS Teaching Students with Disabilities Certification (Highly Preferred) or work towards such certification with special education experience

### **Responsibilities**

- Collaborate effectively with classroom teachers and service providers
- Stay organized and effective despite a highly variable daily schedule
- Communicate with both parents and staff regarding individual student needs
- Ensure strict confidentiality of personal student records and data

- Provide push-in, pull-out, and integrated intervention services
- Ensure special needs students achieve high levels of growth

## **ENL TEACHER**

---

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Head of School in Y1; Hired by Head of School and evaluated by and reports to Director of Student Supports in Y2 and beyond*

### **Qualifications**

- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- College Diploma
- NYS ESOL, TESOL, or ENL Certification (Highly Preferred) or working towards such certification with special education experience

### **Responsibilities**

- Collaborate effectively with classroom teachers, SPED teachers, and service providers
- Stay organized and effective despite a highly variable daily schedule
- Communicate with both parents and staff regarding individual student needs
- Ensure strict confidentiality of personal student records and data
- Provide push-in, pull-out, and integrated intervention services
- Administer NYSITELL and NYSESLAT assessments
- Ensure students who receive MLL/ELL services achieve high levels of growth

## **SOCIAL WORKER**

---

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Head of School*

### **Qualifications**

- At least 2 years of experience working with students and families in an urban environment
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- College Diploma

### **Requirements**

- Work closely with Head of School to establish a positive, structured, achievement-oriented, and creative school culture
- Support teachers to hold all students to high and consistent behavioral expectations.
- Serve as the point person for dealing with behavioral crisis-intervention
- Collaborate with Restoration Rochester, local CBO, to provide resources for families in crisis
- Act as resource to teachers in instructional practice, especially as it relates to discipline, relationships with students, classroom management, and school culture
- Assist teachers, students, and parents in the effective creation and implementation of individual behavior plans
- Lead staff efforts to ensure all students have excellent attendance and arrive at school on time, and working aggressively with students and parents to ensure excellent attendance
- May participate in summer home visits highlighting the responsibilities of parents, teachers, and students

- Help to reinforce the effective use of a school-wide behavior plan, including managing the school's PBIS token system
- Be highly present and visible during school hours, relentlessly ensuring the school has an exceptional school culture
- Circulate proactively throughout classrooms and hallways during the day, to gain valuable context on student behavior and help support positive school culture
- Monitor behavioral reflection desk visits, Mindfulness Room visits, in-school and out of school suspensions
- Keep accurate student discipline records, documenting all conferences, suspensions, and phone calls for behavior
- Provide weekly instructional coaching for the Therapeutic Intervention Specialist

## **GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHER**

---

*Hired, evaluated by, and reports to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction*

### **Qualifications**

- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- College Diploma
- Teaching certification or working towards attaining

### **Responsibilities**

- Deliver lessons plans to students that are engaging, and effective per student data.
- Modify lesson plans and instruction to meet the needs of individual students.
- Cultivate positive relationships with families and consistently communicate with families
- Assess and evaluate student growth; create and execute action plans at class-wide, group-wide and individual basis in response to student data
- Collaborate with Special Education and ENL Teachers to meet the needs of all students.
- Create classroom culture that develops RESPECT values in students
- Effectively and regularly communicate with parents to address individual student needs.
- Consistently model RESPECT Values

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS TEACHER**

---

*Hired by the Head of School, evaluated by and reports to Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator*

### **Qualifications**

- At least 2 years of experience providing arts instruction for children
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- At least a high school diploma or equivalent; College Diploma preferred

### **Requirements**

- Create and deliver engaging and effective lessons plans to students informed by data
- Create lesson plans aligned to the NYS Learning Standards for the Arts
- Modify lesson plans and instruction to meet the needs of individual students
- Create opportunities for student performances and showcases
- Assess and evaluate student growth; create and execute action plans at class-wide, group-wide and individual basis in response to student data



- Collaborate with Special Education and ENL Teachers to meet the needs of all students
- Collaborate with Classroom Teachers to develop cross curricular connections
- Consistently model RESPECT Values

## **TEACHER'S ASSISTANT**

---

*Hired by the Head of School, evaluated by and reports to Grade Level Chairs*

### **Qualifications**

- At least a high school diploma or equivalent, College Diploma with CDA Credential or NYS Teacher's Assistant Certification Preferred.
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability

### **Responsibilities**

- Support academic progress of students in assigned classroom
- Support general education teachers in routines, procedures, and systems
- Assist with students during all communal times including breakfast, lunch, entry and dismissal, community meetings, and transitions
- Deliver data-driven and engaging Phonics, Science, and Social Studies instruction

## **THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION SPECIALIST**

---

*Hired by the Head of School, evaluated by and reports to the Health and Wellness Coordinator*

### **Qualifications**

- At least 1 year of experience supporting students within urban education setting
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- At least a high school diploma or equivalent, College Diploma preferred

### **Requirements**

- Work closely with Health and Wellness Coordinator to establish a positive, structured, achievement-oriented, and creative school culture
- Support teachers to hold all students to high and consistent behavioral expectations
- Serve as the point person for dealing with behavioral crisis-intervention
- Act as resource to teachers in instructional practice, especially as it relates to discipline, relationships with students, classroom management, and school culture
- Assist teachers, students, and parents in effective creation and implementation of individual behavior plans
- Help to reinforce effective use of a school-wide behavior plan, including managing the school's PBIS token system
- Be highly present and visible during school hours, relentlessly ensuring the school has an exceptional school culture
- Monitor behavioral reflection desk visits, Mindfulness Room visits, in-school and out of school suspensions
- Keep accurate student discipline records, documenting all conferences, suspensions, and phone calls for behavior
- Support students' social emotional growth within the Mindfulness Room

## **OFFICE MANAGER**

---

*Hired by the Head of School, evaluated by and reports to the Director of Operations*

### **Qualifications**

- At least 1 year of administrative office experience
- At least a High School Diploma or equivalent
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability
- Excellent time management skills and ability to multi-task and prioritize work
- Attention to detail and problem-solving skills
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Strong organizational and planning skills
- Proficient in MS Office

### **Requirements**

- Point person for mailing, shipping, supplies, equipment, bills and errands
- Organize office operations and procedures
- Coordinate with IT department on all office equipment
- Provide general support to visitors
- Ensure filing systems are maintained and current
- Ensure security, integrity and confidentiality of data
- Monitor and maintain office supplies inventory
- Assist with daily attendance and nutrition tracking
- Assist the Director of Operations with all school operations task

