



NORTH CAROLINA CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

Appalachian Heritage Academy

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 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:	9
	Goals for the Proposed Charter School:	10
III.		
	<u>EDUCATION PLAN</u>	14
	Instructional Program:	14
	C	
	C	
	C	
	9-12 Curriculum and Instructional Design:	14
	Special Programs and "At-Risk" Students	18
	Exceptional Children	20
	Student Performance Standards	22
	Student Conduct:	24
IV.		
	<u>GOVERNANCE, OPERATIONS and CAPACITY</u>	26
	Governance:	26
	Governance and Organizational Structure of Private Non-Profit Organization:	26
	Proposed Management Organization (Educational Management Organization or Charter Management Organization)	32
	Private School Conversions: complete	32
	C	
	Projected Staff:	32
	Staffing Plans, Hiring, and Management	32
	Staff Evaluation and Professional Development	35
	Enrollment and Marketing:	37
	Marketing Plan	37
	Parent and Community Involvement	38
	Admissions Policy	39
	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2015-16 through 2019-2020	41
	Transportation Plan:	42
	School Lunch Plan:	42
	Civil Liability and Insurance	42
	Health and Safety Requirements:	43
	Facility:	
	Facility Contingency Plan:	44
V.		
	<u>FINANCIAL PLAN</u>	
	Budget: Revenue Projections from each LEA 2015-16	45
	Total Budget: Revenue Projections 2015-16 through 2019-2020	46
	Personnel Budget: Expenditure Projections 2015-16 through 2019-2020	47
	Operations Budget: Expenditure Projections 2015-16 through 2019-2020	49
	Overall Budget:	51
	Budget Narrative:	51
	Financial Audits:	55
VI.		
	<u>AGREEMENT PAGE</u>	
	LEA Impact Statement:	57

Applicant Signature: _____ 57

I. APPLICATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of proposed charter school: Appalachian Heritage Academy

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

Name of non-profit organization under which charter will be organized or operated: *Appalachian Heritage Academy Foundation*

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: *Darcel Eddins*

Title/Relationship to nonprofit: *Chair*

Mailing address: PO Box 898
Asheville NC 28802

Primary telephone: 828-257-4000 Alternative telephone: 828-333-8223

E-Mail address: darcel.eddins@gmail.com

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

County: BUNCOMBE

LEA: 110-Buncombe County Schools

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

No:

Yes:

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

No:

Yes:

What is the name of the nonprofit organization that governs this charter school? Appalachian Heritage Academy Foundation

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

Grade Levels Served and Total Student Enrollment:

Projected School Opening: Year 2015 Month August

Will this school operate on a year round schedule?

No:

Yes:

Proposed Grade Levels Served and Total Student Enrollment (

10

Years)

Academic School Year	Grade Levels	Total Projected Student Enrollment
First Year	09,10	160
Second Year	09,10,11	205
Third Year	09,10,11,12	215
Fourth Year	09,10,11,12	215
Fifth Year	09,10,11,12	215
Sixth Year	09,10,11,12	215
Seventh Year	09,10,11,12	215
Eight Year	09,10,11,12	215
Ninth Year	09,10,11,12	215
Tenth Year	09,10,11,12	215

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.

deddins
Signature

Title

deddins
Printed Name

12/03/2013
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:

Our mission statement is:

The Appalachian Heritage Academy empowers students to create positive change in our world by integrating global citizenship skills with wisdom from our region's diverse cultural and natural heritage.

Appalachian heritage, as we define it, includes personal resiliency, creative and practical arts, community-building, and sustainable use of local resources. The principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperation, creativity, and purpose are common themes in all courses.

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.*

Our target population is the high school students of Asheville and surrounding area, many of whose families have a strong interest in sustainable living and arts. Our school will ideally be located in the Asheville City School District, which is 78% majority (white) and 22% minority. Buncombe County as a whole is approximately 90% majority and 10% minority. There are 25,000 students in the Buncombe County system, and about 4,000 students in the Asheville City system. The median income in Buncombe County is about \$40,000, with 11% of the population below the poverty line.

