



**NORTH CAROLINA CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION**

# Pioneer Springs Community School

**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  
301 N. Wilmington Street  
Raleigh NC 27601-2825  
919-807-3491

Mailing Address:  
6303 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-6303

## **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: Pioneer Springs Community School

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: *Pioneer Springs Community School*

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: *Cheryl Demers*

Title/Relationship to nonprofit: *Director*

Mailing address: PO Box 95  
Cornelius NC 28031

Primary telephone: 704-236-9610 Alternative telephone: 704-488-2770

E-Mail address: *pioneerspringscs@gmail.com*

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

County: MECKLENBURG

LEA: 600-Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

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

No:

Yes:

If so, Public or Private:

If yes, please provide the current school or organization web site address:

If a private school, give the name of the private school being converted: Pioneer Springs Community School

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? Pioneer Springs Community School

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

Projected School Opening: Year 2014 Month August

Will this school operate on a year round schedule?

No:  X

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	176
Second Year	K,01,02,03,04	220
Third Year	K,01,02,03,04,05	264
Fourth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06	308
Fifth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07	352
Sixth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	396
Seventh Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08,09	440
Eight Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08,09,10	484
Ninth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08,09,10,11	528
Tenth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08,09,10,11,12	572

*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.*

pioneersprings  
*Signature*

Chairman of the Board  
*Title*

pioneersprings  
*Printed Name*

02/28/2013  
*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:*

Pioneer Springs Community School was created by families to give more families the opportunity to be part of a Basic School connecting students to their community and the natural world. At Pioneer Springs, we believe a school can:

- 1)keep the desire to learn burning bright in every student through individualized, hands-on, creative exploration of an integrated curriculum;
- 2)foster the growth of the whole student: academically, physically, socially, and emotionally;
- 3)function as a community of learning in which students, parents, teachers, and staff collaborate to achieve common goals;
- 4)capture students' inherent curiosity about their environment to foster deeper connections to nature.

### **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.*

Pioneer Springs Community School will target a diverse population of students from Mecklenburg County and surrounding counties. As a community school, we are committed to serving students who live in the communities immediately surrounding Pioneer Springs. The local LEA's demographic population is culturally diverse and our marketing efforts will be aimed at reflecting this diversity in our student body. Two neighboring schools, each approximately two miles from our current location, are David Cox Elementary (African American 72.6%, American Indian 6%, Asian 3.4%, more than one (multi-racial) 5.8%, Pacific Islander 0.2%, and White 11.6%), and Croft Community Elementary School (African American 46.9%, American Indian 4.4%, Asian 5.3%, more than one (multi-racial) 3.9%, and White 39.4%). (CMS Office of Accountability 2012-13, personal interview).

In addition to serving our immediate community, Pioneer Springs also endeavors to serve families throughout Charlotte and North Mecklenburg County who desire the Basic School educational experience and culture. It is our expectation that parents with children who are not thriving in traditional school settings may be attracted to our unique environment and philosophy. Evidence of this need in our area is demonstrated by the large number of students on the waiting lists of the two existing Basic School charters in our area. For the 2012-2013 school year, Community School of Davidson, our model school, had 3400 students on the waiting list, and

Corvian Community School had 441 and approximately 1100 in the upcoming 2013-14 lottery. Our North Charlotte location near the I-77 and I-485 interchange uniquely positions us to serve Charlotte, Lake Norman, and the densely populated University area.

*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?*

Pioneer Springs' identity as a community school will be reflected in its scale, which will be smaller and more intimate than that of the schools of the local LEAs. We will have two classes per grade level. Class sizes will not exceed 22 students, allowing us to maintain a low student to teacher ratio. Year 1 (K - 3) will consist of 176 students. Each successive year the school will grow by one grade, adding another 44 students.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system is large. In the first year of its charter, Pioneer Springs will have an estimated 136 students from CMS, impacting the ADM by .099% (CMS Office of Accountability, 2011-12). In year one, Pioneer Springs will also have an estimated 40 students from Cabarrus County Schools, impacting that system's ADM by .14%. (Cabarrus County Office of Accountability, 2011-12).

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

Pioneer Springs' identity as a Basic School with a strong nature focus will provide families with alternative educational opportunities that may not be available within the larger public school system. Like the schools of the other local LEAs, Pioneer Springs adheres to the rigorous Common Core State and North Carolina Essential Standards. However, as a Basic School, we organize this curriculum to highlight connections across various fields of study, with an emphasis on universal and defining human experiences, equipping students to apply their knowledge to the multi-faceted world outside the classroom. In addition, Pioneer Springs is committed to the development of the whole child: physically, socially, and creatively, as well as cognitively and academically. Each child's needs for physical movement, hydration, and exploration of special interests will be incorporated throughout the school day.

Pioneer Springs also distinguishes itself from the schools of local LEAs by focusing on children's need for connection to the natural world. In addition to core curriculum, Pioneer Springs teachers will plan instruction through a science lens. Because there is a direct positive correlation between nature experiences and improved test scores and lowered stress levels, Pioneer Springs will consistently integrate outside play and nature activities into the curriculum. Weather permitting, lunch and recess take place outside. Weekly Natural Connections and physical education classes further link our students to the outside world. Finally, outdoor, environmentally-based service learning opportunities will be an ongoing part of the educational experience for Pioneer Springs students.

*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.*

3. Pioneer Springs Community School will provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system. Families in the region we serve have demonstrated significant demand to be part of the national school renewal movement represented by the Basic School model. However there are simply not enough Basic Schools in our area to make this choice a possibility for the vast majority of families. For the 2012-2013 school year, nearly 4000 students were wait-listed for the two existing Basic School charters in our area, Community School of Davidson, and Corvian Community School. Receiving a charter will allow Pioneer Springs to expand parent choices and student opportunities.

Pioneer Springs Community School models best practices of existing Basic School charters. Our teachers and staff consult weekly with an educational consultant, Mary Coppola, of Community School of Davidson, to bring Basic School principles into practice at Pioneer Springs.

5. Increasing learning opportunities for all students, including at-risk or gifted students, is a priority at Pioneer Springs. We achieve this by respecting each student's individuality and focusing on individualized instruction. The key is the administration of detailed assessment with results directing all instruction. Through ongoing detailed assessment, teachers identify individual students' strengths and areas for growth, and they are empowered to tailor lesson plans to meet individual students' needs. Each child's individual learning plan is used as a touch point at each conference to gauge progress.

Once students are assessed, teachers will determine if a child has exceptional needs, whether for remediation, enrichment, or additional services. Collaborative relationships with other teachers, educational consultants, and colleagues from other charter schools provides Pioneer Springs teachers with a wealth of resources and support to guide classroom instruction for all students. In addition, Pioneer Springs staff has referral options for parents in need of additional support.



The individualized instruction each student at Pioneer Springs receives is also a function of our small scale, low student-to-teacher ratios, flexible student groupings, and classroom support provided by parent volunteers. This allows us to create the strong connections and trust necessary to foster the development of each student.

6. Innovative and different teaching methods play an important role in how educational goals are accomplished at Pioneer Springs. As a Basic School, Pioneer Springs is characterized by an integrated curriculum. Teachers organize and present material so that lessons from different subject areas relate to one another. Concepts in math, literacy, the arts, even P.E. are all structured around larger thematic units of study, providing valuable coherence and perspective. Brain research shows that multidisciplinary, integrated, thematic units of study are the best vehicle to engage students to participate in their own learning and maximize the brain's learning potential (Jensen, 1998).

In the elementary grades, teachers will stay with their classes for two years (teacher looping), which allows them to become familiar with each student's learning style and needs without devoting precious instructional time to yearly transitions. Additionally, when students and teachers remain together over a two-year school period, learning is increased. Students return to school in the second school year with familiarity of environment, classmate relationships and teacher bonding. Teachers are able to implement larger learning goals with students with the comfort level of really understanding the whole child.

Finally, by integrating the natural environment into the learning experience, Pioneer Springs provides families an innovative educational component not available at other area schools. Because there is a direct positive correlation between nature experiences and improved test scores and lowered stress levels, Pioneer Springs will consistently integrate outside play, nature activities, and outdoor science into the curriculum.

### **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 board of directors will use test scores and other data as the measure of school effectiveness, in accordance with the North Carolina READY accountability program. In addition, the Board of Directors will use survey feedback from teachers, staff, parents and students to develop school improvement plans. We expect 100% participation from our teachers on the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey. The board will use that information to make changes as necessary. The administration and board of directors will use a variety of tools to deliberately reflect on the practices and effectiveness of the school program in order to meet the goals and objectives of the school's mission and philosophy. Short-term and long-term goals will be outlined in a school improvement plan. When the high school phase opens, we intend to seek accreditation with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Our mission speaks to keeping "the desire to learn burning bright" in our

students, and we believe our success relative to this goal will be reflected in our students' academic performance, level of engagement, and positive attitude regarding their school. In addition, our students' daily attendance rate provides an indicator of their level of engagement and investment in their school, therefore it is our goal to maintain a 95% attendance rate (barring mitigating circumstances).

Our mission addresses the development of the whole child, and this commitment will be evident in the typical daily classroom schedule, which will include a variety of opportunities to meet children's physical, social, and academic needs. Classroom instruction will include a balance of active physical movement and periods of quiet, focused instruction. Children and adults are offered multiple opportunities to engage in one-to-one and small group conversations. A Basic School such as Pioneer Springs will offer a climate of caring and support where all stake holders are treated with kindness and respect.