## **APPRENTICE TEACHER**

---

*Hired by the Head of School, evaluated by and reports to Director of Curriculum and Instruction*

### **Qualifications**

- At least a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability

### **Responsibilities**

- Coordinate and organize support of multiple groups of students and individual students
- Steps in for any lead teachers or co-teachers when they are absent
- Supports teachers in assessing and remediating students in responsible grade level
- Assist with students during all communal times including breakfast, lunch, entry and dismissal, community meetings, and transitions

## **OPERATIONS ASSOCIATE**

---

*Hired by the Head of School, evaluated by and reports to the Director of Operations*

### **Qualifications**

- At least a high school diploma or equivalent
- Deep mission-alignment and commitment to school goals and accountability

### **Requirements**

- Assist the Director of Operations with all school operations tasks
- Assist the Office Manager with all administrative and school operations tasks

## Hiring Process

**Candidate Hiring Process.** Rochester Excellence Academy will adhere to a three-step hiring process to ensure that high-quality, mission-aligned candidates are hired to support our students. Our hiring process invites forward qualified candidates to advance to through the stages outlined in **Figure 8a.2** and **Figure 8a.3**.

<b>Figure 8a.2: Hiring Process for Administrators</b>	
Stage	Description
<b>Resume Screening</b>	All resumes will be screened to identify educational attainment and academic achievement/awards; relevant experience with an emphasis on urban education; commitment to the Rochester community; potential gaps in professional experience; presence of references; quality of cover letter.
<b>30-Minute Phone Screening</b>	Candidates will be asked a series of questions that focus on the following: mission and vision alignment; educational philosophies; core values; receptiveness to school model; personal reflectiveness. These answers will be scored using an internal rubric to determine if the candidate will advance to the final stage.
<b>In-Peron Interview &amp; Immersion Experience</b>	The final stage in the hiring process for administrators has three components. <b>Written Component.</b> Candidates will be given a written task to assess clarity in communication, quality of written communication, and mission alignment. These could include formal letters on behalf of the school to families (Director of Operations role) or an email to a teacher following a classroom observation (Director of Curriculum and Instruction). <b>Immersion Activities.</b> Candidates will complete multiple immersion activities (30 minutes each) that test their ability and competency of key skills required for administrators. These could include roleplays, facilitating a data analysis meeting, creating action plans based on student or school data, running a feedback meeting, and developing and delivering a PD session. <b>Formal Interview.</b> During the formal interview, the candidate will be asked to reflect on their immersion activities and will receive feedback from the Head of School. The candidate will be required to immediately implement feedback on one of the immersion activities, through a practice session paired with live coaching. The candidate will also be asked additional questions related to the role that will allow the Head of School assess their ability to be managed, coached, developed, and perform at a high level.

<b>Figure 8a.3: Hiring Process for Teachers</b>	
Stage	Description
<b>Resume Screening</b>	All received resumes will be screened to identify educational attainment and academic achievement/awards; relevant experience with an emphasis on urban education; commitment to the Rochester community; potential gaps in professional experience; presence of references; quality of cover letter.
<b>30-Minute Phone Screening</b>	Candidates will be asked a series of questions that focus on the following: mission and vision alignment; educational philosophies; core values; receptiveness to school model; personal reflectiveness. These answers will be scored using an internal rubric to determine if the candidate will advance to the final stage.
<b>In-Peron Interview &amp; Immersion Experience</b>	The final stage in the hiring process for teachers has three components. <b>Sample Lesson.</b> Candidates will be given criteria for a 30-minute sample lesson. They will be sent a lesson plan with materials and will be asked to internalize the plan. Teachers will deliver a 30-



	<p>minute sample lesson to a classroom of students. The teacher will be assessed on quality of instruction, classroom management, receptiveness to feedback (all candidates will receive live coaching during the lesson), and response to student data. <b>Lesson Debrief.</b> During the debrief, the candidate will be asked to reflect on their lesson and will receive feedback from the Head of School. The candidate will practice delivering a part of the lesson determined by the Head of School to demonstrate their willingness and ability to implement feedback. <b>Formal Interview.</b> The candidate will also be asked additional questions related to the role that will allow the Head of School assess their ability to be managed, coached, developed, and perform at a high level.</p>
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Staff positions outside of instructional and administrative roles will require a slightly different hiring process, including resume screening, phone screen, and two-hour interview that will include the immersion experiences assessing the candidate’s ability to complete job-related tasks. A formal offer or denial will be made within 48 hours of the interview process. Following the candidate’s acceptance, the school will reach out to begin the onboarding process. We will conduct extensive background checks of employment references, educational and licensure certifications, and criminal record information for all hired individuals prior to their official start of their employment with Rochester Excellence Academy.

**Evaluation Process for School Employees**

To succeed in our mission of supporting students in developing the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary to attain future success, all school staff members must regularly reflect upon our practices and mindsets, continuously seeking feedback to build our capacity. Performance reviews and evaluations, informal and formal, will be a vital part of every staff member’s professional development. Performance evaluations will be led by the Head of School, scheduled in advance, and will occur twice each school year, once in January and once in April. Evaluations will be based on an internal rubric that includes both role specific items and school-wide values.<sup>9</sup>

**Administrative. Head of School.** Our Head of School (“HOS”) will be formally evaluated annually by the Board using the Charter School Performance Framework, assessing the HOS’s ability to effectively manage academic performance, teaching and learning, school culture, family engagement, finances, organizational capacity, upholding the promises of our mission and key design elements, enrollment, and legal compliance. The evaluation will be led by the Board Chair supported by one member from both the Academic and Finance Committee.

**Other Administrative Positions.** Every April, the Head of School will conduct a formal evaluation of members of the Leadership Team, including the Director of Operations, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Coordinator of Student Supports. We will use internally developed rubrics and results from our annual staff surveys related to effectiveness of the Leadership Team in these reviews. An informal evaluation will be conducted by the HOS each January. Evaluations will provide action steps towards strengthening individual areas of growth.

**Teachers and Non-Instructional Staff.** Our Head of School will deliver all annual evaluation reviews to teachers whom s/he directly coaches. The HOS will support the Student Supports Coordinator, Director of Operations, and Director of Curriculum and Instruction in delivering annual reviews for Teachers and staff whom they directly coach. All staff will receive mid-year performance reviews in January and will receive end-of-year evaluation reviews in April.