We wish to be located in the Asheville City School District for two main reasons. First, the location of our school and lack of school buses shall not be a barrier to any student resident of Asheville City who wishes to attend, because we will be located on the public bus line in a central location. Our school will attract students who are interested in alternative education, but who may not necessarily have the transportation resources to attend a school out in the county far from the inner city neighborhoods in which they reside. Our marketing efforts are targeted toward inner city families, and we expect that our demographics will be at least 11% very low income students, and at least 20% minority ethnicity. Second, the central Asheville location will allow our students access to the many artists and craftspeople in the near downtown and River Arts District areas. Our school seeks to strengthen community ties and the local economy through our apprenticeship program.

Our location and our student body have been selected to align with our mission as students will be empowered to create change in our world by practicing global citizenship skills in our city and participating in the diverse culture of Asheville.

- 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).*

When our school is at full enrollment, we expect 200 students, with approximately 100 residents of Asheville City Schools district and 100 residents of Buncombe County Schools district. We anticipate attracting students who live in both districts and who have been enrolled in home schools, charter schools, or private schools rather than the LEA's. We expect that our school will enroll between 2 and 7% of ACS 9-12 students. We expect that our school will enroll between .5 and 1.5% of BCS 9-12 students. We anticipate that we may have up to 25% of students who are former home-schooled students; these students will not be taken from the current LEA population, but will be added to the population of students enrolled in a public school.

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

AHA is unusual in that it draws on the cultural heritage of a particular region. We define Appalachian heritage to include skills of self-reliance, resilience, and sustainability, the knowledge and connections to utilize regional resources, and the strengthening of community connections, all of which are necessary in addressing the challenges of the 21st century. Our elective courses will focus on sustainable agriculture and arts/ crafts. While Asheville High has an incredible array of courses, they do not offer courses in Appalachian Heritage skills.

Because of our small size, our schedules will have an element of flexibility not possible in a larger school. Students will have up to two periods most days during which they can receive individual or small group interaction with teachers, whether they are struggling and need directive support, they need specialized EC or ELL services, or they are academically gifted/motivated and working on an independent project. The flexible schedule allows students with changing needs to receive the kind of support they need when they need it.

Our apprenticeship program offers a unique supported experience for both the student and the community partner. Community partners will receive special training to help them mentor students effectively during the apprenticeship. Students will gain real-world skills in an area of their choice, while the community partner will gain the investment of time and energy into their business by the student and the school. Students will base their senior projects on their apprenticeship experiences, and receive continued support at school as they work on this academically oriented project.

Once the Asheville City Schools district hires a permanent superintendent (currently they have an interim superintendent) and once we have our provisional charter, we intend to initiate meetings with that superintendent

and express our strong desire to collaborate with ACS. We feel confident that ACS will share our awareness of the potential for partnership and resource sharing that will benefit all high school students in this area. We recognize that ACS is an excellent system, and our desire is to create a school that will enhance student choice, rather than competing with already existing programming. Our school will develop innovative programming that we will share through our partnership with the LEA to benefit all area students.

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

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

The Six Legislative Purposes of a Charter School are:

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

Purpose #1:

Teachers will work in Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) for continuous professional development and improvement. Teachers will be responsible for determining learning objectives for their courses within the parameters of state and national standards as well as the specific outcomes determined at the school level, while the administration of the school will be responsible for making time and resources available to teachers so that they can do this work. In-service professional development will frequently be led by staff members in their areas of expertise. Teachers will have common planning daily, and will be expected to work together to create interdisciplinary lessons, projects, and units.

Purpose #2:

The board will monitor academic achievement and other aspects of the school to make sure it is achieving mission-based goals. The school will follow the state accountability model for student achievement. The board will also monitor the principal via the North Carolina Executive Principals Evaluation Process.

Purpose #3:

One of the main purposes of AHA is to provide students, through agriculture and the arts, with a greater variety of educational paths and career choices. Outdoor, experiential agriculture and creative work give students with varied abilities the opportunity to succeed in different ways. Internships and community partnerships provide students with opportunities to gain vocational and professional skills in real-world settings. Our program will directly teach community-building skills such as conflict resolution and cooperative group work. AHA will have a strong system in place for parents to be an active part of the school community.

