



## **NORTH CAROLINA CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION**

# **Charlotte Lab School**

**Public charter schools opening the fall of 2015**

**Due by 5:00 pm, December 6, 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 2015-2016 school year**

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

- September 6, 2013** A letter of intent to apply for the 2015-2016 school year **must** be received electronically to Deanna Townsend-Smith in the Office of Charter Schools **no later than 12:00 noon at deanna.townsend-smith@dpi.nc.gov**. 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.
- December 6, 2013** A complete online application package, in the Office of Charter Schools **by 5:00 pm.**
- December 13, 2013** A copy of the application due to the Local Education Agency in which the proposed charter school will reside in. Applicant must provide an attached PDF version as evidence to the Office of Charter Schools (i.e. signed letter).

### **APPLICATION SPECIFICATIONS**

Applicants can submit applications prior to the deadline December 6, 2013 at 5:00 pm. **All applicants must be submitted using the online portal** and applicants are to use the following specifications:

1. All required Appendices should be clearly titled, include page numbers (i.e. Appendix A and page numbers as- A1, A2, B1...), and submitted as a FULL PDF document.
2. Review all elements of your application for completeness before submitting. **An incomplete application will result in the elimination of the application.**
3. Late submissions **will not** be accepted. No exceptions.
4. Provide confirmation electronically to the Office of Charter Schools to [deanna.townsend-smith@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:deanna.townsend-smith@dpi.nc.gov) 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.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I.	<u>APPLICATION CONTACT INFORMATION</u>	5
	Grade Levels Served and Total Student Enrollment:	5
II.		
	<u>MISSION and PURPOSES</u>	7
	Mission:	7
	Educational need and Targeted Student Population of the Proposed Charter School:	7
	Purposes of the Proposed Charter School:	10
	Goals for the Proposed Charter School:	11
III.		
	<u>EDUCATION PLAN</u>	14
	Instructional Program:	14
	C	
	K-5 Curriculum and Instructional Design:	15
	C	
	6-8 Curriculum and Instructional Design:	18
	C	
	Special Programs and "At-Risk" Students	19
	Exceptional Children	22
	Student Performance Standards	25
	Student Conduct:	28
IV.		
	<u>GOVERNANCE, OPERATIONS and CAPACITY</u>	30
	Governance:	30
	Governance and Organizational Structure of Private Non-Profit Organization:	30
	Proposed Management Organization (Educational Management Organization or Charter Management Organization)	37
	Private School Conversions: complete	37
	C	
	Projected Staff:	38
	Staffing Plans, Hiring, and Management	38
	Staff Evaluation and Professional Development	44
	Enrollment and Marketing:	48
	Marketing Plan	48
	Parent and Community Involvement	49
	Admissions Policy	51
	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2015-16 through 2019-2020	53
	Transportation Plan:	54
	School Lunch Plan:	54
	Civil Liability and Insurance	55
	Health and Safety Requirements:	56
	Facility:	
	Facility Contingency Plan:	57
V.		
	<u>FINANCIAL PLAN</u>	
	Budget: Revenue Projections from each LEA 2015-16	58
	Total Budget: Revenue Projections 2015-16 through 2019-2020	59
	Personnel Budget: Expenditure Projections 2015-16 through 2019-2020	60
	Operations Budget: Expenditure Projections 2015-16 through 2019-2020	63
	Overall Budget:	65
	Budget Narrative:	65
	Financial Audits:	70
VI.		
	<u>AGREEMENT PAGE</u>	

LEA Impact Statement: \_\_\_\_\_71  
Applicant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_71

**I. APPLICATION CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name of proposed charter school: Charlotte Lab School

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

Name of non-profit organization under which charter will be organized or operated: *Charlotte Lab School, Inc.*

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: *Dr. Mary Moss*

Title/Relationship to nonprofit: *Non-Voting Board Member*

Mailing address: 201 Altondale Avenue  
Charlotte NC 28207

Primary telephone: 646-320-0261 Alternative telephone: 914-588-8672

E-Mail address: *mmoss@novareschools.org*

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: X

Yes:

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

No: X

Yes:

What is the name of the nonprofit organization that governs this charter school? *Charlotte Lab School, Inc.*

Is this application for Virtual charter school: Yes: No: X

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

Projected School Opening: Year 2015 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,01,02,03,04	280
Second Year	K,01,02,03,04,05	340
Third Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06	400
Fourth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07	460
Fifth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	520
Sixth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	530
Seventh Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	540
Eight Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	540
Ninth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	540
Tenth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	540

*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 initial 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 will result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award. I understand that incomplete applications will 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 non-profit organization.*

charlottelabschool  
Charter Application  
*Signature*

Charlotte Lab School - 2015 NC  
*Title*

charlottelabschool  
*Printed Name*

12/06/2013  
*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:*

The mission of the Charlotte Lab School is to rethink schooling for the 21st century. Acting as a true lab school where students, teachers, and local partners work in collaboration with one another to advance teaching, learning, and leadership, we will become an active community of learners and create a school experience that values authentic learning, individualization and personalization, global awareness and bilingualism, student metacognition, and innovation.

### **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.*

Charlotte Lab School (CLS) is committed to serving a diverse student body. Therefore, CLS will have a Targeted Population that is reflective of Mecklenburg, the county in which the school will be developed. According to the 2011 Census, the demographic make-up of the county is 45% White, 35% African American, 13% Hispanic, and 7% Other. While this differs slightly from that of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), our Local Education Agency (LEA), which is 32% White, 42% African American, 18% Hispanic and 8% Other, we hope that enrolling students within these target demographics will support CMS with overcrowding and will provide our school with the racial, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity that we desire. Due to our emphasis on foreign language instruction, with the goal of developing bilingual graduates, we will seek to increase the Spanish and Chinese-speaking populations.

While we do plan to target families who will make CLS diverse and culturally distinct, we also will target families who wish for their children to receive a unique educational experience and subscribe to the lab school mission. One group that CLS will market the charter school to includes families who place a high importance on foreign language instruction in the early grades. CLS will offer the option of receiving either Spanish or Mandarin Chinese language instruction. These are two of the world's most widely spoken languages, yet there is not enough representation of the teaching of either language in our public elementary and middle schools in Charlotte. There clearly is a need for both. Based on a May 2013 survey conducted by Nielson.com, Charlotte was recognized as the fastest designated market area among Hispanics with a 168% growth in population since 2000. As

a result, CMS is serving a growing number of Hispanic students; according to the Charlotte Observer, CMS is serving nearly three times the amount of Hispanic students that they served ten years ago. Despite this growth, CMS has only two Spanish dual language K-8 schools. Moreover, there is only one CMS elementary school that offers a Mandarin Chinese dual language immersion program, and it is offered only to kindergarten and first grades, yet there is a strong desire among Charlotte businesses, particularly within the banking industry, for professionals who speak the language. Several local organizations recognize the need for more language instruction. CMS has proposed an additional language immersion PK-8 school for August 2017 in their 2013 bond referendum. In addition, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte offers an undergraduate program in both languages as well as a Spanish study abroad scholarship, and Queens University has a federally funded grant that offers recent high school graduates a free summer Mandarin Chinese immersion program.

Another group that CLS will market to includes families who want their children to experience authentic 21st century learning in the heart of Charlotte-Uptown. Given the North Carolina adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), students must develop an understanding for what it means to be literate in the 21st Century through a variety of content areas and contexts. One way to foster this type of learning is to partner with local organizations, businesses and field experts so that students are exposed to the workforce and daily, real-world experiences. At CLS, students will work with our community partners and visit various locations in or around Uptown Charlotte on a regular basis. For this reason, it is important that CLS is located in the metropolitan area so that our students are within a close distance to all of its resources and so that we are functioning as a true lab school, to serve as a site for the development of teachers, leaders, and rich community partnerships.

- 2. What will be the total projected enrollment at the charter school and what percentage of the Average Daily Membership (ADM) does that reflect when compared to the Local Education Agency (LEA) of the same offered grade levels? (i.e. If the proposed school will be grades 9-12, only compare the total enrollment to the total enrollment of the LEA is grades 9-12).*

The total projected student enrollment at Charlotte Lab School will be 540 students in kindergarten through eighth grades. We plan to open the school with 280 students in grades kindergarten through four and will add a grade level each year through eighth grade. We will continue adding students until there are 60 students per grade level (the seventh year). The total projected student enrollment of CLS in year seven (540 students) reflects 0.5% of the Average Daily Membership of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

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

While Charlotte Lab School will be a new venture, there are some similarities between our education plan and that of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS). Like CMS, we will utilize the Common Core State Standards and Essential Standards as our guide for teaching and learning in all core subjects. We will also use the Balanced Literacy Workshop Model for teaching literacy with support from the units of study designed by Lucy Calkins and The Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University Teachers College.



The most critical difference between CLS and the LEA and other private and charter schools in the Charlotte area is our commitment to our five Core Values: 1)Authentic Learning: Students learn best by doing and practicing in context that best mimics the application of that learning; 2)Individualization and Personalization: Schools must focus on meeting the needs of each and every student and provide opportunities for choice and self-directed learning; 3)Global Awareness and Bilingualism: 21st century schools must reflect the modern world and workplace, with a diverse student and faculty population, opportunities to engage with the outside world, and skills that will enable them to communicate and collaborate with diverse groups of people; 4)Metacognitive Skill Development: School can no longer focus on learning a defined set of concepts - "school" for the 21st century must emphasize the learning process and thinking skills that sustain ongoing learning and adapting; and 5)Innovation: Schools need to develop a habit of innovation - to constantly ask "why?" and "what if?" to keep school structures and learning relevant to students in a constantly changing world.

Another instructional difference between CLS and CMS K-8 schools is that CLS will offer students daily language instruction in one of two languages, Spanish or Mandarin Chinese. While there are currently two Spanish dual language K-8 schools in CMS, there are no schools that offer Mandarin Chinese in all grades K-8. We feel that having a mastery of a second language is a critical component of 21st Century learning and directly aligns with the National Standards for Learning Languages.

Given the autonomy we will have as a charter school, CLS will also have the ability to rethink all aspects of our school structures, systems, and policies. We will extend the school day and decrease the number of days in the school calendar in order to maximize the amount of learning time students have daily and increase the number of professional development and planning days the teachers have monthly. We will also have more flexibility to use our budget to purchase technology equipment or pay for the kinds of professional development that our teachers need. We plan to work in collaboration with CMS to serve as a "learning lab" site for the development of their leaders as well, and to help them develop their own school design and transformation processes.

While many schools claim to be "STEM" or "STEAM" schools, the proliferation of schools with those titles and the lack of quality control for those schools result in confusion about what it means to be a "STEM" school. While CLS does not advertise itself as a STEM school, our inquiry- and student-driven approach to learning, emphasis on problem-solving, and focus on challenge-based learning in science and technology align us closely with many successful STEM models. We hope however that our approach will be more comprehensive, and our separation from a STEM label will enable us long-term flexibility if/when the need and trend for "STEM" schools has passed. It is our ultimate goal as a school to remain adaptable to students' needs.

One final difference is our commitment to creating a small learning environment, by using our funding and staff more creatively. Small schools are a highly desirable option for Charlotte families and few currently exist, especially at the middle school level.

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.*

(1) Charlotte Lab School will work in partnership with community organizations and a local university education department. Ongoing collaboration between teachers, community leaders and institutions of higher education is mutually beneficial; it leads to ongoing improvement of instructional practices and ongoing redesign and revision of their teacher and leader-preparation programs. In addition, we feel that the level of collaboration adds to our identity as a lab school; teachers and leaders, as well as students, will gain the experience of working on-site with trained experts, in an inquiry-based manner.

The varying professional development programs that CLS will offer provide opportunities for our faculty members at all levels, creating a multitude of career options and pathways. Additionally, as a small school that supports collaborative leadership, teachers at CLS will have frequent and ongoing opportunities to inform policy decisions, take on leadership roles, and help shape the culture, traditions, and curriculum of the school.

(3) CLS will provide parents and students with the type of educational experience that will grow innovative leaders who are prepared to thrive in the 21st Century. Therefore, CLS students will have access to instruction that is unlike any other in the surrounding area. We will be one of the few public elementary schools in Charlotte that offers a portion of the students daily instruction in Spanish and the only school that offers Mandarin Chinese in grades kindergarten through eight. This gives school choice to parents who feel strongly about their children growing up bilingual.

Our use of challenge-based learning, an approach that centers the curriculum around real world problems and challenges that students must solve or address, and the Learning Lab program, which enables students to receive

highly individualized instruction every day, also distinguish CLS from both public and private school options in the area. Its small size, developmentally-focused structures, and innovative approach to teaching and learning also make it unique.

With a proposed location of Uptown Charlotte, CLS will be accessible to a diverse student body and accessible to the rich cultural resources of the Charlotte metro-area to expand and enhance learning opportunities. Students can ride the Charlotte Area Transportation System (CATS) light rail or bus to attend the school. While in school, students will have regular access to local organizations, namely Discovery Place, our community partner, and Imaginon, and will work with local businesses throughout our learning modules. This ensures CLS students a more hands-on, inquiry-based learning experience with authentic instructional outcomes.

(6) Being a lab school is one component of the CLS design that makes the students' educational experience a unique one and provides an opportunity to extend learning outside the school walls; students and teachers will learn collaboratively with each other and community partners, creating contextual experiences. While we do not plan to advertise ourselves as a STEM school, we do utilize inquiry-based learning strategies and emphasize math, science and technology in our challenge-based learning courses. These courses are designed to further students' hands-on learning with opportunities to do research in order to solve authentic, real-world problems. In addition, students will take part in an advisory program that is reflective of the needs of each age level and that supports students social, emotional, relational, ethical and metacognitive development, including the preparation of students to lead their own conferences. We also offer a Learning Lab program that provides each student with a personalized plan and regular opportunities for individualized and technology-enabled support in targeted areas. Through the use of these innovative methods, CLS will reach all types of learners.

### **Goals for the Proposed Charter School:**

- 1. 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. Address how often and when the information will be communicated to the governing board and other stakeholders. These goals should include specific and measurable performance objectives over the first five years of the schools existence.*

There are several metrics and performance goals that Charlotte Lab School will set to demonstrate our success; progress towards those goals will be updated and communicated regularly to the Board. During monthly board meetings, the CLS administrative team will provide the Board with a report describing the current state of the school and relay the results of the school's ongoing assessment data based on the SMART goals that the Board has created.

The CLS Board of Directors has developed the following SMART Academic and Organizational goals and objectives:

1) Academic Growth: CLS students show academic growth at the end of each school year.

Goals:

2015-2016: 80% of all students will demonstrate at least one year's academic growth at the end of the school year based upon quarterly benchmark assessments, mCLASS Reading 3D and/or READY EOG results.

2017-2018: 85% of all students will show at least one year's academic growth at the end of the school year based upon quarterly benchmark assessments, mCLASS Reading 3D and/or READY EOG results.

2019-2020: 90% of all students will show at least one year's academic growth at the end of the school year based upon quarterly benchmark assessments, mCLASS Reading 3D and/or READY EOG results.

2) Attendance: CLS students attend school daily.

Goals: CLS will have an Average Daily Attendance (ADA) of 90% each year.

3) School Growth: CLS maintains school capacity, increases the number of applicants, and keeps a wait list of students each year.

Goals:

2015-2016: CLS will serve 100% of the school capacity.

2017-2018: CLS will serve 100% of the school capacity, increase the number of CLS applicants by 200 students, and have a waitlist of at least 25 students.

2019-2020: CLS will serve 100% of the school capacity, increase the number of CLS applicants by 200, and have a waitlist of at least 50 students.