It is an essential part of our mission that Pioneer Springs be a true community of learning. The board will receive feedback from families in the form of survey results to confirm families' sense of engagement in this community. We strive to achieve an above 90% satisfaction rating on these annual surveys. In addition, parent volunteer participation in the classroom will be an indication of parent involvement in the community of learning.

Our mission cites fostering deeper connections to the natural world in our students. We are driven to this focus by compelling research linking children's access to nature experiences and natural play with significant cognitive and behavioral benefits. In 'Last Child in the Woods,' author Richard Louv illustrates that when children spend regular time in a natural setting, they experience an increased attention span, improvement in cognitive scores, decrease in depression, and reduced obesity (Louv, R. 2005). It is our goal that Pioneer Springs students spend on average one hour per day outside engaged in both both science-based educational experiences and unstructured, nature-based play. Students' journaling and artwork will reflect the influence of these outdoor activities during the school day.

- 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.*

Pioneer Springs Community School follows the Common Core State and North Carolina Essential Standards and North Carolina's accountability models. Pioneer Springs Community School teachers will use formative, on-going, and summative assessment to guide instruction and reach individual students. Offering sound curriculum, integrated units of study, and instruction driven by assessment results will target individual needs. This will lead to student mastery of grade level skills and objectives, as indicated on K-2 assessments and EOG Tests. As soon as state results are released, teachers will meet with the director to identify strengths, as well as areas for needed change. These findings will be shared with parents. It is our intention that Pioneer Springs students will consistently and significantly show improvement annually in regard to End of Grade Tests.

Performance Objective 1:

Year 1 of the Charter, Pioneer Springs Community School will establish a baseline of testing on the End of Grade Tests;

Year 2 of the Charter, 85% of Pioneer Springs Community School students will be at or above grade level on the End of Grade Tests;

Year 3 of the Charter, 90% of Pioneer Springs Community School students will be at or above grade level on the End of Grade Tests.

Performance Objective 2:

In each of Years 2 through 5 of the charter, Pioneer Springs Community School will meet the "High Growth" standard set by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Performance Objective 3:

In Year 3 and Year 6 of the charter, 90% Pioneer Springs Community School students will be at or above grade level for the Essential Standards for Science as evidenced by READY EOG Assessments, Grades 5 & 8 and the READY EOC Biology assessments.

In preparation for third grade, (in the 2013-2014 school year), a committee will be appointed for the task of studying End Of Grade Assessments. This committee will report findings to the Board and Teachers at the Fall 2014 Staff Meeting. Two new teachers will be hired in Spring of the 2014 school year. These teachers will teach the first third grade class of 2014. The continuing staff and new hires will have a chance to study K-2 assessments and committee findings to develop curriculum for the next school year. Staff Development will be available for teachers during the summer to begin preparing materials and lessons that will support Common Core and Essential Standards and End Of Grade (EOG) Tested Skills. Additionally, our nature focus will incorporate hands-on science; science vocabulary will be included to emphasize this knowledge well in advance of the 5th grade Essential Standards for Science, READY EOG Assessment.

To monitor and evaluate the school's education program, two pieces are in place for measurement and communication. First, parents are invited to Open House in August where standards are introduced. Scope and sequence for each grade level will be presented. Parents will complete a survey to identify questions about curriculum standards. Results of the survey will be determined and given to the Board as consideration for yearly parent education and communication.

Secondly, for communication, the Director will provide a monthly newsletter with a section devoted to standards and measurement. After consulting the State DPI site, parents will be notified of any changes to Charter School Initiatives/Legislation. Each month the director will address questions from the Parent Survey on Standards and Measurement.

### 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.

Pioneer Springs Community School strives to embody the ideas of Dr. Ernest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, as outlined in his book, "The Basic School: A Community for Learning." The Basic School model addresses all aspects of students' development to prepare them for lifelong learning and success. According to "The Basic School," there are four building blocks to promote each student's learning: 1. The School as Community, 2. A Curriculum with Coherence, 3. A Climate for Learning, 4. A Commitment to Character. (Boyer, 1995). The community has expressed unmet need for additional Basic Charter Schools.

We will implement an active approach to teaching and learning with an emphasis on intrinsic student motivation and overall connection to nature to ensure social, emotional and physical health. We include inquiry-based, scientific learning and want our students to construct their own understanding through experiments and real-world problem solving. Constructivist theory is deeply embedded in our instructional model - our students participate in active dialogue (Socratic learning) and spiral learning to work at their immediate level and spiral that learning to the greater, global level (Bruner, J.S., 1960). Individualized instruction promotes learning at Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development through the use of cooperative learning (peer and teacher assistance) and scaffolding of ideas (incremental steps using familiar ideas) (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). Thorough readings on current research will ensure our students will receive high quality instruction.

Students benefit from opportunities to explore subject matter in different ways, and our instructional program is designed to speak to students across a wide range of learning styles. Teachers will utilize a variety of methods to address visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles. Students will be offered varied circumstances to interact in large and small group settings to serve interpersonal and intrapersonal needs.

The curriculum at Pioneer Springs has as its minimum standard the Common Core State and NC Essential Standards. However, at Pioneer Springs, this curriculum is organized to highlight connections across various fields of study, with an emphasis on universal and defining human experiences. In this way, students not only become literate in a variety of disciplines, but are also well-equipped to apply their knowledge to the multi-faceted world outside the classroom.

Beginning in Kindergarten, Pioneer Springs' students will participate in a

variety of nature-based service learning experiences in the community with multiple community partners. Currently, one such community partner and a board member of Pioneer Springs is T. McLeod of McLeod Organics. Mr. McLeod is connected to the local farming and food-to-table programs. He is based at a local farm, The Bradford Farm.

We are also committed to developing relationships across generations. We strive to bring senior citizens into our school and make regular visits to a nursing home facility. Our community school has deep historical connections to our local community, as our building was the community's school from the late nineteenth century through the late 1930's. The building owners, the community, and the Mecklenburg County Historic Landmarks Commission have all expressed support for this structure being returned once again to its original use. Alumni of the original Croft School visit and share their childhood experiences at the school with our students. We are excited for our students not only to learn from these people who bring so much from the past, but also to experience the gift of giving back to the community and its older generation.

### **K-12 Curriculum and Instructional Design:**

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

At Pioneer Springs Community School our learning environment is comprised of:

- Small class size with student: teacher ratio of 22:2 (teacher and assistant)
- Differentiated instruction for gifted as well as challenged
- Hands-on, integrated curriculum
- Alignment with Common Core State and North Carolina Essential standards
- Two-year looping (in elementary grades)
- Focus on nature from K-12

The classroom environment at Pioneer Springs is designed to keep students engaged, renewed, and attentive. A Pioneer Springs classroom is a celebratory, hands-on, collaborative place allowing students to learn in ways that come naturally to them. Students are not assigned a certain desk; instead grouping arrangements are flexible, with tables, reading nooks, etc. In this way, students are encouraged to feel ownership of their entire classroom. Movement and exercise are built into the daily schedule, and students have access to water at all times.

At Pioneer Springs we limit our class size to 22 students with two full-time staff. Teaching assistants remain with the class for the entire day, including Connect (special area) classes in the elementary grades. The administrators will make synergistic, balanced connections between the lead teacher and teacher assistant to foster a collaborative approach. We will provide differentiated instruction in which students' strengths and deficits are targeted early and often, providing individualized instruction on each student's instructional level. We present a hands-on, integrated curriculum - students move through a series of integrated thematic units, which address the Common Core State and North Carolina Essential Standards through participatory learning experiences. Students construct their own understanding and seek to share this understanding in class meetings and through active dialogue.

In the elementary school, teachers will stay with their class for 2 years (teacher looping), which allows them to become familiar with each student's learning style and needs without wasting precious instructional time with yearly transitions. Our teachers work collaboratively to discuss the design and implementation of appropriate early interventions based on students' specific needs. Successful implementation of enrichment activities for academically gifted students will also be discussed and evaluated often. As students' strengths and interests are identified, they will have more opportunities for choice in their Connect classes and the option of independent studies/practicum in high school to target specific areas. Our approach is classroom-based, with frequent free-choice, small group and independent projects. Teachers are empowered to create lesson plans that work best for their entire class structure.

Provide a synopsis of the planned curriculum, including:

1. One sample course scope and sequence (preferably in graph form) in the Appendices (Appendix B1) for one core subject (specific to the school's purpose) for each division (elementary, middle, high) the school would ultimately serve.
2. As Appendix B2, provide a visual disseminating what courses (core content and electives) will be offered in year one through year five of the charter high school. Please ensure the projected staff and budget aligns with the course offerings.
3. Identify how this curriculum aligns with the proposed charter school's mission, targeted student population, and North Carolina Accountability Model.

Our curriculum evidences respect for and stewardship of the natural world, a key component of our mission, within integrated thematic units at every level of the school. Content selection is made intentionally to engage the natural curiosity of the child in his/her environment by providing components of inquiry-based learning. Constructivist models will be utilized with curriculum to promote self-discovery through the scientific process of trial and error.

Our strong commitment to community is demonstrated throughout our curriculum in service learning, ranging from school visits by community farmers and the aging community at the elementary level to practicums at the middle and high school levels, in addition to parental involvement.

Our mission speaks to meeting the needs of the whole child. We work to this end not only in the teaching models employed but in curriculum selection. We incorporate physical activities, such as Brain Gym exercises within the context of a school day. While this type of activity is not reflected in course selection, it is interwoven into the thematic approach to learning and addressing student learning needs through multiple modalities. Additionally, we promote the development of the whole child as students engage interpersonally with local community members while addressing curricular goals through activities such as interviewing and documenting community experiences during a visit to a local farm to study planting seasons, pollination, or crop rotation within the farm-to-table movement.