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<sup>9</sup> The Head of School will be formally evaluated once at the year-end and informally mid-year.



Instructional evaluation reviews will be based on our teacher development rubric and influenced by weekly observations, response to feedback, student performance and growth data, professionalism, and teamwork. Annual review materials and rubrics will be provided to staff during Summer Excellence Intensive (our summer professional development) so that teachers are aware of how they will be assessed. Evaluations will provide action steps towards strengthening individual areas of growth. Annual evaluations will be used to determine professional development opportunities, contract renewal, termination, or resolution of other contractually related terms and/or conditions. Annual evaluations will be delivered in written form and be prepared by the instructional coach of the employee, with the support of the HOS. The HOS will attend all evaluation reviews. Employees will have five (5) business days to reply to a written evaluation. A follow-up meeting with the instructional coach and HOS shall be scheduled within the next five (5) business days. All parties may request the presence of other individuals at the follow up meeting for the purpose of providing any relevant information directly related to any contractual terms and/or conditions at hand. Once this meeting takes place, a written response shall be prepared by the Head of School within five (5) business days and shall be immediately delivered to the employee and the instructional coach. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the employee, the employee may request that, within a reasonable period, the Rochester Excellence Academy Board Chair schedule a hearing with the full Board, or sub-committee of the Board. All parties may request the presence of other individuals at the hearing for the purpose of providing any relevant information directly related to any contractual terms and/or conditions at hand. The Board then has up to ten (10) days to deliberate the case. All decisions of the Board are final.

### **Complaint Process for Staff**

It is our policy to treat employees in a fair and impartial manner. We believe that undisclosed problems will remain unresolved and negatively affect the staff culture of the school. Therefore, we have established an administrative review system, with the intent to solve problems as fairly and informally as possible. A grievance is any significant employee concern that violates or appears to violate our personnel policies, either between employees and their co-workers or between employer and employees. Employees who seek resolution of employment grievances by using established procedures are assured that they will not be subject to discrimination or retaliation or be penalized in any way for their proper use of these procedures. Employees are highly encouraged to take initial complaints involving a co-worker directly to that person for discussion and resolution. Prior to addressing a co-worker, directors, instructional coaches, and the Head of School will be available to practice having a difficult conversation, as needed. If the two employees are unable to reach a resolution, they may at any time request a mediation meeting with their instructional coach and/or the Head of School where both employees are present. The resolution of the Head of School shall be considered final. This procedure is intended to serve as a means for peaceful settlement of disputes that arise between employees and Rochester Excellence Academy. (1) In the event that an employee believes s/he has been treated unfairly, the employee should discuss the situation with his or her instructional coach to in attempt to resolve the issue. (2) If unable to reach a resolution, the employee should present a written complaint to the Head of School within two business days of receiving their instructional coach's response. The employee must notify their instructional coach of this action. (3) The Head of School will respond to both parties within two business days of receiving the complaint. (4) If unable to reach a resolution, or if the complaint involves the Head of School, the employee may present the

complaint to the Board of Trustees. The Board will review all complaints brought before it and will provide a written response to the all parties concerned within fifteen days of receiving the complaint. The decisions of the Board are final. (5) There will be no retaliation of any kind against an employee for utilizing the proper procedure to file a complaint. (6) At their own expense, employees may seek outside guidance to articulate a complaint if deemed necessary.

**Non-Discrimination Policy.** All grievances concerning discrimination shall be handled through the Head of School and in consultation with the Board of Trustees, when appropriate. The complainant should contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, who shall provide information and assistance on properly filing and pursuing the complaint. Specifically, no persons within Rochester Excellence Academy shall intentionally commit any of the following acts for reasons prohibited by this policy: (a) Discriminate in the recruitment, hiring, training, compensation, benefits, promotion, transfer, termination, lay-off, reduction in workforce, or any other terms of conditions of employment. (b) Make any comments, display or distribute any materials that constitute unlawful harassment based on an individual's membership in a legally protected class. (c) Deny a person any service or other program benefits based on the individual's legally protected classification. (d) A Rochester Excellence Academy employee who has become aware of violations of this provision has the affirmative obligation to report the conduct to another member of the management team. It is the policy of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, its students, faculty, and its volunteers to provide information and program services to any and all interested parties in need of said services and for those interested in serving in a volunteer capacity, without regard to race, color, sexual orientation, age, national origin, handicap, gender, and/or ability to pay.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> <https://dhr.ny.gov/sites/default/files/doc/HRL.pdf>.





July 13, 2021

Re: Commitment of Start-Up Funds to Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School

To Whom It May Concern:

We are pleased to inform you that BES will make available \$150,000 of start-up funds for the planning year (fiscal year 2021-2022) of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School contingent upon its charter authorization. These funds will be characterized as a \$150,000 grant that will only be provided in the event that Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School does not receive any funding through the federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) or other philanthropic dollars that meet or exceed \$150,000 for the fiscal year of 2021-2022.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aasimah Navlakhi', is positioned above the printed name.

