



## **NORTH CAROLINA CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION**

# **A.C.E. Academy**

**Public charter schools opening the fall of 2014**

**See Resource Manual for Assistance  
(Available late November 2012)**

**Due by 12:00 noon, March 1, 2013**

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction  
NCDPI/Office of Charter Schools  
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## **CHARTER SCHOOL 2013 Application Process**

**To open a charter school in the 2014-2015 school year**

### **APPLICATION DUE DATE/TIME**

**January 4, 2013**

A letter of intent to apply for the 2014-2015 school year **must** be received in the Office of Charter Schools **no later than 12:00 noon**. If the Letter of Intent is not submitted, an application from this group will not be accepted. You can find the Letter of Intent requirements on the NC Office of Charter School web site.

**March 1, 2013**

A complete application package, one (1) single-sided, signed, and notarized original hard copy, one (1) PDF electronic version of the narrative, and one (1) PDF electronic version of the appendices (i.e. labeled flash drive) must be received in the Office of Charter Schools **by 12:00 noon**.

**March 8, 2013**

A copy of the application due to the Local Education Agency in which the proposed charter school will reside in. Applicant must provide evidence to the Office of Charter Schools (i.e. signed letter).

### **APPLICATION SPECIFICATIONS**

Applicants **MUST** submit applications prior to the deadline March 1, 2013 at 12:00 noon; applicants are to use the following specifications:

1. All elements of the proposal must be typed with 1-inch page margins and 12-point font, single-spaced, in Times New Roman font.
2. Each major section (Mission, Purposes and Goals, Education Plan, Governance, Operations and Capacity, and Financial Plan) must begin on a separate page, as indicated in the template document. Do not exceed 50 pages for the proposal narrative. (Title Page, Table of Contents, and Appendices are not included in the narrative page limit.)
3. If a particular question does not apply to your team or proposal, **keep the section heading**, respond "Not Applicable," AND state the reason this question is not applicable to your team or proposal. The questions may be deleted.
4. All narrative content pages should be numbered and the name of school should appear at the top of ALL pages
5. All required Appendices should be clearly titled and include page numbers (i.e. Appendix A and page numbers as- A1, A2, B1...).
6. Review all elements of your application for completeness before submitting. An incomplete application may result in the elimination of the application.
7. Late submissions will not be accepted. No exceptions.
8. Provide confirmation to the Office of Charter Schools that within seven (7) days the applicant has provided one full copy of the application to the LEA in which the proposed charter school will be located.

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**I. APPLICATION CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name of proposed charter school: *A.C.E. Academy*

Has the organization applied for 501(c)(3) non-profit status: *Yes*  *No*

Name of non-profit organization under which charter will be organized or operated: *A.C.E. Academy*

Provide the name of the person who will serve as the primary contact for this Application. The primary contact should serve as the contact for follow-up, interviews, and notices regarding this Application.

Name of contact person: *Laila Minott*

Title/Relationship to nonprofit: *Director*

Mailing address: 5401-A South Blvd, Suite 162  
Charlotte NC 28217

Primary telephone: 704-258-9213 Alternative telephone: 980-355-0968

E-Mail address: *slconsultants04@yahoo.com*

Name of county and local education agency (LEA) in which charter school will reside:

County: *CABARRUS*

LEA: *130-Cabarrus County Schools*

Is this application a Conversion from a traditional public school or private school?

No:

Yes:

Is this application being submitted as a replication of a current charter school model?

No:

Yes:

What is the name of the nonprofit organization that governs this charter school? *A.C.E. Academy*

**Grade Levels Served and Total Student Enrollment:**

Projected School Opening: Year 2014 Month August

Will this school operate on a year round schedule?

No:

Yes:

*Proposed Grade Levels Served and Total Student Enrollment (10 Years)*

<b>Academic School Year</b>	<b>Grade Levels</b>	<b>Total Projected Student Enrollment</b>
First Year	K,01,02,03,04,05	300
Second Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06	350
Third Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07	400
Fourth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	450
Fifth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	500

Sixth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	550
Seventh Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	600
Eight Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	650
Ninth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	700
Tenth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	750

*The State Board of Education provides funds to charter schools, approves the original members of the boards of directors of the charter schools, has the authority to grant, supervise, and revoke charters, and demands full accountability from charter schools for school finances and student performance.*

*I certify that I have the authority to submit this application and that the founding board members and I were regularly involved in the development of this application. All information contained herein is complete and accurate. I realize that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award. I understand that incomplete applications may not be considered. The person named as the contact person for the application is so authorized to serve as the primary contact for this application on behalf of the applicant.*

slconsultants04  
*Signature*

Board Member  
*Title*

slconsultants04  
*Printed Name*

02/27/2013  
*Date*

## II. MISSION and PURPOSES

(No more than three total pages in this section)

### Mission:

*State the Mission of the proposed charter school in **one hundred words or less**. The mission statement defines the organization's purpose and primary objectives, describing why it exists. The mission statement provides the foundation for the entire proposal.*

*The mission statement of the proposed charter school is as follows:*

A.C.E. Academy will equip students from all backgrounds to succeed in the college and career of their choice by driving academic excellence, developing strong character, and instilling an entrepreneurial mindset.

### Educational need and Targeted Student Population of the Proposed Charter School:

- 1. Provide a description of Targeted Population in terms of demographics. In your description, include how this population will reflect the racial and ethnic composition of the school system in which it is located. Describe the rationale for selecting the location and student body.*

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

The Academic, Entrepreneurship, & Character (A.C.E.) Academy Charter School Board of Directors (Board) has sought to locate A.C.E. Academy Charter School (A.C.E.) in Cabarrus County which is a metropolitan area with an expanding multicultural population that has grown by 72% since 2000 (clrsearch.com, 2012). However, the county does not have a school that focuses on entrepreneurship. A.C.E. Academy will be the first K-8 grades school in Cabarrus County School District (CCSD) to offer an entrepreneurial-focused educational plan. The entrepreneurial focus will benefit the population in Cabarrus County and the surrounding region, especially given CCSDs college enrollment rate is 15% lower than the North Carolina state average (ncreportcards.org, 2012); according to Charney and Libecap (2000), that trend can be reversed by developing a plan that personalizes student's individual goals and skills through an entrepreneurship curricula. A.C.E. Academy Charter School will be a school of choice that will provide transportation to ensure that the 72% of the residents living in urban areas and the 28% that live in the county's rural parts can attend the school.

The Board chose Cabarrus County because it adjoins Mecklenburg County and the city of Charlotte which will bring educational diversity to this fast-growing area. A.C.E. will not discriminate against any students and will encourage all students, including Exceptional Children, English Language Learners, and general education students who support and embrace the mission of A.C.E. Academy. The county's ethnic composition is 28.8% Hispanic and 71.2% Non-Hispanic. The racial composition is 79.4% Caucasian; 15.9% African-American; 0.6% American Indian; 2.2% Asian American; and 1.9% other races (U.S. Census Bureau Quickfacts, 2012).

#### CLOSE ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

The 2011-2012 report card for elementary and middle schools within a five-

mile radius of A.C.E. Academy's proposed site highlights existing achievement levels. In every school in the area, including magnet schools and schools that made proficiencies on the End of Grade assessments, Economically Disadvantaged students (ED), Exceptional Children (EC), and Limited English Proficient students (LEP) lagged far behind Non-economically disadvantaged students (NED). The schools in the five-mile radius show a range of proficiencies on the North Carolina End of Grade exams but the average achievement gap between ED students and NED students was 23.4%. Exhibit 1 in Appendix A illustrates student proficiencies from eight schools.

Beginning 2012-2013, students will be assessed based on the Common Core State Standards and Essential Standards, a more rigorous academic plan adopted by the state (cabarrus.k12.nc.us, 2012). A.C.E. Academy will close achievement gaps by implementing a rigorous academic program deliberately and intentionally designed to meet the learning needs of all students. Each student will have an Individual Learning Plan that will direct how instruction is delivered, a highly effective approach to improving the academic progress of at-risk students (Clarke, 2003).

#### CHARTER SCHOOL DEMAND

Currently, Carolina International School (CIS) is the only operating charter school in the CCSD. CIS is moving to a new site approximately 10 miles from its current site, which the Board anticipates taking over to locate A.C.E. Academy. There is also high demand for charter schools in neighboring counties, with approximately 8,000 students on charter waiting lists in Cabarrus County alone (Charlotte Observer, April 14, 2012). The Board is working with a developer for a new facility in case the plans to move into the CIS property do not come to fruition. Please see the Facility Contingency Plan in Section IV, Facility.

#### *2. What will be the projected enrollment at the charter school and what percentage of the Average Daily Membership (ADM) does that reflect for the local LEA(s) that may be impacted?*

Upon approval, A.C.E. Academy would be the second charter school to operate in the CCSD, and would help the CCSD meet the rapidly expanding student population. A.C.E. Academy will have a minimal impact on the CCSDs 29,000-student enrollment. A.C.E. Academy will enroll a maximum of 300 students in its first year (1% of the 2011/2012 Cabarrus County Average Daily Membership), growing to a peak of 750 students in its tenth year which will be less than 1% if current growth rates are maintained (CCSD, 2012).

#### *3. Explain how the charter school's education plan will compare to or differ from that of the local LEA(s).*

A.C.E. Academy is similar to Cabarrus County Schools District (CCSD) in both its mission/vision and the objectives of its educational plan. Both CCSD and A.C.E. Academy are focused on preparing students for the global economy of the 21st century. CCSDs educational program closely resembles the objectives of A.C.E. Academy; through instructional strategies that utilize the intelligence strengths of students, strong community partnerships, a focus on civic responsibility, self-discipline, and extensive family involvement, students will develop the academic skills essential for success in the 21st century. Instructional practices of both Cabarrus County Schools and A.C.E. Academy include: active learning; hands-on experience; integrated seamless curriculum; individualized approach; and project based learning.

The primary difference between A.C.E. Academy and Cabarrus County Schools is A.C.E.'s focus on entrepreneurship. The Board strongly believes that entrepreneurship education is important for a number of reasons, such as: (1) the development of entrepreneurial skills in a K-8 system increases the supply of future entrepreneurs in North Carolina (and specifically in Cabarrus County) and lowers unemployment rates (McMullan & Long, 1987); (2) entrepreneurship education is important because even if a child does not go into business ownership, employers are looking for people who demonstrate leadership skills such as the ability to be innovative, adaptable, and productive, to solve problems, and collaborate (Henderson, 2009); (3) teachers can teach a variety of academic skills in conjunction with entrepreneurial instruction, making it an appropriate teaching tool for almost any subject area; and (4) an entrepreneurship integrated curriculum can teach students to deal with ambiguity, change, and complexity by pushing them out of their comfort zones as they develop new solutions to problems (Anderson et al, 2012).

4. *In the appendices (Appendix A), you must provide evidence through a narrative or visual of this educational need through survey data, or times and locations of public meetings discussing this proposed charter school. (Please do not provide more than one sample survey form).*

**Purposes of the Proposed Charter School:** *In one page or less, describe how the proposed charter school will achieve one or more of the six legislated purposes, as specifically addressed in the NC charter school statute GS 115C-238.29A, and the proposed school's operations.*

*The Six Legislative Purposes of a Charter School are:*

1. *Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunities to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.*
2. *Hold schools accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.*
3. *Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.*
4. *Improving student learning.*
5. *Increasing learning opportunities for all students, with a special emphasis on at-risk or gifted students.*
6. *Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.*

2. Hold schools accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

A.C.E. Academy will implement all North Carolina-mandated assessments, such as End-of-Grade, as well as administering Performance Series by Scantron assessments and the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) progress monitoring tri-annually. If students are not meeting their expected trend lines for adequate progress, formative and summative assessments will identify areas of strength and skill gaps. K-8 grade students with limited English proficiency will be administered the WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) Access Placement test annually, while Exceptional Child students will be administered assessments based on the recommendation



of the students Individual Education Plan Team, as mandated by the North Carolina Department of Education (Public Schools of North Carolina, 2012). K-2 students will be administered the NC K-2 literacy assessment.

#### 4. Improving student learning.

A.C.E. Academy will improve student learning by using research-based curriculum such as Fountas and Pinnell (2010) which allows classroom teachers and intervention specialists to reliably assess student reading levels. "When everyone in the school uses the same literacy assessment continua, and language moving from observation, to analysis, and then to instruction a common conversation occurs across the school staff. The comprehensive system also includes tools for diagnosis so the teacher can design in depth evaluation as needed" (Fountas & Pinnell quoted in readbag.com, p. 1, 2012).

Additionally, Tomlinson (2001) has shown the impact of differentiated instruction on improving student learning. Differentiated instruction is grounded in an understanding of how people learn. Instruction begins with an assessment of what students already know, and builds new concepts on their existing knowledge. Differentiation provides students with varied experiences to engage with content. A differentiated classroom offers multiple ways for students to access content, to process and make sense of the concepts and skills, and to develop products that demonstrate their learning.

#### 5. Increasing learning opportunities for all students, with a special emphasis on at-risk or gifted students.

Traditionally, public school education has been about the three rs; in today's global society, however, it is essential students learn about the fourth r "a real-world understanding of economics and personal finance. It is only by acquiring economic and financial literacy that children can learn that there are better options for a life well lived, will be able to see opportunity on their horizon line and, ultimately, can grow into successful and productive adults capable of making informed and responsible decisions" (Center for Economic Education, para. 1, 2012). A.C.E. Academy is committed to creating opportunities for students to learn about the real world and how the concepts they are learning in the classroom apply to real life and the business world around them.

A.C.E. Academy recognizes that active engagement in the educational learning process is crucial to success, and its teachers will work to connect business concepts within core curriculum. To make sure students have a solid grounding in economic, personal finances, and entrepreneurship concepts, A.C.E. Academy will use activities, simulations, and projects in the classroom to give students an applied, hands-on experience and keep them engaged. Further, entrepreneurship is integrated in all subjects including English/language arts, science, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, technology, history, and geography. All activities will be adapted to meet the needs of academically or intellectually gifted (AIG) students per North Carolina state law ([ncpublicschools.org/publicservices/gifted](http://ncpublicschools.org/publicservices/gifted), 2013) and Exceptional Children per the federal Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) legislation. A.C.E. Academy will offer a variety of student support services including Exceptional Children, speech and language therapy, social work, and school psychology. The goal of the student support services program is to help

each student become a functional, adaptable, flexible learner who can live, work, and learn in the mainstream of life. Additionally, content and curricular offerings are made available for students who exhibit an interest and ability to be stretched beyond grade-level core content classes.

**Goals for the Proposed Charter School:**

1. *How will the governing board know that the proposed public charter school has attained their mission statement? What metrics will be used to gauge that success, and how often will the metrics be reviewed in your analysis?*

The mission statement is the measure by which the Board will gauge success. The Board will determine success by measuring academic, character education, entrepreneurship education, and operational goals.

**ACADEMIC GOALS:**

1. Proficiency in all core subjects. Student proficiency will be measured by reviewing report cards (reviewed quarterly), EoG exams (reviewed annually), and Performance Series (reviewed annually).
2. School-wide average score of Level III which will be measured by graduation rates and the EoG exams annually.
3. Student attendance rate of at least 93% which will be measured by reviewing daily attendance records.

**CHARACTER EDUCATION GOALS:**

1. Develop skills by having students solve a social problem which will be measured by reviewing K-5 graders civic/service learning projects\*.
2. Increasing student positive behaviors will be measured by reviewing disciplinary reports and student observations\*.
3. 50% of students will provide peer instruction; this goal will be measured by the number of hours each peer mentor completes\*.
4. Active involvement in extra-curricular activities/clubs. Extra-curricular activities/clubs will be measured by the members attendance and participation\*.

\*All character education goals will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION GOALS:**

Students will gain the following; all goals listed below will be measured by the K-5 graders entrepreneurial projects all throughout the year, and the annual Business Plan Pitch and Presentation which is completed by 3, 5, and 8 grade students:

1. Learn financial literacy.
2. Gain understanding of business operations.
3. Develop team businesses as well as read and write business plans.
4. Build leadership skills and self confidence.
5. Explore future career paths

**OPERATIONAL GOALS:**

1. Fostering a school culture that maximizes individual growth by expanding learning opportunities will be measured by daily student attendance rates, annual student/teacher turnover, annual audit of financial statements, and annual budget targets. Additionally, to measure the social success of A.C.E. Academy, we will track indicators that include attendance rates; participation in extracurricular activities; rates of disciplinary action; incidents of bullying; rates of student volunteerism; parent/guardian

satisfaction; hours of parent/guardian involvement; teacher retention rates, and student retention rates.