Purpose #4:

AHA's program is student-centered, with a strong student leadership component. Student learning will be improved at AHA through real-world, hands-on experience and small class size. Our education program includes built-in structures for personalized support such as the seminar class, mentoring and lunch advising. Our holistic curriculum improves students' ability to achieve academically by directly teaching study skills and communication skills. Our program supports the whole student by providing creative outlets for personal expression, and by building community.

Purpose #5:

AHA provides several avenues for students to design and receive support for personalized goals. One of these avenues is the apprenticeship with senior project, which allows students to challenge themselves at the level appropriate to their needs in a field that interests them. Personalized growth plans, supported through the yearly seminar class, help students pursue individualized goals. Active, experiential learning and creative arts give at-risk and all students an outlet for positive expression of emotions, personal growth, and a sense of tangible achievement. The seminar class and lunch advisory times are built into each student's schedule, and can serve to provide increasingly directive support from staff OR increasingly student-directed projects.

Purpose #6:

Teachers will plan interdisciplinary teaching projects. Because student responsibility, community connections, and relationships are integral to AHA's mission, all classes will utilize student-led group work and peer mentoring as a significant aspect of the curriculum. By using community partners as teachers for some elective courses as well as for apprenticeship placements, our faculty will have the opportunity to develop and implement a course to "train the teachers" who may not have traditional education backgrounds. Teachers will also develop cross-curricular units to teach core material in a project based format, and assess the effectiveness of these units via interdisciplinary PLCs.

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.

Appalachian Heritage Academy uses a diverse variety of objective measurements to assess students' progress toward the performance goals. Our goals are SMARTER--specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound and will be evaluated and re-evaluated.

1. Individual and student academic growth as measured by Student Portfolios: Students and mentors will co-create Individual Growth Plans with goals that address academic, personal, and social growth. In the first year, 80% of students will receive a grade of "proficient" as determined by the school staff, with the rate to increase by 5% each year thereafter. "Proficiency" will be defined as a combination of academic excellence and alignment with the school mission. Portfolios will include the following:

A) Overall academic proficiency will be measured by student grades and scores. We will set standards (learning objectives) for all courses, and use standards-based grading (i.e. students must show mastery of the standards). For common core classes, common core state standards will be used. For non-common core classes, faculty will create standards collaboratively within their PLCs. Students will be graded on a quarterly basis. At minimum, 80% of students will perform at or above 2.5 GPA in the first year, 65% of students will perform at or above 3.0 GPA, and 50% of students will perform above a 3.5 GPA, with a 5% increase in percent of students performing at this benchmark each year.

B) Success in apprenticeships and senior projects will be measured using a rubric, including attendance, apprentice master feedback, and academic rigor and relevance of project graded by certified staff.

C) Community Service: Students will do at least 15 hours during 9th grade, 20 in 10th, 25 in 11th, and 30 in 12th. All community service hours must be aligned with our mission. The school will assist in connecting students with opportunities for service.

2. Student attendance: We will have a minimum of 95% attendance each year.

3. Performance on tests required by state accountability model (currently including ACT, PLAN, EOCs, WorkKeys):

For any given assessment in the state accountability model, during the first year of operation, at least 80% of students will score at a level determined by the state as "proficient". Each year thereafter, the percent of students scoring at this level will increase by 5%.

4. Post-graduation success:

Success will be defined in many ways, including enrollment in and graduation from institutes of higher education or training and certification programs; employment in skilled positions; successful maintenance of a family; and domestic or international service (Peace Corps, U.S. armed forces, etc.). Graduates will be surveyed and contacted annually for at least 5 years post-matriculation. At least 80% of graduates will be classified as "successful" within 5 years after matriculation, with a 5% increase for each successive graduating class.

5. Graduation rates:

In the 2017-18 academic year, students will graduate at a minimum rate equal to 5% higher than that year's state graduation rate. Each year thereafter, graduation rates will improve by a minimum of 5% each year compared to the previous year. Once the school has reached a 100% graduation rate, then this

rate shall be maintained every year thereafter.

BOARD REVIEW:

The Board will evaluate these SMARTER goals annually.

The Board will review student course grades quarterly.