Our targeted student populations include children and parents interested in the philosophies of the Basic School. Our curriculum prioritizes community as demonstrated by integrating parents into our classrooms on a daily basis. Connect Classes at the middle and high school levels will offer thematically based electives which are unique to us and our mission.

We believe our approach to learning would be beneficial to most students as it meets the Common Core State requirements and prepares all students to be college and career ready with global competencies and 21st century skills integrated throughout the curriculum at every level. Marketing strategies have been developed to expand our target population to a diverse group of ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds to reflect the demographics of the local school community.

4. 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.

**\*Hands-On Learning**

We believe that the most meaningful learning occurs when students are encouraged and equipped to take ownership of the learning process and construct their own knowledge within the standardized logical sequence and pacing. To that end, our classrooms are designed to be engaging environments filled with resources that allow students to learn in ways to which they naturally respond. Inquiry-based, hands-on learning experiences allow students to delve deeper into subject matter, while establishing connections across various fields of study.

**\*Individualized/Differentiated instruction**

At Pioneer Springs, students are respected as individuals, and instruction is tailored to meet each student's individual learning needs. By employing the method of differentiation, Pioneer Springs teachers are able to meet the specific needs of each student. Differentiation is an assessment-driven teaching approach that takes into account each student's learning needs and readiness level to ensure that each student is challenged appropriately. In addition, differentiation in the classroom can give teachers opportunities to establish stronger connections with students, creating an environment of mutual trust and respect that is favorable to learning. Differentiation is achieved in the classroom at Pioneer Springs through techniques including flexible student groupings, low student-teacher ratios, opportunities for independent learning such as individualized assignments, learning centers, coupled with constant assessment on the part of teachers to inform instruction.

**\*Integrated/thematic instruction**

At the heart of Dr. Boyer's Basic School philosophy is the idea that when curriculum is set within the context of universal and defining human experiences, lessons resonate more deeply with students and learning becomes more meaningful and personal. It was Boyer's vision to "relate the curriculum even more directly to students' lives, helping them understand more about who they are and even more important, what we share" (Boyer, 1995). To facilitate these connections, Boyer identified eight "core commonalities," representing overarching themes common to many cultures. Within these core commonalities, lessons from a variety of different subjects can be explored simultaneously, forming an interconnected web of knowledge. The core commonalities identified by Boyer are: (1) The Life Cycle, (2) The Use of Symbols, (3) Membership in Groups, (4) A Sense of Time and Space, (5) Response to the Aesthetic, (6) Connections to Nature, (7) Producing and Consuming, and (8) Living with Purpose (Boyer 1995).

As a Basic School, Pioneer Springs uses Boyer's core commonalities as the framework around which integrated units of study are structured. In our elementary school classrooms, students in each grade move through several

thematic units throughout the year, which taken as a whole, form one overall theme. All subject areas are integrated into the units, with special emphasis on Essential Standards in Science and Social Studies. In addition, in keeping with our nature focus, connections to the natural world are woven into each of these thematic units and students are given unique opportunities to explore themes in the context of the natural world. Students in upper grade levels are also encouraged to recognize and explore connections across a wide variety of subject areas.

5. Explain how the proposed instructional plan and graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities (trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).

Students will graduate from Pioneer Springs Community School as well-rounded, competent young people with a full academic understanding of reading, writing, mathematics and the arts. Students will have a strong support system built from community members, volunteers, teachers, and school staff. Students will also have a global understanding of the natural environment, with a literate awareness of how to care for themselves through growing food, food choices, cooking, survival, and emotionally thriving in the natural world; all real-world skills. Most importantly, every student will have exposure to rigorous and relevant core curriculum that reflects what students need to know to be competitive within a global 21st Century environment, including a mastery of languages, an appreciation of the arts, and competencies in the use of technology.

Since our curriculum follows the Common Core and the Future-Ready Core requirements, students will be ready for college or other postsecondary opportunities of their choice. Our advisors and support staff will use a strength-based approach using personality inventories and career planning opportunities to help students identify their future goals and take steps necessary to meet those goals.

Pioneer Springs Community School will confidently prepare students for success in life by providing students relevant, academically focused internships within the community in which students will have real-life experiences in preparation for careers in life. Community mentors will be accessed to build student knowledge of interests to guide students in future careers. Students will follow the state requirements in order to graduate from high school.

6. 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.

The Pioneer Springs Community School calendar coincides with the tenets of the proposed mission and education plan by providing planned days for instructional time, professional development through Professional Learning Communities, and parent/teacher conferences. Professional development days are planned to coincide with building curriculum and sharing innovative methods. Additions to the calendar will highlight community events, class end-of-unit sharing, workshops for student and community development, field trips and community speakers. Weekly staff meetings occur after school. Substitute teachers and volunteers may also be scheduled to provide opportunities for teacher professional development.

#### 185 Day Calendar

August 18-22 Teacher Workdays

August 21-22 Parent Conferences (by appointment)



August 24 Parent Open House/ Teacher Workday  
August 25 First Day of School (1/2 day AM for grades K-3)  
August 25-26 Staggered Entry for Kindergarten  
August 27 First Full Day of Kindergarten  
September 1 Labor Day (No School)  
October 31 Teacher WorkdayOptional Conferences (No School)  
November 11 Veterans Day (No School)  
November 26 Day of School  
November 27-28 Thanksgiving Holiday  
December 22 Day of School  
December 23-Jan. 1 Winter Break  
January 2 Classes Resume  
January 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (No School)  
February 9 Teacher WorkdayOptional Conferences (No School)  
March 30 Teacher WorkdayOptional Conferences (No School)  
April 10 Day of School  
April 13-17 Spring Break Holiday (No School)  
April 20 Classes Resume  
May 15 Day of SchoolOptional Conferences  
May 25 Memorial Day (No School)  
June 9 Last Day of School  
June 10, 11, 12, 15, 16 Teacher Workdays

### **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.

Teachers will base classroom level instruction for all students upon current research and best practices. Baseline assessments in reading, writing and mathematics (such as MAP) will be given to students each fall to determine students' levels and create individualized intervention programs according to individual students' needs. Differentiated instruction will provide engaging opportunities for learning for students of all ability levels, providing scaffolded learning environments for some and extended learning experiences for others.

Formative assessments (such as DRA2, running records, student portfolios) will be ongoing within classroom settings to determine students' levels of progress and appropriate responses will be made. English Language Learners (ELL) will be identified upon entry to the school and progress will be monitored by classroom teacher in consultation with an ELL specialist. For those who are not progressing at expected levels as determined by classroom performance, classroom assessments, and/or standardized tests as well as those students who are identified as "at-risk" according to these measures, Response to Intervention (RtI) tiered systems will be put into place to assist these students in meeting grade level expectation.

While the RtI systems in place will involve multiple interventions for established needs in mathematics as well as literacy across grade levels, a closer look at literacy is herein outlined. A literacy lab will be created in which specialized instruction will be provided for those students (with a strong emphasis on early identification in K-1) who are identified with delays in reading and/or writing but who do not currently qualify for IEPs or 504 plans. Highly qualified teachers and/or literacy specialists will

work independently or in small groups (dependent upon the strategy or skill to be taught and individual students' needs) to provide direct instruction tailored to student needs through proven methods such as Orton-Gillingham and approaches such as Reading Recovery. Fast ForWord is an example of one of the research-based tools that may be utilized to aid students identified with a concern in auditory processing speed, attention, reading fluency, decoding, or memory deficits.

Ongoing school-wide professional development will occur through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), during specific staff meetings, on staff development days, and through individual teachers' pursuits to continually strive for additional means to reach all students, including grade level achievers, Exceptional Children, ELL students, Academically or Intellectually Gifted students, and students with other barriers to learning.

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/a. Pioneer Springs Community School asks the primary language spoken in the home on the registration and lottery application, which will help to identify students who may qualify for ELL services. If English is not the primary language spoken, a Home Language Survey will be provided. Students will be assessed using the most appropriate standardized assessment, such as the W-APT or the ACCESS for ELLAs English Language to determine eligibility. Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires parent notification of ELL student qualification and participation.

2/b. After identifying a need, Pioneer Springs Community School will contract services with a qualified ELL instructor, providing direct intervention strategies and classroom/teacher support as necessary. Communication between ELL instructor, classroom teachers, and parents will be ongoing, as parent involvement is a major factor to success.

3/c. ELL students' progress in expressive and receptive language abilities will be monitored by ongoing informal assessment within the English/Language Arts or elementary classroom environment. Classroom teachers will be in communication with the ELL instructor and as students demonstrate mastery in informal measures, post-testing will be done with normative based assessments such as the W-APT or the ACCESS to determine exit from services.

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/a. Teachers will work with academically and intellectually gifted students to go beyond the Common Core State and North Carolina Essential Standards with accelerated activities. Teachers will strive to teach gifted students

from where they are academically, not from where the curriculum states they should begin. Children will not be pulled from the classrooms for Talent Development classes because it is our belief that general education and gifted education should be connected. Pioneer Springs Community School teachers will develop curriculum for Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) students by consulting and collaborating with each other, the parents, outside resources, and the student. Teachers will provide challenging opportunities in classroom assignments. They will also encourage an AIG student's emotional and social growth in addition to their academic growth. Teachers will work to keep up to date on teaching their gifted children by collaborating with teachers in local schools that target the gifted, attending seminars offered by the various gifted associations, and keeping up to date on methodology for teaching these students.