Aasimah Navlakhi  
Chief Executive Officer

**Attachment 11: Pre-Opening Plan**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>Student Recruitment and Admission</b>		
<b>Marketing</b>		
Design, translate, post info packet, flyer, website community	HOS	Nov 19 -Mar 22
Identify and work with CBOs to generate interest	HOS	Nov 19 -Mar 22
Initiate recruiting/marketing campaigns via ads in stores/news	HOS	Nov 19 -Mar 22
Secure invitations to Kindergarten Readiness Events	HOS	Dec 19 – March 22
<b>Enrollment Forms</b>		
Design, translate, and make student enrollment form	HOS	Oct 21
Make Enrollment form available/post on website	HOS	Oct 21
<b>Information Sessions</b>		
Secure locations for ongoing family information sessions	HOS	Nov 19 - July 22
Recruit and train volunteers for community canvassing	HOS	Oct 20 – Mar 22
Conduct neighborhood canvassing	HOS	Oct 20 – July 22
Host information sessions	HOS	Feb 19 – July 22
<b>Lottery and Enrollment</b>		
Collect enrollment forms through final enrollment day: April 1	HOS	Dec 21-April 22
Secure lottery location and announcer as needed	HOS	Mar 22
Post lottery dates on website and on fliers in community	HOS	Mar 22
Practice lottery protocol	HOS	Mar 22
Conduct admission lottery	HOS	Apr 22
Notify families of admission	HOS	Apr 22
Establish waitlist (or repeat lottery)	HOS	Apr 22
Confirm acceptances phone via calls & home visits (if necessary)	HOS	Apr 22- Aug 22
Request and receive student records	HOS	May 22- Aug 22
Finalize all documents and assemble welcome packages	HOS	Mar 22- Apr 22
Finalize all documents for and assemble orientation folders	HOS	Apr 22- May 22
<b>Facilities</b>		
Search and review all private space options	HOS	June 21– Jan 22
Obtain third party real estate expert to view and evaluate each site	HOS	June 21 – Jan 22
Negotiate, review, approve, and sign lease	BOTH	Jan 22
Secure Certificate of Occupancy	HOS	May 22
Establish renovations to be completed by landlord/school	HOS	June 21 – Feb 22
Obtain property insurance required by lease	HOS	Feb 22
Pass final inspection and receive occupancy certificate	HOS	June 22
<b>Procurement</b>		
Purchase supplies and materials for program	HOS	Apr 22
Secure janitorial service	HOS	Apr 22
<b>Governance</b>		
<b>Board Expansion and Transition to Board of Trustees</b>		
Recruit and nominate board members	Board	Nov 21
Develop and ratify by-laws	Board	Nov 21
Create Code of Ethics for board members; Adopt as policy	Board	Nov 21
<b>Develop Governance Strategy</b>		
Define role of Board Member	Board	Nov 21
Define relationship of Board and Head of School	Board	Nov 21
Define communication methods and decision-making processes	Board	Nov 21
Arrange Board liability, draft policies	Board	Nov 21
Plan to move from founding board to governing authority	Board	Nov 21
Develop and file articles of incorporation	Board	Nov 21
Apply for tax-exemption,501c3	Board	Nov 21

Develop Board calendar	Board	Nov 21
<b>Board Structure</b>		
Finalize by-laws	Board	Nov 21
Create job descriptions for Board, committee chairs/committee; Adopt as policy	Board	Nov 21
Create and adopt policy defining relationship between school leader and board	Board	Nov 21
Create Board member handbook; Adopt as policy	Board	Nov 21
Send Trustee information to NYSED for each trustee- trustee financial disclosure, trustee information form resume	HOS	Nov 21
<b>Board Meetings</b>		
Set day/time to hold meetings in compliance with Open Mtg	HOS	Nov 21
Public calendar of meetings on website (Open Mtg)	HOS	Nov 21
Create attendance system/tool for Board and committee meetings	Board	Nov 21
Develop Board calendar with list critical tasks for meetings	Board	Nov 21
Develop articles of incorporation	HOS	Nov 21
Create binders to include all official Board policies	Board	Nov 21
Create comprehensive list of policies to approve prior to opening	BOTH	Nov 21
<b>School Leader</b>		
Finalize and approve job description for Head of School, hire HOS	Board	Nov 21
Determine performance benchmarks/process for HOS eval	Board	Nov 21
<b>Board Development</b>		
Create Board development plan (to include orientation)	Board	Nov 21
Hold Board Retreat	Board	Nov 21
<b>Fund Development/Fundraising</b>		
Establish 501c3	Board	Nov 21
Identify potential individual donors and develop strategy	Board	June 21 – Nov 21
<b>Secure Public/Private Grant Money</b>		
Write need statement	Board	Sept 21 -Nov 21
Write/disseminate proposals to national/local government sources	Board	Dec 21 -Mar 22
Write/disseminate proposals to national/local foundations	Board	Dec 21 -Mar 22
<b>Secure Donations from Individuals</b>		
Create plan to cultivate and solicit potential donors	Board	June 21 – Dec 21
Develop Board cultivation guidelines and strategies	Board	June 21 -Oct 21
Plan and host series of events for securing donations	Board	Nov 21 – June 22
<b>Administrative</b>		
<b>Data Management</b>		
Create filing system and ensure database for all students	HOS	Mar 22- Apr 22
Develop dashboard system: attendance/discipline/academic/ops	HOS	Mar 22 – Apr 22
<b>Family Outreach</b>		
Write, translate, and mail family letter for Family Orientation	HOS	Apr 22
Schedule Home visits	HOS	July 22
Complete home visits to enrolled families	HOS	Aug 22
Call and use notification system to all families for Family Orientation	HOS	June 22- July 22
Prepare pre-opening Family Orientation Materials	HOS	May 22 -June 22
Host pre-opening Family Orientation	HOS	July 22- Aug 22
<b>Instructional Program</b>		
<b>Curriculum Development</b>		
Identify curriculum models for core subjects and enrichment	HOS	June 21 – Oct 21
Site visits/analyses of schools that exhibit best practices	HOS	June 21 -Oct 21
Create and finalize curriculum plans and timelines	HOS	Sept 21 -Dec 21
Modify IAs aligned w/state standards/curriculum frameworks	HOS	June 21 – Apr 22
Create scope and sequence and vertical alignment documents	HOS	Oct 21 -Apr 22
Create organizational system for unit plans and lesson plans	HOS	Oct 21 -Apr 22