2. 60% parent involvement will be measured by the parents volunteer participation as well as involvement in other school activities both of which occur throughout the school year.

3. Active community involvement and partnerships will be measured by the amount of student internships, donations, and community volunteers throughout the school year.

Additionally, A.C.E. Academy's goal will be to facilitate a collaborative and cohesive learning environment in line with its vision, mission, and values by: (1) preparing employees to anticipate and respond appropriately to regional issues within a global context and framework; (2) promoting the analysis and interpretation of data towards informed decision-making; (3) developing programs for innovative, creative, passionate, and energetic high-performing teaching staff; and (4) developing incentive systems to motivate students to enjoy learning and garner interest in school and education.

*2. Provide specific and measurable student achievement performance goals for the school's educational program and the method of demonstrating that students have attained the skills and knowledge specified for those goals. These goals should include specific and measurable performance objectives over the first five years of the schools existence.*

A.C.E.'s Board has created specific achievement performance goals to ensure students will be proficient in Reading, Language Arts, Math and Science:

1. Each year, 75% of third through eighth grade students will meet or exceed End-of-Grade (EoG) Assessment proficiencies; METRIC: EoG reading and math assessment scores for third through eighth grade students will be evaluated to determine if the goal was met. TIMELINE: Annually, in the spring

2. Each year, 75% of fifth and eighth grade students will meet or exceed End-of-Grade (EoG) Science Assessment proficiencies. METRIC: EoG science assessment scores for fifth and eighth grade students will be evaluated to determine if the goal was met. TIMELINE: Annually, in the spring, following first full year of operation.

3. Each year, the school will be in the 65th percentile or high of public schools nationally as measured by the percentage of students that meet or exceed annual MAP growth in reading, math and language arts; METRIC: Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) reading, math and language arts assessment scores for A.C.E. Academy students will be compared to other NWEA participating schools to determine if the goal was met. TIMELINE: Annually, in the spring.

4. Each year, students enrolled for three or more years will on average scaled scores equal to or greater than the grade-level achievement targets for reading, language arts, and math on the Performance Series by Scantron assessments. METRIC: Performance Series by Scantron reading assessment scores for A.C.E. Academy students will be evaluated to determine if the goal was met. TIMELINE: Tri-annually, in the fall, winter, and spring.

5. Each year, eighth grade students enrolled for three or more years will average EXPLORE subject scores equal to or greater than the achievement target for reading and math. METRIC: ACT EXPLORE scores will be analyzed to ensure the goal is met. TIMELINE: Annually in the spring

6. Each year, at least 50% of students will meet or exceed the average of the LEA. METRIC: EoG grade level assessment scores will be compared to LEA grade level assessment scores to determine if the goal was met. TIMELINE: Annually in the spring, following the first year of operation.

### III. EDUCATION PLAN

(No more than ten total pages in this section)

**NOTE:** *All sections of the Education Plan should align with all other sections of this application. The State Board of Education shall give priority consideration to the applicants who demonstrate potential for significant, meaningful innovation in education. Provide precise and clear explanations. Lack of response to any question or proper documentation could deem the application incomplete.*

#### **Instructional Program:**

Provide a detailed description of the overall instructional program of the proposed charter school, including major instructional methods, assessment strategies, and explain how this instructional program and model meet the needs of the targeted student population.

A.C.E. Academy's key design elements of the educational program are backed by research and experience. The four key design elements include:

#### 1. RIGOROUS POST-SECONDARY PREPARATORY PROGRAM

Marzano's (2003) work has consistently shown that a rigorous, aligned curriculum is essential for student learning. The Board has studied various national standards and assessments, including analyses by groups such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress, ACT, Achieve, Inc., the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, The American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the National Council for Social Studies. The Board is structuring the curriculum to align with the North Carolina standards. When combined with the highly effective teaching strategies, rigorous testing, and instructional support, this curriculum will ensure achievement of the academic goals and post-secondary success. Exhibit 2 in Appendix R lists the K-8 grade content and academic goals.

#### 2. A PROVEN SYSTEM TO CLOSE ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

Miller (2003) illustrated that individual student learning is correlated with the quality of classroom instruction by showing the positive impact a teacher's content knowledge, classroom management, and delivery of instruction has on academic progress. The Board recognizes that even with high quality teachers, best curriculum, and greatest instructional practices, there still will be achievement gaps. A.C.E. will design and implement a tiered intervention strategy through an individualized tutoring program. Please refer to "Special Programs and At-Risk Students" subsection (Section III) which outlines the four-tier Response to Intervention ("RtI") structure. A.C.E. Academy's tiered model is based on: (1) use of a collaborative approach by school staff for implementation and monitoring of the intervention process; (2) high quality, research-based instruction and behavioral support; (3) school-wide screening of academics and behavior to determine which students need closer monitoring or additional interventions; (4) follow-up measures to provide information of intervention implementation; (5) continuous monitoring of student progress during the intervention process; and (6) documentation of parent involvement throughout the process. Research shows this intervention model is effective because of its sensitivity to human diversity and provides a clear methodology to provide support to those students who struggle with learning because of their cultural, linguistic, or ethnic differences.

### 3. PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ROOTED IN HEALTHY LIVING, CULTURAL AWARENESS, AND CONCERN FOR OTHERS

The Board of A.C.E. Academy agrees with Martin and Osbergs (2007) assessment that "social entrepreneurship is as vital to the progress of societies as entrepreneurship is to the progress of economies" (p. 29). K-8 students will study social entrepreneurship that teaches A.C.E. students how to investigate issues as well as research and evaluate possible solutions. Developing and implementing a plan of action in addition to assessing their results will teach students how young people from around the world can make a difference in their community. Examples of A.C.E. Academy's grade level service learning projects are: K-1: Needs of the School Community; 2nd: Animal Welfare; 3rd: Protecting the Environment; 4th: Community Health; 5th: Service to Veterans; 6th: Disaster Relief; 7th: Literacy in the Community; and 8th: Entrepreneurship.

### 4. THE USE OF ASSESSMENTS TO INFORM STUDENT INSTRUCTION

Student performance is measured with North Carolina EoG assessments, Terra Nova, NWEA, and Performance Series assessments, as well as the EXPLORE assessment in the eighth grade. Multiple authentic and formative assessments will be given across grades including Presentations of Learning (PoLs), peer assessing, and projects that allow students autonomy on how to demonstrate mastery.

### **K-8 Curriculum and Instructional Design:**

Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure.

A.C.E. Academy's basic learning environment includes the following.

**SCHOOL CULTURE:** Freiberg and Stein (1999) described school culture as the heart, soul, and essence of the school that draws teachers and students to love and want to be a part of it. A.C.E. Academy will develop a school culture that integrates this research. A.C.E. Academy will create traditions and ceremonies that are aligned with its mission and goals that include: (1) students identifying themselves by their college graduation year (e.g. Class of 2020); (2) teachers posting diplomas and paraphernalia of their alma maters; (3) students identifying entrepreneurs they admire and posting their biographies; (4) school walls with A.C.E. Academy's mission, vision, inspiring quotes, and pictures of students and staff; and (5) classical music played throughout the halls and entrances.

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP INTEGRATION:** Schools that offer entrepreneurship-integrated curricula stimulate learning, improve academic performance, increase interest in attending college, improve dropout rates, and promote self-sufficiency (Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship, 2010). A.C.E. will prepare K-8 grade students to learn the principles of entrepreneurship. Daily lesson plans, reading, and entrepreneurship projects will allow students to retain subject matter, make better decisions, think critically and creatively, and display their talents. A.C.E. Academy will also integrate Junior Achievement programs that promote and develop life-long entrepreneurship skills through inclusion in innovative business partnerships which can be brought back to the classroom for further discussion and development.

**LOW STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS:** A.C.E. believes low student to teacher ratios

contributes to preparing students and recognizes that students need many opportunities to interact with their teacher. Kosiewicz (2008) summarizes, "In comparison with students in larger classes, various studies suggest that students enrolled in small classes tend to interact more with their teachers, exhibit more pro-social behavior, and have higher achievement scores." The class sizes at A.C.E. will be 20:1 or less except in mathematics, English language arts (ELA), and technology where the ratio is 10:1. K-2 grade classes will be structured to less than 15 students and 3-8 grade class sizes to less than 20 students.

**FLEXIBLE AND SUPPORTIVE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS:** Flexible and supportive structural systems support student learning, programming, and staffing. Copp & Smith (2010) have shown that, "Quality use of time does not only mean perfecting a system that meets operational needs; it is important to audit how time contributes to or limits learning." A.C.E. Academy students experience 60-90 minutes classes, an extended day (after school program), six weekend module workshops throughout the year, and take courses in three semesters running from August to the beginning of June. The semesters allow more time for the students to take more courses, but it also gives them a chance to focus on fewer subjects at one time.

**PROJECT-BASED LEARNING:** Project-based learning experiences support student-centered learning by engaging students in in-depth projects developed around a question in which students investigate, acquire new knowledge through inquiry, and develop critical thinking skills. At A.C.E., students are expected to direct their learning by engaging in several business development projects that span their entire K-8 experience.

**INCREASED STUDENT TALK:** A.C.E. supports more paired work, rather than groups of three or more. This is so students can increase their "talk time" (which is the closest thing to thought) and in effect, reduce "teacher talk" time. In traditional schooling, the teacher does most of the talking, and consequently, most of the learning. Zemelman et al (1993) notes that "when teachers enforce the standard of silence, they are in a very real sense making learning illegal" (p. 13).

Provide a synopsis of the planned curriculum, including:

1. One sample course scope and sequence (preferably in graph form) in the Appendices (Appendix B) for one core subject (specific to the school's purpose) for each division (elementary, middle) the school would ultimately serve.
2. Identify how this curriculum aligns with the proposed charter school's mission, targeted student population, and North Carolina Accountability Model.

A.C.E. Academy will use a research-based curriculum that aligns with the North Carolina standards to best meet the needs of the targeted population. The curriculum is consistent with college preparedness expectations of the North Carolina Department of Education to allow for a smooth transition from A.C.E. Academy to high school and will include Fountas and Pinnell for Language Arts and Houghton Mifflin for Math, Science, and Social Studies in grades K-8.

A.C.E. Academy believes there is a business aspect involved in every career pathway. A.C.E. teachers will work to connect business concepts within the core curriculum. Activities, simulation, and projects will give students an

applied hands-on experience that ensures students have a solid grounding in economic, personal finance, and entrepreneurship concepts. This instructional program is designed to enhance the core curriculum and to give teachers, curriculum directors, and trainers the tools needed to effectively teach entrepreneurial concepts. Teachers will integrate business skills, ethics, and business practice into the core curriculum by focusing on four areas of business: Management and Leadership, Sales and Marketing, Finance and Economy, and Social Entrepreneurship. These four areas will give A.C.E. Academy a foundation for integration but will not limit curricular adaptation and integration as the business world changes in our global economy. It is never too early to teach a child about the business world around them or to instill in them an entrepreneurial spirit that will help them excel in future careers (Bassano & McConnon, 2008). A.C.E. Academy is not a business school, one where many business classes are taught; rather, it is a school with a business culture and emphasis.

A.C.E. Academy will systematically evaluate student performance goals and objectives to ensure all students regardless of backgrounds are achieving. A.C.E. Academy will examine the results of pre-assessments administered at the beginning of the school year to determine individual performance goals and learning plans to guide instructors. Adaptation of and adherence to the learning plans will ensure all students meet the state standards. Teachers will promote learning with innovative instructional strategies that address A.C.E.'s diverse population and learning styles of all students.

A.C.E. Academy will meet the Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) targets defined by the North Carolina Accountability Model. A.C.E. Academy's K-8 targets include:

1. Participation rate of 95 % in End-of-Grades Tests of Reading Comprehension (grades 3-8)
2. Participation rate of 95 % in End-of-Grade Tests of Mathematics (grades 3-8)
3. Proficiency rate in End-of-Grades Tests of Reading Comprehension (grades 3-8)
4. Proficiency rate in End-of-Grade Tests of Mathematics (grades 3-8)
5. Other academic indicator (OAI), attendance for schools in grades 3 to 8. (ncpublicschools.org, 2012)

3. Describe the primary instructional strategies that the school will expect teachers to master and explain why these strategies will result in increased academic achievement for the targeted student population.

A.C.E. Academy's instructional design and program components are grounded in effective scientific research for achieving academic success for all students. A.C.E. Academy teachers will utilize a variety of instructional strategies (examples listed below) that align with all subjects.

\* Differentiated instruction is the process of "ensuring that what a student learns, how he/she learns it, and how the student demonstrates what he/she has learned is a match for that student's readiness level, interests, and preferred mode of learning" (Tomlinson, 2004, p. 188). Rock et al (2008) have shown how teachers who differentiate instruction close the achievement gaps of all students, a primary concern of A.C.E. Academy.

\* Guided instruction helps a teacher know what is easy and difficult for students to comprehend (Carpenter et al, 1989). Teachers focus on what students know and help them build future understanding based on present knowledge. The program aims to improve children's skills by increasing teachers' knowledge of students' thinking, by changing teachers' beliefs

regarding how children learn, and by ultimately changing teaching practices.  
\* Collaborative learning increases student interest and promotes critical thinking. According to Johnson and Johnson (1986), there is persuasive evidence that cooperative teams achieve at higher levels of thought and retain information longer than students who work quietly as individuals. The shared learning gives students an opportunity to engage in discussion, take responsibility for their own learning, and thus become critical thinkers (Totten, Sills, Digby, & Russ, 1991).

\* Thematic instruction benefits students because it takes what they already know and connects their learning with key concepts. Through the entrepreneurship integration, teachers will ensure students are engaged and connected personally.

\* Project-based learning is an instructional strategy built on authentic learning activities that engage student interest and motivation (Kolb, 1984). Research has shown that project-based learning is highly effective for all students, including those who have traditionally experienced linguistic, ethnic, and class inequalities (Boaler, 2002).

Each of these instructional strategies are proven in effectively improving student learning. When combined with its entrepreneurship-integrated curriculum, A.C.E. Academy will stimulate learning, improve academic performance, increase interest in attending college, improve dropout rates, and promote self-sufficiency (Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship, 2010).

A.C.E.'s approach to student assessment is balanced; it also allows teachers to maintain consistent checks of understanding and employ assessments for learning (Chappuis, 2009). The assessment data is used by teachers and administrators to drive, update, and adjust classroom instructional practices. Through a process of intense data-driven dialogue (Wellman & Lipton, 2004), teachers work in study groups to conduct item analyses of student performance to identify strengths and weaknesses in the assessment data. This collective analysis will inform the school improvement team to make recommendations for targeted programs. Based on research surrounding success in schools of high need, data will be displayed publicly in the building to communicate where students are versus where they need to be and that "academic performance is highly prized" (Reeves, 2000, p. 187).

A.C.E. Academy will also offer a variety of student support services including Exceptional Children, speech and language therapy, social work, and school psychology. The goal of the student support services program is to help each student become a functional, adaptable, flexible learner who can live, work, and learn in the mainstream of life. Additionally, content and curricular offerings are made available for students who exhibit an interest and ability to be stretched beyond grade-level core content classes.

4. Provide a school academic calendar (minimum of 185 instructional days or 1,025 hours) and a brief narrative on how the calendar coincides with the tenets of the proposed mission and education plan.

A.C.E. Academy will follow the calendar detailed in Exhibit 3 located in Appendix R that allows for 187 instructional days starting August 25, 2014 and ending June 17, 2015. A.C.E. will observe the following holidays during the school year: New Years Day; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; President's Day; Good Friday; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Veterans Day; Thanksgiving Day; and Christmas Day. Additionally, 11 vacation days are scheduled for students and school staff including the following breaks: Thanksgiving Break (November 27-28, 2014); Winter Break (December 24, 2014-



January 2, 2015); and Spring Break (April 6-10, 2015).