2/b. Pioneer Springs Community School will comply with North Carolina State and local legislation regarding identification and serving of academically or intellectually gifted students. Our school may identify academically and intellectually gifted children through classroom observations, student performance, parental input at the initial covenant conference and future conferences and as needed, talking to past teachers, grades, sample work (portfolio), comparing to typical characteristics of gifted children, test scores, and other criterion. Teachers will use ongoing informal assessments as well as rubrics to assure that gifted students are working to meet their full potential. Teachers will meet regularly with other teachers as well as the parents of the AIG students to receive feedback on the progress of these students.

### **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. New students to Pioneer Springs Community School will have the opportunity for a parent/teacher covenant conference. Parents are a child's first teacher and any concerns and information that are disclosed will be beneficial to the classroom teacher(s). Student records will also be requested from previous educational institutions. Disclosure during conference and/or student records will provide information on eligibility

for special education services or students protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

2. When a new student is enrolled in Pioneer Springs Community School, extra caution will be taken to ensure the school is aware of any special needs or current eligibility for an IEP. When needs are identified by classroom teachers or parents bring forth appropriate concerns, state guidelines for testing (evaluations and assessments) will be followed with parent consent.

3. Records of students with disabilities and 504 Accommodation plans will be managed appropriately following state and federal guidelines.

1. A form requesting records will be sent directly to the previous educational institute's records office. Return records will be accessible only to the administrative team.

2. Records will be confidentially held on-site at Pioneer Springs Community School in a locked filing cabinet inside of the locked administrative office.

3. A special education provider/employee will be delegated responsibility as a case manager to complete chart reviews at least biannually to ensure all forms are present and current. Checklists and spreadsheets will be developed and shared with all necessary EC providers, administrators, and classroom staff to ensure timely evaluation completion, parent invitations, and IEP meetings per state and federal law.

#### 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. Pioneer Springs Community School will meet all state and federal standards as noted in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), G.S 115C-238.29F(g)(5), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We will contract the necessary services as identified by need. As our school name states, the greater community is also a priority. Pioneer Springs Community School intends to provide informational sessions to parents, teachers, and other professionals on an ongoing basis as a service to the community. This plan has already been implemented and the first session is scheduled to occur March 2013. Kristin Clewell, Occupational Therapist and Board Member, will be giving a presentation on interactive strategies to help support homework and learning in the home.

2. As our school philosophy and instructional model is geared towards meeting and encouraging individual learning styles, we welcome students with varying levels of disabilities or giftedness. Students will be served in the least restrictive environment (regular education setting through self-contained classrooms if deemed most appropriate to students' needs) to ensure all academic, social, and developmental needs will be met. No matter the level of disability, all students will be encouraged to become active learners and participate in hands-on learning experiences on both the school campus and in the community. Procedural guidelines are in place to ensure students with disabilities will receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education as outlined by FAPE.

3. The school and family will work together as part of the IEP team and the family will be involved in the process. The IEP will be the guiding document to ensure all therapy deemed necessary is being provided, as with all environmental and testing accommodations. The IEP will be reviewed regularly by a designated case manager to make changes and update status by state law.

4. Pioneer Springs Community School will hire highly qualified special educators as needed to provide specialized instruction directly to students and to serve as a consultant to regular education classroom teachers to further enhance the school's philosophy of meeting the individual learning styles of all the students. All students are likely to benefit from this educational model, not just those with special needs. The current teaching staff has already participated in a workshop presented by Kristin Clewell, occupational therapist and board member, developed to help address the physical and sensory needs of all students in order to improve classroom participation. Appropriate material and equipment will be provided/purchased as necessary.

### **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. At Pioneer Springs Community School, student performance standards are outlined in student report cards guided by the Common Core State and North Carolina Essential Standards. Students are expected to meet those standards for promotion to the next grade. Individual Education Plans may outline different goals for students with special needs. Curriculum, instruction, and assessments lead to meeting those performance standards. We use open communication between parents, teachers, staff, and the community and share these standards at Open House, covenant conferences, and ongoing conferences.

#### Performance Objective 1:

Year 1 of the Charter, Pioneer Springs Community School will establish a baseline of testing on the End of Grade Tests;

Year 2 of the Charter, 85% of Pioneer Springs Community School students will be at or above grade level on the End of Grade Tests;

Year 3 of the Charter, 90% of Pioneer Springs Community School students will be at or above grade level on the End of Grade Tests.

#### Performance Objective 2:

In each of Years 2 through 5 of the charter, Pioneer Springs Community School will meet the "High Growth" standard set by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

#### Performance Objective 3:

In Year 3 and Year 6 of the charter, 90% Pioneer Springs Community School

students will be at or above grade level for the Essential Standards for Science as evidenced by READY EOG Assessments, Grades 5 & 8 and the READY EOC Biology assessments.

2. Assessment of students at Pioneer Springs will be ongoing and multifaceted, utilizing both summative and formative techniques, and will form the basis on which teachers make decisions concerning instructional programs. Students will receive state mandated testing and teachers will practice and be adept at a variety of formative and summative assessments as well. These will include the assignment of performance-based tasks, evaluation of oral discussion and written work, observation of collaborative work among students in small groups, and review of student portfolios. The ongoing nature of these assessments will afford teachers frequent opportunities to provide students with qualitative feedback concerning their performance and progress. By utilizing assessment strategies which build strong bonds between teachers and individual students, students will be motivated to excel throughout the learning process. Pioneer Springs Community School students will begin End of Grade (EOG) as dictated by state law. The in-depth, experiential exploration of curriculum that Pioneer Springs students engage in all year long will be supplemented with a six-week focus on test-taking strategies to ensure students' learning is reflected in test results.

3. In keeping with our identity as a Basic School, Pioneer Springs Community School will include parents in our community of learning through clear and consistent communication concerning their child's progress. This begins with the Parent/Teacher Covenant Conference in August, at which parents are encouraged to share information with their student's teacher or advisor, and work together to set goals for the upcoming year. This opportunity for openness at the beginning of the school year sets the tone for relationships of mutual trust and cooperation between parents, students, and teachers throughout the school year. Subsequent conferences may be held in October and February, and will be an opportunity for teachers to share insights into students' progress based on various modes of ongoing classroom assessment. Middle and high school students will assume a leadership role in their own conferences, facilitating discussion and providing evaluation of their own performance and progress toward goals. In addition, families will receive feedback in the form of report cards three times during the school year, in October, February, and May.

Elementary and middle school students will be graded on a numeric scale of 1 - 3, with a "3" indicating the student is meeting or exceeding the grade-level standard and is producing quality work independently, a "2" indicating the student is progressing toward the standard and producing the required grade-level work with teacher direction and assistance, and a "1" indicating the student is beginning to develop the standard but not yet able to produce required grade-level work. Modifications will be used in the classroom to meet each students needs. In regard to students with special needs, they will be promoted to the next grade level according to their Individual Education Plan. Students will begin receiving traditional letter grades upon reaching high school.

4. Pioneer Springs Community School exit standards follow Future-Ready Core requirements for those graduating from High School and planning to attend college. Future-Ready Occupational requirements are followed for those students planning on not pursuing a college track. Students with special

needs will be included in their ongoing conferences to build an appropriate high school plan to fully support their strengths and post-secondary life goals. All students will be functional, self-sufficient members of society upon graduating from high school.

### **High School Graduation Requirements**

1. If implemented, describe how the proposed charter school will meet the Future-Ready Core requirements. Provide details on how the students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts.
2. Explain the plan for graduating students with special education needs.
3. Explain what systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting the proposed graduation requirements.

1. Pioneer Springs Community School will meet the Future-Ready Core requirements. By offering and communicating these requirements, students will earn credit hours according to which classes they take. The class rank is based on a weighted grade point average in which a single (1) quality point or weight is added to passing grades earned in Advanced/Honors/Academically Gifted courses or two (2) quality points are added to passing grades earned in Advance Placement courses.

Basic/Introduction to.../Standard(S) - This course provides credit toward a high school diploma.

Advanced/Honors/Academically Gifted(H) - This course provides credit toward a high school diploma and the state weighting system adds the equivalent of one quality point to the grade earned.

Advance Placement(AP) - This course provides credit toward a high school diploma and the state weighting system adds the equivalent of two quality points to the grade earned in the AP/IB course.

Transcript information will include identifying material, classes taken, grades earned, and Grade Point Average.

2. At Pioneer Springs Community School, students with special education needs may graduate with a Graduation Certificate. If the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) is too rigorous and the student is enrolled, of course, in content courses specifically designed to meet their needs; the Director will follow State guidelines to graduate any student he/she feels is necessary and appropriate with the Graduation Certificate.

3. At Pioneer Springs Community School advisory teachers are assigned to middle school and high school students. Advisory teachers will maintain contact with classroom teachers to determine a pattern of failure and will address concerns about meeting graduation requirements and avoiding dropping out of high school. A team approach will be implemented, including the school social worker, to address the potential concerns. Our small size, community culture, and on-going communication allows for the success of each student.