Develop Curriculum	HOS	June 21 -Apr 22
<b>Procurement</b>		
Purchase materials for standardized testing	HOS	May 22- July 22
Contract with NWEA MAP and STEP	HOS	Nov 21-Apr 22
<b>Assessment</b>		
Finalize assessment strategy and assessment calendar	HOS	Oct 21 – Apr 22
Create dashboard for data analysis	HOS	Oct 21- Apr 22
Develop common class configuration classroom model	HOS	Oct 21
<b>Special Education</b>		
Identify and secure specific texts and materials	HOS	Oct 21- Apr 22
Consult with district administrator in change of SPED service	HOS	Nov 21 -June 22
Identify populations of students with disabilities	HOS	May 22
Acquire student record	HOS	May 22 – Aug 22
Define service requirements for all SPED students	HOS	May 22- Aug 22
Create PD for teachers SPED modifications/accommodations	HOS	June 22- Aug 22
<b>School Culture and Climate</b>		
Finalize daily schedule, discipline policy, and school calendar	HOS	May 22
Codify classroom and school-wide rituals and routines	HOS	May 22
<b>Financial Management</b>		
Codify fiscal controls and financial policies	HOS	Nov 21
Identify who signs/writes checks/finalize signature policies	BOTH	Nov 21
Develop fiscal reporting templates (budget vs. actual) policy	HOS	Nov 21
Design purchase orders/expense forms and policy	HOS	Nov 21
Develop segregation of funds policy (public/private)	BOTH	Nov 21
Establish payroll	HOS	Nov 21
Develop schedule of Board financial reviews	BOTH	Nov 21
Develop chart of accounts to track income, expenses, assets, liabilities, cash flow	HOS	Nov 21
Establish bank accounts	HOS	Nov 21
Define investment/savings strategy	Board	Nov 21
Finalize cash flow plan	HOS	Nov 21
<b>Personnel</b>		
Finalize and approve organizational chart and all job descriptions	BOTH	Nov 21
Post job openings through partner organizations and website	HOS	Nov 21
Coordinate benefits enrollment	HOS	Nov 21 -May 22
Recruit and hire staff and teachers	HOS	Nov 21 -May 22
Negotiate and sign agreements for contracted services	HOS	Nov 21 -July 22
Finalize policies and procedures for evaluation of staff	HOS	Nov 21 -May 22
Development professional development plans	HOS	Apr 22- May 22
Perform background checks on employees	HOS	Apr 22 – May 22
Fill out forms to enroll teachers in payroll and benefits	HOS	July 22 -Aug 22
Plan and hold staff orientation	HOS	July 22 -Aug 22
All staff complete employee information forms	HOS	July 22- Aug 22
<b>Employee Handbook</b>		
Draft, edit, and translate handbook content	HOS	Jan 22
Secure legal review of handbook	HOS	Jan 22
Approve handbook	Board	Apr 22
Print and distribute final copies to staff members	HOS	July 22 -Aug 22
<b>Transportation Services</b>		
Determine transportation needs	HOS	June 22 -Feb 22
Contract for transportation services	HOS	Jan 22 – Apr 22
Develop transportation routes/schedules/emergency contacts	HOS	May 22- July 22
<b>Food Service</b>		

Issue RFP for food vendor	HOS	Mar 22
Define requirement (# of students/any religious or individual needs) and identify students eligible for free/reduced price lunch	HOS	Apr 22
Determine food service arrangement	HOS	May 22
Select vendor; draft and sign contract	HOS	Apr 22- July 22
Develop food service plan	HOS	Apr 22 – July 22
Complete FRL forms	HOS	Apr 22 – July 22
<b>Student and Staff Health and Safety</b>		
Identify doctor/nurse resources and first aid resources	HOS	Jan 22- Mar 22
Develop policy for non-compliance by parents	HOS	Jan 22 – Feb 22
Acquire medical forms	HOS	Jan 22- Apr 22
Undergo fire and building inspection	HOS	June 22
Contact Board of Health	HOS	Jun 22
Develop fire drill policy/schedule/route/School Safety Plan	HOS	June 22
<b>Community Partnerships</b>		
Identify community partnership opportunities; Establish MOU	HOS	Ongoing
Create performance measures for each partnership	HOS	Ongoing
<b>Families</b>		
Draft, edit, and translate content of family/parent handbook	HOS	June 21-Sept 21
Secure legal review of handbook, Board approval of handbook	BOTH	Jan 22
Print/distribute final copies to families at Family Orientation	HOS	May 22- July 22
<b>School Communications</b>		
Make user interface and design updates to school website	HOS	Nov 21
Set up non-profit mailing status with Post Office	HOS	Nov 21
Set filing system for student academic/disciplinary/health records	HOS	June 21 -Sept 21
Codify procedure for visitors entering the building	HOS	June 21 -Sept 21
Select provider for internet access	HOS	Apr 22
Set up intranet	HOS	Apr 22
Draft communication systems and structures playbook	HOS	June 22
Install phone systems and answering services	HOS	Jan 22
<b>Purchasing</b>		
Approve budget allocations for uniform	Board	Nov 21 -Dec 21
Create comprehensive purchasing list through December 2021	HOS	Jan 22- Feb22
Purchase classroom and office equipment and furniture	HOS	Apr 22-July 22
Purchase cleaning products and restroom supplies	HOS	Apr 22- Jun 22
Purchase class materials and enrichment equipment	HOS	Apr 22- June 22
Purchase class library materials	HOS	Apr 22- June 22
Purchase classroom/office/medical supplies/furniture	HOS	Apr 22- June 22
Purchase signage for building interior	HOS	Jun 22
Contract student uniforms	HOS	Mar 22 – Apr 22
Create uniform sizing sheets for families	HOS	Apr 22
Create dress code one-pager to include with family handbook	HOS	Apr 22
<b>Contract Services and Personnel</b>		
Hire janitorial services; identify electrician, plumber, handyman	HOS	May 22- June 22
Contract related service providers	HOS	May 22- June 22
<b>Technology</b>		
Issue RFP for technology	HOS	Jan 22
Finalize plans for purchasing technology	HOS	Jan 22
Devices and all software installation for students and teachers	HOS	May 22 -June 22
<b>Uniform</b>		
Contract student uniforms	HOS	Mar 22– Apr 22
Create uniform sizing sheets for families	HOS	Apr 22
Create dress code one-pager to include with family handbook	HOS	Apr 22



## **ATTACHMENT 12: Dissolution Plan**

In alignment with all SED requirements, Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School has budgeted \$20,000 each year of the charter term which will be held within escrow, separate from all other funds, and solely for dissolution purposes. Set aside in perpetuity, and as needed, these funds will be used specifically to pay for legal and audit expenses associated with dissolution, including any debts or unmet financial obligations. In the event of dissolution of Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School, the Board of Trustees and the Head of School will follow a set of dissolution procedures in accordance with Education Law §2851(2)(t), 219, and 220, and the Closing Procedures specified by the State Education Department. Those procedures, as indicated by the New York State Education Department Closing Procedures Guide and Checklist, are included below.

### **Within 24 hours of SED vote to close to school**

(1) Establish Transition Team to ensure smooth transition of students and staff and to close down school's business. (2) Transition Team will include SED staff member, Board Chair, Head of School, Director of Operations, one teacher, and one parent from family advisory council. (3) Board Chair will solicit assistance of external partners to fulfill all responsibilities associated with dissolution. (4) SED staff member and Board Chair will distribute a press release that includes: (1) history of the school (2) SED closure policies (3) reason(s) for school closure (4) outline of support for students, parents, and staff (5) contact information for the SED and school media liaison.