4) Family Satisfaction and Retention: CLS students and families are pleased to be part of the CLS community and remain CLS students each year.

Goals:

2015-2016: 85% of families will be pleased to be part of the CLS community based upon the parent survey results and 90% will remain CLS students.

2017-2018: 90% of students and families will be pleased to be part of the CLS community based upon the parent survey results and 92% will remain CLS students.

2019-2020: 95% of students and families will be pleased to be part of the CLS community based upon the parent survey results and 95% of K-7 students will remain at CLS.

5) Teacher Satisfaction and Retention: CLS teachers are pleased to be working at CLS and will remain on staff each year.

Goals:

2015-2016: 80% of teachers will be pleased to be to be working at CLS based upon the teacher survey results and 85% will remain on staff.

2017-2018: 85% of teachers will be pleased to be to be working at CLS based upon the teacher survey results and 90% will remain on staff.

2019-2020: 90% of teachers will be pleased to be to be working at CLS based upon the teacher survey results and 90% will remain on staff.

*2. How will the governing board know that the proposed public charter school is working toward attaining their mission statement?*

During monthly Board Meetings, the CLS administrative team will present a school progress report to the Board of Directors, citing examples of how the school is achieving its mission. They will bring data from all instructional programs including challenge-based learning activities, information from the community partners, evidence of the use of technology, and feedback from the Spanish and Mandarin Chinese language instructors about the state of the language program and the students response to learning dual languages, and other relevant student growth data.

In addition to the report on the school mission, the CLS administrative team will provide the Board with data to show how the school is achieving each of the five goals listed above. Throughout the year, we will provide evidence of academic growth through benchmark testing results and average daily attendance through Power School reports. Annually we will discuss data on school growth based on the number of applicants and waiting list, as well as results from the Family and Teacher surveys. All of this information will give the Board a complete understanding of how CLS is achieving our school mission and goals.

### 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 will 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.

With the support of our identified Head of School Dr. Mary Moss, who was a Founding Co-Principal of the New York City iSchool and former principal of Mott Hall II, Charlotte Lab School will model our instructional program after these innovative and successful schools and modify the approach to meet the needs of our K-8 student body.

To uphold the fidelity of our core values (described in the previous section), and with the unique needs of our students in mind, CLS will utilize a variety of instructional methods. Much like the NYCiSchool and Mott Hall II, the CLS instructional approach is focused on authentic learning experiences which will enable students to learn content and skills through logical contexts and applications. Students will develop a better sense for global awareness, will be able to communicate in a second language, are exposed to current events, and creatively learn 21st century skills through challenge-based courses that are inherently interdisciplinary. These courses will enable students to discuss and collaboratively develop solutions for age-appropriate real-world challenges. They will develop mathematics understandings through the solving of real-world problems; because students develop mathematical abilities at different paces, the mathematics program will be highly individualized, modeled after the Teach to One program offered by New Classrooms. CLS students will develop reading and writing skills by reading authentic literature and writing original work as part of Columbia University Teachers College Reading and Writing Workshop model. In addition, they will become fluent in a second language, either Spanish or Mandarin Chinese, through a partial immersion dual-language program that is supported by students language acquisition readiness. CLS students will also have the opportunity to explore new areas of interest through Enrichment opportunities that provide exposure and a well-rounded curriculum. In preparation for high school, eighth grade students will develop an Areas of Focus, enabling them to develop expertise in a chosen area of interest.

In order to gauge the success of and drive the instructional program, CLS will use a variety of assessment data. Teachers will create and administer formative and quarterly benchmark assessments in all core areas as one way to measure student learning and academic progress, enabling us to track and monitor student growth and instructional needs in Reading level, literacy skills, Mathematics abilities, Common Core State Standards, 21st Century skills and high school, college and career readiness. Reading levels will



be posted on a data wall which teachers and the administrative team will refer to when discussing student progress. In addition, classroom activities, assignments, projects and challenge-based module work will be tracked through Jump rope.

In combination with benchmark data, teachers will use ongoing, daily classroom data to create a personalized plan for each student. These plans will inform weekly Learning Lab activities, designed to provide opportunities for students to work on the skills that they need at their own pace. Moreover, they will develop a deeper understanding of themselves, each other, and the community through an Advisory program reflective of the needs of their age. In the upper grades, students will also begin to lead their own conferences and create portfolios to showcase their learning, share new understandings, explain their strengths and set future goals. These practices will provide teachers with opportunities for ongoing informal assessments, as well the ability for students to self-reflect and evaluate their progress.

The CLS student body will be comprised of a diverse group of students seeking a school experience that differs from that of the traditional school model. Through our dedication to our core values, we will provide CLS students with a unique and innovative model of school in the 21st Century.

### **K-5 Curriculum and Instructional Design:**

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

Charlotte Lab School will provide a caring and nurturing learning environment for all of our K-8 students where they form lasting relationships with peers and adults, are encouraged to make responsible choices, have a sense of personal ownership and play a role in the community, and are valued as individual thinkers and life-long learners. To achieve this, CLS will offer a small class size (between 20-25 students) and additional personnel to provide a low student-teacher ratio so that teachers can give students more personal attention and support their social and emotional needs. We will also use a student-centered approach, designed so that children and adolescents can develop an understanding for who they are as learners and how they learn best. Using the Lab School model, students will be engaged in daily activities both inside and outside of the classroom. We will use a combination of hands-on activities, field experience around the Uptown Charlotte area, meet with field experts, and utilize one-to-one technology as tools for learning. Our Advisory program will serve as an important foundation for students' academic success, by providing them with the support, guidance, and explicit learning skills needed at each stage of their development. Finally, our ubiquitous use of technology will foster an environment that views it as a tool to use whenever needed, not as a driver for what we do (i.e. never technology for technology's sake). Part of our technology-rich environment will include an explicit curriculum designed to help our students make good choices around technology and raise awareness and consciousness about the dangers of the internet, social media, and the potential long-term consequences for their public images and reputation.

Provide a synopsis of the planned curriculum, including:

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

At Charlotte Lab School we believe in having state and national standards with which to compare our students' academic success, progress and growth. That is why we have aligned our curriculum with the Common Core State Standards and the Essential State Standards. However, we see these standards as just the starting point for the development of our curriculum, which we believe will need to do more than prepare students to be successful on standardized tests; at CLS, we want to prepare students for the kind of deep learning, critical thinking, collaboration, problem solving, and adaptability required for success in higher education and the 21st century workforce. Therefore, our curriculum and instructional practices offer students personalized instruction, challenge-based learning, intensive foreign language instruction, and the approach to learning all content areas in the context of real world applications. The individualized and engaging nature of these approaches, which include hands-on, inquiry-driven, technology-enabled, real world activities are appropriate and effective teaching strategies for students at every level. Additionally, the families who choose CLS will be those seeking and opting into this type of innovative educational experience.

Given our supplemental curriculum, our unique instructional techniques designed to address a wide variety of learners, and regular benchmark assessments, we will have an accurate view of how our students are working; therefore, CLS students will be prepared to participate in the North Carolina Accountability Model. The elementary students will take part in the Read to Achieve Program Grade-Level Implementation Plan. As part of the program, students in kindergarten through third grades will take the mCLASS Reading 3D assessments, a statewide adopted formative diagnostic assessment system, throughout the year. Any student who is working below grade level will take part in the North Carolina Responsiveness to Intervention program and will receive supplemental activities and reading interventions like Fountas and Pinnell's research-based Leveled Literacy Intervention program which supports students' foundational reading and comprehension skills.

In addition, our learning modules and work with community partnerships directly correlate with the READY initiative as it is focused on preparing our students for opportunities in high school and beyond. These modules, as well as our Language Arts and Math curriculum, are designed to teach students the skills that they need for 21st Century readiness. To support this, our quarterly benchmark assessments and performance tasks will align with the North Carolina READY End-of-Grade exams (EOGs) so that teachers will be able to monitor student growth throughout the year and plan their lessons accordingly.

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



Charlotte Lab School recognizes that in order for teachers to be truly effective, they need to educate our children using a variety of instructional strategies. With this in mind, we expect our teachers to have a strong background in the facilitating the workshop model and differentiated learning (described in detail in Appendix B) by the end of their first year with us; these have had proven success with Columbia University Teachers College in reaching all learners.

In addition, we will guide CLS teachers in their mastery of the following strategies and methods:

#### Challenge-Based Curriculum Planning

All CLS teachers will need to build their expertise in the development and facilitation of challenge-based learning modules. Our students will be taught the content areas through an interdisciplinary approach using 9-week courses or modules. The modules are developed around real-world challenges and enhance students' understanding of big ideas and broad global concepts. Solving each challenge becomes the driving force and curriculum of the module, so it is important that teachers have the ability to backwards-plan with the learning outcomes and objectives in mind. They will reach out to local partners and experts and plan for on- and off-site visits, and integrate different subject areas, forms of technology, and learning experiences into the planning of each module. When CLS teachers have effectively planned the structure for the module, students can guide their own learning while the teachers facilitate the process, providing feedback along the way.

While the CLS version of challenge-based learning is unique to us and the NYC iSchool, it was inspired by Apple's challenge based learning model as well as Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound's design principles and curriculum planning resources. Both have experienced national success at growing 21st Century learners who can adapt to the world around them.

#### Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model

To make the partial dual language program successful, CLS teachers will need exposure to the SIOP model. This is a research-based model proven to effectively teach second language learners. The SIOP approach involves a great deal of hands-on modeling and visual cuing so teachers need to internalize how the approach works and receive training on ways to best meet the needs of students learning another language. Because part of our target population are likely to be Hispanic and Asian children who speak Spanish and Mandarin Chinese respectively, as well as other demographics who would like to be bilingual in one of the two languages, an understanding of the SIOP model will be critical for CLS teachers who are teaching in a partial dual language environment.

#### Digital Dexterity

At CLS, our mission is to prepare students for living and thriving in the 21st Century; as a result, CLS teachers need to have digital dexterity. This means that all teachers need to be technologically-proficient and adapt their understanding of the digital world on an ongoing basis based upon current and emerging technology trends. While the traditional school may use technology in a lab for Specials or in a classroom for specific computer programs or research, CLS teachers will truly subscribe to the notion that

21st Century learning means that technology has a purpose and should be accessible to us whenever it can foster and supplement our learning. To expand the notion of "school" and the traditional strict interpretations of when, where, and how it occurs, we want to ensure that our use of technology is ubiquitous - anytime, anywhere - but also driven by the purpose of the task, i.e. never technology for technology's sake.

While this expertise may be demanding on teachers, CLS is committed to hiring and training teachers whose nature is to teach in this manner, and therefore, support the learning of these techniques in true lab school fashion, collaboratively and in context.

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

To maximize our instructional time, Charlotte Lab School will operate on a seven and a half (7.5) hour school day rather than the seven (7) hour school day with which most schools operate. This will allow our students additional time for instructional practices, fieldwork, and meetings with our community partners, which will ultimately improve our challenge-based coursework and academic success. This additional time also enables the time needed to adequately implement our Advisory Program, which we feel will be a critical component to the development of a positive school culture, and the development of important metacognition and 21st century skills that often are not easily or sufficiently integrated into other areas of the curriculum.

With the increase in the instructional day, we have more flexibility with our school calendar. Our 2015-2016 school academic calendar is 175 days, starting and ending one week later than the CMS calendar. We feel that this change is necessary to provide our teachers with the time and resources that they need to be successful: one day on the last school day of each month for teacher development and planning (9 days total), a half (1/2) day each quarter for parent-teacher-student conferences, and additional professional development and planning days before the school year begins and after it ends (11 workdays). The last day of each quarter will be designated as a showcase day where students can share their module work with their peers, parents and community partners which enables students to take ownership of their work and motivates them to increase their learning potential. The "public" nature of these presentations, with the inclusion of a "real world" audience creates a truly high stakes accountability model, for students, teachers, and the school.

### **6-8 Curriculum and Instructional Design:**

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

Refer to K-5 Curriculum and Instructional Design questions for complete K-8 Program description

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 the middle school division the school would ultimately serve.*

2. *Identify how this curriculum aligns with the proposed charter school's mission, targeted student population, and North Carolina Accountability Model.*

Refer to K-5 Curriculum and Instructional Design questions for complete K-8 Program description

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

Refer to K-5 Curriculum and Instructional Design questions for complete K-8 Program description

4. *Provide a school academic calendar in Appendix C (minimum of 185 instructional days or 1,025 hours).*

5. *Describe in a brief narrative below on how the calendar coincides with the tenets of the proposed mission and education plan.*

Refer to K-5 Curriculum and Instructional Design questions for complete K-8 Program description

### **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.*

Charlotte Lab School is dedicated to providing quality instruction and clear methods of prevention and intervention to students who are at-risk of not making adequate academic growth.

To ensure this, CLS will utilize the North Carolina Responsiveness to Instruction (NCRtI) model for addressing the needs of all students. Through this model, all students will receive Tier I support which is the core classroom instruction. Teachers will conduct ongoing informal assessments, document the students' strengths and areas for growth through conference notes, and continue to adjust and differentiate their group and Learning Lab lessons based upon this data and the results from the quarterly benchmark assessments.

In accordance with the North Carolina Student Accountability Standards, any CLS student who is performing below grade level in Reading, Writing, Math or Behavior will receive a Personalized Education Plan (PEP) written and implemented by the classroom teacher, and will enter the intervention process at Tier II. The teacher will set goals, document the evidence-based intervention strategies that they use to meet those goals, and meet quarterly with parents to discuss the students' progress. At that point, the Intervention Team, consisting of a member of the administrative team, a teacher representative from the grade level above and below, and the

classroom teacher, will regularly meet to discuss these students individually.

If a student does not progress on the PEP, the Intervention Team may then move the student to Tier III. This is intensive, targeted instruction given in addition to the core and PEP instruction; the instruction may also be more frequent and/or in a smaller setting. Tier III students may take part in a variety of intensive research-based programs such as Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) by Fountas and Pinnell or Kathy Richardson's Math Perspectives program. For students with behavioral concerns, the Intervention Team will establish a behavior contract with the student, family, and advisor to address specific needs. If a Tier III student still has made limited progress, the Intervention Team may then refer the student for Special Education testing. (See "Exceptional Children" section for referral process).

CLS teachers will monitor the continued progress and academic growth of all CLS students whether they are part of the NCRtI process or not. The CLS administrative team will meet with each teacher quarterly to discuss their students at length during "Kid Talk" sessions; at this time, teachers will have the opportunity to share their class profile, discuss the strengths and areas of growth of individual students and seek suggestions for interventions and instructional strategies to support all students' learning.

While each child's teachers will be involved in this process, and will provide regular and frequent input regarding student progress, each child's Advisor will play the role as "case manager," serving as the student's advocate and primary liaison with the family and any external resources. It is the belief of CLS that given the small and personalized nature of the school, we must ensure that no child "falls through the cracks"; therefore, each faculty member at CLS will serve as an advisor. By utilizing all pedagogically trained staff members, we will be able to attain a student to advisor ratio of 12 to 1, enabling us to provide students and families with more individual attention and ensure the success of each and every student.

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 ELL students.*
  - c) *Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of ELL students, including exiting students from ELL services.*

Charlotte Lab School recognizes the importance of creating an instructional plan and curriculum that includes all learners, namely ELL students, particularly because of our language emphasis and expectation of a significant ELL population. At CLS however, the ability to speak a second language is considered a strength and asset, rather than a challenge to be overcome. While providing opportunities for students who are native speakers of Spanish or Mandarin to continue to excel in their home language, it is obviously also critical that they progress in the English language as well. In accordance with the North Carolina (NC) adoption of the World-

Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium English language development standards, all prospective and current ELL students should be identified, monitored and evaluated to ensure their academic success. To achieve this, CLS will first identify all new ELL students and administer the WIDA Access Placement Test (W-APT) if they meet one of the following criteria:

- Upon entrance to CLS, their families have completed the Home Language Survey (as stated in the North Carolina State Board of Education policy GCS-K-000 (16 NCAC 6D.0106)) and have indicated that English is their second language.
- Their teachers have referred them to the Intervention Team for deficiencies in the English Language.