To help ensure A.C.E.'s success, the calendar allows for: (a) End of Grade testing; (b) six Saturday module workshops; (c) three semesters or trimesters; (d) 16 in-service professional development opportunities; and (e) seven staff meetings for after school professional development trainings.

(a) To measure student performance on the goals, objectives, and grade-level competencies, End of Grade assessments are scheduled in the second week of May in 2015.

(b) Six Saturday workshops will be offered to provide students performing below grade level (who are identified through standardized assessments and teachers observations) additional support.

(c) The academic calendar is organized in three semesters or trimesters that run from August to June. The trimesters allow more time for the students to take more courses, but it also gives them a chance to focus on fewer subjects at one time.

(d) A.C.E. will arrange 16 professional development opportunities; two weeks or 10 days prior to the start of the school year for teacher training and preparation and six in-service professional development days throughout the school year.

(e) In addition to the six professional development days throughout the year, seven after school staff meetings are scheduled and will be dedicated to professional development, collaboration between school staff and business partners, and ensuring challenging instruction is being provided.

The professional development opportunities are extremely important because it gives each teacher the opportunity to become acclimated to A.C.E.'s policies and procedures, educational plan (including entrepreneurial integration and character education practices), state standards, and peer collaboration. In addition to the on-going professional development throughout the school year, the calendar allows time during teachers daily schedules for common planning which will be used to ensure instructional delivery is aligned with A.C.E.'s mission and student goals. After school department meetings will also support continual learning and team collaboration. Because partnerships between the home and school are vital to student success, three days are dedicated to parent-teacher conferences. The purpose of the conferences is to allow time for parents and teachers to collaboratively create and evaluate a plan that will ensure the student is performing successfully.

### **Special Programs and "At-Risk" Students**

1. Describe the methods and clear systems of prevention and intervention teachers will utilize to provide assistance to students that are not performing at expected levels: ensuring continued progress and academic student growth.

A.C.E. Academy subscribes to a four-tier Response to Intervention ("RtI") structure to provide assistance to students that are performing at expected levels.

Tier I is subject area classroom instruction (general education students and Exceptional Children students). Teachers use differentiated instruction, when possible, to meet student needs. Frequent formative assessments determine the extent to which content is learned prior to a summative assessment. Summative assessments in the form of unit tests, papers, projects, presentations, and demonstrations indicate mastery of content. Teachers reteach and reassess as necessary.

Tier II encompasses the classroom instruction outlined above and additional needs-based learning. Students identified through standardized assessments and teacher observations as performing below grade level receive additional support in the classroom. This support could come from the classroom teacher or another staff member who is assigned to the classroom. Students receive more frequent progress monitoring to determine academic growth. The students are supported and monitored for ten weeks. Additional time is allocated on six Saturdays throughout the school year to provide assistance to students.

Tier III encompasses Tier I and Tier II instruction with the addition of "individualized learning." Students who do not make accelerated progress after ten weeks of receiving Tier II instruction are identified as Tier III students. An interventionist, who is a certified teacher, services the targeted students outside of the classroom (not during core instruction). A learning plan is formulated to the specific students needs, along with individualized assessments. If the student is not making accelerated progress after five weeks, a child study is initiated and the students study team meets to recommend and implement additional strategies to assist the student. After a subsequent five-week time frame, if the student is not making accelerated progress to grade level, the Instructional Support Team (IST referenced in Section III. EDUCATION PLAN in the "Identification and Records" subsection of "Exception Children") will make recommendations for the next steps to be taken.

Tier IV encompasses Tier I instruction and "specially designed learning." The students identified for Tier IV are those that qualify for Exceptional Children services based on a documented learning or speech disability. Students receive classroom instruction by the general education teacher and support by an Exceptional Children teacher based on their IEP goals. They also may receive modified content or instructional delivery.

2. Explain how the instructional plan and curriculum will meet the needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students, including the following:
  - a) Methods for identifying ELL students.
  - b) Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for these students.
  - c) Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of ELL students, including exiting students from ELL services.

1. Methods for identifying ELL students.

To identify ELL students, A.C.E. will distribute a questionnaire to determine the students home language (all paperwork will be provided in English and Spanish). If another translation is required, one will be provided to the students family at no charge. If it is determined the primary or home language is other than English, the student will be enrolled in classes and provided the same opportunities as all other students.

2. Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for these students.

A.C.E. Academy understands that students, regardless of native language, are required to meet the North Carolina End of Grade exam and North Carolina High School Graduation Requirements. It is further understood that as second language learners are working to acquire a new language, proficiency in the new language can occur rapidly through academic applications. To this end, when English Language Learners (ELLs) enter A.C.E. Academy, students will be supported by a teacher who is qualified to teach second language learners. Utilizing the NC English Language Proficiency Standard Course of Study and the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Proficiency Standards, as well as the Core content Standards Linking Documents, support and general education teachers will collaborate and focus on the academic achievement and language acquisition of the ELL. Care will be taken to ensure language acquisition is not simply supplanted in the general education classroom; rather, language acquisition and core content instruction will occur simultaneously through the collaborative work of teachers informed by the NC English Language Proficiency Standard Course of Study and the WIDA.

3. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of ELL students, including exiting students from ELL services.

Monitoring of ELL students will take various forms, including grade reviews, attendance, parent communication, teacher input, and student self-assessment. Students that test at the state approved level for exiting the ELL program (at least a 4.8 composite score with reading and writing scores of at least 4.0 each on the annual test for English language proficiency) will be exited from the ELL program if their performance on another assessment (i.e., EoG) demonstrates their ability to be successful without support. If a student is not successful and language proficiency is determined to be the key fact, the student may be reassessed and reentered into the ELL program and additional support will be provided.

3. Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of intellectually gifted students, including the following:

a) Specific instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their abilities.

b) Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of intellectually gifted students.

1. Specific instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their abilities.

A.C.E. Academy will offer a specialized program designed to meet the needs of academically gifted students. Their educational program will encompass a unique set of services designed to highlight and develop their gifts while simultaneously addressing their specific areas of need as required. Academically gifted students should have an instructional program including extracurricular activities focused on students strengths, with modifications for students talents and disabilities in the regular classroom. For these students, we will provide the technology to form electronic communities and to access global resources, like Internet to research topics, which allows gifted students to explore ideas and events more quickly and in greater depth.

For academically gifted students, A.C.E. Academy will also provide an Accelerated Program. Student selection will be based upon their high scores on the North Carolina End-of-Grade test, the Terra Nova Assessment Test, Performance Series grade-level test, and through teacher recommendation. Students must score in the 97th percentile or higher in either reading or math to be considered for the Accelerated Program.

Homeroom teachers and electives/speciality teachers will be aware of, and have the responsibility to, oversee the students core academics and challenge the students in their specific areas of strength. A.C.E. Academy teachers will utilize differentiation of instruction to provide students with the opportunity to accelerate within the general education classroom. Teachers will design lessons implementing different levels of instruction and curriculum to meet the variety of needs within the classroom. In the area of math instruction, students are provided with enrichment activities, or in some instances, a student will partake in a higher grade level math class to meet the individual child's academic needs. Additionally, the Board believes this is a prime opportunity to begin gifted students in accelerated entrepreneurship programming. Honors projects, internships, and peer tutoring all become opportunities for the gifted student to truly understand social entrepreneurship.

## 2. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of intellectually gifted students.

In order to appropriately and adequately monitor and evaluate the progress and success of academically and intellectually gifted (AIG) students, A.C.E. Academy will form an advisory group of community members, parents/families of AIG students from diverse backgrounds, teachers of the gifted, and other professional staff who meet regularly to review all aspects of the Accelerated Program for AIG students and make recommendations for program improvement.

The use of NWEA assessments, Performance Series by Scantron assessments, and ACT assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics will be part of that evaluative process. In addition to the previously mentioned assessments, certified AIG licensed teachers will monitor mastery of curricular content through the formative assessment process.

## **Exceptional Children**

The public charter school cannot deny admission to any child eligible for special education services as identified under the federal legislation *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)* Amendments of 2004 (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), IDEA regulations, and Article 9 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes, North Carolina Policies *Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*. All public schools are responsible for hiring licensed and 'highly qualified' special educators pursuant to law. Public schools are required to provide a full continuum of services to meet the unique needs of ALL students with disabilities.

### **Identification and Records**

1. Explain how you will identify students who are enrolled within the charter school that have previously been found to be eligible for special education services or are protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
2. Provide the process for identifying students who may be eligible for special education services as identified in the federal 'Child Find' mandate. Be sure to include how student evaluations and assessments will be completed.
3. Provide a plan detailing how the records of students with disabilities and 504 Accommodation

plans will be properly managed.

- a) Requesting Records from previous schools
- b) Record Confidentiality (on site)
- c) Record Compliance (on site)

1. Students who have previously been found to be eligible for special education services or protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act will be identified by: (1) notification by parent; (2) school registration form; and (3) Comprehensive Exceptional Children Accountability System (CECAS).

2. Student needs will be supported through the interventions determined by the Instructional Support Team (IST). The IST will be responsible for identifying students who may be eligible for intervention and special education services. The IST is a school-based group of people (i.e. parents, General Education and Exceptional Children teachers, psychologists, social worker, speech therapists and administrators). The interventions will be in place for a minimum of 30 academic days. Students will be assessed weekly in order to monitor progress. After 20 academic days, students who make expected growth will no longer be a part of the intervention process and will continue to work with the teacher in the classroom. Students who do not make sufficient growth will either begin a different research-based program or spend more time working on the same program as a second intervention.

If the student does not make progress at this point, he/she will be referred for Exceptional Children testing at the consent of the parent. Persons from varying disciplines including a school psychologist, speech and language therapist, physical therapist, audiologist and/or occupational therapist may conduct evaluations. The team will consider the students progress in the context of his/her opportunity, past experiences, sensory, health, language culture, and developmental challenges.

The comprehensive evaluation of the student will include normative measures to advance the understanding of why the student continues to have difficulty. The student will also be tested with an individually administered standardized achievement test to validate the samples of classroom assessment data with normative data. The evaluation will lead to appropriate recommendations as to the best plan for instruction. Recommendations will not be limited to special education supports and programs and may include recommendations such as classroom accommodations or continued participation in response to intervention targeted small group instruction.

If the child is determined eligible for special education services, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed to reasonably set learning goals and specifically state services provided by A.C.E. to meet the student's individual needs.

3. REQUESTING RECORDS FROM PREVIOUS SCHOOLS: A.C.E. Academy will submit a for requesting for records to the student's previous school in order to obtain student IEP and 504 Plan documents.

RECORD CONFIDENTIALITY (ON SITE): Records (including files, documents, and other materials containing information directly related to a student and are

maintained by A.C.E.) of all children referred for evaluation and/or identified as disabled/504 will be maintained in a locked secured file cabinet in the administrative office of A.C.E. Academy.

RECORD COMPLIANCE (ON SITE): A.C.E. Academy will follow and adhere to the North Carolina Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities (2010). A.C.E. Academy will align their Continuous Improvement Performance Plan with the North Carolina State Performance Plan and meet all local, state and federal special education reports deadlines.

#### Exceptional Children's Education Programming

1. Describe the educational programs, strategies, and additional supports the school will provide to ensure a full continuum of services for students with disabilities.
2. Describe the methods and support systems that will be in place to ensure students with disabilities receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).
3. Describe how implementation of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be monitored and reported to the student, parents and relevant staff.
4. Describe the proposed plan for providing related services.

1. The mission of A.C.E. Academy is to ensure that students with disabilities develop mentally, physically, emotionally, and vocationally through the provision of an appropriate, individualized education in the least restrictive environment. We will offer a full continuum of services, including but not limited to, regular, resource and separate setting program to serve students with special needs, ensuring that all of our students become part of the school community regardless of their strengths or weaknesses.

A.C.E. Academy will offer a full inclusion program to exceptional students whose educational needs can be met in regular classroom setting in the least restrictive environment. A.C.E. Academy will provide this fully inclusive model together with an Exceptional Children teacher who will offer input to enhance the curriculum for those students. In accordance with the exceptional student ratio in Cabarrus County, A.C.E. Academy anticipates 10% of the student body to be exceptional children. It should be noted that while full inclusion is optimal, A.C.E. Academy recognizes that the IEP team will determine the continuum of services for students with disabilities. Some children may require more intensive services in a setting away from non-disabled peers to reach their full potential.

The Exceptional Children teacher will be available to co-teach in classrooms and provide an even smaller student/teacher ratio. This teacher will provide special education consultative services and will assist teachers in developing students' strengths and using these strengths to address areas of weakness. The Exceptional Children teacher will employ direct, explicit and sequenced instruction with clear modeling and guided practice activities. The Exceptional Children teacher will also assist general education teachers in making necessary modifications and adjusting the presentation of curriculum as needed so that all students can be successful. Students individualized education plans will be followed and reviewed annually.

2. A.C.E. Academy understands that all students are entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and that this best occurs in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). It is our belief that students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Accommodations Plans should, to the greatest extent possible, participate in the same classes and

experiences afforded to general education students. Instructional planning is focused upon ensuring student success. The result is a curriculum that allows students to derive meaning from all of their educational experiences.

When making educational placement decisions for students with disabilities, A.C.E. Academy will ensure that parents and leadership are contributing members of the IEP team and together the team is making decisions that are subject to requirements regarding provisions of Least Restrictive Environment. When determining how services will be delivered to students with disabilities, A.C.E. Academy will follow all North Carolina Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities (2010) rules and recommendations as issued by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and State Performance Plan (SPP). If a child with a current IEP enrolls at A.C.E. Academy, A.C.E. will implement the existing IEP to the extent possible, or will provide an interim IEP agreed to by parents until a new IEP can be developed. IEPs will be developed, revised, and implemented in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Improvement Act (IDEA) and state law and regulations.

3. Ongoing progress monitoring such as AIMSweb is administered to track rate of progress to determine which concepts and skills need to be targeted for further instruction. Student progress is monitored recurrently to ensure academic success and to allow program individualization, a key element of effective special education (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995). Weekly staff meetings and frequent progress reports will allow A.C.E. Academy teachers, administrators, and parents to evaluate the academic and social progress of each student. This approach ensures that student needs are addressed in a timely fashion. The school's IEP Team, which includes the parents and administration, will be responsible for determining the special accommodations and services that are needed to ensure that all students receives a free appropriate education. The school's IEP Team will monitor the students progress and effectiveness of the students plan.

4. A.C.E. Academy Board of Directors will select and contract for related services. Related services include but are not limited to: speech and language pathology, audiology services, psychological services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, nursing, art therapy, social work services and physical therapy. The implementation and delivery of related services will be based on the student need as determined by the Individualized Education Program (IEP), which includes the school principal, child's teacher and parent. Key elements of the Individualized Education Program include the projected date for the beginning of the services and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services.

### **Student Performance Standards**

1. Describe the student performance standards for the school as a whole.
2. Explain the use of any evaluation tool or assessment that the proposed charter school will use in addition to any state or federally mandated tests. Describe how this data will be used to drive instruction and improve the curriculum over time for the benefit of students.
3. Explain the policies and standards for promoting students, including students with special needs, from one grade level to the next. Discuss how and when promotion criteria will be communicated to parents and students.
4. Provide the public charter school's exit standards for graduating students. These standards should set forth what students in the last grade served will know and be able to do.

1. A.C.E. Academy's school management staff will oversee teacher and student performance school-wide and ensure that the mission is being fulfilled. Below is a sampling of some of the goals A.C.E. Academy will implement to measure success:

- \* Our students will show a 5% growth per year.

- \* Our students will perform at a level higher than their peers in the Cabarrus County School District on the Mathematics and English Language Arts portion of the NC EoG in all grades, as demonstrated by a greater percentage of students passing and by a higher overall average student score.

- \* A.C.E. students will read aloud and present their entrepreneurship projects as well as a business plan pitch before a panel of teachers and outside entrepreneurs at the end of their 3rd, 5th, and 8th grade years achieving a higher rating from the panel for each following skills: elocution, comprehension, and analysis. Additionally, K-5 grade students will participate in several on-going civic/service learning projects through the year by researching a local or global cause and will gain knowledge in community involvement, critical thinking, problem solving, humanity, financial resources, and public relations.