### **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.

At Pioneer Springs Community School we consider the safety of all of our students a top priority. Seven core virtues (respect, compassion, honesty, responsibility, self-discipline, giving, and perseverance) are emphasized as virtues that promote excellence in living as well as learning; these core virtues are part of Dr. Boyer's Basic School and are common to all cultures (Boyer, 1995). Core virtues are taught by word and deed. Student conduct is further defined through our student handbook. Administrators, staff, and volunteers are trained in and use Positive Discipline. Our administrators, teachers, students, and parents read and sign a Covenant Agreement at the annual Covenant Conference. The Covenant Agreement provides specific expectations for involvement and conduct. Classroom expectations are taught from a young age and children learn to do their best even when no one is watching. As our students grow and move through middle and high school, we address issues through classroom material. At the middle and high school level, students are provided an advisor providing life skill support especially during transitional experiences.

In cases of student conduct violations, the teachers or support staff will report incidents, per student handbook, to the school social worker and/or Director and Assistant Director to assess on a case by case basis. We also conduct functional behavioral assessment in order to develop positive behavioral strategies. Students with disabilities with an on-going behavioral concern may be identified as requiring a behavioral plan in addition to their IEP. A volunteer Ombudsman (student advocate) or school social worker will be utilized in areas of grievance and to protect due process rights.



**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:* Pioneer Springs Community School

*Mailing Address:* PO Box 95

*City/State/Zip:* Charlotte NC 28269

*Street Address:* 9200 Bob Beatty Road

*Phone:* 704-236-9610

*Fax:* 704-236-9610

*Name of registered agent and address:* Sandra L. Knox  
19410 Jetton Road, Suite 130  
Cornelius, NC 28031

*FEDERAL TAX ID:* 45-5464815

**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)  
X 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>
Mark Barsoum	Board Member	MECKLENBURG	Biology Professor

Mary Coppola	Board Member	MECKLENBURG	Teacher/Consultant at Community School of Davidson
Susan Massengill	Board Member	MECKLENBURG	Physician
T McLeod	Board Member	MECKLENBURG	Farmer
Chris Stigliano	Treasurer	MECKLENBURG	Business Development & Innovation Management
Kristin Clewell	Secretary	MECKLENBURG	Occupational Therapist
Sandra Knox	Board Member	MECKLENBURG	Attorney at Law
Tanya Chartier	Vice-Chairman	MECKLENBURG	Educator
Abigail Jennings	Chairman of the Board of Trustees	MECKLENBURG	Business Owner

**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.*

The Board of Trustees will oversee all functions of the charter school. The bylaws provided in Article I state that the purpose of the corporation is to maintain and operate a school as a not-for-profit enterprise. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Chair of the Board of Trustees, the Past Chair and the chair of each standing committee and shall function as a long-range planning committee. Other committees may be designated by the majority of the voting members. All decisions of the board will be made in the best interest of students in accordance with the mission and philosophy of the school. In addition to the nine standing Board members, the Bylaws also provide for Honorary Trustees. The initial Honorary Trustees shall be the co-founders of the school. Future Honorary Trustees may be elected by the Board from among former Trustees who shall have served with distinction and from among distinguished friends and major contributors to the School who shall not have served previously as Trustees. Honorary Trustees shall be invited to attend all meetings of the Board but shall not be entitled to vote. The inclusion of Honorary Trustees will allow the Board to have additional community resources available for management of the school.

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.*

The board will follow best practices of size with between five and nine board members; preferably an odd number. The board consists of a balance between educational and business members. The board will oversee and lead Pioneer Springs Community School and support and guide the charter school's commitment to the mission. The board will supervise the lead administrator and stay informed through monthly board and committee meetings in all key areas of the Charter School.

The board is a representation of the community at large and represents a cross-section of appropriate areas of expertise. Each individual brings a diverse and wide range of skills to the board. The board will ensure that a) the Charter School is successful by setting appropriate SMART goals; b) the Charter School will ensure school and school leader success through SMART goals; upholding of the schools mission; and realization of the appropriate academic, social, emotional, and physical success of all children; c) the board will have training on The Basic School and on the focus of the whole child. The board is first and foremost responsible to the students of the school, "doing what is best for students." Families are aware of board meetings and advised to attend and information is available through the North Carolina Open Meeting Laws. The Board of Trustees is aware of parents as their children's first teacher and value parents' commitment and support of the mission as well as the support of the community at large.

- 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?*

Founding board members were recruited and selected due to their understanding and support of the mission of Pioneer Springs Community School. The founding board members have also been selected due to their educational and organizational/business skill sets. With a vacant position on the board it is critical that a replacement is selected quickly to provide continuity and support to the board pursuant to the process outlined in Article IV, Section 2, paragraph 1 of the Bylaws; the replacement will have a similar skill set to the board member he or she is to replace. Board members serve three-year terms, with the exception of the initial board members who are serving staggered terms so that no more than 1/3 of members terms shall expire in a given year. All board members are selected in compliance with the procedures contained in the Bylaws, with consideration duly given to the Conflict of Interest policy contained therein.

- 4. How often will the board meet?*

The board will meet monthly.

- 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).*

New board member orientation will include the school's PowerPoint Open House presentation and a tour/classroom visit to Pioneer Springs Community School. In addition, all board members will receive training on the Basic School model as provided by our Community School of Davidson educational consultant and are expected to read "The Basic School: A Community for Learning," by Ernest L. Boyer. Board members are invited to participate in the school's volunteer training and to volunteer in the classroom. Additional financial and board policy training (board best practices, ethics, conflict of interest - required by all board members) will be provided, as well, at an annual Board retreat each May.

- 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.*

The bylaws address conflicts of interest among board members at Article IV, Section 15, which provides that the trustees, officers, administrators, faculty and other employees will exercise their authority for the sole

benefit of the school. There should be an avoidance of placing oneself in a position of personal interest and The Board of Trustees will provide guidance where necessary. Areas of potential conflict of interest are 1) Financial Interest, in regard to competition with school in regard to purchase of property; material financial interest; and any circumstance in which an individual may profit; 2) Inside Information; 3) Conflicting interests other than Financial; 4) Acceptance of Gifts and Favors.

The bylaws further provide that the individual(s) involved in a potential conflict of interest shall not be counted in determining the existence of a quorum and any meeting of the Board.

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

The board will vote on all school policy decisions in accordance with the mission and philosophy of the school, acting in the best interest of students in keeping with state and federal laws. The school director will not have a vote on such policy decisions. The school director will participate in such discussions and provide input on all such matters. Every decision made by the majority of board of directors present at a meeting held in which a quorum is present is the act of the board of directors.

*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.*

Not Applicable

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.*

Not Applicable

- 1. Describe the rationale for converting from a private entity to a public school. Include information regarding how the proposed charter school will be nonsectarian in nature and will be open for all

*students (not just those currently attending the private school).*

Pioneer Springs Community School was founded as a private school with the intention of becoming a Charter School with the next application cycle. Our model school, Community School of Davidson, and fellow Basic School, Corvian Community School both were private schools before converting to Charter Schools. The evidence of need and demand is persuasive for The Basic School and the board wants to make this style of education available to all, regardless of income and to attract a more diverse student population.

Pioneer Springs has been a private, nonsectarian school and will continue as a nonsectarian school obeying federal and state laws. Private school families have been made aware of the school's intention of converting to a charter school and the law regarding the open and public lottery.

- 2. Provide a detailed description of the existing private school's financial status, including the process in which these financial assets or deficits will be transferred to the non-profit organization. Provide a copy of the organization's IRS Form 990 for the last three years as Appendix Q.*

Pioneer Springs is currently a non-profit corporation operating at a break-even financial model, with all of our expenses paid by our tuition income and additional fundraising. In addition, our financial projections forecast that we will be deficit-free when we open as a charter in the Fall of 2014. All assets owned by the non-profit corporation will remain in the corporation when we open as a charter, such as furnishings and supplies. We incorporated last summer and will be filing our first IRS Form 990 after July 1, 2013.

- 3. Depict and analyze the current enrollment trends and student demographics of the private school over the past three academic years.*

School year 2012-2103 has been the inaugural year for Pioneer Springs Community School, as a private school. Currently the school has one Kindergarten class and one class of First Grade Students. The Kindergarten class has nine students; First Grade has ten students; 95% caucasian. We project full enrollment of 22 students in our upcoming Kindergarten Class for the 2013-2014 School Year; our second year as a private school.

- 4. Document and expound upon evidence that the existing private school is successful in student achievement. Base this explanation upon academic data available through state and national summative assessments.*

At Pioneer Springs Community School assessment drives instruction. Formative, ongoing and summative assessments are used to provide individualized instruction. Currently we are at mid-year and have not completed summative assessments. Pioneer Springs Community School follows the Common Core State and North Carolina Essential Standards and has incorporated best practices of Community School of Davidson, our model school and an Honor School of Excellence.

- 5. Explain the process by which the current private school staff will be considered for teaching at the proposed charter school staff. What is the projected turnover due to the statutory requirements for teacher licensure and highly qualified status?*

Pioneer Springs Community School as a private school has hired fully licensed and highly qualified teachers; we expect no turnover due to the statutory requirements. We fully expect our current teachers to reapply as teachers at the Charter School.

*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.*

Pioneer Springs Community School will advertise with local newspapers and will post the employment application on the school's website. Due to community approval of the Basic School and our use of creative and innovative teaching techniques, Pioneer Springs will also attract high performing teachers through word-of-mouth.

Pioneer Springs Community School (PSCS) will show through description and modeling that PSCS hires teachers as educational leaders in the classroom who are creative, professional problem-solvers who make sound decisions based on best practices and current research and have opportunities to grow as professionals. We have high expectations of our teachers and they represent the school and connect with the students and families on a daily basis; therefore PSCS will provide continual opportunities for teachers to learn and grow. At PSCS teachers will stay current on educational, research-based theories. Teachers are also encouraged to bring creative techniques into the classroom that will help their individual students to learn; adding to a positive teacher/school connection.