### **Within 48 hours of SED vote to close the school**

(1) Assign Transition Team action item responsibilities and set calendar for meetings and dates of completion for each closure action item. The Transition Team will develop a Student Transition Plan that focuses on enrolling students in a new, appropriate school, and will include clear deadlines for key activities and will not be considered complete until every student engaging in transitional services has been enrolled in a new school. (2) School Closure Coordinator will be established so that families have access to a direct line of support that can provide guidance through the transition. (3) SED staff member and Board chair will distribute an initial closure notification letter to faculty, staff, and parents that outlines the closure decision, the timeline for transition, and the help line and online information to address inquiries pertaining to records, enrollment, lottery procedures, names and locations of other charter schools. (4) If school has planned to operate a Summer Program, the school must provide SED with evidence that the appropriate parties have been officially notified, and that the complete and proper financial management of the school is completed in a timely manner.

### **Within 72 hours of SED vote to close the school**

(1) SED staff member and Board chair will send a closure letter to state and local agencies, including the school district will include: (a) Notification materials distributed to parents and faculty/staff (b) SED decision materials, resolution to close school (c) Copy of any termination agreement(s) (if applicable), (4) copy local public school districts. (2) Create talking points for parents, faculty, community, and press. Focus on communicating plans for orderly transition of students and staff. Once completed, distribute to Transition Team. (3) Secure student records by ensuring all records are organized, up to date, and maintained in a secure location. (4) Secure financial records by ensuring all records are organized, up to date, and maintained in a secure location. A copy of all financial records should be given to SED prior to closure. Those records

include, but are not limited to: (a) original bank statements for no less than one year, (b) vendor invoices and statements, (c) records of payments to vendors, (d) Payroll documentation

#### **Within 1 week of SED vote to close the school**

(1) Transition Team will create a parent contact list and faculty contact list, and provide copies of both to SED. The Transition Team will also convene a parent closure meeting as well as a faculty/staff meeting.

#### **Ongoing activities after SED closure vote until end of classes as designated in SED resolution**

(1) Continue Instruction: Head of School will ensure instruction continues at school. (2) Board Communication: Board Chair will provide advance copies of all meeting agendas, minutes, financials, and all other documents outlined in the SED Closing Procedures guide. (3) Establish Use of Reserve Funds. (4) Maintain Location and Communication: Throughout closing procedures, the school must remain in its current facility and maintain operational telephone service. (5) Maintain Insurance. (6) Report of Financial Condition: The school will submit a current balance sheet, current income statement, grant reports, and month-to-month cash flow documents to SED.

#### **Within 10 days of SED vote to close the school**

(1) Board Chair will send a parent/guardian closure transition letter that provides detailed guidance regarding the transition plan, including but not limited to: (a) date of last day of instruction, (b) notification of mandatory enrollment under New York State law, (c) contact and enrollment information of other schools, and (d) information on obtaining student records pursuant to the New York State Freedom of Information Law.

#### **Within 3 weeks of SED vote to close the school**

(1) The Director of Operations will formulate a list of creditors, debtors and any amounts accrued and unpaid with respect to such creditor or debtor. (2) The Director of Operations will formulate a list of all contractors with contracts in effect and notify them of the school closure and cessation of operations.

#### **Within 30 days of SED vote to close the school**

(1) The Board shall engage, by a vote of the Board, an independent auditor to conduct a final close-out audit of the school. The Board Chair will take the necessary steps to maintain 501©(3) status with the IRS. (2) The Board shall engage, by a vote of the board, an independent auditor to conduct a final close-out audit of the school. The Board Chair will take the necessary steps to maintain 501©(3) status with the IRS. (3) The Director of Operations will also perform a Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) search to determine if there are any perfected security interests and to what assets security interests are attached. This activity will be provided to SED.

#### **Within 45 days of SED vote to close the school**

(1) The Board Chair and Director of Operations will establish an employee termination date and notify all employees, benefit providers, payroll processor, and vendors of pending termination. These activities will be provided to SED. (2) The Director of Operations will create a fixed asset list segregating New York State and federal dollars, note source codes for funds and price for each purchase, and establish a fair market value for all fixed assets. These materials will be provided to SED. (3) The Director of Operations will develop a plan for the disposition of all assets, property,

and inventory, including assets purchased with federal funds. (4) The Board is required to petition the supreme court in the judicial district where the principal office of the corporation is located, directing the disposition of all property belonging to the school. This petition will be sent to SED and the New York State Attorney General at least 10 days prior to submission. The Director of Operations and SED staff member will ensure that the school prioritizes a payment strategy considering New York State and local requirements and will provide SED with a copy of all materials associated with this action.

#### **One week after the last day of instruction**

(1) The Head of School will ensure final report cards and student records are up to date and sent home to parents/guardians and provided to SED. (2) The Head of School will transfer all testing materials in accordance with New York State regulations regarding disposition of New York State Assessment materials.

#### **Within 30 days of the last day of instruction**

(1) The Director of Operations will review, prepare, and make available itemized financial documents. (2) The Head of School will generate a list of all payroll reports including taxes and retirement or adjustments on employee contracts, as well as employment verification reports, and provide these to each employee, as well as to SED. (3) The Head of School and Transition Team will, in accordance with New York State statute, transfer all student records, including special education records, to the students' new school, new school district, and New York City Department of Education. (4) The Board Chair and Head of School will ensure that written documentation of the transfer of records accompanies the transfer of all student materials. These materials will be provided to SED.

#### **Within 45 days of the last day of instruction**

(1) The Head of School will ensure that Federal Expenditure Reports and Annual Performance reports are completed and provided to SED.

#### **Within 60 days of the last day of instruction**

(1) The Director of Operations will ensure the final distribution of assets. (2) The Board Chair will document the disposition and transfer of corporate records.

#### **Within 120 days of the last day of instruction**

(1) The Board Chair and Director of Operations will submit a final closeout audit, which documents disposition of all liabilities. A copy will be provided to SED.



## ATTACHMENT 13: Plan to Address Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners

Rochester Excellence Academy Charter School (“Rochester Excellence”) will provide rigorous academics and high-quality instruction for all students. We recognize that children are unique and have differing needs and abilities; through our relentless focus on responding to student data and providing individualized supports informed by best practice and current research, and aligned to students’ needs, we will ensure that all students, including our MLL/ELLs, have the necessary tools and supports to achieve academic and social success.

We have designed our academic plan to meet the needs of our projected 15 % MLL/ELL population and will modify our plan to meet the needs of all students regardless of the actual percentages of subgroups. We intend to collaborate with families to ensure that every student has the necessary supports to excel.