- \* 80% of our students will demonstrate mastery in narrative writing by meeting or exceeding the minimum grade-level standard score for work assessed according to the seven-category Writing Appraisal System.

2. Student assessment is an essential component in the monitoring of student achievement. Aligned standardized assessments, periodic benchmark assessments and a variety of culminating assessments are incorporated into daily practice. Assessments will be aligned with the curriculum and instruction. Assessments will be designed by matching the appropriate measurement method to the type of learning targets: knowledge, reasoning, skill, performance, or disposition.

Assessment data will inform all instruction at A.C.E. Academy. In addition to state and federally mandated tests, frequent formative assessments will be given to determine student learning during a unit of study. These formative assessments will consist of, but are not limited to: thumbs up/thumbs down, individual whiteboards for checking for understanding, entrance/exit cards, homework checks, visual representations of learning, verbal responses, content area games, and written spot checks. Teachers will be required to indicate formative assessments in lesson plans. Summative assessments take the form of unit tests, papers, projects, presentations, and demonstrations to indicate content mastery. Teachers reteach and reassess as necessary if students do not master the given content. Teachers will be required to indicate summative assessments in lesson plans.

Standardized and other norm/criterion-referenced assessments will be outlined in a yearly "assessment calendar." The assessments will be given periodically and will drive classroom instruction. Assessment data from Performance Series by Scantron will be the driving force behind A.C.E. Academy's intervention program. STAR Reading, Performance Series Reading, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Word Analysis, and AIMSweb will be used to inform reading instruction. Students will be placed in leveled or strategy groups determined by performance on the aforementioned assessments. The Readers Workshop method of instruction (mini-lesson, guided reading, independent



reading, and conferring) guides the reading classes.

STAR Math, Performance Series math, and Diagnostic Readiness assessments will be used to drive math instruction. Students will work in differentiated groups to attain content mastery. Cumulative grade level assessments will be written by content area committees to demonstrate student progress over time. After analyzing this data, effectiveness of grade level instruction will be determined.

3. A policy for promotion and retention will be in place. Any student meeting the state standards requirements per the NC state tests and having satisfactorily met all grade level expectations will automatically be promoted to the next grade level. Grade promotion requirements will be communicated to parents at registration via the Parent Handbook, as well as at the Parent Welcoming Committee meeting and through teacher/administrative communications throughout the school year. Parents of students being considered for retention shall be notified in writing as early as possible, not later than 45 days before the end of the school year. Parents may respond in writing to the Director within 30 days of the written notification to protest the retention. Retention of students will be at the sole discretion of the Director.

4. A.C.E. Academy will meet and exceed the North Carolina Promotion and Retention Policies that include:

a. Kindergarten students must meet the minimum Kindergarten NC Essential and the

Common Core State Standards in Language Arts and mathematics by receiving a grade of "Outstanding" or "Satisfactory".

b. Grades one through five: students must receive a passing grade of "D" or higher in Reading, Math, English, Social Studies, and Science. A mandatory retention following third grade will be required for students not meeting the mastery levels in reading. A mandatory retention following fifth grade will be required for students not meeting the mastery levels in mathematics. Credit recovery opportunities will be provided for students in fifth grade not meeting mastery requirements in math. These credit recovery options will include virtual school opportunities to ensure our students are adequately prepared for success in Algebra.

c. Grades six through eight: students must receive a passing grade of "D" or higher in Reading, Math, English, Social Studies, and Science. A mandatory retention following eighth grade will be required for students not meeting the mastery levels in reading and mathematics. Credit recovery opportunities will be provided for students in sixth grade not meeting mastery requirements in math. These credit recovery options will include virtual school opportunities to ensure our students are adequately prepared for success in Algebra.

Upon graduating eighth (8) grade, A.C.E. students must:

A. Demonstrate grade-level proficiency by scoring at or above Achievement Level III on state end-of-grade tests in reading and mathematics.

B. Demonstrate adequate progress in writing by scoring at or above the proficiency level on the seventh grade writing assessment.

C. Cumulative (four quarters) passing grades (60%) in core academic subjects (such as: English/language arts, math and science) during eighth grade year

Further, graduates of ACE Academy must demonstrate and continue to develop

the ability to: communicate effectively through a variety of media; think creatively and constructively to solve problems; apply technology, recognizing both its potential and its limitations; develop physical and emotional well-being; function as citizens in local, state, national, and global communities; value and promote social justice and equality; value the ideas of others; develop a sense of agency and identity that supports individual growth; and be a reflective, eternal learner.

**Student Conduct:**

Provide a brief narrative that disseminates how student conduct will be governed at the proposed charter school and how this plan **aligns** with the overall mission and proposed Education Plan of the charter school.

Provide a draft copy of the student handbook within the appendices (Appendix C).

Be sure to include:

1. Practices the school will use to promote effective discipline.
2. A preliminary list and definitions of the offenses which may result in suspension or expulsion of students.
3. An explanation of how the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities in regards to these actions that may or must lead to suspension and expulsion.
4. Policies and procedures disseminating due process rights, including grievance procedures, for when a student is suspended or expelled.

It is A.C.E. Academy's goal to offer a quality education program. To fulfill this goal, students need a positive, safe, and orderly school environment in which learning can take place without disruption. Students who do not observe the rules of good conduct in classroom or within the school building decrease both the learning and safety of others and their own opportunities to learn. Therefore, our staff takes a very proactive role in enforcing the Student Code of Conduct. Students are expected to demonstrate respect and courtesy by obeying staff members, and being kind and considerate of others and the schools property.

A.C.E. Academy's student conduct policy will support the attainment of the school's mission upholding high expectations and remain responsible for establishing a positive school climate that continuously identifies and acknowledges students for respectful behavior. A.C.E. Academy students will model and identify appropriate behaviors in varying environments throughout the course of the school day and academic setting. Learning behavior transitions in varying environments remains a valuable component of the socialization process of a productive citizen. All A.C.E. Academy students will be trained to support and implement a school-wide positive discipline model. A.C.E. Academy faculty and students will work together to implement the A.C.E. Academy model.

**IV. GOVERNANCE, OPERATIONS and CAPACITY**

(No more than ten total pages in this section)

**NOTE:** Please answer all sections completely. Do not use "same as LEA" or "whatever the law states". Lack of proper documentation could deem the application incomplete.

**Governance:**

**Private Nonprofit Corporation:**

\*The nonprofit corporation must be officially authorized by the NC Secretary of State by the final approval interview date.

*Name of Private Nonprofit:* A.C.E. Academy

*Mailing Address:* 5401-A South Blvd., Suite 162

*City/State/Zip:* Charlotte NC 28217

*Street Address:* N/A

*Phone:* 704-258-9213

*Fax:* 980-355-0969

*Name of registered agent and address:* Laila Minott  
305 Stonewater Bay Lane, Mount Holly, NC 28120

**FEDERAL TAX ID:**

**Tax-Exempt Status 501 (c)(3)**

The private nonprofit listed as the responsible organization for the proposed charter school has received 501 (c)(3) status:

Yes (copy of letter from federal government attached: Appendix D)  
 No

**NOTE:** If the non-profit organization has yet to obtain the 501(c)(3) status, the tax-exempt status must be obtained from the Internal Revenue Service within twenty-four (24) months of the date the Charter Application is given final approval.

**Governance and Organizational Structure of Private Non-Profit Organization:**

The private nonprofit corporation is the legal entity that has responsibility for all aspects of the proposed charter school. Its members should reflect the ability to operate a charter school from both business and education perspectives.

Please complete the table provided depicting the founding members of the nonprofit organization.

<b>Board Member Name</b>	<b>Board Title</b>	<b>County/State of Residence</b>	<b>Current Occupation</b>
Michael Minter	Board Member	CABARRUS	Athletic Coach
Christina Kirk	Board Member	CABARRUS	Tutor
Dawn Hammond	Board Member	CABARRUS	Homemaker

Cameo Goodwin	Board Member	CABARRUS	Homemaker
Laila Minott	Board Member	GASTON	Educational Consultant
Shawn Smalls	Vice Chair	GASTON	Entrepreneur
David Hands	Board Member	MECKLENBURG	Attorney
Lauren Baptiste	Board Member	MECKLENBURG	Retired Educator
Shannon Martin	Secretary	MECKLENBURG	Contract Manager
Ofelia Amador	Treasurer	MECKLENBURG	Banker
Adolphe Thorpe	Board Chair	MECKLENBURG	Accountant

**Please provide the following in this location of the APPLICATION: (Do not include as an appendices.)**

1. *A description of the governance structure of the proposed charter school, including the governing board's functions, primary duties, roles and responsibilities as it relates to overseeing the charter school. Include how the board will recruit, hire, and supervise the lead administrator.*

As required by state law, the Board is responsible for the governance and oversight of the school. The Board will delegate responsibility for administrative operations to A.C.E.'s Executive Director. A.C.E. Academy will implement a traditional leadership model in which decision-making flows from the Board or A.C.E. Executive Director and downward. This structure allows more one-on-one contact between executives and staff. This model aligns with A.C.E. Academy's mission because teachers are given more autonomy to customize instruction according to a student's specific needs, rather than according to predetermined template.

The main responsibility of the Board will be to ensure the school fulfills the scope of its charter and mission. The Board will be responsible for all fiscal and academic policies, governance, and ensuring compliance with all state and federal laws. The responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- \* Acquiring the necessary training to be an exemplary Board and evaluating Boards effectiveness
- \* Serve as an advocate for A.C.E. Academy in the community, such that the schools missions and goals are achieved.
- \* Holding school administrators accountable for achieving A.C.E. Academy's mission and vision
- \* Selecting and hiring school's Executive Director and vote on all other personnel decisions
- \* Approving and monitoring all academic performance and goals
- \* Managing schools payable and receivable accounts as well as approving all purchases
- \* Reviewing financial statements monthly and make changes, as needed
- \* Reviewing, approving, and overseeing annual budgets
- \* Meeting, at a minimum, on a monthly basis while observing NC Open Meetings Law
- \* Adopting and adapting bylaws, as needed
- \* Appointing officers, delegates, and committees
- \* Approving independent auditors for A.C.E. Academy's annual audit
- \* Retaining legal counsel
- \* Adhering to federal and state charter school law and procedures

A.C.E. Academy is committed to hiring a highly qualified administrator who shares the same educational philosophy as the Board. In an effort to reach the widest range of educators seeking the opportunity to join an

alternative, innovative school, the Board will advertise in national, regional, international, and local newspapers and publications, including The Charlotte Observer and Education Week. We will also post advertisements in print and online at various universities, schools of education, alternative schools, professional associations, teacher unions and public schools. Additionally, there will be an extensive recruitment effort in our community in order to reach professionals who are familiar with the dynamics and population and who strive to contribute professionally as well as personally to the quality of education. All applicants will submit a cover letter that states their qualifications and their education philosophy, as well as a resume and names of three references.

The Board will supervise and evaluate the Executive Director to ensure the school is meeting its mission. The Board will use the following measurements to indicate the Executive Directors performance: school leadership effectiveness, academic proficiency and growth, school improvement plans, attendance rates, teacher retention, pupil attrition rates, and student waiting lists. As part of the Boards supervision of the Executive Director, the Board will review, inspect, and evaluate monthly reports detailing the school's operations.

2. *Describe the size, current and desired composition, powers, and duties of the governing board. Identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the governing board. Explain how this governance structure and composition will help ensure that a) the school will be an educational and operational success; b) the board will evaluate the success of the school and school leader; and c) there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders, including parents.*

Currently, A.C.E. Academy's Board of Directors consists of 11 members that have various affiliations within the community. Each board member contributes a unique skill and talent to the school's implementation and development. To ensure the school fulfills its mission, the Board has delegated four officer positions (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary) as well as created a number of committees and teams that will focus on specific goals and tasks. The Chair is responsible for general supervision, direction, and control of the Corporations affairs. The Vice Chair performs all of the Chairs duties (if and when the Chair is absent or disabled). The Treasurer is responsible for keeping accurate records of the Corporations properties, receipts, and disbursement; prepare financial reports; and provide a report of the Corporations financial transactions and condition at least annually. The Secretary's role is to book all meeting minutes and maintain a copy of the Corporations Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

Committees include Finance, Instructional, and Community Relations. A.C.E. Academy's Finance Committee will consist of board members that possess professional experience and knowledge in the legal field, banking, accounting, taxes, consulting, and/or business operations. The Instructional Committee consists of members with knowledge of educational field including curriculum design, summative and formative assessments, Exceptional Children programming, instructional strategies, classroom management, and/or school staff structure. The Community Relations Committee is comprised of members with coaching, leadership, public relations, real estate, networking, fundraising, and/or community affairs.

The number of directors will be determined by the directors with a minimum

number of five except in cases of emergencies on an as needed basis. Each director is authorized to vote on all matters, subject to the restrictions established by law, the Corporations Articles of Incorporation, or its bylaws.

In addition, the Board will develop specific operating procedures and practices to implement policies and objectives. To ensure the school's educational and operational success, the Board will solicit input from committees, the A.C.E. Academy School Improvement Team (with parent representation), school leaders, staff, and the community. When necessary, the Board will employ outside counsel to ensure compliance with all state and federal laws and regulations and to adopt effective policies. After presentation and discussion, the Board will make informed and objective policy decisions at open board meetings, as required by law, with careful review and scrutiny of proposed policies.

Finally, with advice and assistance from legal counsel, the Board will review school policies as needed and on a regularly scheduled basis to ensure legal compliance and consistency with existing school needs and practices. All school policies and student/parent handbooks will be available on the schools website.

These policies provide the school with the critical legal and operational foundation to immediately and proactively promote safe and efficient operations as well as reduce legal problems and costs. Many schools address such matters on an ad hoc basis after problems arise and "as time permits." In contrast, the Boards aim is to be proactive from the beginning, to help establish a culture of strategic planning and compliance.

- 3. Explain the procedure by which the founding board members have been recruited and selected. If a position is vacant, how and on what timeline will new members be recruited and added to the board?*

A.C.E. Academy was developed by Shawn Smalls, Laila Minott, and Shannon Martin who have been providing educational services throughout Cabarrus County and other school districts for ten years. Because of that experience, Smalls, Minott, and Martin understand, appreciate, and respect the value of education. Developing a charter school in Cabarrus County has been a passion for all three. Smalls, Minott, and Martin are the founding members of the charter and have recruited all members of the Board by matching their skills, interests, experience, knowledge, and commitment based on the needs of the Board. The three members sought out a diverse Board that included individuals that have community affiliations, education experience, and ability to create business partnerships that will lead to the schools operational success and sustainability. By networking and asking colleagues for referrals, Smalls, Minott, and Martin pursued thought-provoking individuals that bring prestige and advocacy to the mission of the school. Smalls, Minott, and Martin recruited board members by providing: (1) an overview of charter schools and A.C.E.s mission and vision; (2) Board of Directors job descriptions and expectations including the number of meetings, committee assignments, length of board term, and time commitment required; (3) data on the Cabarrus County community; (4) achievement gaps throughout the state, and (5) the impact we can make in the community. All potential board members/candidates were given the opportunity to question, discuss, and contribute to the schools mission, vision, and plan. A.C.E.'s current Board of Directors consists of 11 board members.

Except as otherwise provided by law or the Articles of Incorporation of the Corporation, any vacancy occurring in the Board of Directors shall be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining directors (even though less than a quorum) or by the sole remaining director at the next meeting of the Board of Directors or within sixty (60) days, whichever first occurs.

4. *How often will the board meet?*

The Board will inform public of monthly meetings and follow open meetings law.

5. *What kinds of orientation or training will new board members receive, and what kinds of ongoing professional development will existing board members receive? The plan for training and development should include a timetable, specific topics to be addressed, and requirements for participation (Board Policies Draft: Appendix H).*

A.C.E. Academy Charter School board members will be expected to attend all training sessions available for board members offered by the North Carolina Department of Public Instructions Office of Charter Schools (OCS). A.C.E. will also work with its OCS consultant(s) to coordinate additional board training as needed and available.

Each new board member will participate in an orientation that presents the schools mission, vision, and plan. A board member manual will also be provided that includes A.C.E.'s Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, current budget and most recent audited financial statement, copies of minutes, educational plan, a list of board members and their contact information, lists of committees, and any staff assignments. Additionally, new board members will be required to read and regularly review existing school policies, Board policies, and the Corporations Bylaws.