CLS will also administer the WIDA-ACCESS test to all current ELL students as indicated by their prior school records. The results from this assessment will provide teachers and parents with the students' strengths and areas of growth in a variety of reading, writing, speaking, and listening contexts. Based upon this information, teachers will adapt their instructional strategies to support the students in the appropriate literacy focus areas.

Like all CLS students, ELL students will take part in one of two dual language programs. The majority of our ELL students will receive daily Spanish and English instruction in a classroom filled with Native and non-Native English speakers. For our ELL students whose first language is Mandarin Chinese, they will receive daily Mandarin Chinese and English instruction. We believe that this type of instruction, along with our Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) approach, will benefit not only our ELL students, but all students, as they learn from one another, build vocabulary and experiences in two languages, and develop an appreciation for a second language and culture.

Throughout the dual language and regular classroom instruction, teachers will monitor the growth of all ELL students using the designated classroom and school assessment data. When necessary, ELL students will receive additional support and modified assignments during Learning Lab and Advisory. CLS teachers will meet with parents of all ELL students to discuss their progress during their regular PEP conferences. In addition, for students in grades 3-8, CLS teachers will confer with the school testing coordinator to add any necessary accommodations for state testing.

In addition to monitoring ELL students, CLS teachers will observe and evaluate any Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students that still appear to be struggling with the English language. If they are not making adequate growth on their benchmark and state testing, CLS will differentiate their curriculum and reevaluate their LEP status to meet their needs, adding exemptions and accommodations as necessary. This will ensure that all students have equitable access to instruction.

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.*

At Charlotte Lab School, all students will receive a quality instructional program that requires higher level thinking and is designed to make students high school, college and career-ready. Therefore, we will instruct intellectually gifted students in an inclusive setting with other CLS students and provide enrichment opportunities for the entire student body. We will take into account each student's unique interests, learning styles and capabilities and differentiate their instruction accordingly. Just as Learning Lab and Advisory time will be used to support students who need additional support or work on various skill areas, these times in the schedule can and will be used to provide more challenging activities designed to continue to push gifted students even farther. The level of student choice, the student-centered approach, and the topics of our challenge-based modules enable our program to be inherently differentiated and in line with much of the Talent Development enrichment opportunities offered by the LEA.

Adhering to the North Carolina Academically or Intellectually Gifted (NC AIG) Program Standards, when identifying AIG students that are new to CLS, we will rely on their prior school records to determine their status as AIG students. Once they are in our school, CLS students in any grade level who are not initially identified as AIG and display gifted abilities in one or more subject area(s) can be referred to the CLS administrative team by a classroom teacher, staff member or parent at any time. The administrative team, along with the classroom teacher, will evaluate each student's classroom performance, READY EOG scores, benchmark assessments and informal classroom data to determine if he or she is eligible for the differentiated AIG programming. This programming may include, but is not limited to:

- Grouping across grade levels
- Independent studies for challenge-based module work
- Supplemental work with critical thinking and problem-solving activities during Learning Lab and Advisory
- Technology programs that focus on building analytical skills

These students will be monitored and evaluated in the same manner as other CLS students, through benchmark assessments and ongoing classroom data, and teachers will meet with parents on an as-needed basis if their educational needs and academic goals need to be modified. The environment and methods for monitoring and evaluating students ensure that all CLS students, regardless of ability, are receiving the academic program that is essential to their success and that continues to push them appropriately.

### **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), 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**

If you have questions regarding the application process, please contact the Office of Charter Schools via email at [deanna.townsend-smith@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:deanna.townsend-smith@dpi.nc.gov).

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)*

All CLS students will receive the services and instruction that meet their needs, including students who are eligible for special education services or are protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. To first identify students who should receive these services and/or accommodations, CLS will review cumulative records from all students' previous schools to determine if an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan exists. If the records are delayed, the CLS School Business Manager (SBM) will contact the former school consistently until the records appear. Once the records are in our possession, the SBM will review them for appropriate contents and if there is an Exceptional Children (EC) or 504 folder, he SBM will inform the administrative team. The team will then assign a case manager to all students who have special needs. The case manager is responsible for writing, revising and in some cases, implementing their plans, as well as conducting the IEP or 504 meetings with the classroom teacher, advisor, member of the administrative team, and parent(s). Students who qualify for EC services will have an EC-certified case manager who will also serve as the child's EC teacher. A member of the administrative team will be the case manager for all students with 504 plans.

Following the guidelines of the federal Child Find mandate, if there is a CLS student who is believed to have EC needs, he/she can be evaluated in one of two ways: 1)A parent has submitted a written request to the school asking that his/her child be evaluated for a disability. CLS will then hold an IEP meeting in which a decision will be made by the IEP team as to whether or not there is enough evidence to show that the student should be evaluated for a disability; 2)The student has gone through Tier III of the RtI process with limited progress and is, therefore, referred to the EC Team for evaluation.

If it is determined by the EC Team that the student needs to be evaluated, he/she will be tested by a contracted School Psychologist. Based upon the findings in the psychologist's report, if the student qualifies for EC services, an IEP will be written on his/her behalf and the student will receive instruction from an EC-certified teacher in an inclusion setting. If the student does not qualify for EC services and he/she is new to the RtI process, he/she will be referred to the Intervention Team and begin to receive intervention services. If the student who did not qualify for EC services was referred from Tier III of the RtI process, he/she will continue to receive all interventions through Tier III and classroom modifications as necessary.

Similar to the EC process, if a parent wishes that his/her child receive accommodations under Section 504, he/she will need to provide the school with a copy of the child's medical condition or disability and meet with the case manager and classroom teacher to write a 504 plan.

Throughout the process of identifying and evaluating students for EC services and 504 accommodations, CLS will maintain all EC and 504 records and information in a confidential manner, likely in a secure closet, managed by the SBM. In addition, the EC and administrative teams will have access to the closet and by request, teachers will be able to review their own students' information. There will be a sign-in/out process for all records so that the SBM can locate student records at all times.

A member of the administrative team will be part of each IEP and 504 meeting to ensure compliance with state/federal guidelines, record-keeping, and student services. To facilitate this, the EC and administrative teams will hold parent and teacher meetings for annual review or as dictated by IEPs and 504 plans. EC-certified and general education teachers who instruct EC students and students with 504 plans will continually monitor the plans to ensure appropriateness and compliance.

#### 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.*

At Charlotte Lab School (CLS) we have designed an educational program that ensures a full continuum of services for all students. For students with disabilities, this means that they will receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) through the inclusion model and ongoing differentiated instruction. We believe that the inclusion model works best for most EC students. In this model, EC teachers will push-into classrooms to provide additional one-to-one or group support to EC children. As a result, those students are part of an educational setting that is their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) where they can hear the lesson firsthand from their classroom teacher and receive supplemental instruction from an EC-trained teacher. They also have the benefit of observing their classmates problem-solve through their work and set personal goals for themselves. This example enriches the classroom community and allows all students to learn from and respect one another. While we believe in the inclusion model, we do understand that there is no "one size fits all" solution to EC or any type of instruction; therefore, if a setting other than the inclusion setting is noted on an EC student's IEP, that alternative setting will be provided.

Similar to our ELL and intellectually gifted students, EC students will receive differentiated instruction throughout the day and particularly during the Learning Lab and Advisory blocks. During Reading instruction, teachers will conduct running records to determine their independent and instructional reading levels and work with them in homogeneous guided



reading and strategy groups. During writing, classroom and EC teachers will individually confer with students to determine what their next writing steps should be. With our math program, students will be spending significant time working at their own pace, on the skills that they need to work on, and will be supported by classroom teachers, assistant teachers, and EC teacher when issues with particular challenges arise. This model is student-centered and allows the EC students to challenge themselves and truly push themselves to their academic potential, never to be limited by their placement or the level of other students in their classroom.

Throughout this core instruction, classroom and EC teachers are cognizant of the EC students' IEPs and are modifying instruction and work when applicable to ensure that they are in compliance with the IEP goals and plans. Quarterly parent-teacher conferences are scheduled between the parents, teachers, and advisors to make certain that all stakeholders share the same ideas about the EC students' achievement and progress. Other staff members that work with the EC students are also informed of the IEP goals and will work with the students at the appropriate levels in their subject areas.

When it comes to a parent or teachers' attention that an EC student may need related services, an IEP meeting will be scheduled and the team will convene. The adult who made the referral will bring documentation of the need to the meeting and the team will discuss the options that are available at the school. If the services are available at CLS, the student will receive the related services on-site on a part or full-time basis, depending on the need. If the services are not available, CLS will contract with personnel from the Local Education Agency or another charter school to obtain the services for the child.

CLS believes that all students deserve a sound instructional program and through these EC services and the inclusion model, students with disabilities will be well supported at our school.

### **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 **ALL** students. These standards should set forth what students in the **last grade served** will know and be able to do. Be sure to include plans for the "At-Risk" population.*

Charlotte Lab School has high standards and expectations for the students we serve. We believe that through our experience as educators, the quality of our instructional program, and the wide range of learning experiences that we offer, our students will succeed in meeting our high criteria for success. Therefore, our performance standard for our school as a whole is: 90% of all students will complete their assigned coursework each year, and

90% of all students will show at least one year's academic growth at the end of the school year by 2020, our 5th year open as a school.

To achieve this, there are many evaluation tools that we will use in addition to our state tests:

#### Literacy

In Reading, we will use different formative assessments to measure our students' Reading levels. Teachers in grades K-3 will follow the state guidelines for mCLASS Reading 3D assessments and use their fluency, word recognition, and text reading and comprehension progress monitoring tools to gain a picture of each reader as a whole. The results will provide teachers with the appropriate information to drive their individual, small group and whole group lessons. In addition, in grades 3-8, Literacy teachers will conduct Fountas and Pinnell benchmark assessments at a minimum of once a quarter or whenever they believe a child has moved up in reading level. These assessments, similar to the text reading and comprehension assessments, will provide teachers with an understanding of students' reading skills and behaviors and what comprehension strategies they use to analyze texts.

In Writing, teachers will create rubrics for each writing unit of study in order to evaluate the students published pieces and ongoing writing abilities. They will also use Columbia University's Teachers College Reading and Writing Project's (TCRWP) writing continuum to assess the students strengths and areas of improvement which will support them in determining teaching points for the student conferences and small group lessons.

Finally, TCRWP's performance tasks for Reading and Writing will be conducted in all grades K-8 two times a year to give CLS teachers a baseline for how their students' understanding of informal reading and writing transfers to summative task-oriented assignments. This will also help teachers gauge how students may perform on their Smarter Balanced READY EOG performance tasks at the end of the year.

#### Math, Social Studies and Science

CLS teachers will assess students on an ongoing basis using teacher observations and conference notes, rubrics from projects and assignments, and CLS-created performance tasks and benchmark assessments for each strand of the Common Core and Essential Standards. Once a quarter, CLS teachers will also use a program such as the ClassScape Assessment System where they can create Math and Science quizzes and unit exams online that have questions similar to those of the READY EOGs. Since all students will eventually take their state exams on the computer, these Internet-based assessments will enable them to familiarize themselves with the computer tools and allow them to improve upon their technological skills.

#### Foreign Language

The Spanish and Mandarin Chinese teachers will create their own assessments for evaluating the success of their program using the National Standards for Learning Languages as their guide. They will administer a variety of conversational evaluations, written tasks and presentation activities to measure all students oral, reading and written fluency in the second

language. These assessments will allow teachers to improve upon their instructional techniques and discover new ways for teaching the content.

#### Promotion

CLS believes that all students can succeed as long as they have the social and academic tools to access, analyze, synthesize and present new information learned. To support this notion, we feel that many factors should be utilized in promotion decisions.

promoted to the next grade level. The student should be on or approaching grade level in four out of five core subjects, is the appropriate age level or within a year of it, and is socially mature enough to handle the subsequent grade level. The factors that determine grade level performance includes: students' grades based on classroom activities, teachers recommendations, academic growth the student has made throughout the year, and when applicable, his/her performance on state mandated assessments.

To ensure that this data is formally taken into account on behalf of each student, CLS has developed a Gateway Review Process to handle promotion and retention. The process works as follows:

-At the beginning of the 4th quarter of each school year, Advisors will be responsible for providing the Intervention Team with a list of students in their class that they believe are in question for promotion. Because we have a strong intervention process, no names on the list should be a surprise to the team as they would have been discussed by the team members throughout the year.

-During the 4th quarter, Advisors will work with students to create a portfolio of their work in whatever areas that they are deficient and collect the documentation from the year that supports whether the student should be promoted or retained.

-Parents will be notified of and invited to the Gateway Review meeting well in advance.

-The parents, along with teacher and advisor, will have the opportunity to present the portfolio and documentation to the Gateway Review Committee. This committee will include members of the Intervention Team including one teacher representative from each grade level in grades K-4 (for lower grade Gateway students) and 5-8 (for upper grade Gateway students). The members can also share whether they wish for the child to be promoted or retained and explain why.

-The committee will review the information, take into account the students prior history (i.e. age, size, past retentions, past grades), make a decision regarding promotion/retention, and the parents will be notified of the decision within 24 hours.

While this process will be in effect for all students K-8, there are specific students that need to meet different criteria for promotion. Third grade students will have additional documentation due to the North Carolina Read to Achieve legislation. CLS will abide by the state mandates for this program and retain any third grade student who does not meet the criteria for promotion. In addition, CLS will review all EC students' IEPs to determine if they should be promoted to the next grade level; the EC students who have sufficiently met their IEP goals will be promoted regardless of their achievement on grade level assignments and standardized tests. The same is true for ELL students; any ELL student who is still below grade level due to language deficiencies will be promoted to the next

grade level. Their PEP will be revised for next year to ensure that their language needs are continually being met.

### Graduation Requirements

By grade 8, all CLS students will be proficient in a number of areas that will enable them to graduate middle school and be ready to excel in high school. On state assessments, they will meet grade level expectations on the 8th grade English, Math and Science READY EOG exams. Within the school, they will have met all attendance requirements as well as completed 95% of their assigned work for their courses by graduation day. In addition, each 8th grade student will need to receive a satisfactory grade or higher on their exit presentation which will be based on their work in their Area of Focus. This presentation should exhibit strong research and technological competence, solid oral and written communication skills, and embody their cultural learning experiences. They will share their presentation with parents, advisor, teachers and classmates on Exhibition Day during the last week of school.

### **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 specific to the proposed charter school within the appendices (Appendix D).*

*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.*

Aligned with its mission and core values, Charlotte Lab School's approach to student conduct will be similarly structured to ensure that it guides students toward appropriate behavior, demonstrates the real-world reward of "doing the right thing", and is age and developmentally appropriate. Our goal is for our students to choose to do the right thing at all times, whether an adult or other person is present or not. To achieve this, our entire community needs to view discipline as a learning process, not a system of punishment. We want to invest the time early in our students' lives to help them see the benefit of treating others well, caring for common spaces and materials, and respecting themselves and others.