**Identification and Programs.** During annual Family Orientation, held before the start of the school each year, families will complete a Home Language Questionnaire which will be available in Rochester’s dominant languages of English and Spanish.<sup>1</sup> If a family requires a translator for languages outside of English or Spanish, we will contract procure translating services and ensure that a translator will join our Classroom Teachers and ESOL Intervention Specialist on our annual home visits.<sup>2</sup> We will devote five afternoons during our Summer Excellence Intensive to visit all incoming families’ homes. Classroom teachers will visit each student’s homes on their preliminary class list, drafted based on diagnostic assessment results and family input gathered at Family Orientation. Our ESOL Intervention Specialist will accompany classroom teachers on home visits for those families who indicated that English was not their primary home language on the questionnaire. During the home visit, the child will be given the NYSITELL Assessment; this includes students with an established IEP as they are eligible to receive the same ENL services as students without disabilities. Any student whose NYSITELL proficiency deems them to be at the Entering, Emerging, Transitioning, or Expanding proficiency level will receive English as a New Language (“ENL”) services throughout the school day. Students who may have had interrupted or inconsistent formal education will be given an oral interview, in which may require the support of a translator through the Catholic Family Services, to inform proper interventions and supports necessary. Parents will be notified by our ESOL Intervention Specialist that their child qualifies for ENL services and will be debriefed on the services that would be provided. Parents must provide written permission before students receive ENL services and have the right to refuse services. Upon receiving written parent permission, our ESOL Intervention Specialist will push into the classroom during our 185 minutes of daily literacy instruction including Interactive Read Alouds, Literacy Rotations, Shared Writing, Grammar, and Writing. ESOL Intervention Specialists will attend weekly grade level team meetings and will collaboratively plan with classroom teachers ensuring that their instruction is tailored to support MLL/ELLs during general classroom instruction. We will assess the effectiveness of our supports on a weekly basis based on student data. If it is deemed that students are exhibiting minimal to no growth, additional supports may be added during non-instructional times including our daily school wide RTI block, arrival, breakfast, lunch, snack, or during any independent student work time. Families will receive a weekly progress report from our ESOL Intervention Specialist and a bi-monthly phone call ensuring that they are updated on their child’s progress and in-home supports are streamlined. Our

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2016/12/02/languages-of-rochester/94726584/>

<sup>2</sup> Costs for translation services are provided for our in our Budget in all years

full Student Support Team, consisting of the Head of School, Coordinator of Students Supports, ESOL Intervention Specialist, Special Education Intervention Specialists, ICT Classroom Teachers, Therapeutic Intervention Specialist (Y2+), and the Social Worker will review our MLL/ELLs assessment data every six weeks and will dedicate at least an hour per grade level served, during full day PD sessions, analyzing and action planning to close gaps they may occur within our subgroups. At the conclusion of each school year, students who receive ENL services will be given the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (“NYSESLAT”) which assesses a student’s ability to speak, read, and write in English. Only students who achieve a proficiency level of Commanding will discontinue receiving ELL services. Our Head of School and Coordinator of Student Supports (Y1), Director of Student Supports (Y2+), will provide oversight for our MLL/ELL Plan, including identification, placement, programming, faculty, family partnership, and data analysis. Our Student Supports Coordinator Y1 (Director of Student Supports Y2+) will provide weekly instructional coaching for all ESOL Intervention Specialists including observations, live coaching, feedback meetings, teaching taxonomies and instructional practices, and collaborative data analysis and planning.

**Quality of Instruction.** We believe that all students regardless of race, gender, socio-economic status, geographical location, differing abilities, languages, and backgrounds including MLL/ELLs can achieve at high levels with access to rigorous academics paired with high-quality, data-driven instruction and individualized supports. Our literacy curriculum, Core Knowledge Language Arts, is aligned to the Next Generation Learning Standards, is research-based, and has proven to support high student achievement in high-poverty, high achieving charter schools which serve similar populations.<sup>3</sup> Core Knowledge Language Arts has a two strand literacy approach, listening & learning and skills, which provides explicit skills instruction while simultaneously building the background knowledge base of all children including vocabulary and knowledge of the world, this ensures equity in instruction and assures that all students including MLL/ELLs have equal access to knowledge acquisition. We have a relentless focus on collecting, monitoring, and responding to daily student data and using it to drive our instructional practices and individualized supports. Many of our Tier 1 supports embedded within our school model and academic programming offered to all students also will be beneficial for the growth of our MLL/ELL population. Our two-teacher model and homogenous small group literacy rotations allow increased individualized supports, appropriately paced instruction, and ample time for direct student feedback.<sup>4</sup> During literacy rotations, students will engage in a 45-minute multi-sensory phonics lesson filled with kinesthetic movements, pictures, and manipulatives, and which will provide entry points for MLL/ELLs who are developing their English skills. Classroom environments are print-rich paired with photographs and pictures, including a word wall and anchor charts for each subject, diagrams, and graphic organizers, allowing students to refer to them during instruction and independent student work time.<sup>5</sup> All students will be explicitly taught how to independently use the visual aids around the classroom as references. Across content areas we focus on building Habits of Discussion for all students. In explicitly teaching, modeling, praising, and allotting ample time for practicing strategies for engaging in productive and effective discourse, all students including our MLL/ELLs strengthen their language development.<sup>6</sup> Our ICT classroom at each grade level offers half the classroom size, with 15 students and a two-teacher model which includes both a General Education Lead Teacher and a NYS Special Education Certified Lead Teacher. Students with

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.coreknowledge.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/CK-Early-Literacy-Pilot-3-12-121.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/20074011.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/using-graphic-organizers-ells>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.edutopia.org/article/6-essential-strategies-teaching-english-language-learners>



disabilities and MLL/ELLs will have priority placement for all ICT classrooms which provide intense individualized supports. Our ESOL Intervention Specialist will attend weekly grade level meetings and data analysis meeting and will participate in collaborative planning to ensure alignment for push-in interventions. They will specifically look for anticipated misconceptions or areas in which they will need to scaffold within general classroom lessons. During collaborative planning, ESOL Intervention Specialists will provide feedback to classroom teachers, identifying opportunities for differentiation and scaffolding to support the growth of MLL/ELLs. All teachers will be trained, supervised, evaluated, and supported on their ability to support the growth of our MLL/ELLs. We will stock classroom libraries with texts written in our students' home languages. In the event that we struggle to find books written in our students' home languages, we will reach out to families for suggestions, even if that means working with our families to develop texts. We will encourage families to have their children read texts in their home language at home during their required 20 minutes of reading. During literacy rotations, students will have access to literacy-based computer programming, such as RAZ kids which offers instruction in different languages, and Language Studio developed to support MLL/ELLs in attaining mastery of content standards within thrAmplify Core Knowledge Language Arts Curriculum.<sup>7</sup>