Each year the schools legal counsel and/or other appropriate officers or experts will conduct professional development workshops on subjects and topics that help support A.C.E.s operational success. Specific topics include:

- \* Basic board member duties (general review)
  - o N.C. charter statute overview
  - o Conflict of interest policy, procedure, and commitments
  - o Financial oversight & integrity
  - o Public records/open meetings
  - o Fiduciary duties/due diligence
  - o Personnel roles, relationships, & standards
  - o School safety/student well-being
  - o General board procedures
  - o Hearing/grievance procedures
- \* New or revised potential policies required
- \* New state/federal rules and legal developments
- \* State of the School: annual needs and goals
- \* Student Achievement
- \* Advocacy
- \* Strategic Planning

In addition, the Board will hold in-depth training, as required, on particular issues (e.g., see topics above, due process requirements).

All board members are required to participate in the following on-going

scheduled events:

- \* New Board Member Orientation which will be scheduled immediately following an election or appointment
- \* Regular Board Meetings which are scheduled monthly
- \* Professional Development Workshops which are scheduled as needed or at least quarterly

6. *Describe the board's ethical standards and procedures for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest. Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the application is approved; discuss specific steps that the board will take to avoid any actual conflicts and to mitigate perceived conflicts.*

Directors will avoid improper conduct arising from conflicts of interest and will abide by all ethical and legal requirements governing conflicts of interests. A system of checks and balances will be created to monitor and identify potential or actual conflicts such as: financial interests, gifts and bonuses, nepotism, political activities, public comment, and other violations. Additionally, to avoid any actual conflicts, the policies and compliance practices will be reviewed on a regular basis and immediate action will be taken to address items lacking or in need of improvement. Board members will also be required to provide full disclosure notifying all members of any connections that may have with a staff member or organization doing business with A.C.E. Academy and abstain from discussion and voting on matters involving dealings between A.C.E. and an affiliation. This also applies to any school staff members in decision-making roles. A written record of full disclosure statements will be maintained by the Board Chair. If any director has or may have a conflict of interest in a matter pending before the Board, such member shall fully disclose to the Board the nature of the conflict or potential conflict. No transaction may be approved if it would constitute self-dealing, prohibited under Section 4941 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provisions of any later federal tax laws, or if it would result in the imposition of any excise tax under any other provision of Chapter 49A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provisions of any later federal tax laws.

7. *Explain the decision-making processes the board will use to develop school policies.*

A.C.E. Board will create a committee to write, review, and implement all policy. Before implementing a policy, the board members assigned to the committee (which includes legal counsel) will review best practices as well as charter school law. A.C.E.'s Board has already arranged with its legal counsel to adopt a complete set of board policies that include personnel, discipline, enrollment, safety, and other pertinent school policies. These policies provide the school with the critical legal and operational foundation to immediately and proactively promote safe and efficient operations, and reduce legal problems and costs. Many schools address such matters on an ad hoc basis after problems arise and "as time permits." In contrast, the Boards aim is be proactive from the beginning, to help establish a culture of strategic planning and compliance. All policies will be reviewed annually and updated based on legal changes, school reform, and needs.

8. *Describe any advisory bodies, councils, or associations listed in the organization chart or to be formed, including the roles and duties of that body, and the reporting structure as it relates to the school's governing body and leadership.*

A.C.E. Academy will develop a Parent Association which is created to engage families in school planning, leadership, volunteer opportunities, and community resources that strengthen and support students learning and well-



being. The Parent Association will assist in the schools various departments and events year round including (but not limited to) after school activities, field trips, Parent University classes, ceremonies, enrichment activities, fundraisers, school accountability, mentoring programs, and teacher assistance. All interested parents of A.C.E. students, community advocates and volunteers, and A.C.E. school staff are invited to join the Parent Association.

The Parent Association will be accountable and must report directly to the Executive Director. Regular meetings will be held to coordinate school calendars and facilitate communication between the parents, community, and school staff. If the Parent Association is ever not able to accomplish any part of its purpose, the association's chair will take this to the Executive Director for problem solving; the Executive Director will troubleshoot, assume the task, or reassign, if necessary. The results will be reported to the Board.

### Governance and Organizational Structure of Private Non-Profit Organization (continued)

#### Include in the Appendices:

9. A well-defined organizational chart showing the relationship of the Board of Directors to the parents and staff of the proposed charter school. This chart should also include lines of authority to and from any outside entity that will play a role in managing or supporting the charter school (such as educational service providers, advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils).
10. A one-page resume from each founding board member and responses to the questions found on the Charter School Board Member Form (Appendix E).
11. The proposed by-laws, which must include a Conflict of Interest Policy for board members and a stated commitment to the NC Open Meetings Law (Appendix F).
12. A copy of the articles of incorporation, if available. If not available, this document must be available prior to interview by SBE, the applicant must demonstrate that it has been applied for prior to submission of the proposed application. (Appendix G)
13. Copy of any board policies if adopted already (Appendix H).
14. Copies of meeting minutes (if available), relevant to the development of the charter school plan, during the application process (Appendix I).

### Proposed Management Organization (Educational Management Organization or Charter Management Organization)

*If the proposed school does not intend to contract with an education service provider, mark "Not Applicable" and follow the direction #3 in the Application Specifications.*

**X Not Applicable**

**Private School Conversions: complete ONLY if the proposed charter is a private school conversion.**

*Otherwise, mark "Not Applicable" and follow the direction #3 in the Application Specifications.*

**X Not Applicable**

*Applicable" and follow the direction #3 in the Application Specifications. Understand that the replication means that a new charter school will be governed separately from the charter school the application is modeled after.*

**X Not Applicable**

### Projected Staff:

Provide, as Appendix K, a list of positions anticipated for the charter school; (e.g., principal or director; finance

officer, administrative support staff; teachers (part-time and full-time); paraprofessionals/teaching assistants, clerical, and maintenance.). Be mindful that your predicted administration and staff match the projected enrollment noted in Section I and align with the proposed budget.

### **Staffing Plans, Hiring, and Management**

Include the following information for the proposed charter school:

1. *Explain the board's strategy for recruiting and retaining high-performing teachers.*

The Board will use various strategies for recruiting and retaining high-performing teachers. Recruitment will focus on partnering with colleges and university to build relationships with A.C.E. Academy. A.C.E. will also collaborate with Teach for America who will identify and place qualified candidates. The board will identify qualified teachers who hold alternative certification. Teachers may be recruited through a teacher referral program. The board will seek carefully selected and trained staff committed to professional competency and eagerness for life-long learning.

A.C.E.'s recruitment and retention strategies will be implemented for high performing teachers.

- \* Competitive total rewards program for all staff (employee compensation, merit pay, and benefits);
- \* A plan of intensive and structured support for teachers that include an orientation, professional development opportunities, coaching and observation opportunities with experienced teachers;
- \* Provide opportunities for collaboration and discussions amongst colleagues regarding professional practice;
- \* Formative assessment tools conducted by principal that permit evaluation of practice on an ongoing basis that require observations and constructive feedback;
- \* Reward expert teachers through support in seeking National Teacher Board Certification;
- \* Opportunities to express and address concerns focused on teacher working conditions and staff satisfaction.

2. *Provide a description of the relationship that will exist between the charter school employees and the nonprofit board. Provide as Appendix L, a draft of the employment policies to be implemented by the proposed charter school.*

A.C.E. will employ a team that is committed to fulfilling its mission. The description below outlines the employees relationship with the Board.

a. Supervisory Authority. A.C.E. Academy's Executive Director shall have the responsibility and authority to determine necessary staffing levels and to recruit, screen, select, evaluate, assign, discipline, transfer, and recommend to the Board, suspension or discharge of all personnel, consistent with state and federal law, and consistent with the parameters adopted and included within the Educational Program and approved budget.

b. Executive Director. Except as otherwise agreed to by the parties, the Executive Director shall be employed by the Board and subject to the Boards supervision. The A.C.E. Academy Executive Director will have the authority, consistent with applicable law, to recommend the hiring of the School Principal and Assistant Principal and to hold him or her accountable for the success of the school. The Board shall determine, after considering any recommendations by the Executive Director, the terms of the employment contract with the Principal and Assistant Principal, including his or her

duties and compensation.

c. Teachers. Prior to each academic year, the A.C.E. Academy Executive Director shall recommend to the Board the number and functions of full- and part-time teachers necessary for the effective operation of the School. The Executive Director shall exercise supervisory authority regarding all aspects of School staffing, subject to the limitations of number and types of positions to be approved by the Board.

d. Support Staff. The A.C.E. Academy Executive Director shall recommend the number and functions of support staff, including contracted personnel, required for the effective operation of the school. Support staff may work at the School on a full- or part-time basis based on the Executive Directors discretion.

*3. Outline the board's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks.*

The Board and leadership will follow the equal employment opportunity law by prohibiting discrimination against all applicants and employees. This policy applies to all areas of employment including hiring, discharge, promotion, and compensation. The Board will comply with state and federal laws when hiring school personnel and delegates to the Executive Director the task of entertaining employment applications or promotions, interviewing applicants, and administers all personnel matters. The Executive Director is responsible for making final nominations to the Board for appointments. Nominations are subject to the Boards approval.

Criminal history checks will be conducted by following North Carolina and federal laws. Before making any offer of employment to a new applicant, a conditional approval will be granted by the Board while a national criminal history (which includes the Department of Justice's fingerprinting) and sexual offender status investigation is completed by the Executive Director. There is no charge to the candidate for the background investigation; A.C.E. has allocated \$3,000.00 in its budget to cover this expense. The Board will review the investigation results and determine qualification based on the information. Additionally, all Board members are subject to criminal investigations, as well.

The Executive Director may recommend to the Board for a teacher or administrators suspension or termination for reasonable and just cause which are made final upon a majority vote of the Board. The termination process shall be handled by the Executive Director or Board designee in coordination with the Human Resources Manager. A staff member may resign in accordance with the terms of the employment contract. Separating employees are asked to complete a written notice and provide it thirty days in advance. The Executive Director may act for the Board in the acceptance of a resignation; however, the School Board has the right to rescind the acceptance.

*4. Outline the school's proposed salary range and employment benefits for all levels of employment.*

A.C.E.'s staff is paid based on an 11 month schedule (excluding the Executive Director, Principal, Assistant Principal, Compliance Officer, Administrative Assistant, and Payroll/AP Clerk who are paid on a 12 month schedule), and salaries will be determined based on a tiered schedule of experience, credentials, number of years employed with A.C.E., and standard

wage increases. Salary ranges for school employees are as follows: the Executive Director's annual salary will range from \$54,170.00-\$122,000.00; the Principal's annual salary ranges from \$40,000.00-\$91,000.00; the Assistant Principal's annual salary ranges from \$34,000.00-\$73,000.00; Certified Teachers with BA Degrees annual salary ranges from \$34,000.00 to \$47,000.00; Certified Teachers with a Masters Degree annual salary ranges from \$36,000.00 to \$48,000.00; and the Compliance Officer, Guidance Counselor, and RtI Coordinator, and IT Specialist's annual salary ranges from \$30,000.00 to \$63,000.00 and Support Staff annual salary ranges from \$19,000.00 to \$32,750.00.

A.C.E.'s full-time employee benefits will include: Medical insurance and prescription coverage, Dental coverage, Group Life Insurance, Short-Term Disability coverage (optional) and Flexible Spending Account (optional).

Refer to Employee Handbook in Appendix C for a list of all paid holidays and a description of A.C.E. policy regarding leave of absence including workman's compensation, jury duty, bereavement, family medical leave (FMLA), military leave of absence, and school closings.

*5. Provide the procedures for employee grievance and/or termination.*

A.C.E. Academy's leadership will encourage all employees to bring legitimate concerns about work-related situations to the attention of the Executive Director through the process outlined.

IMMEDIATELY INITIATE STEP 1: Employees must discuss the matter promptly with their immediate supervisor. Within 10 working days, every effort will be made to resolve the matter at this stage. Employees will receive a written record of this step from their immediate supervisor which will be placed in the personnel file. WITHIN 7 DAYS, INITIATE STEP 2: If a satisfactory resolution was not reached in Step 1, employees should address the matter with the Human Resources Manager and a written reply will be provided within 10 working days. WITHIN 7 DAYS, INITIATE STEP 3: If a reasonable resolution has not been achieved at Step 2, the Executive Director will discuss the matter with the Board. Within two weeks, a personnel hearing will be scheduled, a decision for resolution will be developed by the Board, and the Board's decision will be final.

The Executive Director, Human Resources Manager, and immediate supervisors have the responsibility of determining the appropriate response for any employee that is not meeting their responsibilities, based on specific circumstances. A.C.E. Academy's Corrective Action Plan assures consistency in addressing performance and/or behavior that fails to meet stated standards and expectations. Corrective action may include coaching, counseling, oral and written warnings, suspension, transfer or dismissal depending on the nature and severity of the individual situation. If performance fails to improve after application of the corrective action plan, the employee may be terminated (with board approval). As an "at will employer" the board reserves the right to terminate an individual's employment at any time for any reason, with or without cause, with or without notice, and with or without application of corrective action.

*6. Identify any positions that will have dual responsibilities (within or without the organization) and the funding source for each position.*

Not applicable, as no dual responsibility positions are planned.

*7. Describe the plans to have qualified staffing adequate for the anticipated special needs*

*population, means for providing qualified staffing for ELL and gifted students.*

A.C.E. will employ required staff and ensure appropriate classroom space, curricular materials, and supplementary resources to enable all Exceptional Children (EC), ELL, and Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) students to achieve academic success. A coordinator will be responsible for implementing and supervising the EC program. All teachers providing EC, English Language Arts instruction to ELL students, and accelerated programs to AIG students will be highly qualified or certified.

Staff members who work directly with special needs students will receive appropriate professional development in order to prepare them to support the school's special needs population. The professional development will focus on: the research-based instructional methodologies, monitoring, school's EC programs, services outside of instruction, and strategies for effective communication with students and parents.

8. *Provide a narrative detailing the roles and responsibilities, qualifications and appropriate licenses that each position must have to be hired by the non-profit organization and effectively perform the job function(s).*

A.C.E. leaders will hire selected personnel to fill the following positions over the initial five year period of the schools operation to match the projected student enrollment. The roles, responsibilities, qualifications, and appropriate education and licenses for each position are outlined below.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: will manage and supervise the business operations of the school relieving the principal of administrative duties; must have a B.A. or B.S. degree with coursework in Business Administration or related discipline desired and minimum of five years of leadership experience.

PRINCIPAL: will supervise and observe all instructional practices which include professional development; must have a Masters degree in school/education administration and meet the required score on the North Carolina School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA) as well as exhibited management experience.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL: will assist in the development of the school's overall instructional program and provide direction to instructional staff; must have a Masters degree in education and appropriate licenses.

DEAN OF STUDENTS: will implement the school safety report, ensure that student conduct is maintained, and facilitate parent involvement; must have a Bachelors or graduate degree and leadership experience.

COMPLIANCE OFFICER: will maintain all data management for student and school reports including PowerSchools maintenance and reporting; must have a Bachelors degree required in related field.

PAYROLL/ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CLERK: will handle process payroll and invoices, enter accounts payable transactions into the accounting system, and ensure accuracy and timely reporting; must have an Associate degree in Accounting or a related field.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: will provide clerical assistance and welcome school's guest; must have a high school diploma or higher as well as demonstrate organizational and writing skills.

**GUIDANCE COUNSELOR:** will enhance A.C.E.'s mission by providing services that strengthen home, school, and community partnerships and alleviate barriers to learning; must hold a Masters degree and required state certification in school.

**TEACHERS:** will enrich their expertise in the subject area they will teach as well as develop lessons plans that ensure the attainment of state learning standards; must have a Bachelors degree in elementary or secondary education from a state-approved and accredited teacher education program, with appropriate Teacher Certification/License and demonstrate expertise in the subject to be taught.

**EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN TEACHERS:** will design instruction which parallels the general education curriculum as well as plan and implement academic programming to students with severe emotional and behavioral disabilities; must have exceptional children teaching certification.