As such, CLS will utilize a framework called the Code for Living. This approach to developing the whole child includes the following themes: Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, Integrity, Compassion, Generosity and Fairness. These themes will be embedded and integrated into all aspects of the CLS community and culture, from signage throughout the building, to an advisory curriculum and quarterly student awards built upon these themes. In addition to being woven into the culture and day-to-day life and

activities of the school, we believe that the concept of these themes must be explicitly taught. The themes will drive the Advisory curriculum, including lessons, discussions, and projects related to each, and they will be embedded in our approach to student discipline. In addition to the more formal policies outlined in the CLS handbook, our approach will include a discussion with children that includes the following:

Which theme of the Code for Living was violated?

What are the consequences for you, other students involved, and our entire community when that violation occurs?

What were alternatives you could have chosen that would uphold our Code for Living?

While CLS understands the importance of developing the whole child and recognizes the value of solid character development for students' long-term success, we also will execute a Code of Conduct to ensure that our students are abiding by these themes and not disrupting the learning process of others. CLS teachers will spend the first six weeks of every school year reviewing these school rules, positively reinforcing them in all situations throughout the school year, and rewarding them when applicable. This conduct code states that students will:

Be polite to everyone and observe good manners.

Be alert and attentive to learning opportunities.

Be prepared for class by bringing all necessary books and materials with you.

Arrive on time and ready to learn.

Move around the school in an orderly and respectful manner.

Be considerate of the school, its classrooms and the school community by keeping our space clean, organized and quiet.

Welcome visitors and show them why our school is a special place for learning.

Abide by the Code for Living.

Finally, as part of the CLS mission of providing a nurturing and developmentally sensitive environment enriched with authentic experiences, our expectation is that our students will be thoroughly engaged in learning, which will result in limited discipline issues. Teachers will be trained to implement elements of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Responsive Classroom programs so that students are incentivized by their positive behavior rather than just punished for their negative actions. As often as possible, students will be redirected and reengaged into their learning activities so that the enforcement of the discipline policy can be avoided. However, when necessary, CLS teachers will follow the protocol outlined in the CLS Student Handbook for handling matters of misconduct.

**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:* Charlotte Lab School, Inc.

*Mailing Address:* 201 Altondale Avenue

*City/State/Zip:* Charlotte NC 28207

*Street Address:*

*Phone:* 646-320-0261

*Fax:*

*Name of registered agent and address:*

*FEDERAL TAX ID:*

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

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

Yes (copy of letter from federal government attached: Appendix E)  
 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 initial members of the nonprofit organization.

<b>Board Member Name</b>	<b>Board Title</b>	<b>County/State of Residence</b>	<b>Current Occupation</b>
Vikki-Rose Tunick	Director	MECKLENBURG	Curriculum Consultant, CMS and UCPS



Dee Lanier	Director	MECKLENBURG	Technology Catalyst, Trinity Episcopal School
Denise Glaser-Serrano	Director	MECKLENBURG	Parent Representative, former bilingual educator
Corliss Brown-Thompson	Director	MECKLENBURG	Senior Fellow, Northeastern Graduate School of Ed
Peter Bove	Director	MECKLENBURG	Senior Legal Counsel, Capital Markets, Wells Fargo
Mary Moss	Head of School (pending), non-voting Board member	MECKLENBURG	Principal Coach, CMS and New Leaders
Joel Bonasera	Secretary	MECKLENBURG	Director, STEM Fellows Program, Discovery Place
Michelle Thornhill	Treasurer	MECKLENBURG	Senior VP Diversity and Inclusion, Wells Fargo
Apri Agyapong	Vice Chair	MECKLENBURG	Director of Development, New Leaders
Tom Murray	Board Chair	MECKLENBURG	CEO, Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority

**Please provide the following in this location of the APPLICATION:**

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 the Charlotte Lab School will serve as the governing body of the school, specifically hiring, advising and supporting the school's administration in the following areas: Hire, support and evaluate the Head of School; Vote on/approve all personnel decisions; Determine compensation for Head of School; Support Head of School in carrying out charter school's mission; Collaboratively develop, understand, and abide by charter's bylaws; Collaboratively determine and develop the Board's governing structure of school personnel; Collaboratively develop and provide advice around school decisions and policies; Work with administration to develop short- and long-term strategic plans for school growth, success, and sustainability; Monitor and adhere to the charter's financial responsibilities; Monitor the charter school's programs and services; Ensure adequate resources and manage them effectively; Collaboratively set goals, develop strategic plans to achieve

them, and reflect upon and evaluate the board's performance in meeting them; Advocate for charter school and assist in efforts to ensure its growth, sustainability, and positive public image, both from fundraising and student recruitment perspectives; Fulfill elected role within Board; Be well informed about relevant Charter School Laws and NCDPI policies; Conduct all Board business and manage meetings in accordance with those policies; Ensure compliance with NC Open Board Meeting Laws and support the keeping and publishing of meeting minutes (NC Statutes: Chapter 143, Article 33C; G.S., 143:318); Avoid conflicts of interest and be willing to put welfare of organization before personal benefit

Roles of board members will include: Board Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Additionally, board members will participate in at least one sub-committee such as Budget and Audit, Development, Community Engagement, and Facilities to be voted on in accordance with bylaws.

While the Board has identified a Head of School and intends to hire her pending approval of the application, the Board will utilize many methods to hire future Heads of School. They may recruit through contacts in the local community, including Teach for America and New Leaders networks, and post on national and higher education recruiting sites. Interested candidates will participate in a behavioral interview that includes a range of questions from diverse perspectives, role-playing scenarios designed to elicit examples of previous experience and behavior, and providing a writing sample. The Board will focus its search on applicants with prior school leadership experience, particularly in the areas of new school design and start-up, blended learning, challenge-based learning, developmentally appropriate instructional practices, and managing significant external partnerships. Candidates with experience working with similarly diverse populations will also be a priority.

Once hired, the Head of School will be evaluated using Kim Marshall's principal effectiveness rubrics (<http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/practicerubrics/Docs/MarshallPrincipalRubric.pdf>).

The Board will review the Head of School's performance three times throughout each school year. The first meeting during late summer and will include goal-setting for the coming year, a discussion of his/her specific plan for achieving those goals and the interim benchmarks for assessing and monitoring progress, and reviewing a detailed plan for relevant professional development. The second meeting during mid-year will include a progress update on collaboratively determined goals; adjustments will be made based on emerging priorities. The third and final meeting will include a discussion of the following topics: goals met, various data including teacher and family feedback survey, teacher retention data, student attendance, student testing performance, application numbers, safety and discipline data, and goals for the coming year.

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.*



Guided by the NCDPI "Elements of a High Functioning Public Charter School Board," the Charlotte Lab School Board will include a range of 7-11 members, preferably an odd number, and will seek to represent diverse skills, experiences, constituents, and areas of expertise. The current board includes members with expertise in 21st century teaching and learning, educational technology, public school leadership, curriculum planning and design, literacy education, bilingual education, marketing/development/fundraising, real estate, business, strategic planning, community engagement, human resources/diversity, law, and representatives from partner organizations and higher education. Several board members are also parents of current public school students. Current CLS Board members are well connected with diverse Charlotte communities, business leaders, cultural institutions, higher education institutions, and have extensive connections with educators in both private and public schools, and with respected educator preparation programs such as Teach for America and New Leaders.

CLS Board members will provide governance and support to ensure that the vision and mission of CLS are fulfilled, keeping students social, emotional, developmental, and educational needs at the core of all decision-making. The CLS Board will hire, supervise, and evaluate the Head of School and will approve all personnel decisions made by the Head of School through a vote. The CLS Board will ensure success of CLS by a) Development of clear short and long-term SMART goals and related strategic plans and benchmarks; b) Quarterly review and evaluation of operational, financial, and academic progress by school and Head of School; c) Supervision of the Head of School through monthly Board meetings and reports; and d) Ongoing opportunities for professional development of Board members. The CLS Board will announce and post all activities, opportunities, and meeting dates on the CLS website, in accordance with NC Open Meeting Laws. To manage its own effectiveness, the CLS Board will review its roles and responsibilities on an annual basis to ensure ongoing support and successful implementation of the schools mission and vision. Several tools will inform the development of the Boards self-assessment rubric, including a National Non-Profit Board Self-Assessment Tool and various tools from BoardSource. The CLS Board will also abide by all laws, rules, and best practices regarding conflict of interest to always ensure stewardship of the CLS organization.

As CLS Board members complete their term(s), as outlined in the bylaws, they will be involved in the recruitment and training of replacement Board members. The diversity of background and expertise, as well as representation from parents and community members, will remain a priority.

*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 CLS Board members were recruited through an informal series of informational discussions, the sharing of the CLS vision and Board responsibilities, and a careful evaluation of skill-sets to drive the strategy for recruitment of a diverse and representative board. Board members were ultimately selected based on their interest in and commitment to the vision and mission of the Charlotte Lab School and their commitment to providing additional school options to all students in the Charlotte metro area. Currently, the Charlotte Lab School Board is fully staffed with

members committed to serving a two-year term, which will take the school through its opening months.

According to the CLS Bylaws (Article VI, #3), "All officers may serve no more than two (2) consecutive two-year terms. Former officers, after a break in service of one (1) year, may be elected to another term as an officer." At time of re-election, Board members must be in good standing, according to the Boards self-evaluation system, described in #3. According to CLS Bylaws (Article V, #6), "Vacancies on the Board of Directors shall be filled by election at the Board meeting immediately prior to the end of the expiring directors term. Vacancies occurring mid-term shall be filled by election at the next Board meeting. Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent an individual director from being reelected to office." As described earlier, all outgoing Board members are expected to identify potential replacement Board members and to present those names and initiate that contact prior to resignation. In the event that a Board member must resign unexpectedly or is dismissed, Board members will be asked to identify potential candidates for discussion at the next Board meeting, with the goal of finalizing election within two subsequent Board meetings. In order to most proactively anticipate and plan for vacancies, the Board Chair will conduct quarterly check-ins with all Board members to assess ongoing interest and ability to commit to the position.

*4. Outline below the strategic board calendar detailing how often the board will meet according to the bylaws established.*

The CLS Board will meet monthly for 2-3 hours and hold committee work sessions.

*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 J).*

Professional Development for CLS Board members will include the following activities and schedule. Board members are required to participate in a minimum of three (3) professional development opportunities each year in addition to the quarterly "retreat" sessions.

Sept 2013-Jan 2014: Visits to existing charter schools: Research Triangle High School, Community School of Davidson, KIPP Charlotte, Sugar Creek Charter School, Others TBD

January 2014: Board Member Orientation: What it means to be a charter school board member - overview of responsibilities, guest speaker from existing charter school board member

January 2014: Team effectiveness workshop, including the use of the "Strengthfinder" approach, team building activities, and the development of Board commitments - how we plan to informally work together, commit to and support the success of the CLS

February 2014: Google Apps for Education training, including the use of Google sites and drive led by one of our CLS Board members.

February-March 2014: Charter School Law 101: The Board will invite a guest speaker/expert to provide an overview and training to board members on

important legal issues associated with NC charter school governance

February 2014-June 2015: Additional visits to existing charter schools and other innovative school models; some Board members will attend various conferences on 21st century teaching and learning, effective technology integration, curriculum and planning, including ISTE, Deeper Learning, EduCon, ASCD, National Middle Level Educators conference, Coalition for Essential Schools Conference, National Association of Bilingual Educators conference, etc.; after each school visit or conference, participating board members will present new learning and implications for the CLS to the entire board

Quarterly: Each quarter the Board will meet for a "retreat" session during which they will review progress of the school and board, review data to drive discussion and decision-making, provide feedback to the Head of School, and adjust strategic plans as needed to ensure that CLS is successful and on-track to achieve goals ; during these meetings, the Board will also assess its own effectiveness as a collaborative team through the administration and review of feedback surveys

August 2015: Board member orientation for new members

As the founding board develops their initial orientation program in January 2014, best practices and critical information will be captured and compiled into a CLS Board Member handbook. When new Board members join, they will be given a copy of the handbook and the outgoing Board member will provide an orientation during the transition. Each summer during the Boards retreat, the entire Board will review bylaws, CLS mission and vision, Board policies, etc., providing new members with a complete orientation.

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 CLS Board bylaws specifically discuss expectations for board members ethical behavior in Article VII. CLS Board members will commit to avoiding potential conflicts of interest, always exercising their positional authority for the express benefit of the CLS as a whole. Potential areas of conflict include a) inside and confidential information regarding employees and students; b) acceptance of gifts and favors; c) preferential treatment of their own children who may be CLS students; d) financial benefit to their represented organization; and e) any financial, or other interest from which they might benefit. The CLS Board bylaws specify that any individual(s) identified to have a potential conflict shall be excused from relevant decisions and voting, and excluded from quorum requirements for that particular meeting.

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

The CLS Board recognizes the importance of ensuring that the school abides by all North Carolina State Laws for Charter Schools. Therefore the Board will oversee the development of all policies related to teacher licensure, student admissions, charter renewal, and employee and relevant Board member screening.

For most school policies, however, the CLS Board will serve as a governance board, delegating day-to-day decision-making power to the Head of School. Therefore, the Board will focus on developing and voting on school-wide policies to support the big picture - the vision, mission, and achievement of school goals. The Head of School and his/her designated team will develop policies to be outlined each year in faculty and family handbooks. Each year, the Board will vote on and approve those policies. The Board will also vote on addendum or changes to those policy handbooks as needed throughout the year. The implementation of those policies will be delegated to the Head of School. Policies that affect school outcomes, students and families experiences related to the achievement of desired outcomes, and/or the resources/finances required to achieve those outcomes will remain the focus of Board policy-making.

When initiating and approving school policies, the board will take the following steps:

-Data collection: Board members will closely review the issues related to the policy. What are the different perspectives? What are the current issues? What are the needs? What does the data reveal? What is the potential impact/consequences? What is the cost (real and otherwise)? This data collection period may include informal discussions and data gathering (including the use of surveys) from various stakeholders and input and reporting from the Head of School and his/her team.

-Discussion: After a collection and review of available data and perspectives, Board members will share opinions, brainstorm solutions, and propose alternatives.

-Consensus-building: After deliberation and discussion, Board members will work to compromise in areas of disagreement, by keeping the focus on the needs of students. While only a 3/4 vote is required for the adoption of a policy, the Board will make all efforts to reach consensus to increase buy-in and support for all school policies, in the best interests, harmony, and ongoing collaboration of the larger school community.

*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.*

In addition to the CLS Board subcommittees listed earlier (Budget and Audit, Development, and Community Engagement and Facilities), Charlotte Lab School will establish a School Advisory Council. The Council reports directly to and advises the Head of School and is made up of an even number of faculty members and parent representatives, in addition to student representatives at the middle school level. The purpose of this Council is to act as a sounding board for the Head of School, to liaise between their constituents and Charlotte Lab School leaders, and to provide multiple perspectives when the Head of School is making decisions. The School Advisory Council has no formal authority and does not play a role in the evaluation of the Head of School. The Council may, when necessary, bring issues to the attention of the CLS Board, but does not play a formal role in the CLS Board.

A Parent Association will also be formed for the Charlotte Lab School as a way for parents to become more actively involved in supporting the school. In addition to leading fundraising efforts, the Parent Association will also be responsible for coordinating volunteers, planning and running school-wide

and community events, and may offer parent workshops and special programs. The Parent Association has no formal authority and no direct reporting to the CLS Board. The Parent Association plays no role in the evaluation of the Head of School or any other faculty/staff.

9. *Discuss the school's grievance process for parents and staff members.*

The following steps outline CLS's grievance process for parents and staff members:

Step 1: A parent or employee who wishes to file a grievance must first provide a request in writing to the Head of School or other appropriate member of the administrative team. A meeting will be scheduled and the matter may be resolved at that time.