*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.*

All charter school employees will report directly to the Assistant Director and/or Director. The Director reports to the Board of Directors. All board meetings are open to the public and employees are invited to attend and may provide direct feedback to the board of directors.

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

Pioneer Springs Community School staff will be directly hired by the Director and Assistant Director. Pioneer Springs will require background checks of its employees as required by the application laws to ensure the safety of the school and all students. The Director will bring all possible dismissals of school personnel and the appropriate documentation before a closed session of the Board of Directors.

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

The proposed salary range and employment benefits are in line with our model school, Community School of Davidson and fellow Basic School, Corvian Community School. Pioneer Springs Community School may not use the state

health and retirement plans. Full time professional staff are eligible for benefits.

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

All employees of Pioneer Springs Community (PSCS) are expected to act with good common sense and in a professional manner. To ensure orderly operations and provide the safest possible work environment, PSCS expects all employees to abide by certain rules of conduct. While it is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace, the Employee Handbook provides examples of conduct which may result in disciplinary action in the sole and exclusive discretion of PSCS, up to and including discharge. PSCS reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to add or delete offenses and to take such disciplinary actions, up to and including discharge, as are necessitated by the particular circumstances of a given case.

Employee Handbook:

TERMINATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

Because employment with PSCS is at will, both the employee and PSCS have the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time and for any reason not prohibited by law, with or without notice.

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

The training needs of Pioneer Springs Community School will be determined by the Director and Assistant Director. Direct, relevant training will be provided to PSCS staff by the Director, Assistant Director, and when specific to the educational needs of the staff by the Exceptional Children Teacher(s), Reading Specialist. In future years the School Social Worker/Counselor/Ombudsman and Librarian will provide additional training and resources to school staff, families, board members, and community members.

*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.*

Pioneer Springs Community School supports each individual child's learning. We hire creative and knowledgeable teachers that bring innovative teaching techniques to the classroom. Through on-going assessment the teachers will be aware of special classroom needs such as ELL and gifted students. These highly trained teachers will necessary referrals. Pioneer Springs Community School is an active and knowledgeable consumer and will contract for services when in-house resources are unavailable.

*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).*

All administrators and teachers of Pioneer Springs Community School will possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics required by and consistent with the vision and philosophies of the school. The school will promote and look for opportunities, including the commitment and willingness from all employees to work as a team to implement the school's goals.

Director: Provides leadership for the schools shared mission and goals;

short and long-term strategic planning. Qualifications: Bachelors degree; proven leadership success; commitment to the schools mission.

\*Spokesperson for PSCS/Public speaker

\*Regular written communication with parents/school community

\*Primary parent contact for school-wide matters or concerns

\*Secondary contact after initial teacher/parent/student contact and continued grievances

\*Provides direct communication with and reports to the school's Board of Trustees

\*Works to develop and support strategic plan for annual growth

\*Works to develop community outreach and build awareness of school in the local community and forge partnerships

\*Works to develop a strategic fundraising plan including creating and sustaining a donor network

\*Provides a classroom presence, including observations to support teachers

\*Occasional teaching in areas of special interest to maintain a connection with the classes and classroom environment

\*Continues to ask all parties, "Is this best for the whole child?"

Assistant Director: Provides assistant leadership for the school's shared mission and goals. Assists to provide direction to staff in implementing goals and objectives. Qualifications: Bachelors degree; proven teaching and/or administrative success; commitment to the schools mission.

\*Assists and reports to lead administrator

\*Assists to implement student orientation and registration activities

\*Assists in the development and establishing of the school goals and objectives and the planning of the schools instructional program

\*Assists to provide direction to staff in implementing goals and objectives and meets with staff to assist in their development and teacher improvement plans

\*Assists in preparation of budget priorities

\*Assists in school disciplinary issues

\*Carries out policies and procedures set by the Director and Board of Trustees

Administrative Assistant - clerical activities will include public reception, phone, administrative support, and other general office duties. The administrative assistant will have reasonable clerical experience in these areas.

Lead and Connect Teachers - At minimum, 75% of the lead teachers shall hold teacher certificates. We will seek teachers with creative and innovative teaching skills who demonstrate commitment to the school's stated principles and goals. Exceptional teachers will hold the appropriate licensure for teaching or administrating special ED programs and will be highly qualified.

Teacher Assistant - Prior teaching assistant experience and/or education course work would be optimal for these positions without specific certificates or licenses required.

Substitute Teachers - Will have a passion for children and a commitment to the school's mission.

Custodian - provides general upkeep, repair, and custodial services to the facility, inside and outside of the classrooms. The custodian must have



reasonable facilities experience.

Librarian - Manage, maintain, and acquire appropriate school resources. Provides additional classroom support and research-based training to parents and teachers. Is an information and technology expert to the school; works closely with all teachers to provide individualized instruction to students. The librarian will hold appropriate licensure and will be highly qualified.

Reading Specialist - provides additional reading support to individual students who are at-risk, gifted, or have special needs. Provides additional classroom support and research-based training to teachers and parents. The reading specialist will hold appropriate licensure and will be highly qualified.

School Social Worker or Counselor/Ombudsman- The School Social Worker promotes and enhances the overall academic mission by providing services that strengthen home, school, and community partnerships and address barriers to learning and achievement. The School Social Worker significantly contributes to the development of a healthy, safe, and caring environment. Such an environment is achieved by advancing the understanding of the emotional and social development of children and the influences of family, community, and cultural differences on student success along with the implementation of effective intervention strategies. The major functions of the school social worker job description incorporate the North Carolina State Board of Education guiding mission that every public school student will graduate from high school globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the twenty-first century (2008, North Carolina School Social Worker Job Description). The school social worker will hold appropriate licensure and will be highly qualified.

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

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

At minimum, 75% of the lead teachers shall hold teacher certificates; Exceptional Teachers will hold appropriate teaching licensure and certificates;

School Social Worker will hold appropriate licensure; other employees as deemed appropriate.

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.*

At Pioneer Springs Community School, teachers are leaders and often mentors. Teachers have the opportunity to share knowledge and experience with other teachers at weekly staff meetings and in Professional Learning Communities. Since innovation is key in our classrooms, all staff has an opportunity to focus on experiences and techniques that have been beneficial to them in the classroom. Our specialists - Exceptional Children Teachers, School Social Worker, Reading Specialist, Librarian, and Directors provide training and updates in their areas of expertise. Lead teachers as well as teacher assistants may share innovative and beneficial research-based best practices and techniques with others in the team to grow as professionals.

Pioneer Springs' educational consultant from Community School of Davidson visits weekly and shares cutting-edge, current, rigorous academic

information that ensures PSCS is achieving continuity with the Basic School Model and providing exceptional education to our students. Classroom observation is a key element in evaluating staff. Staff is observed not only by administrators but also colleague teachers and other staff. We may also implement the use of a teaching system of accountability such as McREL. We believe that everyone wants to improve and that we can all learn from one another. Staff feels valued and supported through this constructive observation and helps to retain our teachers.

The school calendar provides teacher workdays and the opportunity to learn from planned visits from members of community resources as well as the opportunity to attend outside professional development. Our mentor school, Community School of Davidson, is thirteen miles away from our current location and provides tremendous learning opportunities including their Fresh Take Conference each year. Staff also shares articles and relevant books and provides discussion during book discussion. Staff is required to maintain their certification and licensure.

- 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.*

Professional development will occur mostly in-house since we attract and retain highly successful, motivated, and knowledgeable staff that are an asset to others within the school; teacher leaders sharing with others. We also contract with Community School of Davidson to visit classrooms and observe their teachers as well as attend their annual conference. Additionally, we bring community groups to the school to share knowledge of community resources and additional education and training. Together our in-house staff, community resources and connection to Community School of Davidson will effectively allow proper implementation of our educational program. All educational resources and training in-house and at Community School of Davidson will be available to all members of staff. Staff needing individualized training will be provided one on one training as deemed necessary by themselves and the Director/Assistant Director.

Additionally, teachers may have access to national and international training resources such as the International Reading Association, ASCD (formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development), and National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Representatives attending national/international training will bring information back to share with the teaching teams to keep current on research and best practices.

- 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.*

Prior to the opening of the charter school, professional development will be provided by observing current classrooms at Pioneer Springs and Community School of Davidson. The annual conference at Community School of Davidson is offered in the summer prior to school opening. Also, our educational consultant will prepare additional training days to educate our staff on the whole child approach, thematic units, and our scope and sequence. Observation days and Professional Learning Communities will be arranged.

- 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.*

Professional development will be provided in the summer before the school year begins. Additional observation and training days will be scheduled with teacher assistants and substitute teachers covering lead teacher classrooms. Teacher workdays are planned to provide in-house training from current specialized staff, community resources, and from Community School of Davidson staff. Weekly staff meetings keep staff up to date and familiar with how other staff are using innovative and creative techniques in their classrooms.

### **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 reflect 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)).*

Pioneer Springs Community Schools marketing plan will include:

- \*Holding open houses at the school to provide families with information on the schools mission, purposes and philosophy.
- \*Advertising in local neighborhood newsletters, magazines, newspapers and social media (Facebook and Twitter).
- \*Direct contact with local organizations and community centers to reach at risk and diverse ethnic populations.
- \*Event Marketing at local neighborhood events.
- \*Direct contact with local preschools

### **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. Pioneer Springs Community School has a website and social media presence through Facebook. At the time Pioneer Springs is approved for Charter the online presence will reflect that status and the timeline for Lottery and Opening. The Marketing Plan will reach out to prospective parents and community members.