**TEACHER ASSISTANT:** will deliver instructional services to students as well as aid a teacher or another professional; must have an Associates degree.

**RTI COORDINATOR:** will assist instructional staff in implementing research-based instructional practices that support student's development; must have a Bachelors degree in an educational related field and minimum of three years of teaching experience.

**IT SPECIALIST:** will collaborate with instructional staff to integrate technology and assist in hardware, software, and network infrastructure maintenance; must have a Bachelors degree in a related field and demonstrated technology proficiency.

**CONTRACTED PERSONNEL:** Personnel like speech therapist, psychologist, physical therapist, and occupational therapist will be contracted on an as-needed basis to provide preventive, assessment, and remediation services to meet students needs; must have state license and degrees in related fields as well as at least 2 years of experience. The Human Resources Manager will be contracted as well to handle operations related to recruitment, hiring, training, benefits, and employee relations; must have a Bachelors degree in Business or other similar degree and previous work experience in human resources.

**CUSTODIANS:** Responsible for routine cleaning and building maintenance; must have one year of custodial experience or any equivalent combination of experience and/or education.

### **Staff Evaluation and Professional Development**

1. *Identify the positions responsible for maintaining teacher licensure requirements and professional development.*

The Principal is the lead contact and is responsible for assuring staff meet teacher licensure requirements and professional development.

2. *Provide a detailed plan noting how the school will mentor, retain, and evaluate staff in a format that matches the school's mission, educational program, and meet the teacher certification and licensure requirements for teachers as prescribed by state law and No Child Left Behind. Be sure this overview matches with the projected staff and funding of the proposed budget section.*

A.C.E. Academy will attract and retain top-notch teachers. All new staff members will undergo an orientation that teaches school culture, mission,

and goals to ensure new staff members are assimilated in the A.C.E. family. A.C.E. Academy will design a retention and evaluation plan that consists of school-wide professional development which is structured around state and local data analysis as well as school-wide initiatives to improve teaching and learning.

Teachers with less than three years of teaching experience will participate in A.C.E.'s New Teacher Induction Program. The purposes and goals of A.C.E.'s New Teacher Induction Program are to: (1) increase student learning through a standardized teacher standards and professional practice; (2) assist beginning teachers with improving instructional skills; (3) provide individual needs assessment and professional coaching through mentoring with expert (experienced) teachers; and (4) build teacher confidence through constructive support, positive reinforcement and feedback. A.C.E.'s Principal will identify qualified mentors based on criteria established by a teacher-led design team; once identified, mentors are matched with new teachers. Together, the mentors and new teachers meet openly to reflect on professional practice, through discussion and dialogue on relevant instructional best practices strategies. Additionally, each teacher is required to maintain an Individual Development Plan (IDP) with the oversight of the Principal and school leadership. IDPs are based on the state of North Carolina's Professional Teaching Standards and includes a mid-year and year-end review.

A.C.E.'s teachers are evaluated to develop a plan for professional growth in accordance to the North Carolina Professional Teachers Standards. A.C.E.'s principal provide oversight for the teacher training and evaluation process. Teachers engage in the evaluation process through the use of self-assessment, reflection, classroom demonstration(s) and presentation of artifacts. Teachers are evaluated in accordance with North Carolina requirements as outlined in the teacher evaluation process. Administrators and teachers engage in applicable components of the teacher evaluation process. The Record of Teacher Evaluation Activities must be completed and maintained (in the personnel file) for all teachers.

A.C.E. Academy's principal is evaluated in relation to the North Carolina Standards for School Executives and to develop a plan for professional growth. The principal will participate in the evaluation process, guided by the Executive Director. The principal evaluation process focuses on the following: self-examination, goal-setting, professional development, and demonstration of performance on specific standards. All required evaluation worksheets, forms/documents will be completed, reviewed, signed and maintained in the personnel file.

- 3. Discuss the core components of professional development plan and how these components will support effective implementation of the educational program. Discuss the extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally and will be individualized or uniform.*

Teachers are expected to engage in professional development activities throughout the academic year as part of their Individual Development Plan. The trainings will occur each month wherein master teachers provide meaningful learning activities, lectures, make and take, etc., to support

impactful learning within the major domains. New teachers receive additional professional support through participation in the New Teacher Induction Program. In addition to participation in internal, school-wide professional development activities, teachers are also required to participate in specified external education conferences sponsored by the North Carolina Alliance and the North Carolina Public Charter Schools Association. Administrators and teachers will share best practices learned with colleagues through content/grade level meetings, with the focus on implementation of relevant/appropriate best practices to support the schools overall educational plan.

4. *Provide a schedule and explanation of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what will be covered during this induction period and how teachers will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods.*

Newly hired staff will engage in comprehensive orientation and induction activities prior to school opening or beginning their work assignments. Orientation activities are facilitated and shared between the Executive Director, Principal, Assistant Principal, Human Resources Manager, and Compliance Officer. All staff members will be hired before August 1, 2014; all orientation activities, as well as professional development trainings, will occur during the two weeks before the school's opening (the first day of school is August 25 and the trainings will occur August 11-15 and 18-22). Activities include but are not limited to the following:

- A. New Hire Orientation;
- B. Total Rewards (Review of Employee Benefits Programs);
- C. Introduction Understanding Your School Community and Work Culture;
- D. Significance of Common Core;
- E. Review of applicable North Carolina and school laws, policies and requirements;
- F. Performance Series Testing;
- G. PowerSchools (Student Information Management System)

A.C.E. Academy Administrators, Teachers, and Paraprofessionals will participate in the following professional development activities prior to school opening.

a) **Assisting Teachers With Classroom Management Discipline:** Teachers learn that organization in the classroom reduces discipline problems.

b) **Safer, Saner Schools:** Teachers learn core concepts of restorative practices that improve behavior and combine high levels of control and support to hold children accountable, engaged and empower families.

c) **Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Interventions for Challenging Students:** Staff learn how to implement Tier 2 interventions to help students with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges to decrease inappropriate behavior while increasing self-management skills.

d) **Crisis Team Training for Schools:** The training will address the four phases of emergency management; Prevention/Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery.

e) **Section 504 from Referral to Placement:** Staff will learn strategies for effectively managing issues involving evaluations, eligibility,



accommodation and due process.

f) Bully-Free School: Participants will learn how behavior-based initiatives, such as Positive Behavior Support and Peer Mediation can be an effective response to aggression and other bullying behaviors.

g) Diversity & Tolerance Education in Schools: Teaching tolerance in schools reduces the instances of hate crimes, racism, discrimination, and bigotry.

h) Internet Safety: Participants will learn how online issues are affecting children (cyber-bullying, sexting, online communication, predators, and social networking).

i) Entrepreneurship Education: Teachers will learn the connections between entrepreneurship and the concepts taught in all classes such as Interdependence, Communication, Identity, Cycle, Persuasion, Problem-Solving, Impact, Collaboration, Change, or Meaning.

j) Science and Common Core: Teachers will learn and practice a systematic approach to teaching science.

k) Mathematics and the Common Core: Teachers learn effective pedagogical practices in school; mathematical content knowledge and how students learn mathematics in support of RTI

l) Literacy and the Common Core: This program is designed to provide effective and efficient instructional strategies that will improve student outcomes related to core reading instruction.

m) Digital Writing and the Common Core: In this session participants will understand how to use digital literacy's to meet the Common Core State Standards. Participants will explore a variety of digital media including: Google Docs, Wikis Blogs, Storybid and more.

n) Writers Workshop Common Core Standards: This session will demonstrate techniques to establish a classroom culture which provides opportunities for students to make their narrative, argument and informational writing better each and every day.

5. Describe the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year, and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure accommodate this plan.

A.C.E. Academy provides 23 total (10 days before the schools opening and 13 days throughout the year starting in the month of September) professional development days. Professional development sessions will focus primarily on evaluative actions including but not limited to: evaluation of student achievement in meeting or exceeding grade level content expectations, utilization of technology to aide in effective classroom instruction, instructional delivery practices, and monitoring student progress through classroom activities and assessments. New teachers (with less than three years of teaching experience) are required to participate in three Saturday sessions focused on New Teacher Induction activities.

The school calendar has been built to ensure all teachers have the time and resources to participate in all professional development trainings by creating in-service days within the course of a normal school day (for example, if the school day is 7 hours, the professional development day is 7

hours). Additionally, job-embedded trainings including after school department and faculty meetings as well as common planning times will also be incorporated into the teachers daily schedules; this will allow for teachers to work collaboratively to provide challenging instruction as well as plan and coordinate with key stakeholders (parents, business partners, and community volunteers) to ensure greater integration of entrepreneurship. Typically, teachers independent efforts isolate them in their classrooms and rob schools of the rewards that stem from the collaboration aforementioned. Key partnerships among school staff, parents, business organizations, and community advocates will enrich teachers continual learning and student achievement.

### **Enrollment and Marketing:**

Reaching the full capacity for enrollment will be critical to obtain the necessary financial resources to keep your school viable and operating efficiently. In addition, it is required by law that charter schools provide equal access to all students. Read the charter school state statute regarding admissions GS 115C.238.29F(g) (1-7) carefully.

### **Marketing Plan**

*Marketing to potential students and parents is vital to the survival of a charter school. Provide a plan indicating how the school will market to potential students and parents in order to reasonably reflects the racial/ethnic and demographic composition of the district in which the charter school will be located or of the special population the school seeks to serve: (G.S.115C-238.29F(g)(5)).*

A.C.E. Academy has developed a comprehensive marketing plan that guides the Board in advertising the school's opening and enrollment availability within Cabarrus County and other surrounding counties. All marketing literature will be available and distributed in Spanish and other languages, as necessary. The community relations committee within A.C.E. Board of Directors will be responsible for the marketing plans and strategies. The committee will recruit volunteers to assist in all activities ongoing.

\* STARTING JULY 2013; A.C.E. will begin public relations strategies; the community relations committee will contact community centers, local sports leagues (football, baseball, basketball and soccer), head start preschools, shopping malls, supermarkets, churches, faith based organizations and neighborhoods associations to post advertisements and inform the community at large about the school opening and events. Additionally, posters will be placed in and around grocery stores, banks, restaurants, barber shops, beauty salons and coin-operated laundry facilities.

\* SEPTEMBER 2013 NOVEMBER 2013: A.C.E. Academy will mail Flyers/Post Cards/Brochure to households within a twenty-mile radius of the proposed school site (which may include surrounding counties) and all Cabarrus County residents; this will be continued annually, as needed.

\* SEPTEMBER 2013 THROUGH MARCH 2014: A.C.E. will conduct door to door solicitation through the distribution of flyers, pamphlets, t-shirts and other apparel, and promotional items in the community, neighborhoods, businesses, and subdivisions within the vicinity of the school; this will be continued annually, as needed.

\* SEPTEMBER 2013 AUGUST 2014: A.C.E. Academy will purchase internet ads that market to local residents and businesses. Additionally, A.C.E. Academy will develop an online presence through social media networking, and A.C.E.'s website will promote general information. A.C.E. Academy's Board will use local radio, TV, bus ads, newspapers and publications to inform the community and make public announcements about the school. A.C.E. Academy will have representatives attend educational conferences both to promote the school in general as well as serve as a vehicle to attract new staff members.

\* DECEMBER 2013 JULY 2014: Staff recruitment will begin and continue as needed. A.C.E. Academy will be present at education job fairs to attract highly qualified teachers and college job fairs to recruit potential staff members. A.C.E. Academy will collaborate with Teach 4 America and Teach Now Charlotte to recruit and solicit instructors. A.C.E. Academy will develop a strategic referral process to attract current teachers, with the use of online job sites, classified ads, local staffing agencies, and Employment Security Commission.

\* FEBRUARY 2014 MAY 2014: A.C.E. Academy will place billboard ads on major highways and parkways that surround the school.

\* MARCH 2014: Informational Sessions will begin and continue annually for parents to learn about the educational focus, school culture, A.C.E. Academy's mission, and enrollment procedures. Informational Sessions will be strategically held throughout Cabarrus County at local libraries, churches, and community organizations. Parents will have the opportunity to meet staff, board members and have questions or concerns answered.

\* JULY 2014: Open Houses will begin and continue annually. Parents that have attended an informational session and want further specific information on A.C.E. Academy can schedule a personalized tour that allows parents and children to visit and familiarize themselves with the school facility and staff. This will give parents an opportunity to make a well informed decision in selecting A.C.E. Academy.

### **Parent and Community Involvement**

- 1. Describe how you will communicate with and engage parents and community members from the time that the school is approved through opening.*
- 2. Describe how you will engage parents in the life of the public charter school. Explain the plan for building engaging partnerships between the family and school that strengthen support for student learning.*

1. A.C.E Academy supports the vision, mission, and goals through its commitment to maintain multiple lines of communication with its stakeholders. A.C.E. Academy strives to inform stakeholders of the successes and challenges of the school's students, staff, programs and budgets as well as gather input and feedback. A variety of strategies are implemented to garner input and inform stakeholders. Websites, blogs, email blasts, e-newsletters, television and radio broadcasts from the time that the school is approved through opening reinforce the commitment to build strong relationships with all stakeholders groups.

2. A.C.E. Academy is based on a stakeholder empowerment model that immerses students, parents, and teachers in the decision-making process which enables

them to make choices and generate discussion that directly informs leadership decisions at the local level. A.C.E. will develop a Parent Association to engage families in school planning, leadership and meaningful volunteer opportunities. A.C.E. Academy will offer parents, student government and community members the opportunity to be actively involved in instructional activities, review pertinent data and engage in school improvement projects.

The school will serve as a community center where an after-school program and Parent University will take place. A.C.E. Academy's after-school program will be an extension of the schools learning model and include academic, enrichment, and athletic activities. Parents will be charged a minimal cost to cover after school expenses (instructors, snacks, instructional supplies, etc.). The Parent University is an innovative program that provides life skill and job training workshops, GED support groups, End of Grades Testing assistance, book clubs, sessions on Title I and Special Education programs, college information, and other offerings. The Parent University will be held at the school in comfortable community-gathering spaces equipped with multiple computers, phones, sofas, small libraries, play areas for children, checkout academic tool kits and more.

A.C.E. Academy will give parents access to PowerSchool, an online communication tool that provides parents and students with real-time information on grades, attendance, homework, scores, teacher comments, projects, assessment dates, academic progress, and school bulletins. Parents and students can view comprehensive academic and behavioral information through their mobile devices such as the iPhone, IPAD and Android operating system devices.

A.C.E. Academy has also established relationships with key business and community organizations that will support family development and student learning. A.C.E. Academy is partnering with the following organizations (see Appendix R, Exhibit 5 which contain letters detailing each partnership):

(1) JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT programs expose students to real-world learning through the latest technology with a personal finance curriculum that has sequential themes designed for elementary and middle school students that teaches saving, investing, spending, earning a paycheck, taxes, budgeting, debt and interest, careers and more.

(2) MISS EBONY SCHOOL OF ETIQUETTE INC. will provide character educational programs that focus on communication, etiquette, feelings, and attitude.

(3) TARA DAVIS (owner of Flow Designs & Apparel) and professor at Johnson & Wales University will teach students business finance, retail industry, fashion designs, apparel quality, textiles, fashion merchandising and fashion marketing.

(4) GENERATION NATION teaches civic, government, democracy and leadership through real world applications.

(5) MOSAIC COMMUNICATIONS is a public relations firm that will teach students about careers in broadcasting, media, news and public relations. Students will learn how to create press releases, how the news business is conducted, and how to market their business products through the media.