The portfolio targets will be created/ revised by a PLC including all teaching staff, counselor, and principal annually, and the rubric for grading the portfolio will align with the standards. The Board will approve the targets for the portfolio to ensure that it is aligned with the school's mission.

The Board will review portfolio scores annually.

All tests required by the state accountability model will be given, and scores will be reported to the Board as soon as data is available.

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

Unless otherwise stated, all metrics will be monitored annually.

1. Student performance standards:

The board will monitor student performance standards outlined above at the midpoint and at the end of each school year, unless otherwise stated above.

2. Retention:

The board will monitor the retention of students at the school in two ways. First, the board will be informed during the monthly board meeting of any student who chooses to un-enroll during the school year. Second, the board will monitor the rates of continuing students who enroll for the next academic year. By the third year of operation, there will be a retention rate of at least 85% of rising sophomores, a retention rate of at least 90% for rising juniors, and a retention rate of at least 95% for rising seniors.

3. Student body:

The student body will reflect the race and class composition of the City of Asheville or County of Buncombe, depending on the location of the school, to within 10% margin of error. If the composition of the population at large changes, then that change shall be reflected in the student body within 4 years.

4. Community partnerships:

By the 2017-18 academic year, there will be a minimum number of community partnerships sufficient to place every senior in an off-campus apprenticeship. Each year thereafter, the number of community partnerships shall increase or remain constant.

5. Compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and terms of the charter contract:

Board members will be familiar with these regulations and ensure compliance. Board process for every decision will include compliance with laws, regulations, and terms of charter.

6. Financial performance and viability:

The school will operate at a viable financial level. This will be monitored quarterly by the board. The board will contract for an audit of finances at

appropriate intervals.

7. Board performance:

The board will evaluate its own performance and adherence to our group agreements annually.

8. School improvement plans:

The board will request a school improvement plan to be updated annually, and will monitor it at least annually.

9. School leadership effectiveness:

This will be measured in accordance with success on student performance standards, teacher working conditions survey, teacher retention, and the NC School Executive Rubric. The board will use the North Carolina Executive Principal Evaluation Process as an ongoing component of ensuring leadership effectiveness.

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.

The overall instructional program supports the study of Appalachian heritage, specifically in agriculture and arts. Major instructional methods are student-centered, emphasizing opportunities for student leadership in research, creative expression, and formation of meaningful products. Students will work in cooperative groups to achieve common goals for which members are mutually accountable. Experiential learning is emphasized through problem-based learning, project-based learning, multi-disciplinary projects, paideia-type seminars, and appropriate use of technology. (See references for research supporting the above methods, in Appendix T.)

Assessments will be based upon the learning objectives collaboratively determined by teachers in Professional Learning Communities (DuFour & Marzano), in accordance with the state requirements and AHA mission-based objectives. They will include frequent formative assessments providing data that teachers use to modify instruction, as well as summative assessments to measure what has been learned and whether or not the objectives for learning have been achieved. Common assessments will be used whenever feasible to aid teachers in continuous improvement and professional development in their PLCs. Cross-curricular problem-based learning projects/units will incorporate learning objectives from multiple disciplines and will always include evaluation of effectiveness by the PLC of interdisciplinary teachers who have implemented the project or unit. Students will know how they are to be evaluated before they begin their work, and are expected to perform at a high level of academic rigor.

Our program will help students acquire the skills they need to be successful adults. By emphasizing student leadership, 21st century career skills, and student-led projects in the community at large, we are meeting the need of the target population to create new businesses and industries, as well as revitalizing "traditional" industry such as agriculture. Our focus on collaboration, effective communication, and diversity in the student body will also help to re-integrate a community that is currently diverse but somewhat fractured by segregation.

9-12 Curriculum and Instructional Design:

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

Students will work individually on projects as well as in collaborative groups, as they need to know how to do both once they enter the workforce. They will take an active leadership role in classes, with opportunities to present, teach, and initiate their own projects. Teachers will primarily act as facilitators who provide and maintain clear structures for all student activities. Students will have opportunities to work on more advanced or modified independent projects as appropriate, with the guidance of mentors who meet with them during lunch-time advisory periods and other specified times.