2. At Pioneer Springs Community School, teachers and parents work together to create an inclusive community of learning; we believe that parents are a child's first and best teacher. Teachers are communicative with parents and frequently inform them of student progress and the specifics of educational goals being addressed in the classroom; therefore, to build stronger teacher, parent, and school relationships, we will communicate with parents through workshops, conferences, and newsletters. We enthusiastically welcome parents to volunteer in many capacities to fulfill their roles as crucial

members of our school community; parents are also encouraged to attend workshops that will help them better understand our school philosophy and instructional processes.

Because there is a direct correlation between outside/nature experiences and stress reduction, Pioneer Springs' goal is to encourage outdoor group outings. Pioneer Springs will advocate class outings and family/school get-togethers outside of school hours in an effort to build community and a greater respect and understanding of the natural environment.

## **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.*

1. Tentative dates for application period; enrollment deadlines and procedures.

Pioneer Springs Community School will not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender or disability. The school will not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic performance, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

Pioneer Springs Community School will hold open enrollment, tentatively, through November 18, 2013 through February 28, 2014. Open house sessions and enrollment applications will be posted on the schools website ([www.pioneersprings.org](http://www.pioneersprings.org)). Open house sessions will be tentatively held in January and February, 2014.

2. Clear policies and procedures detailing the open enrollment lottery plan including policies regarding statutory permitted student enrollment preferences.

\*If the number of registrants for a grade level exceeds the number of openings at that grade level, a public lottery will be held to determine the admissions for that grade level.

\*The lottery for the 2014-2015 school year is open to the public and will occur during one of our board meetings, tentatively scheduled, Tuesday, March 25, 2014.

\*All names will be randomly drawn, and students will be admitted based on the order of selection beginning with third grade.

\*The lottery will continue until all names are drawn.

\*Pioneer Springs Community School will give enrollment priority to siblings of currently enrolled students who were admitted to the charter school in a previous year and to children of the schools Director, teachers, and teacher assistants.

\*If openings remain available after the close of open enrollment or become available, registrations will be on a first come, first served basis until there are no further openings.

\*Registrations will be date and time stamped upon submission, and students will be admitted in the order in which the registrations are received.

\*On an annual basis the board of directors will analyze student demographic enrollment statistics and revise the marketing plan to ensure that Pioneer Springs Community School reflects the demographics of the community in which we serve.

3. Policies and procedures for student waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers.

Student Waiting Lists:

Any application received after the application deadline will still be accepted and will be added to the end of the grade level waitlist. Students not accepted during the open enrollment lottery will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which their names are drawn.

Withdrawals and Transfers:

Students who are planning to withdraw from Pioneer Springs Community School must meet with the Director accompanied by a parent/legal guardian. Upon written request, a copy of the students records will be provided.

Re-enrollment:

If a student is admitted to Pioneer Springs Community School and does not enroll; or withdraws/transfers to another school; student may reapply to Pioneer Springs and will be added to the end of the grade level waitlist.

4. Explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities (if any) for students or parents.

Informal socials and tours will be scheduled during the Spring before the school year to introduce the children and families to the school environment. Teachers and other staff will have the opportunity to meet soon to be entering children and help create balanced classrooms.

5. Clear policies and procedures for student withdraws and transfers.

\*Student wanting to withdraw or transfer must meet with the school Director accompanied by a parent/legal guardian.

\*Upon written request, a copy of the students records will be provided.

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

IDENTIFY LEA FROM WHICH STUDENTS WILL PROBABLY COME

- LEA #1 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
- LEA #2 Cabarrus County 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 600	LEA 130	LEA 000	LEA 600	LEA 130	LEA 000	LEA 600	LEA 130	LEA 000	LEA 600	LEA 130	LEA 000	LEA 600	LEA 130	LEA 000
Kindergarten	34	10		34	10		34	10		34	10		34	10	
Grade 01	34	10		34	10		34	10		34	10		34	10	
Grade 02	34	10		34	10		34	10		34	10		34	10	
Grade 03	34	10		34	10		34	10		34	10		34	10	
Grade 04	0	0		34	10		34	10		34	10		34	10	
Grade 05	0	0		0	0		34	10		34	10		34	10	
Grade 06	0	0		0	0		0	0		34	10		34	10	
Grade 07	0	0		0	0		0	0		0	0		34	10	
	136	40		170	50		204	60		238	70		272	80	
	176			220			264			308			352		

**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.*

Pioneer Springs Community School will ensure that no child is denied access to the school due to lack of transportation. We will assist in providing carpooling opportunities for all families in need of transportation. We will help create connections between school families and/or set up carpooling locations. We will provide rented transportation for in-school field trips. Future options may include possible light rail/commuter train. Additionally, our school's closest bus stop is located at Reames Road and Old Reames Road.

**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.*

Pioneer Springs Community School will provide a healthy school lunch to children that are lacking a daily meal. Children at Pioneer Springs Community School bring a healthy snack and lunch from home each day. If a child is in need of a healthy lunch or snack, our community school will provide. If the need is consistent we will outsource our lunch plan to local businesses. As the school grows, we will reassess and determine if our need is great enough to apply for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

**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		\$250.00
Officers and Directors/Errors and Omissions	\$1,000,000		\$1,100.00
Property Insurance	\$20,000		\$100.00
Motor Vehicle Liability	\$1,000,000		\$1,200.00
Bonding Minimum/Maximum Amount	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$1,100.00
Other	\$0		\$540.00
<b>Total Cost</b>			<b>\$4,290.00</b>

\*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.

pioneersprings 02/18/2013

(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).*

Pioneer Springs Community School has secured space for our first year as a charter school and is in the process of obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy. We currently lease classroom space in the Historic Croft Schoolhouse from an unaffiliated business, ALB Architecture. The Historic Croft Schoolhouse resides on a large property surrounded on two sides by wooded areas and has mature trees on another side. The neighboring property owner, as well as our landlords, have expressed interest in our continued growth and the purchase/lease of their properties. In addition, the neighboring property owner has granted permission for us to expand onto his property in an existing commercial structure, or with modular units for additional classrooms in our first year as a charter school. Pioneer Springs Community School wants to maintain the historical integrity of our current 1890 location and to continue our commitment to the local community. Our nature focus compels us to be mindful of environmental concerns - we are committed to re-purposing a building rather than building a brand new structure, if at all possible.

**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.*

Pioneer Springs Community School (PSCS) is currently a private school operating within the above location. At the time of conversion to a Charter School, Pioneer Springs will utilize our current building and will add three additional classrooms on the adjoining property, which will adequately serve our first year classroom needs. Children will eat in their classrooms and play in the natural environment surrounding the school grounds. In year two,



Pioneer Springs Community School will expand our classroom space with an additional property purchase/lease within the surrounding area. There is an available commercial property across the street from the school with sufficient room for future growth expansion. In the event that we were prevented from expanding as planned in our current location, Pioneer Springs will conduct a thorough facility search of available properties in the area, as well as contact local churches regarding partnering with their facilities, while making clear our non-sectarian school philosophy.

## 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 #1 600 - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools**

Revenue	2012-2013 Per Pupil Funding	Projected LEA ADM	Approximate funding for 2014-2015
State Funds	\$4,438.40	136	\$603,622.40
Local Funds	\$2,377.00	136	\$323,272.00
Federal EC Funds	\$3,743.48	17	\$63,639.16
<b>Totals</b>			\$990,533.56

**LEA #2 130 - Cabarrus County Schools**

Revenue	2012-2013 Per Pupil Funding	Projected LEA ADM	Approximate funding for 2014-2015
State Funds	\$4,316.93	40	\$172,677.20
Local Funds	\$1,574.59	40	\$62,983.60
Federal EC Funds	\$3,743.48	4	\$14,973.92
<b>Totals</b>			\$250,634.72

**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	\$78,613	\$82,357	\$97,330	\$112,304	\$131,022
-Local Per Pupil Funds	\$386,256	\$482,820	\$579,383	\$675,947	\$772,511
-Other Funds*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
-State ADM Funds	\$776,300	\$970,375	\$1,164,449	\$1,358,524	\$1,552,599
-Working Capital*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$1,241,169</b>	<b>\$1,535,552</b>	<b>\$1,841,162</b>	<b>\$2,146,775</b>	<b>\$2,456,132</b>