Step 2: If a grievance cannot be resolved directly with the Head of School, the parent or employee may request, within 15 days of the action or incident, a hearing with the Board. The Board has 30 days from receipt of that written notification to schedule and hold the requested hearing or deny the request for a hearing, with or without cause. The Board will provide written notice of the time and place to the parent or employee who filed the grievance, as well as the Head of School and any other relevant personnel.

Step 3: The Board will communicate its final decision to all involved parties within 30 days of the hearing. The Board's final decision is the final step for all grievances.

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

Include in the Appendices:

1. 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). (Appendix F)
2. A one-page resume from each founding board member and responses to the questions found on the Charter School Board Member Form (Appendix G).
3. 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 H).
4. 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 I)
5. Copy of any board policies if adopted already (Appendix J).
6. Copies of meeting minutes (if available), relevant to the development of the charter school plan, during the application process (Appendix K).

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

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

**X** Not Applicable

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

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



**X Not Applicable**

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

**X Not Applicable**

**Projected Staff:**

Provide, as Appendix M, 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, course offerings and align with the proposed budget.

**Staffing Plans, Hiring, and Management**

Include the following information for the proposed charter school:

Charlotte Lab School believes that a diverse and highly effective teaching staff will be our greatest asset and the most significant factor in our success in terms of student achievement and student recruitment. It is our goal to attract and retain smart, passionate, innovative, and experienced teachers who truly believe in the CLS mission and who reflect the diversity of our students and the greater Charlotte community.

To recruit talented faculty, CLS will:

- Describe and post job openings on: the CLS website, Facebook and Twitter accounts, teachers-teachers.com, Craigslist, and online job finder/recruitment sites;
- Advertise through: local newspapers and magazines written in English and Spanish, Teach for America's group TFA Alumni of Color, New Leaders networks, university and Latino educator organizations, including National Hispanic Education Coalition and Hispanic Education Association, the National Association for Bilingual Education publications;
- Participate in job fairs with local universities and charter associations;
- Share job opportunities as part of Board members' presentations at national education conferences

Drawing on best practices described in the "Irreplaceables" report by The New Teacher Project, CLS will retain talented teachers by:

- Making teacher retention a priority. CLS included a teacher retention goal as one of our overall school goals and will achieve this goal by listening and responding to teachers' needs through their ongoing suggestions and working conditions survey results, providing feedback throughout the evaluation process, and valuing their work through an annual average salary increase of 2.9% based on teacher performance.
- Creating a culture of high expectations for faculty members. At CLS, a strong culture will be developed using regular feedback and coaching. Staff will collaboratively set goals, problem-solve, and form a highly professional community that values intellectual, instructional conversations.

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.*

The recruitment, hiring, coaching, evaluation, and recommendation for termination of employees are all responsibilities that will be carried out by the Head of School. The Board will provide final approval, via 3/4 vote, for all final decisions regarding hiring and dismissals.

Employees of the Charlotte Lab School will also have the following opportunities for direct interaction with the Board:

- Faculty members will have non-voting representation on the Board
- Faculty members will have representation on the School Advisory Council, which in-turn has Board representation
- Faculty members may raise concerns officially to the Board via email to any Board Member
- Faculty members may submit to the Board grievances, in writing, regarding dismissals
- Employees may be asked to participate in various Board events, fundraisers, etc.

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

CLS believes that hiring is one of the most important tasks; therefore we have designed the following process to ensure that each potential staff member is a great fit for the school and community. Each candidate will participate in:

- An initial phone screening conversation
- An onsite interview
- Facilitating a model lesson (if applicable)
- A final conversation with the Head of School

Once a candidate advances through these steps, at least two professional references will be reviewed and he/she will undergo a criminal background check and a review of citizenship or eligible status. Pending the results, the Head of School will seek Board approval for hiring.

Throughout the process, CLS representatives will utilize a rubric and essential questions to evaluate candidates on these qualities:

- Impact and influence-Is this a teacher leader?
- Initiative and persistence-Will the candidate take risks and persevere?
- Innovation and creativity-Does the candidate offer different ways to think about teaching and learning?
- Collaboration and sharing-Will this candidate be comfortable teaching in an atmosphere of ongoing collaboration, coaching and feedback?
- Data driven decision-making-Does the candidate use data to drive instruction?
- Pedagogical expertise-How well does the candidate understand the content?

On the rare occasion, there are actions that could lead to an employees' dismissal. A violation of any CLS employee policy pursuant to the CLS Staff Handbook is grounds for an immediate dismissal. In addition, staff can be dismissed for unsatisfactory job performance; in that case, the Head of School will make every effort to resolve the issues prior to dismissal, but if she is unable to do so, the employee will receive two(2) weeks notice

prior to the date of dismissal.

The hiring and dismissal of all CLS employees (other than the Head of School) is ultimately the responsibility of the Head of School, with the Board providing final approval on all personnel decisions.

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

Due to CLS's belief in the importance of its employees in realizing its vision, and the increased expectations for planning, collaboration, and leadership, CLS will offer salaries slightly higher than nearby LEAs and plan for an average annual salary increase of 2.9%.

School Leader: \$80,000-\$130,000  
Assistant School Leader: \$65,000-\$100,000  
Secretary: \$20,000-\$45,000  
School Business Manager: \$40,000-\$80,000  
Teacher: \$35,000-\$80,000  
Teacher Assistant: \$20,000-\$40,000  
EC Teacher: \$45,000-\$80,000  
Speech Teacher: \$45,000-\$80,000  
Guidance Counselor: \$45,000-\$80,000  
Technology Director: \$55,000-\$90,000  
Development Director: \$50,000-\$90,000  
Admissions Director: \$45,000-\$70,000

The annual average 2.9% salary increase will be based on faculty member performance, determined by a combination of the following criteria:

- Student performance data (proficiency and growth on NC State end-of-year assessments, and growth as determined by progress in reading levels for early grades k-2),
- Faculty member growth, as demonstrated through several factors including progress measured through Marshalls teacher effectiveness rubrics,
- Student growth, as measured by Charlotte Lab Schools own 21st century skills rubric and other factors.

Annual performance bonuses are pending Board approval each year and may be dependent on the schools financial position and other contextual factors.

All full-time faculty members will receive health insurance and will be offered a retirement plan beginning in the schools third year.

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

The following steps outline grievance procedures at CLS:

Step 1: An employee who wishes to file a grievance must first provide a request in writing to the Head of School or other appropriate member of the leadership team. A meeting will be scheduled and the matter may be resolved at that time.

Step 2: If a grievance cannot be resolved directly with the Head of School, the employee may request, within 15 days of the action or incident, a hearing with the Board. The Board has 30 days from receipt of that written notification to schedule and hold the requested hearing or deny the request for a hearing, with or without cause. The Board will provide written notice of the time and place to the employee who filed the grievance, as well as to



the Head of School and any other relevant personnel.

Step 3: The Board will communicate its final decision to all involved parties within 30 days of the hearing. The Board's final decision is the final step for all grievances.

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

Given our expectations for a diverse population, the Charlotte Lab School will seek candidates who can fulfill dual responsibilities:

- Teachers who are dual-certified to teach elementary and Exceptional Children
- Teachers who are dual-certified to teach elementary and AIG students
- Teachers who are dual-certified to teach elementary and English as a Second Language
- Teachers who are able to teach multiple enrichment courses, such as Physical Education and Dance, or Art and Technology, etc.

The Charlotte Lab School will work actively to partner with other schools, private, charter and within CMS, to share teaching staff in order to offer varied enrichment programs, and provide services of psychologists, speech teachers, guidance counselor (in our early years), nurse, etc.

*8. Describe the plans to have qualified staffing adequate for the anticipated special needs population, means for providing qualified staffing for ELL and gifted students.*

CLS will ensure that we provide adequate staff and instructional time to meet the needs of all students, including those who have special needs, are ELL, or are gifted. We will do this by recruiting teachers who are dual certified, sharing some instructional positions with other schools, and employing one full-time EC teacher beginning in our first year. As we grow, we will adjust the number of positions to be hired in each of these areas based on the needs of our student population.

We expect a higher population of ELL and gifted students based on our mission of offering intensive foreign language instruction, targeting a diverse student body, and teaching through an inquiry-driven, challenge-based approach that emphasizes higher order thinking skills. We also expect to better accommodate those students, as well as our students with special needs, due to our differentiated instruction, smaller class sizes and intention to hire teachers with multiple licenses and skill-sets.

*9. 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).*

Teachers: will hold a bachelors from a four-year institution and demonstrate the qualities outlined in the previous section. Highly qualified teachers, those that are fully licensed by the State of NC, are important. Teachers should be mission-aligned and may have previous experience, advanced degrees, leadership potential, comfort with technology, and strong interpersonal skills. CLS will set a goal to employ at least 70% certified teachers at all grade levels. Responsibilities include:

Developing curriculum collaboratively with teachers, integrating technology, and assessing students based on CLS policies/programs

Facilitating instruction for whole class, small group, individuals, and

advisory group

Analyzing data to inform decision making and instructional planning

Communicating frequently and regularly with families of students and advisees

Participating actively in ongoing professional development and teacher evaluation process

Supervising students and maintaining a clean, orderly, safe, print-rich and positive classroom learning environment

Teacher Assistants (TA): will have completed an Associates Degree or two years of higher education equivalent to 48 credit hours, completion of the NC DOL Apprenticeship Program or completion of the NC ATA Professional Development Plan. Experience working with elementary age students is required. Responsibilities of include:

Planning and working with teachers in devising strategies for reinforcing skills and concepts and assessing students

Assisting in instruction of individual or groups of students as directed by the teacher

Participating actively in professional development and the CLS faculty evaluation process

Assisting with daily record-keeping and tasks as assigned by teacher

Assisting in supervising students and maintaining a clean, orderly, safe, print-rich and positive classroom learning environment

Participating in transportation, lunch, and student supervision duties as assigned

Office Manager (OM): will hold a school diploma, have some secretarial experience, and must be bilingual in Spanish. Will serve as both a front office receptionist and an assistant to the Head of School. Must also be proficient in Microsoft Office Suite, have knowledge of office practices, have excellent written and verbal communication skills in English and Spanish, and strong interpersonal skills. The OM must be comfortable working in a fast-paced environment with diverse community members, can meet deadlines, and maintain flexibility in response to schedules and tasks. Responsibilities include:

Greeting parents, students, visitors, and school partners and assisting with various needs

Answering phones, taking messages, using voicemail

Making copies, filing, and organizing the front office

Adhering to systems designed by the SBM for keeping the front office organized and the school running smoothly

Supporting the Head of School with personal schedule and maintaining school calendar

Maintaining student and teacher attendance

Assisting with the purchasing of supplies and the requests of teachers for instructional materials

School Business Manager(SBM): will be required to have at least a Bachelors Degree, or four years equivalent experience in business/finance/office or program management. Some leadership/management experience and knowledge of accounting principles is critical. The SBM needs to design clear and efficient systems and train others to implement them, and perform complex accounting clerical work with speed and accuracy. Must also be proficient in Microsoft Office Suite, have knowledge of office practices, have

excellent written and verbal communication skills, and strong interpersonal skills. The SBM must be comfortable working in a fast-paced environment with diverse community members, can meet deadlines, and maintain flexibility in response to schedules and tasks.

Responsibilities include:

Working reliably with confidential information

Maintaining accurate financial records

Processing payroll and preparing and maintaining payroll documents

Interfacing with contracted CPA to prepare required paperwork in a timely manner

Receiving and accounting for cash, bank deposits, and balancing budget data

Apprising Head of School on financial status on a weekly basis

Preparing data, records, and reports for annual financial audit process and quarterly reports to Board

Technology Director (TD): will be expected to hold an advanced degree in education or a related field, have several years experience as a teacher, and experience working with/training teachers to integrate technology into instruction. TD should also be current with emerging technologies, have a strong network of colleagues to encourage ongoing innovation, and be aligned with CLS core values. Responsibilities include:

Serving as website co-author and trainer

Working directly with contracted infrastructure set-up vendor

Collaborating regularly with other international technology coordinators

Initiating and implementing school-wide technology implementation strategy

Providing Google Apps implementation and training to all admin and faculty

Holding regular team meetings with grade-level teams to develop cross-curricular strategies

Providing regular technology coaching and professional development for all school personnel

Development Director (DD): will be required to have an advanced degree (Masters or greater) in education or relevant field, and previous experience in fundraising, grant-writing, or other non-profit work. Must have exceptional written and verbal communication skills and a proven track record of achieving fundraising targets. The DD must also be aligned with the CLS mission and vision and be able to articulate it clearly and convincingly to potential partners, families, funders, and the broader Charlotte community. Responsibilities include:

Creating and implementing annual development plan and reporting quarterly to the Board

Leading and managing the school's fundraising goals

Training and leading other staff and Board members to support fundraising and marketing efforts

Cultivating and nurturing relationships with current and potential partners, sponsors, donors, and PTA

Writing grant proposals and preparing reports to corporate, foundation, and government funders

Developing and implementing comprehensive marketing and public relations strategy

Assistant Head of School: will be required to have an advanced degree (Masters or greater) in education or relevant field, previous school

leadership experience, and teaching experience and hold or work to obtain NC Principal Certification. Responsibilities include:  
Carrying out the school's mission and supporting student recruitment and admissions  
Ensuring the safety of students and staff  
Assisting Head of School with developing, coaching, supervising and evaluating all curriculum, programs, and staff  
Overseeing day-to-day operations of the school  
Recruiting and retaining a highly effective staff  
Ensuring compliance with all NC charter and public school laws and requirements

Head of School: will be required to have an advanced degree (Masters or greater) in education or relevant field, previous school leadership experience, and teaching experience and hold or work to obtain NC Principal Certification. Responsibilities include:  
Carrying out the school's mission and supporting student recruitment and admissions  
Ensuring the safety of students and staff  
Developing short- and long-term goals and strategic plans to achieve those goals  
Developing, coaching, supervising and evaluating all curriculum, programs, and staff  
Overseeing day-to-day operations of the school  
Communicating with all stakeholders and presenting goals, strategic plans and progress to Board  
Recruiting and retaining a highly effective staff  
Cultivating relationships in support of school growth, partnerships, and fundraising  
Ensuring compliance with all NC charter and public school laws and requirements

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

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

The Head of School, Assistant Head of School and School Business Manager will all be responsible for maintaining and tracking all licensure requirements and professional development for teachers and administrators.

- 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.*

Mentorship: During the early years of CLS, the Head of School and Assistant Head of School will directly support all teachers, to ensure the development of a positive culture among students and staff, as well as the implementation of core instructional practices with fidelity to the model and design. As capacity is built among teaching staff, experienced CLS teachers will mentor new CLS teachers each year. The professional development and evaluation process at CLS is individualized; therefore direct mentoring/coaching of teachers will be an ongoing part of their experience.

Retention: Competitive compensation, opportunities to earn annual bonuses, a strong instructionally-focused culture, and a personalized approach to

faculty evaluation and professional development will be critical factors in retaining teachers at CLS each year. Our approach with students will be modeled in its approach to faculty development. Self-determined goals and professional development will push an atmosphere of continual improvement and enable teachers to feel personally invested. The collaborative leadership style of the administration, teacher representation on the School Advisory Council, and teacher-driven professional development will provide teachers with a greater voice in school policy- and decision-making. They will be responsible for developing their own curriculum, within the CLS framework, and will have greater ownership for the teaching and learning processes. There will be ongoing opportunities for career development, with university partners and "certificate" programs offered as part of our work as a "lab" or "teaching school." The expectation of visitors, student teachers, and graduate students will also provide frequent opportunities for intellectual engagement and deeper opportunities for professional development.