## **Admissions Policy**

Provide the school's proposed policies and the procedures for admitting students to the proposed charter school, including:

1. *Tentative dates for application period; enrollment deadlines and procedures.*
2. *Clear policies and procedures detailing the open enrollment lottery plan including policies regarding statutory permitted student enrollment preferences.*
3. *Policies and procedures for student waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers.*
4. *Explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities (if any) for students or parents.*
5. *Clear policies and procedures for student withdraws and transfers.*

Upon final approval, A.C.E. will begin the enrollment process (January 2014-August 2014). If applications received exceed offered seats in any grade level, a random selection process (lottery) will take place for all grade levels including under-subscribed grade levels or grade levels with offered seats available. A.C.E. will maintain a waiting list for any students not admitted due to unavailability including transfer students. If applications received are fewer than offered seats in a grade level, all eligible applicants will be accepted and a lottery will not be conducted. Applications for the subsequent school year will be accepted during the Open Enrollment Period (which begins the first day of school and ends the last day of October in the current school year). Open enrollment notices and application process details will be publicized within the community. Students from Cabarrus or any other counties may enroll in A.C.E. and will not be denied based on academic performance, special needs, gender, race, creed, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

A.C.E. Academy public lottery plan consists of six steps. (1) Applicants will be given a unique identification number. (2) Openings in each grade will be filled by randomly drawing numbers from a hopper. (3) After filling all the openings, an official document for waiting lists for each grade will be prepared. (4) Lottery winners will be informed via mail and/or phone call within a week and will be required to register to the school before a deadline that will be scheduled about a month after the lottery. (5) Any openings will be filled by the applicants from the waiting list within the following three weeks after the lottery winners registration deadline. Openings after that time will be filled on a first come, first served basis. (6) The deadlines for the application, lottery, and registration will be determined and announced on the school website every year in the end of the second trimester. Students may enroll without the lottery through the following exemptions: students already enrolled in the school; siblings of current A.C.E. students; children of A.C.E. faculty and staff (their number should not exceed the number of available spots for a given grade; and children of A.C.E.'s Board (in the first year of the school). Any parent or guardian who wishes to appeal any aspect of the lottery process may do so in writing to the Board.

Applications received after the Open Enrollment Period will be added to the end of the waiting list for the appropriate grade in the order in which they were received. When a seat becomes available in a particular grade due to attrition or another event, if that particular grade has a waiting list, that available seat will be filled by the first student on the list. If a waiting list does not exist for that particular grade, but exists for

another grade, the school may (subject to applicable enrollment limits and Board approved offered seats) fill the available seat using the first student on the waiting list in a different grade, the grade deemed most beneficial to student and school considering class size, teacher capacity, and other school operational factors. Students currently attending A.C.E. will have the opportunity to re-enroll for the next school year by accurately completing and returning the required Student Re-Enrollment Form by the deadline provided.

Students that withdraw from A.C.E. must report to the Administrative Assistant with their parents in person three days prior to leaving. After verification from the students counselor, the student will report to the records office to receive the appropriate withdrawal form. Students must return all textbooks, pay all debts, obtain the required signatures, and return the completed form to the records office before the withdrawal process is complete. A.C.E. has no plans for pre-admission.

**PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2014-15 through 2018-2019**

IDENTIFY LEA FROM WHICH STUDENTS WILL PROBABLY COME

LEA #1 Cabarrus County Schools  
 LEA #2 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools  
 LEA #3

In the following tables, please list for each year and grade level, the numbers of students that the school reasonably expects to enroll. In addition, please indicate any plans to increase the grade levels offered by the school over time and be sure these figures match those on the initial cover page.

	2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019		
	LEA 130	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 130	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 130	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 130	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 130	LEA 600	LEA 000
Kindergarten	24	16		24	16		24	16		24	16		24	16	
Grade 01	24	16		24	16		24	16		24	16		24	16	
Grade 02	24	16		24	16		24	16		24	16		24	16	
Grade 03	36	24		30	20		30	20		30	20		30	20	
Grade 04	36	24		36	24		30	20		30	20		36	24	
Grade 05	36	24		36	24		36	24		30	20		36	24	
Grade 06	0	0		36	24		36	24		36	24		42	28	
Grade 07	0	0		0	0		36	24		36	24		42	28	
Grade 08	0	0		0	0		0	0		36	24		42	28	
	180	120		210	140		240	160		270	180		300	200	
	300			350			400			450			500		

### **Transportation Plan:**

*Describe in detail the transportation plan that will ensure that no child is denied access to the school due to lack of transportation. The details of this plan should align with the Mission, identified need for the charter school, targeted student population, and the budget proposal.*

As provided for in NCGS 115C-238.29F(h), charter schools are not required, but encouraged to provide transportation for students enrolled at the school. Surveys conducted by A.C.E. Academy revealed that transportation can be a barrier to economically disadvantaged parents and a major component for students' attendance and performance. As an identified need for A.C.E. Academy, the Board will ensure that transportation will not be a barrier or deny any child access to the school.

To that end, A.C.E. Academy will contract with a local transportation company, Eagle Bus Service, to provide NC Department of Transportation approved transportation that will convey students from safe, accessible, and convenient pick-up points. A.C.E. Academy will designate a staff to coordinate and facilitate the smooth operation of this arrangement with the local transportation company.

Parents/guardians will have the opportunity to request transportation. Once students are registered and all transportation requests are submitted, specific routes will be determined by the transportation company based on seat availability and route patterns. Although precise travel time cannot be determined without the student home locations, it is strongly encouraged to limit the travel time to not more than 1 hour one way. Once routes are determined, students will be assigned bus stop locations, drop off times and seat assignments on the bus. Each bus holds at least 40 students and will not exceed 60; the exact number of students on a bus is contingent on the route pattern.

A.C.E. Academy will also help organize carpool groups with parents from close neighborhoods. The Board will work diligently so that the school is open and accessible to all students, including low-income students, exceptional students and students experiencing homelessness.

### **School Lunch Plan:**

*Describe in detail the school lunch plan that will ensure that no child is lacking a daily meal. The details of this plan should align with the targeted student population and school budget proposal.*

Good nutrition is a key component of any successful school especially in a community with limited resources. Nutritional support will be a cornerstone of the full-service model proposed which is why A.C.E. has allocated \$10,000-\$30,000 annually in the first five years to cover the costs of food services.

A.C.E. understands that partnerships are necessary to provide high quality, affordable healthy foods for all students regardless of race, economic status, sex, age, or disability. Upon final approval, A.C.E. will apply for Child Nutrition Programs through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and will



continue to investigate various programs and resources to offset the cost of running a school food services program. This will allow for A.C.E. to serve meals free or at a reduced price to qualifying students as well as at a reasonable price for paying students. A.C.E. school meals will offer students whole grains, low fat and fat free milk options, fruits and vegetables, and lean protein that are nutritionally sound and kid-friendly.

A.C.E. Academy will fully participate in and comply with the federal nutritional program. A.C.E. agrees to: (a) keep the names of children eligible to receive free or reduced price meals from being distributed, published, posted, or announced in any manner, with no overt identification of the eligible children by use of special tokens, tickets, identification numbers or any other means; (b) develop and send to each student's parent or guardian a letter which includes a household application for free or reduced price meals at the beginning of each school year. Parents will be responsible for completing a household application and returning it to the school; and (c) allow certification of a foster child for free meals, without application according to Public Law 111-296. If an application is denied, parents or guardians will be provided written notification which shall include clear explanations for the denial and appeal procedures.

**Civil Liability and Insurance (GS 115C-238.29F(c)):**

The Charter School shall obtain and maintain insurance at a minimum in the following amounts:

1. Errors and omissions: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per claim;
2. General liability: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence;
3. Boiler and machinery: the replacement cost of the building;
4. Real and personal property: the appraised value of the building and contents;
5. Fidelity bonds: no less than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) to cover employee dishonesty;
6. Automobile liability: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence; and
7. Workers' compensation: as specified by Chapter 97 of the General Statutes.

Area of proposed coverage	Proposed amount of coverage		Cost (Quote)
Comprehensive General Liability	\$1,000,000		\$2,438.00
Officers and Directors/Errors and Omissions	\$1,000,000		\$2,438.00
Property Insurance	\$995,670		\$6,970.00
Motor Vehicle Liability	\$1,000,000		\$181.00
Bonding Minimum/Maximum Amount	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$332.00
Other	\$2,629,000		\$10,974.00
Total Cost			\$23,333.00

\*The applicant must provide a quote from an insurance provider as part of this application (as Appendix M) to demonstrate the levels of insurance coverage and projected cost.

**Health and Safety Requirements:**

All public charter schools are required to follow the regulations regarding health and safety as stated in § 115C238.29F (a).

We, the Board members at (Charter School Name) will develop a written safety plan and policies to be shared with staff, parents and students and be available upon inspection from the Department of Public Instruction and local Health Departments.

slconsultants04

02/26/2013

(Board Chair Signature)

(Date)

**Facility:**

*Note that the SBE may approve a charter school prior to the school's obtaining a facility; however, students may not attend school and no funds will be allocated until the school has obtained a valid Certificate of Occupancy for Educational use to the Office of Charter Schools.*

*What is your plan to obtain a building? Identify the steps that the board will take to acquire a facility and obtain the Educational Certificate of Occupancy. If a facility has been identified please fill out the Facility Form (Appendix N).*

Carolina International School (CIS), the only charter school operating in the Cabarrus County School District, is moving to a new site approximately 10 miles from its current site at the end of the 2013-2014 school year due to a school expansion. The Board has entered negotiations to take over that location for A.C.E. Academy which will open in August of 2014. Currently, CIS has an Educational Certificate of Occupancy that verifies the school facility is in compliance with the North Carolina Building Codes for fire, health, and safety. After moving into the facility, A.C.E. officials will maintain routine safety, health, and fire inspection records which will be conducted by local health and fire departments. Additionally, A.C.E. will ensure an adequate environment is provided to support the schools mission and the safety of staff and students. School leadership will conduct fire, emergency lock-down, and inclement weather drills at least twice in the first month of the school and once each month throughout the year. Evacuation routes will be posted in each room, as well.

A.C.E.'s Board has visited the potential school site and communicated plans with CIS's Board. Additionally, A.C.E. has used the potential site and facilities in planning for the school's logistical operations (i.e. enrollment plans, transportation, school meals, student to teacher ratios, and grade structure); however, the Board has developed a contingency plan (see below) to ensure the school's successful opening in August 2014.

**Facility Contingency Plan:** *Describe the method of finding a facility if the one the board has identified will not be ready by the time the public charter school will be opening. Include information regarding the immediate spatial needs of the school and identify any programs that will not be immediately offered because a permanent facility has yet to open.*

While the Board is confident negotiations to assume the property currently occupied by Carolina International Academy will be successful, it is concurrently working with a local real estate development team (which includes a commercial real estate agent, architectural firm, and general contractor who all specialize in charter school real estate development) that has located two other backup locations and is looking for more. A.C.E.'s Board (with the help of the real estate development team listed above) has identified other potential facilities for rent or lease and new construction sites. All locations we are considering meets the needs of our

complete educational plan.

A.C.E. Board also consulted with the architectural firm to develop a layout (with square footage breakdown) that matches the school's facility and spatial needs with potential existing and new construction locations. The team has determined that the school will need between 25,000 to 46,000 square feet in the first year of operation. This determination matches (and in many cases, exceeds) the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's minimum requirements and standards. Upon final approval, the Board plans to secure the school's location by March 2014 to ensure adequate planning and operational goals are met.

## V. FINANCIAL PLAN

In the following sections present a detailed description of assumptions and revenue estimates, including but not limited to the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs. The narrative should specifically address the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income.

### **Budget: Revenue Projections from each LEA 2014-15**

**SHOW  
CALCULATIONS  
FOR FIGURING  
STATE  
AND LOCAL  
DOLLARS  
FOR THE  
PROPOSED  
CHARTER  
SCHOOL**

*The formula for figuring these allotments can be found in the Resource Manual Finance Section.*

See Charter School Dollars per ADM on the following link for per pupil allotments by county.

<http://dpi.state.nc.us/fbs/allotments/support/>

- All per pupil amounts are from the 2012-2013 year and would be approximations for 2014-2015.
- Federal funding is based upon the number of students enrolled who qualify. The applicant should use caution when relying on federal funding in year one to meet budgetary goals.
- These revenue projection figures do NOT guarantee the charter school would receive this amount of funding in 2014-2015. For local funding amounts, applicants will need to contact their local offices or LEA.

#### LEA #1130 - Cabarrus County Schools

Revenue	2012-2013 Per Pupil Funding	Projected LEA ADM	Approximate funding for 2014-2015
State Funds	\$4,316.93	180	\$777,047.40
Local Funds	\$1,598.54	180	\$287,737.20
Federal EC Funds	\$3,743.48	15	\$56,152.20
<b>Totals</b>			\$1,120,936.80

#### LEA #2600 - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Revenue	2012-2013 Per Pupil Funding	Projected LEA ADM	Approximate funding for 2014-2015
State Funds	\$4,438.40	120	\$532,608.00
Local Funds	\$2,262.96	120	\$271,555.20
Federal EC Funds	\$3,743.48	10	\$37,434.80
<b>Totals</b>			\$841,598.00

**Total Budget: Revenue Projections 2014-15 through 2018-2019**

<b>INCOME: REVENUE PROJECTIONS</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
-Exceptional Children Federal Funds	\$93,587	\$104,817	\$119,791	\$134,765	\$149,739
-Local Per Pupil Funds	\$559,292	\$652,508	\$745,723	\$838,939	\$932,154
-Other Funds*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
-State ADM Funds	\$1,309,655	\$1,527,931	\$1,746,207	\$1,964,483	\$2,182,759
-Working Capital*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	\$1,962,534	\$2,285,257	\$2,611,722	\$2,938,187	\$3,264,652

**\*If the applicant is depending on other funding sources or working capital to balance the operating budget, please provide documentation such as signed statements from donors, foundations, bank statements, etc., on the availability of these funds.**

**Assurances are needed to guarantee these additional sources of revenue are available. Please include these as Appendix P.**

**Personnel Budget: Expenditure Projections 2014-15 through 2018-2019**

This Personnel list may be amended to meet the needs of the charter school: This list should align with the projected staff located in the Operations Plan (Appendix K).

BUDGET EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS Personnel	2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019		
	# Staff	Salary per	Total salary	# Staff	Salary per	Total salary	# Staff	Salary per	Total salary	# Staff	Salary per	Total salary	# Staff	Salary per	Total salary
<b>Personnel:</b>															
Executive Director	1	\$60,000	\$60,000	1	\$61,800	\$61,800	1	\$63,654	\$63,654	1	\$65,564	\$65,564	1	\$67,531	\$67,531
School Principal	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	1	\$51,500	\$51,500	1	\$53,045	\$53,045	1	\$54,636	\$54,636	1	\$56,275	\$56,275
Assistant Principal	0	\$0	\$0	1	\$42,000	\$42,000	1	\$43,260	\$43,260	1	\$44,558	\$44,558	1	\$45,895	\$45,895
Dean Of Students	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	1	\$38,000	\$38,000	1	\$39,140	\$39,140	1	\$40,314	\$40,314
Compliance Officer	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	1	\$41,200	\$41,200	1	\$42,436	\$42,436	1	\$43,709	\$43,709	1	\$45,020	\$45,020
Administrative Assistant	1	\$28,000	\$28,000	1	\$28,840	\$28,840	1	\$29,705	\$29,705	1	\$30,596	\$30,596	1	\$31,514	\$31,514
Administrative Assistant - 3rd Year	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	1	\$28,000	\$28,000	1	\$28,840	\$28,840	1	\$29,705	\$29,705
Guidance Counselor	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	1	\$38,000	\$38,000
Core Content Teacher(S) - 1st Year	18	\$34,000	\$612,000	18	\$35,020	\$630,360	18	\$36,071	\$649,278	18	\$37,153	\$668,754	18	\$38,267	\$688,806
Core Content Teacher(S) - 2nd Year	0	\$0	\$0	3	\$34,000	\$102,000	3	\$35,020	\$105,060	3	\$36,071	\$108,213	3	\$37,153	\$111,459
Core Content Teacher(S) - 3rd Year	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	3	\$34,000	\$102,000	3	\$35,020	\$105,060	3	\$36,071	\$108,213
Electives/Specialty Teacher(s)	3	\$34,000	\$102,000	3	\$35,020	\$105,060	3	\$36,071	\$108,213	3	\$37,153	\$111,459	3	\$38,267	\$114,801
Electives/Specialty Teachers - 3rd Year	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	3	\$34,000	\$102,000	3	\$35,020	\$105,060	3	\$36,071	\$108,213
Exceptional Children Teacher(s)	1.5	\$38,000	\$57,000	2	\$39,140	\$78,280	2	\$40,314	\$80,628	2	\$41,524	\$83,048	2	\$42,769	\$85,538
Para Educator(s)	3	\$18,000	\$54,000	3	\$18,540	\$55,620	3	\$19,096	\$57,288	3	\$19,669	\$59,007	3	\$20,259	\$60,777
Rti Coordinator	1	\$35,000	\$35,000	1	\$36,050	\$36,050	1	\$37,132	\$37,132	1	\$38,245	\$38,245	1	\$39,393	\$39,393
Rti Teacher	1	\$32,000	\$32,000	1	\$32,960	\$32,960	1	\$33,949	\$33,949	1	\$34,967	\$34,967	1	\$36,016	\$36,016
It Specialist	1	\$30,000	\$30,000	1	\$30,900	\$30,900	1	\$31,827	\$31,827	1	\$32,782	\$32,782	1	\$33,765	\$33,765
Payroll/Ap Clerk	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	1	\$20,600	\$20,600	1	\$21,218	\$21,218	1	\$21,855	\$21,855	1	\$22,510	\$22,510