**\*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>															
Director	1	\$45,000	\$45,000	1	\$46,350	\$46,350	1	\$47,740	\$47,740	1	\$50,647	\$50,647	1	\$52,167	\$52,167
Assistant Director	0	\$0	\$0	1	\$38,000	\$38,000	1	\$39,140	\$39,140	1	\$40,314	\$40,314	2	\$41,524	\$83,048
Administrative Assistant	1	\$15,000	\$15,000	1	\$15,450	\$15,450	1	\$15,913	\$15,913	1	\$16,390	\$16,390	1	\$16,882	\$16,882
Lead Teachers	8	\$36,000	\$288,000	10	\$37,080	\$370,800	12	\$38,192	\$458,304	14	\$39,338	\$550,732	16	\$40,518	\$648,288
Teacher Assistants	8	\$20,000	\$160,000	10	\$20,600	\$206,000	12	\$21,218	\$254,616	14	\$21,854	\$305,956	16	\$22,499	\$359,984
Connect Teachers	5	\$6,400	\$32,000	5	\$7,200	\$36,000	5	\$8,800	\$44,000	7	\$10,400	\$72,800	7	\$12,000	\$84,000
Exceptional Children Teacher(s)	1	\$36,000	\$36,000	1	\$37,080	\$37,080	1	\$38,192	\$38,192	2	\$39,338	\$78,676	2	\$40,518	\$81,036
Reading Specialist	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1	\$25,000	\$25,000
School Social Worker	0	\$0	\$0	1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1	\$25,750	\$25,750	1	\$26,522	\$26,522	1	\$27,318	\$27,318
Librarian	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	1	\$15,000	\$15,000	1	\$15,000	\$15,000
Substitute Teachers	2	\$600	\$1,200	3	\$900	\$2,700	4	\$1,200	\$4,800	5	\$1,500	\$7,500	6	\$1,800	\$10,800
Custodian	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	1	\$11,000	\$11,000	1	\$12,000	\$12,000
Educational Consultant	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	1	\$11,000	\$11,000	1	\$12,000	\$12,000	1	\$13,000	\$13,000	1	\$14,000	\$14,000
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>\$199,000</b>	<b>\$617,200</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>\$268,660</b>	<b>\$818,380</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>\$278,145</b>	<b>\$970,455</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>\$310,303</b>	<b>\$1,213,537</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>\$321,226</b>	<b>\$1,429,523</b>
<b>Benefits:</b>															
	# Staff	Cost Per	Total	# Staff	Cost Per	Total	# Staff	Cost Per	Total	# Staff	Cost Per	Total	# Staff	Cost Per	Total
Disability	18	\$8	\$144	23	\$9	\$207	27	\$9	\$243	32	\$9	\$288	37	\$10	\$370
Health Insurance	18	\$6,000	\$108,000	23	\$6,180	\$142,140	27	\$6,365	\$171,855	32	\$6,556	\$209,792	37	\$6,753	\$249,861
Life Insurance	18	\$102	\$1,836	23	\$106	\$2,438	27	\$110	\$2,970	32	\$113	\$3,616	37	\$116	\$4,292

Pioneer Springs Community School

Medicare	18	\$339	\$6,102	23	\$353	\$8,119	27	\$366	\$9,882	32	\$377	\$12,064	37	\$387	\$14,319
Retirement Plan	18	\$847	\$15,246	23	\$883	\$20,309	27	\$916	\$24,732	32	\$942	\$30,144	37	\$967	\$35,779
Social Security	18	\$1,820	\$32,760	23	\$1,897	\$43,631	27	\$1,969	\$53,163	32	\$2,024	\$64,768	37	\$2,079	\$76,923
Suta	18	\$250	\$4,500	23	\$250	\$5,750	27	\$250	\$6,750	32	\$250	\$8,000	37	\$250	\$9,250
Total Benefits	126	\$9,366	\$168,588	161	\$9,678	\$222,594	189	\$9,985	\$269,595	224	\$10,271	\$328,672	259	\$10,562	\$390,794
<b>Total Personnel Budget</b>	155	\$208,366	\$785,788	197	\$278,338	\$1,040,974	230	\$288,130	\$1,240,050	274	\$320,574	\$1,542,209	315	\$331,788	\$1,820,317

**\*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	Furnishings	\$42,500	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
	Individualized Supplies	\$1,760	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,500
	Laptops	\$10,110	\$11,910	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$18,000
	Musical Instruments	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$0	\$0
	Nature Supplies	\$7,500	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Books and Supplies	Copy Paper	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$3,000
	Curriculum/Texts	\$15,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
	Instructional Materials	\$5,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
	School Supplies	\$2,400	\$3,000	\$3,600	\$4,200	\$4,800
	Testing Supplies	\$5,112	\$3,440	\$4,068	\$4,696	\$5,324
Human Resources Costs	Contract Employees	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$10,000
	Powerschool	\$4,400	\$5,500	\$6,600	\$7,700	\$8,800
	Training	\$2,400	\$2,925	\$3,300	\$3,600	\$4,200
Other	Accounting	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500
	Contingency - Unknown Expenses	\$35,000	\$50,000	\$35,000	\$17,500	\$20,000
	Food Plan	\$200	\$250	\$300	\$350	\$400
	Insurances	\$4,290	\$4,290	\$4,290	\$4,290	\$4,290
	Isis Accounting	\$13,000	\$16,000	\$18,500	\$21,200	\$23,500
	Marketing Plan	\$500	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$800
	Transportation Plan	\$5,600	\$7,000	\$9,600	\$10,000	\$12,800
	Travel Expenses	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$2,000
Rents and Debt Services	Custodial Supplies	\$3,000	\$3,500	\$3,750	\$3,750	\$4,250
	Extermination	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
	Facility Lease/Mortgage	\$112,000	\$140,000	\$168,000	\$196,000	\$224,000
	Maintenance	\$250	\$500	\$750	\$800	\$1,250
	Rent of Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Security/Alarm	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,500
Technology Technology Hardware	Instructional Software	\$500	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300
	It Support	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
	Network/Internet	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200
	Office Software	\$100	\$150	\$200	\$250	\$300
	Other	\$9,900	\$2,700	\$9,900	\$0	\$3,250
Utilities	Electric	\$4,000	\$4,200	\$5,000	\$5,250	\$6,000
	Phone	\$770	\$800	\$850	\$850	\$900

	Water/Sewer/Trash	\$634	\$750	\$750	\$800	\$825
	Total Operations	\$321,626	\$329,165	\$355,458	\$355,736	\$394,189

**\*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)	\$785,788	\$1,040,974	\$1,240,050	\$1,542,209	\$1,820,317
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (OPERATIONS)	\$321,626	\$329,165	\$355,458	\$355,736	\$394,189
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$1,107,414	\$1,370,139	\$1,595,508	\$1,897,945	\$2,214,506
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,241,169	\$1,535,552	\$1,841,162	\$2,146,775	\$2,456,132
ANNUAL NET PROJECTIONS	\$133,755	\$165,413	\$245,654	\$248,830	\$241,626

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

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

- 1. 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?*

Pioneer Springs Community School based budgetary projections on actual Year 1 budgetary expenses as a private school and the growth of Pioneer Springs Community School in its second year as a private school. Additionally we considered standard rate of charter school compensation and benefits at 30% of annual salaries and standard, local rental rates and operational expenses based on historic budgetary data. Rental rates and utility rates are actual for our current location with the addition of three classrooms with actual rental quotes. Dependent upon our student population and needs our budgetary projections would be altered as necessary. The determined break-even point for student enrollment is approximately 85% of the projected enrollment.

- 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*

The director will solicit a minimum of three (3) bids through standard RFP (Request for Proposal) process for provision of contract services, to include submission of client references, accreditation, insurances and costs for services. Bids will then be submitted to the Board of Trustees for final decision. The current budget reflects quotes for the provision of accounting, payroll, auditing and IT services. To prevent conflict of interest issues and provide sufficient checks and balances, accounting and auditing services will be provided by separate firms.

- 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.*

Pioneer Springs Community School seeks to maintain sound fiscal policies through prioritizing our expenses. We believe a safe and well-furnished facility, as well as proper teacher/student ratios, are core to our mission and effective learning. Our Facility & Overhead and our Educational Priority expenses would receive budget priority. Although the Administrative and Variable Overhead costs are important and desired, we believe that in a time of financial austerity these expenses could be managed through volunteer services, reduction, fundraising, or elimination. Due to anticipated cash flow challenges in Year One, we will rely on a line of credit to meet any first year deficits. In following years, our budget



affords a 10% contingency reserve for unforeseen expenses. (Note: we do not have any bonds, real estate or grants.)

(Appendix R, p. for Chart).

- 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.*

In anticipation of a budgetary gap at the beginning of our first year of operation as a Charter School, we intend to secure a line of credit from a local lending institution to guarantee the availability of funds to meet daily operating costs.

- 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?*

Pioneer Springs Community School's budget accounts for contingency funds to deal with revenue being lower than planned. Our Facility & Overhead and our Educational Priority expenses would receive budget priority as outlined above.

Break-even student enrollment/Projected enrollment

Year 1 - 152/176

Year 2 - 186/220

Year 3 - 221/264

Year 4 - 266/308

Year 5 - 311/352

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

In the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening, the Board of Directors will approach our banking institution for loan assistance. Pioneer Springs Community School currently has a community presence and anticipates full enrollment at the time of opening as a charter school; this along with the preliminary approval of charter status should ensure financial viability. Pioneer Springs Community School will also continue to fundraise.

Pioneer Springs, as a private school, has created several successful fundraisers including a raffle for community items and an art show with live auction.

**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.*

Our budget includes the costs of an independent auditor to conduct annual audits. Our plan is for our Board of Trustees to establish an Audit Committee to oversee the hiring and the work of the auditor. We will follow the procedures outlined in our budget narrative to request three (3) proposals from various firms to be considered by the Audit Committee, who will then make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for the final selection.

*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.*

We plan to use the firm of Potter and Company, CPA to conduct a full audit of the first year of operation as a charter.

Potter & Company, Certified Public Accountants  
114 N. Church Street  
Monroe, NC 28110  
Phone: (704) 283-8189  
Fax: (704) 289-3439

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 Pioneer Springs Community School (*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: pioneersprings

Board Position: Chairman of the Board

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

Date: 02/28/2013

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

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

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

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