Evaluation: Teaching and administration will be evaluated using Kim Marshall's rubrics, and teachers will engage in formal review meetings three times each year. At the beginning of each year, employees will conduct a self-evaluation and their supervisor will assess them using the same rubric. The first meeting will include a discussion of where the employee performs in each area, collaborative development of SMART goals for the year, and a detailed action plan for achieving those goals. At the mid-year point, a second formal meeting will be held, at which time the employee and supervisor will separately, then collaboratively, assess the progress made towards the goals determined earlier that year. Adjustments may be made to the goals, and a plan will be developed for the remainder of the year. At the end of the year, the employee and supervisor will again assess progress towards goals, reflect on the year and lessons learned, and discuss goals for the following year. At each meeting, relevant data such as teacher and family feedback surveys and student achievement and performance data, will also inform the conversation around progress towards goals.

In between each formal meeting, teachers will be observed at least 3 times each month for brief periods. After each observation, teachers will be provided with written and/or verbal feedback, initiating an ongoing dialogue about their practice. It is our belief to provide ongoing feedback to teachers, rather than engage in formal and typically less helpful occasional classroom visits. This supports the CLS mission to maintain a positive, professional culture and to involve all members of the community as part of the ongoing learning process.

Licensure and Certification Requirements: CLS will meet or exceed the certification and licensure standards set forth by both NC charter school law and federal laws. All teachers will be required to hold at least a 4-year bachelor's degree and 70% or more of our teachers will be certified in their teaching area. For CLS administration, they must hold valid NC Principal certification or be working towards it within two years.

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



Aligned with our belief in authentic learning for students, CLS feels that the most effective professional development (PD) for adults is that which is conducted in the context of their work, when they have the need for it and it is relevant to their personal goals. Therefore, at CLS, most PD will be individualized based upon each faculty member's annual SMART goals and personal plan for achieving those goals. This PD might include trainings or workshops offered outside of school, independent or small group study, or one-on-one PD with another CLS faculty member.

Whole-school PD will be facilitated by the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Technology Director, and teachers as determined by needs. Topics may include: CLS Mission/Vision, challenge-based learning unit development, best practices of dual language learning, data-driven instruction, the workshop model, technology integration, and 21st century skills. CLS will hold monthly PD days, giving teachers time to plan, learn and collaborate with faculty and external partners, and reflect upon and modify their instructional practices. Teachers will also be allotted days off each year for their own, partially funded PD, as collaboratively determined by their formal evaluation.

In partnership with a local university, CLS also plans to offer opportunities to support the development of educators at all levels:

- "Innovative Teacher" certificate programs, designed and delivered in collaboration with an institution of higher learning, will enable our teachers to develop their expertise as true 21st century educators.

- "Master Innovative Teachers" will co-facilitate PD offered to teachers from CLS and other partner schools.

- Emerging Leaders Program will be offered through New Leaders as a way for teachers to develop their leadership skills.

- School Designers-in-Residence Program will be offered in partnership with New Leaders as a way for rising leaders to receive support when developing new charter schools.

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 school opening, the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and Technology Director will meet monthly to plan the instructional framework, curriculum, and more detailed professional development plan for the school. For their own professional development, they will visit schools (charter, district and private) to glean best practices and innovative approaches, will attend and/or present at national conferences, and participate in book studies on relevant topics. Books will include:

Global Achievement Gap and Creating Innovators by Tony Wagner

Disrupting Class by Clayton Christensen

School 3.0 by Jim Lengel

How to Innovate: The Essential Guide for Fearless School Leaders by Mary Moss Brown and Alisa Berger

An Ethic of Excellence by Ron Berger

The Smartest Kids in the World by Amanda Ripley

Data Driven and Leverage Leadership by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo

Rethinking Teacher Supervision and Evaluation by Kim Marshall



Beginning in the spring 2015, all hired faculty members will participate in the following professional development experiences:

Spring 2015: Overview of CLS Mission, Vision, and Core Instructional Program; Assignment of CLS books for reading prior to commencement of summer professional development

Late Spring 2015: Individual completion of placement questionnaire (to help us determine best placement) and Strengths Finder survey (to help us put together high functioning teams for each grade level)

Early Summer 2015:

10 days of professional development will include:

- A 2-day retreat during which we will focus on: Why CLS? What are we about? What makes us different?; Whole community and team building activities and exercises, including the development of norms; feedback and collaborative development of student policies

- Book discussions based on pre-reading

- Readers/writers workshop training to ensure consistency across classes and grade levels

- A 5-day challenge-based unit design workshop, using the Facilitators Guide to Planning a Challenge-Based Module created by Mary Moss (<http://novareschools.wordpress.com/resources/>)

- A 2-day Advisor workshop, designed to help faculty members prepare for their roles as advisors (including an overview of the advisory curriculum and student-led conference process)

- Technology skills and training will be embedded throughout these workshops

Late Summer:

3 days of Faculty orientation will include:

- Review of Faculty Handbook and policies

- Tech orientation for specific tools, software, etc.

- Review of student orientation program and student policies

- Team planning time

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.

In addition to summer planning before and after the school year, faculty members will have 9 days of professional development built into the school year. Starting in September, one day each month will be set aside for professional development, which will include reviewing data, instructional planning, whole group sessions, and differentiated workshops.

The CLS calendar accounts for these days, while ensuring that CLS meets minimum instructional time requirements. Because the CLS school day is 7.5 hours, longer than the average Charlotte-Mecklenburg elementary and middle schools and local charter schools' school days, our school year will be 175 days, providing 11 additional days for this professional development to plan for the upcoming school year.

Individualized professional development will also be embedded in the near-weekly conversations that administrators will hold with teachers when providing them feedback on classroom instruction as part of the evaluation process, as well as specific opportunities outlined as part of each teachers

annual SMART goals.

As mentioned in a previous question, teachers have an allotment of days off each year so that they can seek their own off-site professional development; this could be to attend educational conferences, local, state and national workshops, and to visit successful schools. We will apply for grants to offset these costs and offer teachers multiple opportunities to grow individually and professionally.

### **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)).*

It is the desire of the Charlotte Lab School to have a student population that is reflective of Charlotte's diversity. With a location planned for Uptown, a 15-mile radius will provide a diverse pool to which we will market the school. It is the goal of CLS to recruit families from all seven of CMS Learning Communities, in order to avoid disproportionately affecting one single feeder pattern of schools. Strategically recruiting students from all seven learning communities will also ensure that the diversity of CLS reflects that of Charlotte.

Given our location and desired student population, we will focus marketing efforts in the following neighborhoods: Myers Park, Dilworth, Elizabeth, Eastover, Plaza Midwood, Cherry, Hidden Valley, The Plaza-Eastway, Westerly Hills, Bryant, Fourth Ward, Third Ward, South End, Lockwood, and other center-city neighborhoods. We will also ensure that marketing materials are available in both English and Spanish and open houses and information sessions are held in both languages.

The following timeline provides a more detailed plan for our marketing approach:

#### Winter-Spring 2014:

Notify friends, contacts, and colleagues of completion of application and continue with informal promotion of CLS mission and vision  
Post application update on website, update language, add details of instructional programs, and respond to all early inquiries  
Develop Facebook and Twitter accounts  
Form and meet with Community Engagement Committee to develop marketing strategy, including an analysis of demographic and audience, and timeline that integrates CMS magnet application schedule  
Work with branding expert and graphic designers to create logo, branding

strategy, and templates

Design and print CLS fliers and brochures

Continue to pursue partnerships (Northeastern University, Discovery Place, Johnson & Wales)

Begin initial outreach to daycare centers, churches, and preschools, by meeting with program/community leaders; determine which sites are likely to encourage application to CLS; distribute fliers and set dates for information sessions for fall 2014

Pursue media opportunities in local radio, TV, and newspapers

Develop additional marketing materials for target groups

Identify speaking and networking opportunities for Head of School and identify local education conferences and events to attend

Summer-Fall 2014

Continue to keep website and social media accounts updated

Issue a press release to relevant media outlets; run ads on multicultural radio stations, in local newspapers and magazines, in English and Spanish

Print and distribute fliers, brochures, application guidelines to summer programs and camps, high-traffic family areas, at local fall events, open houses, information sessions, and all events attended by CLS administrators and Board members

Work with charter organizations and other charter schools to plan common student recruitment events for the fall season

Identify neighborhoods that have demonstrated weaker interest and develop plans for second round of media coverage, flier distribution, new targets for open houses

Winter-Spring 2015

Continue to keep website and social media accounts updated

Continue to host monthly open houses and provide information sessions to feeder schools/programs

Develop targeted third-round plans for programs and neighborhoods where little interest has been shown; problem solve with Committee and work connections as necessary

Conduct additional media blitzes focusing on areas of less interest and fewer applications

Secure interviews in 2-3 media outlets to continue to generate buzz

Summer 2015

Promote and hold a "ribbon-cutting" event when space/building opens

Hold a "Day in the Life" event to showcase CLS teaching and learning practices; include opportunities for each CLS partner organization to promote their own programs

Order CLS apparel, stickers, and other marketing items

Fall 2015

Students receive CLS founding class t-shirts at Orientation program

CLS opens

### **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.*

Parent and community involvement is critical to the success of any school. For this reason, we at Charlotte Lab School will utilize all means necessary to ensure that parents and community members are consistently informed about school news, participate in school events and feel part of the greater CLS school community.

CLS has a website ([www.charlottelabschool.org](http://www.charlottelabschool.org)) that remains current with basic information about our school, a list and description of our board members, and an "Announcements" section filled with board meeting dates and minutes. Once our school is approved, we will continue to post curriculum information and school calendar updates on the website to make certain that our prospective families stay informed about our school and its opening. In addition, we will have a presence on social media through a school Facebook page and our Board members' LinkedIn and Twitter pages so that the community is abreast of our current school status.

To engage parents in the life of the public charter school, CLS will begin involving parents very soon after the enrollment process. During the spring prior to a student's first year at the school, the family will be invited to attend an orientation night. This event will set the tone for the school and help families know what to expect and to plan in advance. In later years, we will also offer additional programming during the summer.

Prior to the start of school each year, we will hold an informal and casual "Setting Up Our Space" event, at which time families are invited to come help the school and teachers set up for the year, including putting together furniture, covering bulletin boards, organizing supplies, etc. This enables parents who might be less comfortable in formal school event settings to get to know the Heads of School, faculty, and each other in a less structured setting, in which all parents are able to contribute at an equal level. Pizza and drinks will be served, creating a welcoming atmosphere for students and families.

Once school begins each year, CLS will welcome parents and community members into the school for an Open House and Curriculum Night. These events will give the CLS staff an opportunity to meet the current and future families and other members of the CLS community and provide them with a review of the school mission, policies and procedures, curriculum, and student expectations.

CLS also expects parents to be regularly involved in the school community. Enrollment packets will include an outline of our goals and expectations for them as contributing members of our school community. Some of these expectations include: taking an active role in monitoring their child's academic progress, communicating regularly with teachers, exchanging positive and constructive feedback, providing volunteer service in some capacity to the school, and seeking out and getting to know their child's friends' parents in order to stay better connected to their child's school and social networks.

In order to build partnerships between families and our school, CLS will provide several opportunities for parents to participate in school

governance and parent leadership. They can serve as parent representatives on the School Advisory Council, Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and/or as a class parent or school volunteer. Through these avenues, parents have a voice within the CLS community and their point of view and expertise can be represented.

CLS views parents as integral partners in achieving our vision and mission and in helping each student to fulfill his/her potential; therefore, we truly welcome these opportunities and more for parents and community members to get involved at Charlotte Lab School.

## **Admissions Policy**

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

1. *Tentative dates for the open enrollment application period; enrollment deadlines and procedures. \*Please be advised schools cannot accept applications until after final approval from the SBE.*
2. *Clear policies and procedures detailing the open enrollment lottery plan including policies regarding statutory permitted student enrollment preferences.*
3. *Clear 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.*

The Charlotte Lab School application period will be from September 1, 2014-February 1, 2015. Applications must be received by the CLS office no later than 11:59pm on February 1, 2015. They will be reviewed for completeness, checked for a valid North Carolina address and will be entered into a database. If the number of applications exceed available seats, a public lottery will be held in March, in accordance with all NC charter school laws. After the lottery is held, any applications not accepted will be placed on a waitlist based on the order pulled from the lottery. Any application submitted after February 1st will be added to the end of the waitlist according to the date/time submitted.

All students will be notified of acceptance via mailed written letter (in both English and Spanish) and families will be required to attend a school information session to complete the registration process. This session will inform parents of the nature of CLS instruction and will allow us an opportunity to elicit feedback on students. 14 sessions will be offered in March-April at varying times of the day to accommodate all parents' schedules; special arrangements will be made for parents with extenuating circumstances. Once a family attends the session, they must turn in the registration packet by May 1, 2015; the enrollment process is then complete. If a family does not complete the registration process prior to May 1, their seat may be forfeited and the next applicant on the waitlist will be accepted. Students who do not attend the first day of school or call in to notify the school of the absence by a CLS-determined date/time will forfeit their enrollment and must complete another application to be considered in the future.

CLS will admit, and/or place in the lottery, any student who completes the

application prior to the deadline. Notwithstanding any recent law to the contrary, a charter school may refuse admission to any student who has been expelled or suspended from the public school under G.S. 115C390.5 through G.S. 115C390.11 until the period of suspension or expulsion has expired.

The public lottery will be run as follows:

CLS will notify all applicants and the public (through posting on website) of the date, time, and location of the lottery.

Applications will be reviewed for completeness and verified for valid NC address.

Each completed application is assigned a unique number and a ticket will be created.

Any applicant that meets the State rules for priority admission will be placed on the acceptance list.

Numbered tickets will be pulled at random during a video-taped, public lottery for the remaining seats at each grade level until all seats are filled.

All remaining tickets will be drawn and placed on the waitlist for each grade in the order they are pulled.

CLS will make every effort to ensure the integrity of the lottery process, including audits.

Per State rules, CLS will give admissions preference to children of current employees and Board members and to current students' siblings. If the number of applicants in these groups exceeds the available seats, a separate preference group lottery will be held. Once a student is enrolled at CLS, families do not have to re-enroll each year; however they must submit an "Intent to Return" form so CLS administrators can plan accordingly. Any applicant on the waitlist from the previous year, must resubmit an application and participate in the lottery again.

Families who wish to withdraw a student must notify CLS in writing at least 3 days prior to withdrawal and are requested to participate in an in-person Exit Interview to help CLS administrators better understand the reason for withdrawal. Upon completing a required withdrawal form and receiving a transfer form from the student's new school, CLS will provide all relevant and required records. If the family chooses to later re-apply, they must complete a new application and participate in the lottery process again.



**PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2015-16 through 2019-2020**

IDENTIFY LEA FROM WHICH  
STUDENTS WILL PROBABLY COME

LEA #1 Charlotte-Mecklenburg  
Schools

LEA #2

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.

	2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020		
	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 000	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 000	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 000	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 000	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 000
Kindergarten	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0
Grade 01	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0
Grade 02	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0
Grade 03	50	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0
Grade 04	50	0	0	50	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0
Grade 05	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0
Grade 06	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	60	0	0
Grade 07	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0
Grade 08	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0
	280			340			400			460			520		

## **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.*

Charlotte Lab School has a proposed location of in or near Uptown Charlotte for a number of reasons: to have regular access to the local organizations and cultural institutions in that area, to attract a diverse student body of families who live in close proximity to central Charlotte, and to be within walking distance of public transportation for students who wish to attend CLS from the outer parts of the city. We will provide all CLS families with a transportation survey in their enrollment packets in order to research their transportation needs as well as to ensure that no child is denied access to CLS due to lack of transportation. We anticipate that based on this information, the following plan will give our CLS families several options for transportation to school each day.