**Support.** We will use the translating services of the Catholic Family Center (“CFC”) to allow proper communication with our families. The CFC offers translating services to multiple organizations and schools within the Rochester community and have the capacity of providing translation services for 20 different languages.<sup>8</sup> We will continue to translate our marketing and recruitment materials into Spanish, and other languages as community need arises. Translation services will be provided for families during Family Conferences, collaborative Student Support Meetings, bi-weekly phone communication, and any other meeting within which a student's progress must be communicated. Weekly progress reports will be translated, as needed. Families will also be provided with resources from NYSED's MLL/ELL Parent Resources including Parent Notification Letters and forms to communicate language development progress and assessment results. In addition to push-in ENL services provided during literacy instruction, all students including MLL/ELLs will receive tailored intervention during our school-wide RTI block. If our MLL/ELLs exhibit little to no growth with push-in support, we may add additional pull-out interventions during non-instructional times, including arrival, breakfast, lunch, snack, or the school-wide RTI intervention block. We will support our MLL/ELLs' social emotional development through our daily interactive SEL Read Aloud, mindfulness “Moments of Peace” exercises, values-based community focused on building character strengths, and extended arts exploration blocks proven to support both academic and social success. Our focus is on helping students develop their five SEL Competencies including Self- Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making.<sup>9</sup> Our staffing model includes a Social Worker in all years and a Therapeutic Intervention Specialist who will work with students in developing their five SEL Competencies within the classroom and our Mindfulness Room.

The growth of all students including our MLL/ELLs is the responsibility of all teachers and staff. ESOL Intervention Specialists will attend weekly grade level team meetings, data analysis meetings, and collaborative planning meetings, and in all will be collaborating and sharing best practices. Our collaborative approach between classroom teachers and Specialists will be

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.raz-kids.com/main/RazQuizRoom/collectionId/4/leveledBookLanguageId/3>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cfcr Rochester.org/our-services/serving-rochester/language-services/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://casel.org/core-competencies/>

monitored and supervised by our Student Support Coordinator. The Head of School and Student Supports Team will analyze student data and work with teaching teams on responding to data.

**Differentiation.** The Director of Student Supports and ESOL Intervention Specialists will work with all teachers to ensure instruction is differentiated for ELL/MLLs. The Director of Student Supports and ESOL Intervention Specialists will deliver professional development to build the capacity of all teachers to support ELL/MLLs during the 17-day Summer Excellence Intensive and at least once monthly during the school year. They will observe instruction and provide feedback to teachers on their ability to differentiate instruction to reach all learners. Classroom teachers will ensure that the following scaffolds aligned to Engage NY's Resource Guide for ELA<sup>10</sup> are in place across all content areas. **Academic Vocabulary:** Academic vocabulary will be pre-taught to ensure access to content background knowledge is activated and/or appropriate context is provided prior to a lesson; teachers will pause throughout lessons to provide definitions of academic language paired with visuals and gestures to increase comprehension; academic vocabulary will be posted on word walls with visuals after introduced. **Discourse Opportunities:** Teachers will pause and allow students to engage in content-based discussions using the TlaC *Turn and Talk* technique<sup>11</sup>; teachers will explicitly teach *Habits of Discussion* to all students to increase classroom discourse effectiveness<sup>12</sup>; teachers will frequently pause to verbalize think-a-louds to model thought processes when reading. **Integration of Writing:** Teachers will allow students to craft written responses to content-based questions prior to engaging in discourse using *Everybody Writes* technique<sup>13</sup>; ELL/MLLs at Entering or Emerging levels will be provided with additional word banks, sentence starters, and graphic organizers. **Supplemental Supports:** Short video clips, visuals, and graphic organizers will be added to lessons to increase access to content and comprehension; students will have multiple exposures to text with different purpose for reading.

**Home Language Incorporation.** English and Spanish are the dominant languages within Rochester. The Head of School will actively recruit and hire mission-aligned bilingual teachers. Teachers and staff will be encouraged to communicate with our ELL/MLLs in their home language, which will also provide meaningful and organic exposure to another language for other students. Classroom libraries will include books in students' home languages, if assistance is needed to find books in students' home languages which are other than Spanish, the ESOL Intervention Specialist will partner with families and the Catholic Family Center's Translators to locate appropriate children's books. We will partner with translators to ensure accurate translation of homework as our ELL/MLL students will be given the option of having homework translated in their home language to increase parental involvement and embraces their family's culture.

**Assessments.** Our MLL/ELLs will participate in our cyclical assessments including STEP, NWEA MAP, and ELA and Math Interims given approximately every six weeks. After each assessment, we will analyze and create an action plan to address the disaggregated data. The Student Support Team will run the data meetings with each grade level team to ensure that all action plans provide targeted supports. Student Support Coordinators and ESOL Intervention Specialists will support classroom teams in responding to daily exit ticket and weekly assessment data through modifying daily instruction to meet the needs of all students, including MLL/ELLs. We will use the

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<sup>10</sup> [file:///C:/Users/BESFe/Downloads/scaffolding\\_instruction\\_for\\_ells-resource\\_guide\\_for\\_ela.pdf](file:///C:/Users/BESFe/Downloads/scaffolding_instruction_for_ells-resource_guide_for_ela.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> During a Turn and Talk, the teacher poses a questions and students discuss it with their neighbors as the teachers listens in and takes data, followed by a whole class share out (Lemov, *Teach Like a Champion 2.0*)

<sup>12</sup> Habits of Discussions are explicit techniques which teaches students how to engage effective and productive discourse; often content based (Pambrick- Santoya, Settles, and Worrell *Great Habits, Great Readers*)

<sup>13</sup> Everybody Writes is a TLaC 2.0 Technique where teachers provide time for students to craft a written response to questions before engaging in discourse (Lemov, *Teach Like a Champion 2.0*)

NYSITELL and NYSESLAT as diagnostic tools to identify where a student is on the continuum of language development and provide information for proper interventions necessary. Students who may have had interrupted or inconsistent formal education will be given an oral interview, in which may require the support of a translator through the Catholic Family Services, to inform proper interventions and supports necessary. Our assessment plan pairs diagnostic tools and formative assessment practices to measure MLL/ELLs' content knowledge, and utilizes new and home languages to inform our daily instruction.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/nys-blueprint-for-ell-success.pdf>