A.C.E. Academy

Contracted Personnel - Psychologist	.5	\$20,000	\$10,000	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	1	\$20,000	\$20,000
Contracted Personnel - Speech Therapist	.5	\$25,000	\$12,500	1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1	\$25,000	\$25,000
Contracted Personnel - Social Worker	.5	\$25,000	\$12,500	1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1	\$25,000	\$25,000
Contracted Personnel - Custodian	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	1.5	\$20,000	\$30,000	2	\$20,000	\$40,000	2	\$20,000	\$40,000	2	\$20,000	\$40,000
Contracted Personnel - Hr Manager	1	\$22,000	\$22,000	1	\$22,000	\$22,000	1	\$22,000	\$22,000	1	\$22,000	\$22,000	1	\$22,000	\$22,000
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>\$531,000</b>	<b>\$1,197,000</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>\$619,570</b>	<b>\$1,439,170</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>\$768,798</b>	<b>\$1,758,693</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>\$788,502</b>	<b>\$1,807,493</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>\$846,795</b>	<b>\$1,895,745</b>
<b>Benefits:</b>															
	<i># Staff</i>	<i>Cost Per</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i># Staff</i>	<i>Cost Per</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i># Staff</i>	<i>Cost Per</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i># Staff</i>	<i>Cost Per</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i># Staff</i>	<i>Cost Per</i>	<i>Total</i>
Health Insurance	33.5	\$3,600	\$120,600	38	\$3,780	\$143,640	46	\$3,969	\$182,574	46	\$4,167	\$191,682	47	\$4,376	\$205,672
Life Insurance & Short Term Disability	33.5	\$120	\$4,020	38	\$126	\$4,788	46	\$132	\$6,072	46	\$139	\$6,394	47	\$146	\$6,862
Medicare & Social Security	33.5	\$2,762	\$92,527	38	\$2,855	\$108,490	46	\$2,919	\$134,274	46	\$3,007	\$138,322	47	\$3,092	\$145,324
Retirement Plan	33.5	\$722	\$24,187	38	\$746	\$28,348	46	\$763	\$35,098	46	\$786	\$36,156	47	\$810	\$38,070
<b>Total Benefits</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>\$7,204</b>	<b>\$241,334</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>\$7,507</b>	<b>\$285,266</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>\$7,783</b>	<b>\$358,018</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>\$8,099</b>	<b>\$372,554</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>\$8,424</b>	<b>\$395,928</b>
<b>Total Personnel Budget</b>															
	<b>171</b>	<b>\$538,204</b>	<b>\$1,438,334</b>	<b>195.5</b>	<b>\$627,077</b>	<b>\$1,724,436</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>\$776,581</b>	<b>\$2,116,711</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>\$796,601</b>	<b>\$2,180,047</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>\$855,219</b>	<b>\$2,291,673</b>

**\*Applicants may amend this table and the position titles to fit their Education and Operations Plans.**

**Operations Budget: Expenditure Projections 2014-15 through 2018-2019**

<b>BUDGET OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS</b>		<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
Books and Supplies	Copy Paper	\$6,500	\$7,150	\$7,865	\$8,652	\$9,517
	Curriculum/Texts	\$35,500	\$17,500	\$17,500	\$25,500	\$25,500
	Instructional Materials	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
	School Supplies	\$6,000	\$6,500	\$6,500	\$6,500	\$6,500
	Testing Supplies	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$21,855	\$21,855
Human Resources Costs	Criminal Investigation/Fingerprinting	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
	Legal Counsel	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
	NC Wise	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
	Other	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
	Professional Development	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Other	Contingency Fund	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Food Plan	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000
	Insurances	\$23,333	\$23,333	\$23,333	\$23,333	\$23,333
	Marketing Plan	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Transportation Plan	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$14,000
	Travel Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Rents And Debt Services	Furniture	\$40,000	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Rents and Debt Services	Custodial Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Extermination	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Facility Lease/Mortgage	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000
	Maintenance	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Rent of Equipment	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
	Security/Alarm	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
Technology Technology Hardware	Hardware	\$35,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$40,000	\$50,000
	Instructional Software	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Network/Internet	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Office Software	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Utilities	Electric	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
	Energy	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
	Phone	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
	Water/Sewer/Trash	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>Total Operations</b>		<b>\$503,333</b>	<b>\$481,483</b>	<b>\$462,198</b>	<b>\$507,840</b>	<b>\$523,705</b>

**\*Applicants may amend this table and the position titles to fit their Education and Operations Plans.**



**Overall Budget:**

<b>BUDGET OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES (PERSONNEL)	\$1,438,334	\$1,724,436	\$2,116,711	\$2,180,047	\$2,291,673
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (OPERATIONS)	\$503,333	\$481,483	\$462,198	\$507,840	\$523,705
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$1,941,667	\$2,205,919	\$2,578,909	\$2,687,887	\$2,815,378
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,962,534	\$2,285,257	\$2,611,722	\$2,938,187	\$3,264,652
ANNUAL NET PROJECTIONS	\$20,867	\$79,338	\$32,813	\$250,300	\$449,274

**Budget Narrative:** (No more than one and a half pages)

Please include additional information that showcases all assumptions for your budgetary calculations.

- Describe the budgetary projections and explain the analysis utilized to project these specific enrollment figures. If your budget projections are lower than anticipated, how will the school adjust this budget and what is the determined break-even point for student enrollment?*

A.C.E.'s Board has developed a \$1.9 million budget to operate the school in year one based on an enrollment of 300 K-5 grade students. This amount will cover all personnel expenses which include: a leadership team; 23.5 teachers; 3 para professionals; 1 RTI Coordinator, IT Specialist, and Payroll/AP Clerk; and contract support personnel including 1 custodian (they will not be offered benefits). Operational expenses include instructional materials, assessment tools, technology and hardware, software, facility costs, and utilities.

A.C.E.'s projected student enrollment (300) is 1% of the 11-12 Cabarrus County ADM (CCSD, 2012). Additionally, the enrollment projections were based on three factors: (1) Carolina International School (CIS) is moving to a new facility approximately ten miles away, further than their majority student population; displacing approximately 20-30% of the current student enrollment. Those students along with over 150 students currently on CIS's waiting list should generate about 65% of ACE's projected enrollment. Although A.C.E.'s Board is confident in successful negotiations with CIS's Board of Directors, the Board has conducted research in other locations within the county to ensure enrollment projections are met. Charlotte Observer reports that there are around 8,000 students on charter waiting lists in Cabarrus County alone (April 14, 2012). (2) Mike Minter, a retired Carolina Panther football player and A.C.E. Board Member, has conducted several athletic and enrichment camps for youth throughout the county. His notoriety and community service has allowed him to become a respected figure and will assist in marketing and driving students to A.C.E. Additionally, Shawn Smalls, Laila Minott, and Shannon Martin (A.C.E. Board Members) have previously provided educational services with Minter throughout CCSD. Jointly, they have served over 1,000 families. Through their community service, they have established relationships with families that support the school and plan to enroll their students. (3) Our small class sizes and innovative academic approach (which integrates entrepreneurship) will entice new enrollees while offering an additional public school choice.

The student allocations for Cabarrus and Mecklenburg Counties are also conservative. CIS reports that about 60% of their students are from Mecklenburg County and 40% are from Cabarrus County. Our budget flipped the allocations because Mecklenburg has higher per pupil allocations than does

Cabarrus; if the LEA allocations are closer to the current CIS allocations, A.C.E. will have more revenue. If budget projections fall below expectations, A.C.E.'s Board will adjust staff and variable overhead to maintain budget solvency. The determined break-even point for student enrollment is 295 (5 students less than the student enrollment at the lowest ADM) for the 2014-2015 school year which is calculated by adding the contingency fund and the annual net projection.

- 2. Describe the systems and processes by which the school will manage accounting, purchasing, payroll, and audits. Specify any administrative services expected to be contracted for the school, and describe the criteria and procedures for the selection of contractors*

To ensure A.C.E.'s financial success, A.C.E. Executive Director, with assistance of the Payroll/Accounts Payable Clerk will maintain and coordinate all financial transactions which include purchasing, revenue activities, expenditures, record keeping, auditing and direct billing. The Payroll/Accounts Payable Clerk will process all payroll transactions into an accounting software system to ensure all employees and contractors are paid accurately and timely. Payroll and compensation will be rendered on a biweekly basis every other Friday.

A.C.E. will contract with Davis and Davis, CPA to meet accounting and auditing needs, however, the Board reserves the right to enter an agreement with another state approved financial vendor. Additionally, A.C.E. will contract with a HR Manager that will provide support in recruitment, hiring, separation/termination, professional development, and benefits policies and procedures. A.C.E. will contract with a Social Worker, Psychologist, and Speech Therapist that will provide preventive, assessment, remediation, and intervention services.

As our student population increases, we have allocated additional funds to support additional contracted staff. A.C.E. has incorporated contracted personnel to provide the necessary expertise and as a cost cutting method (contractors will not be offered benefits). All contractors must be approved by the Board. Any bids for services will only be awarded after receiving a minimum of three Requests for Proposals from authorized vendors.

- 3. Explain how the spending priorities align with the school's mission, curricular offerings, transportation plans, and professional development needs. Be able to depict in chart format and discuss in a narrative how the school will maintain a small, contingency reserve and operate using sound fiscal practices. As you construct the budget, include any and all documentation about cash on hand, bonds, real estate, or grants as part of this application package.*

A.C.E. Academy's spending priorities align with the mission and curricular offerings because it projects that instructional salaries, instructional materials, and technology comprise approximately 80% percent of the budget. Only about 20% of the budget would be spent on rent, utilities, security, and other activities.

A.C.E. has incorporated a contingency fund of \$10,000 for each of the first five years and developed annual net projections in the following amounts:

Year 1	2014-2015	\$20,867.00
Year 2	2015-2016	\$79,338.00
Year 3	2016-2017	\$32,813.00
Year 4	2017-2018	\$250,300.00
Year 5	2018-2019	\$449,274.00

A.C.E. Board is dedicated to responsibly managing the schools resources to

ensure fiscal responsibility and build public trust. Board Members Smalls, Minott, and Martin have business operational and professional experience in educating 5,000 plus students through the use of Title I programs and have collectively procured over \$1 million in federal funds. With limited cash flow, they have been responsible for hiring and screening staff; marketing and recruiting students for programs; contract management; grant writing; community collaborations; federal programming and compliance; and providing instructional professional development.

A.C.E.s Board Chair, Adolphe Thorpe, owns an HR Block tax service and bring extensive management, finance, payroll, and accounting to A.C.E. Academy. Other board members: (1) Ofelia Amador has worked for several large banking institutions and brings expertise in financial operations as it relates to Small Business Association Loans, credit, capital and retirement. (2) David Hands specializes in legal counsel and family law. (3) Lauren Baptiste is a retired teacher with experience in teaching ELL students and nutritional services. (4) Christina Kirk, Dawn Hammond, and Cameo Goodwin are homemakers with various workforce experiences. As residents of Cabarrus County, they all understand the need for additional public school choice and will be instrumental in informing the community and families of A.C.E.s mission and goals. (5) Mike Minter has been a community leader in Cabarrus County and will aid in developing sponsorships, fundraising and philanthropic opportunities for A.C.E. Academy. All of A.C.E.s Board Members bring unique skills and attributes to the school and will assist in ensuring A.C.E. is fiscally sound and sustainable.

- 4. Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include evidence of commitment for any funds on which the school's core operation depends.*

The projected budget is based on state, local, and federal EC allotment. The school does not have cash at bank or on hand, real estate, bonds and securities or grants as part of this application package. However, several board members are donating resources to support the schools implementation and development. Resources include but not limited to in kind labor regarding grant writing, fund raising, marketing and recruitment of staff and students. Additionally, A.C.E. has procured free public meeting space for all board meetings, community meetings and staff interviews. Upon approval, A.C.E.s Board will cover immediate communication expenses that include website design, telecommunications, and office supplies.

- 5. Discuss the school's contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated. What is the school's break-even student enrollment figure for each of the first five years?*

In year one, A.C.E. has an annual net projection in the amount of \$20,867.00 and has budgeted \$10,000.00 in the contingency fund. If anticipated revenues are less than expected, expenses will be adjusted accordingly. A.C.E. will offer all potential staff members a conditional employment contract to ensure final hiring and selection are based on actual enrollment numbers. If we have not met our targeted enrollment number by July 1, 2014, we will not proceed in hiring as many staff members as anticipated.

Break-even figures of the proposed budget:

Year 1: 295 Projecting to enroll 300 students

Year 2: 336 Projecting to enroll 350 students  
Year 3: 393 Projecting to enroll 400 students  
Year 4: 406 Projecting to enroll 450 students  
Year 5: 423 Projecting to enroll 500 students

*6. Year one cash flow contingency, in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening.*

A.C.E. Board members are committed to providing in kind funds and resources in the months prior to the schools opening (Reference question 4 within the Budget Narrative subsection for a detail description). A.C.E. will begin to conduct fundraising events once the 501-c3 status is confirmed. Additionally, the Board will also be applying for a number of grants, loans, and other funding sources, (i.e. American Charter Development, Charter Schools Development Corporation, JP Morgan Chase and Ziegler Investment Banking) that provide facility financing, access to capital, loans in the advance of opening.

The Board has researched and is in the process of setting up accounts with companies that will allow extended invoicing and leasing in order to procure and obtain operational tools and equipment.

**Financial Audits:** (No more than a half of a page)

*Describe the procedure and method for conducting an independent financial audit for the proposed charter school.*

A.C.E. Academy will adhere to the auditing and reporting procedures and requirements that are applied to public schools operating in North Carolina. A.C.E. Academics Board of Directors will interview a minimum of three auditing firms before selecting the financial auditor. The Board of Directors will select and contract with a licensed North Carolina CPA to conduct the annual audit of the schools financial records, including the balance sheet, cash flow, and income statements. The audit will be included in the School Annual Report. The audit will be conducted in a timely manner as required by the North Carolina Local Government Commission and will demonstrate compliance with North Carolina law for a non-profit corporation.

*Provide the name and contact information of the firm approved by the NC Local Government Commission (LGC) that will conduct the audit. If a firm has yet to be identified please list the firms the board has investigated.*

Name: Davis and Davis, CPA  
Address: 115 S. St. Marys St., Suite A, Raleigh, NC  
Phone Number: 919-730-7376  
Fax Number: 248-487-2525

**VI. AGREEMENT PAGE**

**LEA Impact Statement:**

Pursuant to G.S. 115C-238.29B(d), the charter school applicant must submit a copy of the application to the LEA in which the school will be located. The applicant must submit their application to the LEA within **seven (7) days** from the due date so that proof of submission can be included in the complete application packet. The LEA may then submit information or comment directly to the Office of Charter Schools for consideration by the State Board of Education.

**Applicant Signature:**

The foregoing application is submitted on behalf of A.C.E. Academy (*name of non-profit corporation or individuals submitting application*). The undersigned has read the application and hereby declares that the information contained in it is true and accurate to the best of his/her information and belief. The undersigned further represents that the applicant has read the Charter School Law and agrees to be governed by it, other applicable laws, and SBE regulations.

Print/Type Name: slconsultants04

Board Position: Board Member

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 02/27/2013

Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

\_\_\_\_\_  
Official Seal

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.