### **Carpooling**

CLS will coordinate a carpooling program for families who live near each other and have indicated that they wish to carpool to and from school together. To facilitate this, we will use the addresses of all families who wish to participate in this program to organize central stops for pick-up and drop-off locations. Parents who wish to work out carpooling systems on their own will be encouraged to do so; our needs assessment survey results (Appendix A) indicate that this will be a likely and popular choice among some members of our school community population.

### **CATS transportation**

CLS will also provide Charlotte Authority Transit System (CATS) bus and light rail passes at a subsidized cost for families who have shown an interest in utilizing public transportation and are in need of financial support.

### **School Bus**

Finally, CLS will offer a school bus service provided by a contracted bus company at a subsidized cost (See Appendix T for the Eagle Bus Company quote). This service will have multiple pick-up and drop-off locations in the East, West, and Central Charlotte areas. The bus stops will be in community locations and the route will be designed based upon the information received from the CLS transportation surveys. It will be our goal in the negotiations of a contract with a bus company to provide the service at a fixed cost, but for the school to retain a percentage of the fees to create a "transportation fund" to cover the costs for students who need financial assistance for transportation.

We believe that all of these options will afford students the opportunity to receive free transportation access to our unique and high-quality educational experience.

## **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.*

In keeping with its mission to develop globally aware, thoughtful citizens, to embed learning in the context of authentic situations, and to partner with neighborhood resources, the Charlotte Lab School will utilize its lunch program to teach concepts and skills around sustainable local food sourcing, urban farming, nutrition and healthful eating habits. CLS will work with a local organization/vendor to provide lunch at a fixed cost (through monthly meal plans) to our students. We will negotiate a contract with the organization to retain a percentage of the sales of such meal plans in order to provide lunches free of cost to those students who meet the guidelines for free and reduced lunch in public schools. We are in the process of contacting Johnson & Wales College of Culinary Arts in hopes of partnering with their students to develop this innovative lunch program. As a program that describes their location in Uptown Charlotte as "an incredible learning lab in which to expand [students] palette and hone [their] skills", Johnson & Wales would be an ideal partner. Two other organizations in the Charlotte area that use locally-sourced sustainable ingredients and are potential vendors for our school include: Simply Fresh to You and Good Kitchen.

As a contingency plan, in our budget projections we included the cost of daily lunch (\$3/day for 180 days) for 30% of our students.

**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		\$4,846.00
Officers and Directors/Errors and Omissions	\$1,000,000		\$ .00
Property Insurance	\$450,000		\$675.00
Motor Vehicle Liability	\$1,000,000		\$181.00
Bonding Minimum/Maximum Amount	\$0	\$250,000	\$332.00
Other	\$1,112,000		\$6,132.00
Total Cost			\$12,166.00

\*The applicant must provide a quote from an insurance provider as part of this application (as Appendix O) 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.

charlottelabschool                      12/06/2013

(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).*

Charlotte Lab School seeks to find a space in or near Uptown Charlotte in order to fulfill our mission to embed the City and its culture into our curriculum and to fully utilize the resources of our neighborhood. We anticipate a need for a 20,000 square foot space for our initial 280 students, with the capacity to grow to approximately 40,000 square feet.

The steps we take to secure a space will include:

January 2014: Form a Facilities Committee among members of the Board and schedule a meeting with a representative from Funding the Gap, an organization that provides financing and consulting services for charter schools and has extensive experience supporting schools with their facilities needs; together develop a plan and timeline for finding space, and discuss options for contingency plan

January-April 2014: Facilities Committee will tour school facilities, and other facilities whose concepts are applicable to CLS vision (i.e. graduate school libraries, scientific laboratories, etc.)

February 2014: Facilities Committee will identify possible locations, funders, and Charlotte area organizations that support and promote the development of the Uptown Charlotte community; Committee Chair will set up meetings as appropriate

March 2014: Develop a facilities requirements document to determine actual space needs, including total space, classrooms, restrooms, common learning areas, recreation areas, cafeteria, teacher planning spaces, administrative offices, reception area, multi-purpose spaces, power, and technical infrastructure needs

April-June 2014: Meet with facilities Committee monthly to provide updates on meetings with funders, architects, realtors, etc.

July 2014: The Facilities Committee will have identified funders/financers, architect, location, and specific technology requirements

September 2014: Enter into a facilities contract to begin necessary work

September 2014/February 2015: Facilities Committee will continue to visit schools, focusing on internal set-up and design, furniture, use of space

December 2014: Have use of portion of space in order to conduct open houses for prospective families, Board meetings, and faculty information sessions and interviews

February 2015: Vendors and suppliers will be selected for furniture, school equipment, and IT infrastructure

May 2015: Facility is ready and Certificate of Occupancy issued

July 1, 2015: Facility is ready for move-in, installation and set-up of furniture and equipment

**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.*

Our Facilities Committee will, very early in our planning process, work with real estate and charter consultant experts to explore contingency plan possibilities. These are likely to include temporarily renting office space in mid-town or South End, both of which scenarios we have accounted for in our budget projections and locations equally accessible to Uptown to support our school mission and remain convenient for families.

**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 2015-16**

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

*Refer to the Resource Manual Finance Section for guidance on estimated funding amounts*

**State Funds:** Charter schools receive an equivalent amount per student as the local education agency (LEA) receives per student receives from the State. Funding is based on the 1<sup>st</sup> month average daily membership.

- In year 1 – Base state allotments are determined by the LEA in which the student resides
- In year 2 and beyond- Base State allotments are determined by the LEA in which the school is located.

**Local Funds:** Charter schools receive a per pupil share of the local current expense of the LEA in which the student resides.

**Federal Funds:** Charter schools must qualify and apply for the individual federal grants based on their population of students.

**REFER TO RESOURCE GUIDE FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND SOURCE DOCUMENTS**

LEA #1 600 - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Revenue	2013-2014 Per Pupil Funding	Projected LEA ADM	Approximate funding for 2015-2016
State Funds	\$4,582.77	280	\$1,283,175.60
Local Funds	\$2,381.40	280	\$666,792.00
Federal EC Funds	\$3,743.48	28	\$104,817.44
<b>Totals</b>			\$2,054,785.04



**Total Budget: Revenue Projections 2015-16 through 2019-2020**

<b>INCOME: REVENUE PROJECTIONS</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>
<b>-State ADM Funds</b>	\$1,283,176	\$1,558,141	\$1,833,108	\$2,108,074	\$2,383,040
<b>-Local Per Pupil Funds</b>	\$666,792	\$809,676	\$952,560	\$1,095,444	\$1,238,328
<b>-Exceptional Children Federal Funds</b>	\$104,817	\$127,278	\$149,739	\$172,200	\$194,661
<b>-Other Funds*</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>-Working Capital*</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Z - TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$2,054,785	\$2,495,095	\$2,935,407	\$3,375,718	\$3,816,029

**\*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 documents, etc., on the commitment of these funds. If these figures are loans, the repayment needs to be explained in the narrative and found within the budget projections.**

**Assurances are needed to confirm the commitment of these additional sources of revenue. Please include these as Appendix R.**

**Personnel Budget: Expenditure Projections 2015-16 through 2019-2020**

The personnel list below may be amended to meet the staffing of individual charter schools: This list should align with the projected staff located in the Operations Plan (Appendix M).

BUDGET EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS Personnel	2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020		
	Num Staff	Avg Salary	Total salary	FTE	Avg Salary	Total salary	FTE	Avg Salary	Total salary	FTE	Avg Salary	Total salary	FTE	Avg Salary	Total salary
Administrative & Support Personnel:															
School Business Manager	1	\$45,000	\$45,000	1	\$46,305	\$46,305	1	\$47,647	\$47,647	1	\$49,029	\$49,029	1	\$50,451	\$50,451
Office Manager	1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1	\$25,500	\$25,500	1	\$26,010	\$26,010	1	\$26,530	\$26,530	1	\$27,060	\$27,060
Head Of School	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	1	\$102,900	\$102,900	1	\$105,884	\$105,884	1	\$108,954	\$108,954	1	\$112,114	\$112,114
Assistant Head Of School	1	\$70,000	\$70,000	1	\$72,030	\$72,030	1	\$74,118	\$74,118	1	\$76,268	\$76,268	1	\$78,480	\$78,480
Technology Director	1	\$55,000	\$55,000	1	\$60,000	\$60,000	1	\$66,885	\$66,885	1	\$68,824	\$68,824	1	\$70,820	\$70,820
Development Director	0	\$0	\$0	1	\$65,000	\$65,000	1	\$66,885	\$66,885	1	\$68,824	\$68,824	1	\$70,820	\$70,820
Dean Of Students	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	1	\$55,000	\$55,000	1	\$56,595	\$56,595	1	\$58,236	\$58,236
Technician	0	\$0	\$0	1	\$30,000	\$30,000	1	\$30,870	\$30,870	1	\$31,765	\$31,765	1	\$32,686	\$32,686
A - Total Admin and Support:	5	\$295,000	\$295,000	7	\$401,735	\$401,735	8	\$473,299	\$473,299	8	\$486,789	\$486,789	8	\$500,667	\$500,667
Instructional Personnel:															
Core Content Teacher(s)	13	\$40,000	\$520,000	16	\$40,957	\$655,312	18	\$41,865	\$753,570	21	\$42,529	\$893,109	23	\$43,398	\$998,154
Electives/Specialty Teacher(s)	2	\$40,000	\$80,000	2.5	\$40,957	\$102,393	3.5	\$41,865	\$146,528	4.5	\$42,529	\$191,381	5	\$43,398	\$216,990
Exceptional Children Teacher(s)	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	1	\$40,957	\$40,957	1	\$41,865	\$41,865	1	\$42,529	\$42,529	1	\$43,398	\$43,398
Teacher Assistants	3	\$25,000	\$75,000	3	\$25,725	\$77,175	5	\$26,471	\$132,355	6	\$27,239	\$163,434	6	\$28,028	\$168,168
Esl Teacher	.5	\$40,000	\$20,000	.5	\$40,957	\$20,479	.5	\$41,865	\$20,933	.5	\$42,529	\$21,265	1	\$43,398	\$43,398
Speech	.2	\$50,000	\$10,000	.2	\$50,000	\$10,000	.2	\$50,000	\$10,000	.2	\$50,000	\$10,000	.5	\$50,000	\$25,000

Charlotte Lab School

Guidance	.2	\$50,000	\$10,000	.4	\$50,000	\$20,000	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	1	\$51,450	\$51,450	1	\$52,942	\$52,942
B - Total Instructional Personnel:	19.9	\$285,000	\$755,000	23.6	\$289,553	\$926,315	29.2	\$293,931	\$1,155,250	34.2	\$298,805	\$1,373,167	37.5	\$304,562	\$1,548,050
A+B = C - Total Admin, Support and Instructional Personnel:	24.9	\$580,000	\$1,050,000	30.6	\$691,288	\$1,328,050	37.2	\$767,230	\$1,628,549	42.2	\$785,594	\$1,859,956	45.5	\$805,229	\$2,048,717
Administrative & Support Benefits															
Health Insurance	5	\$4,581	\$22,905	8	\$4,581	\$36,648	8	\$4,581	\$36,648	8	\$4,581	\$36,648	8	\$4,581	\$36,648
Retirement Plan--NC State	0	\$0	\$0	8	\$2,000	\$16,000	8	\$2,000	\$16,000	8	\$2,000	\$16,000	8	\$2,000	\$16,000
Retirement Plan--Other	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0
Life Insurance	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0
Disability	5	\$400	\$2,000	8	\$400	\$3,200	8	\$400	\$3,200	8	\$400	\$3,200	8	\$400	\$3,200
Medicare	5	\$553	\$2,765	8	\$553	\$4,424	8	\$553	\$4,424	8	\$400	\$3,200	8	\$400	\$3,200
Social Security	5	\$2,367	\$11,835	8	\$2,367	\$18,936	8	\$2,367	\$18,936	8	\$2,367	\$18,936	8	\$2,367	\$18,936
D - Total Admin and Support Benefits:	20	\$7,901	\$39,505	40	\$9,901	\$79,208	40	\$9,901	\$79,208	40	\$9,748	\$77,984	40	\$9,748	\$77,984
Instructional Personnel Benefits:															
Health Insurance	20	\$4,581	\$91,620	23	\$4,581	\$105,363	29	\$4,581	\$132,849	34	\$4,581	\$155,754	38	\$4,581	\$174,078
Retirement Plan--NC State	0	\$0	\$0	23	\$2,000	\$46,000	29	\$2,000	\$58,000	34	\$2,000	\$68,000	38	\$2,000	\$76,000
Retirement Plan--Other	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0
Social Security	20	\$2,367	\$47,340	23	\$2,367	\$54,441	29	\$2,367	\$68,643	34	\$2,367	\$80,478	38	\$2,367	\$89,946
Disability	20	\$400	\$8,000	23	\$400	\$9,200	29	\$400	\$11,600	34	\$400	\$13,600	38	\$400	\$15,200
Medicare	20	\$553	\$11,060	23	\$553	\$12,719	29	\$553	\$16,037	34	\$553	\$18,802	38	\$553	\$21,014
Life Insurance	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0
E - Total Instructional Personnel Benefits:	80	\$7,901	\$158,020	115	\$9,901	\$227,723	145	\$9,901	\$287,129	170	\$9,901	\$336,634	190	\$9,901	\$376,238
D+E = F - Total Personnel Benefits	100	\$15,802	\$197,525	155	\$19,802	\$306,931	185	\$19,802	\$366,337	210	\$19,649	\$414,618	230	\$19,649	\$454,222

A+D = G - Total Admin and Support Personnel (Salary & Benefits)	25	\$827,785	\$334,505	47	\$1,090,389	\$480,943	48	\$1,264,425	\$552,507	48	\$1,384,714	\$564,773	48	\$1,418,362	\$578,651
B+E = H - Total Instructional Personnel (Salary & Benefits)	99.9	\$394,501	\$913,020	138.6	\$411,754	\$1,154,038	174.2	\$441,832	\$1,442,379	204.2	\$465,906	\$1,709,801	227.5	\$484,863	\$1,924,288
G+H = J - TOTAL PERSONNEL	124.9	\$1,222,286	\$1,247,525	185.6	\$1,502,143	\$1,634,981	222.2	\$1,706,257	\$1,994,886	252.2	\$1,850,620	\$2,274,574	275.5	\$1,903,225	\$2,502,939

**Operations Budget: Expenditure Projections 2015-16 through 2019-2020**

<b>BUDGET OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS</b>		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>
	Administrative & Support:					
Office:	Office Supplies	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$17,000
	Computers & Software	\$7,500	\$12,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
	Payroll Software	\$2,980	\$2,980	\$2,980	\$2,980	\$2,980
	School Management Software	\$11,200	\$13,600	\$16,000	\$18,400	\$20,800
Professional Contract	Legal Services	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Other	Marketing And Advertising	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000
Professional Contract	Audit Services	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
	Financial Services	\$18,200	\$22,100	\$26,000	\$29,900	\$33,800
Transportation	Bus Fees And Cats Passes	\$26,500	\$26,500	\$26,500	\$26,500	\$53,000
Office:	Printing And Copying	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$7,000	\$9,000	\$10,000
Facilities	All-Inclusive Lease	\$362,677	\$489,326	\$575,678	\$662,030	\$636,124
	Cleaning Supplies	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
Other	Board Meeting Supplies And Pd	\$1,700	\$1,700	\$1,700	\$1,700	\$1,700
	Child nutrition	\$45,360	\$55,080	\$64,800	\$74,520	\$84,240
Office:	Furniture	\$6,000	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Utilities	Phone/Internet	\$10,000	\$12,000	\$14,400	\$17,280	\$20,736
Other	Tech Repair Costs	\$3,267	\$3,967	\$4,667	\$5,367	\$6,067
	<b>K - TOTAL Administrative &amp; Support Operations</b>	<b>\$524,884</b>	<b>\$678,753</b>	<b>\$781,225</b>	<b>\$888,177</b>	<b>\$907,947</b>
	Instructional:					
Classroom Technology	Software	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Instructional Contract	Instructional Support	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$10,000
	Staff Development	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Books and Supplies	Instructional Materials	\$17,500	\$20,000	\$23,000	\$29,000	\$32,000
	Testing Supplies	\$8,400	\$10,200	\$12,000	\$13,800	\$15,600
Other	Classroom Set-Up: Furniture And Equipment	\$16,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
	Research And Development	\$0	\$15,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$40,000
	Professional Development Stipends For Teachers	\$13,500	\$17,000	\$19,000	\$21,500	\$23,000
Transportation	Student Trips	\$4,200	\$5,100	\$6,000	\$6,900	\$7,800
Classroom Technology	Computers	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
	<b>L - TOTAL Instructional Operations</b>	<b>\$101,600</b>	<b>\$112,300</b>	<b>\$138,000</b>	<b>\$157,200</b>	<b>\$170,400</b>

	K+L = M - TOTAL OPERATIONS	\$626,484	\$791,053	\$919,225	\$1,045,377	\$1,078,347
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**Overall Budget:**

<b>BUDGET OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>
J - TOTAL PERSONNEL	\$1,247,525	\$1,634,981	\$1,994,886	\$2,274,574	\$2,502,939
M - TOTAL OPERATIONS	\$626,484	\$791,053	\$919,225	\$1,045,377	\$1,078,347
J+ M =N TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$1,874,009	\$2,426,034	\$2,914,111	\$3,319,951	\$3,581,286
Z - TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,054,785	\$2,495,095	\$2,935,407	\$3,375,718	\$3,816,029
Z - N = SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$180,776	\$69,061	\$21,296	\$55,767	\$234,743

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

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

1. *How was the student enrollment number projected?*

*Provide an explanation as to why you believe there is a demand for the school that will meet this enrollment projection.*

*Provide the break-even point of student enrollment.*

The budget for the Charlotte Lab School was developed over several months in consultation with Board members, utilizing estimates comparable to those of similarly sized charter schools in the Charlotte area. Budget projections were based on enrollment figures that seem feasible based on the positive interest shown in the Charlotte Lab School model, the Uptown Charlotte location, and the organizations with whom we are developing partnerships.

The size of the school and thus our enrollment projections were determined based on the need for a k-8 school that could remain relatively small in size even at full capacity. The small size will be attractive for many families, particularly with our inclusion of the middle grades, which represent a time when many families leave CMS for private schools, and will be more suitable to Charlotte Lab School's mission and location.

As discussed in our needs assessment (see Appendix A), our language offerings, unique approach to teaching and learning, Uptown Charlotte location, partnership organizations, high quality faculty, and the general need for more seats in CMS, particularly in language immersion and "STEAM"-focused schools, we believe that our enrollment projections are reasonable.

With 269 students enrolled, without assuming that any students will qualify for federal EC funds, we will "break even." This means that as long as we meet our enrollment target of 28 students in the first year, we can cover our anticipated expenses, even if we experience an attrition rate of 3% during our first months of operation.

*Discuss the school's contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.*

From our survey results and informal conversations over the past year of considering this proposal, it is clear to us that there is a need in Charlotte for the kind of school experience CLS will provide. We understand, however that it is important to develop a plan for the event that anticipated revenues fall short, and therefore would consider reducing expenses in the following areas:

- Reduce number of staff or amount of space if enrollment is lower
- Lower spending on furniture, office equipment, computers, and other instructional and general supplies; we can make use of family and community donations, Donors Choose, and Classroom Central to support our needs
- Reduce or eliminate professional development stipends and provide more in-house opportunities
- Reduce support staff or administrative positions, or delay the adding of such positions, as needed
- Reduce salaries; this would be a last resort given our belief in a high quality faculty in order to carry out the CLS mission.

*Does the budget rely on sources of funds other than state, county, and federal (e.g. loans, donations etc.)? If so, please provide the source and amount. Be sure that the appropriate assurances documentation is provided in the appendices*

**No, the proposed budget for Charlotte Lab School does not rely on any sources of funds other than state, county, and federal EC funds. Although we have an aggressive plan for applying for planning and start-up grants, we have produced a balanced budget based solely on these sources of funding.**

*Provide the student to teacher ratio that the budget is built on.*

Class sizes range from 17 to 25; 17:1 ratio

2. *Does the school intend to contract for services such as student accounting and financial services, exceptional children instructional support, custodial etc. Describe the criteria and procedures for the selection of contractors and large purchases.*

Charlotte Lab School intends to contract for the following services: financial services/accounting, child psychologist, transportation, child nutrition, and some professional development.

The following criteria will be considered when selecting vendors: reputation and references, service record, experience with k-12 schools (particularly charter schools), appropriate liability coverage (as relevant), and criminal background check for any vendors who come in contact with students.

Selection and payment of a vendor will include the following steps:

- The Head of School (or designee) or Board of Directors will issue a Request for Proposal for the proposed need/service/item.
- Interested vendors will submit estimates and a description of services; at least two "bids" must be received prior to any expenditure over \$10,000.
- The Head of School (or designee) must have the School Business Manager co-sign any check over \$10,000.
- The Head of School will require Board approval for any expenditure over \$25,000.

3. *Explain how the budget aligns with the school's mission, curricular offerings, transportation plans, and facility needs.*

The proposed Charlotte Lab School budget was designed carefully and strategically to align with and support the school mission. We also hope that our budget reflects our values and beliefs about the kind of school we strive for CLS to become. For each category of expenses, we will highlight components of our budget that demonstrate this alignment.

Personnel:

-The success of CLS is dependent upon high quality leaders and teachers, therefore salaries reflect a higher range, but remain within that of CMS; these salaries also reflect CLS's higher expectations for the quality of planning and instruction, longer school days, and the increased number of work days (include in the summer).

-We are investing in hiring a Technology Director from the first year, as much of our model depends heavily on the integration of technology. This person will be able to oversee our technology from an infrastructure perspective as well as assist with planning, professional development, and ongoing innovation.

-A technician will be hired beginning in our second year, as we reach over 200 devices, enabling our teachers to use technology more readily and reliably

-A Development Director will be be hired beginning in the second year, enabling us to begin the marketing and fundraising processes early in our existence to ensure our long-term sustainability and to facilitate our developing relationships with various partner organizations

-A Dean of Students will be added as our students approach their middle school years, in anticipation of greater needs for student support and discipline, as well as an additional person to assist with high school admissions

-We will partner with CMS or another charter school to share the resources of speech and guidance faculty for the first two years. Beginning in the 3rd year, we will hire a Guidance Counselor full time, to better support our students as they enter adolescence and to help them prepare early for the high school selection and admissions process. Our strong advisory program will also be able to provide many of the social and emotional support services typically provided by Guidance Counselors.

-Multiple Teacher Assistants will enable us to keep our student to faculty ratio low

-Multiple enrichment teachers will enable us to provide a diversity of offerings and choice to our students for exploring new activities and deepening learning in areas of interest

-In order to attract and retain top talent, we offer competitive salaries for all positions, benefits calculated at a typical rate of 12%, and access to the NC State retirement plan, beginning in our second year.

-Finally, as described earlier in our Educational Plan section, all pedagogical faculty members will serve in the capacity of Advisor. Our total personnel budget enables us to reach a student to advisor ratio of less than 13 to 1, which is in line with best practices for effective advisory programs.

(See continued section below).

4. *What percentage of expenditures will be the school's goal for a general fund balance?*

*Describe how the school will develop the fund balance.*

The Charlotte Lab School will seek to grow to a general fund balance of 10% in order to ensure long-term sustainability of our school and to be fully prepared for future needs of our student population, including transportation, child nutrition, as well as our growth and facilities.

Our fund balances are as follows:

2015-2016: \$180,776 which represents 9% contingency

2016-2017: \$69,061 which represents 3% contingency and a cumulative reserve fund of \$249,837  
2017-2018: \$21,296 which represents 1% contingency and a cumulative reserve fund of \$271,133  
2018-2019: \$55,767 which represents 2% contingency and a cumulative reserve fund of \$326,900  
2019-2020: \$234,743 which represents 6% contingency and a cumulative reserve fund of \$561,643.

By the end of our fifth year, the cumulative reserve fund of \$561,643 provides us with a 15% contingency reserve, which will be our goal to maintain.

As long as we make our enrollment projections, these calculations represent a conservative estimate; we have not figured in any additional funding that we are likely to receive through start-up grants, partnership grants, PTA and family fundraising efforts, or the fundraising dollars raised by our Director of Development who will be hired during our second year. Some of the planning and start-up grants for which we are in the process of applying include: Next Generation Learning Challenge grants, Charter School Growth Fund, Z. Smith Reynolds, and federal CSP funding.

*5. Provide a description of proposed financing structure. Include financing of facilities, other asset financing and leases.*

For the purposes of this application and our short-term planning, we have budgeted 18% of our total revenue for facilities spending. Beginning in our fifth year, this percentage will be raised to 20%. During the first years of the school, this will enable us to lease a full-service building, which includes security costs, basic utilities, regular cleaning and maintenance. We have budgeted to spend approximately \$17 per square foot, which falls in line with the \$17.89 square foot average rental for in-town Charlotte commercial properties ([http://www.loopnet.com/Charlotte\\_North-Carolina\\_Market-Trends](http://www.loopnet.com/Charlotte_North-Carolina_Market-Trends)). We will plan to seek an escalating rent structure to enable us to better absorb the costs. We are also in the process of working with Funding the Gap to explore our options for financing a long-term lease or an independent, new building.

*7. Will the school have assets from other sources (e.g. building, furniture, chairs, computers, etc.)? If yes, please provide a list. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include evidence of commitment for any assets on which the school's core operation depends*

At this time, Charlotte Lab School does not hold assets from any other sources, however we will seek opportunities to accept donations of furniture, equipment, etc. from businesses that might be closing, downsizing, or relocating.

CONTINUED FROM BUDGET ALIGNMENT QUESTION ABOVE...

Operations:

-Many of our projected expenses support faculty autonomy, flexibility, ownership, collaboration and risk-taking; each faculty member will be given a \$1500 allocation to determine which computer device they wish to purchase,

a \$1000 budget for classroom furniture, design and decor, and an annual \$500 stipend for professional development (which we hope to grow to a larger amount over the years) which they can apply towards any professional activity that helps them to achieve their annual goals.

-Beginning in our second year, we have set aside a Research & Development fund, that will grow as the school grows. This fund will be set aside for new initiatives, pilot programs, teacher innovation mini-grants, and other activities that will support the school's ongoing innovation and improvement efforts. It is part of our mission to continue to push our thinking and practices and to remain adaptable to meet the goals of our changing students and world; this fund will support that process.

-Our expenses for the purchase of devices will enable us to be at 1:1 student to device ratio by our fifth year. Although our students will not have "their own" device, part of our mission is to make technology ubiquitous in our school - ready anytime, anywhere, whenever it is needed.

-The small instructional software budget is purposeful; it is our intention to utilize Google Apps for Education and other "open" (free, readily available, and device-agnostic) resources to enable our students and families to access our digital resources anytime, anywhere, on any device, and to serve as a model for a long-term cost-effective, technology-rich school environment.

#### Curricular Offerings:

-Our Spanish and Mandarin bilingual teachers represent part of the total teacher numbers listed in the budget; they are part of our core instructional team and not considered enrichment or elective teachers

-Our ESL teacher will be dual-certified and will serve as one of the core teachers as well as to provide any specific services needed by our English-Language Learners

#### Transportation and School Nutrition:

CLS is committed to ensuring that every student has transportation to school and a healthy meal to eat at school every day. We have allocated in our budget amounts to cover the costs of bus transportation and school lunch for 30% of our population. It will also be our goal to negotiate contracts with our vendors to allocate a percentage of the sales to support the cost of students who qualify for financial assistance.

#### Facilities:

-The amount allocated for rent represents 18% of our total budget, a typical and reasonable figure according to charter facilities experts with whom we consulted. This amount will enable us to spend approximately \$17 per square foot, which is in line with Charlotte commercial real estate fees. Commercial leases in and near Uptown are in full-service facilities, therefore rent is inclusive of costs for security, custodian, basic utilities, and building maintenance.

-We have allocated a considerable amount for phone and internet service, as much of our curriculum will rely on internet access in all areas of our school space, and large broadband capacity for the downloading of multi-media resources.

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

*How will the school ensure adequate internal controls, including segregation of duties, safeguarding of assets, accurate and adequate recording keeping?*

The Charlotte Lab School will employ a full-time School Business Manager who will oversee all financial record-keeping. Roles, responsibilities, expectations and hiring criteria for the School Business Manager position can be found in the Staffing Section of this application.

In addition to hiring a full-time SBM, CLS will also contract with a well-regarded, licensed accounting firm that has extensive experience managing Charter School finances. We have been in contact with two firms: LB&A and Potter & Company and will review their services and estimates in greater detail prior to selecting which firm will handle our finances, payroll, ISIS reporting, etc. and which (or another if needed) will conduct an annual audit of our finances and financial processes. These financial consultants will liaise with the school primarily through the School Business Manager and collaboratively will prepare monthly budget status updates for the Board. Each year a thorough audit will be conducted by one of the aforementioned licensed accounting firms.

*Provide any known or possible related party transactions (relationship, description of transaction and estimated dollars involved)*

Not applicable. Charlotte Lab School will ensure, through its comprehensive conflict of interest policies and annual auditing process, that finances will be handled with the highest standard of ethics.

*Provide the name and contact information of the independent audit firm who will conduct the annual financial statement audit. If a firm has yet to be identified please list the firms the board has investigated.*

As mentioned earlier, we have received estimates for financial services and audit services from the following licensed and experienced CPA firms:

Potter & Company  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS  
434 Copperfield Boulevard NE  
Suite A  
Concord, NC 28025  
Phone: 704.786-8189  
Fax: 704.786-4447

LB&A, Certified Public Accountants, PLLC  
212 W. Matthews St  
Suite 102  
Matthews, NC 28105  
704.841.1120



**VI. AGREEMENT PAGE**

**Application Fee:**

*Pursuant to § 115C-238.29B(e) the charter school applicant must submit a \$500 application fee to the Office of Charter Schools. The applicant must submit their application fee by the December 6, 2013 5:00 pm EST deadline. Payments will be accepted in the form of a check only. Cash or credit cards are not accepted.*

*\*Application Note: The applicant must mail the check along with a copy of the proposed charter LOI to be received before or on the due date of December 6, 2013 5:00 pm EST. Failure to submit payment by the stipulated timeline to the Office of Charter Schools will deem the application incomplete.*

*Payments should be made payable to North Carolina Department of Public Instruction*

*North Carolina Department of Public Instruction  
Office Of Charter Schools  
6303 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-6303*

*I understand the requirements pursuant to G.S. 115C-238.29B(e).*

charlottelabschool

Date: 12/06/2013

**Applicant Signature:**

The foregoing application is submitted on behalf of Charlotte Lab 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: charlottelabschool

Board Position: Charlotte Lab School - 2015 NC Charter Application

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

Date: 12/06/2013

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

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

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

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