As much as possible, classes will be heterogeneous (non-tracked, inclusive of mixed-ability levels), and will be taught in mixed age groups. Our target class size is 20 students or less. Classes will mirror the Professional Learning Community processes that both the faculty and board engage in for their own projects and decision-making. The principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperation, creativity, and purpose are common themes in all courses.

Provide a synopsis of the planned curriculum, including:

1. *One sample course scope and sequence for one core subject (specific to the school's purpose) (Appendix B2).*
2. *As Appendix B3, provide a visual disseminating what courses (core content and electives) will be offered in year one through year five of the charter high school. Please ensure the projected staff and budget aligns with the course offerings.*
3. *Identify how this curriculum aligns with the proposed charter school's mission, targeted student population, and North Carolina Accountability Model.*

State Superintendent June Atkinson has stated that making sure students have the academic skills to choose whatever path they want to follow is critical for high school graduates. The AHA curriculum allows students to focus in agriculture and/or arts, drawing on Appalachian heritage to gain practical skills for a variety of locally sustainable trades. Our agriculture and arts focus and experiential learning in community not only build workforce skills but also align with our mission of drawing on local resources and heritage. The senior apprenticeship and senior project also prepare students directly for the workforce.

North Carolina Accountability Model:

* 100% of our students will pass Math II or higher. AHA ensures this by providing individual support for struggling students as well as providing opportunity for advanced students to take higher level courses, including courses at AB Tech (the local community college) or other higher education institutions when possible.

* Our courses are aligned with CCSS and ACT standards, and taught at a level of rigor to prepare students for both ACT and college. 80% of students during the 2016-17 school year will score at this level, with a 5% increase of students scoring at this level each year thereafter.

* 100% of eligible juniors will earn at least a silver level on the WorkKeys Performance Test. Students can take this test at AB Tech, and accommodations are available for EC students.

* A high graduation rate will be ensured in the following ways: Our small

class size and built-in support system will ensure that all students experience appropriate support, and our mission of empowering students will be fulfilled through peer mentoring, shared leadership, and student-centered, experiential learning. The seminar class, which students take all four years, will provide them with high school study and organizational skills, assistance with apprenticeship, college, and career plans, and individualized support including the development of personal 4-year plans. All students will be matched with individual teacher mentors, with whom they can meet during built-in advisory periods at lunchtime.

* Every senior will be required to complete an apprenticeship, as well as a graduation project that includes the presentation of a product (artifact from apprenticeship, work of art, demonstration, presentation, etc.) as well as an academic paper, relevant to the apprenticeship. AHA will facilitate and monitor apprenticeship placements through partnerships in the community (see letters of support in Appendices A and T). Student apprentices will develop professional connections and skills, gain real-world work experience, and benefit their communities. The apprenticeship supports our mission of connecting with local community and integrating traditional with global citizenship skills.

We define "Southern Appalachian heritage skills" as including but not limited to: self-reliance, sustainable practices, interdependence, practical arts, and use of local resources. These skills inspire our course curricula and elective options. Our region hosts a strong sense of pride in local heritage. The Asheville area is also known throughout the country as a center for sustainable building, living, and permaculture initiatives, as well as a diverse focus in the arts. Many families move to the Asheville area with a desire to live more sustainably, but then home school their children because no schools in the area currently offer a curriculum with this focus. AHA will bring together traditional Appalachian culture, our unique Asheville culture, and the individual heritage of every student by addressing our shared interests in community, arts, and sustainability.

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

Teachers must be trained to provide differentiated instruction in mixed classrooms, including coaching students in acquisition of skills by employing increasing levels of support as necessary. Teachers will be trained in supporting exceptional students, whether they have learning disabilities, or they are academically gifted, or both. Mixed ability classrooms provide opportunities for student leadership and mentoring, increased confidence and academic challenge for students of all levels, and a desegregated, diverse setting that mirrors the complex environments of the real world. Teachers must be trained to work with different ability levels, including working with ELL students through the use of programs such as SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol). In their Professional Learning Communities, teachers must also be able to determine differentiated learning objectives for students and design assessments that align with specific skills taught, in order to accurately assess what has been learned, and use assessment data to inform instruction. Skill in assessment and understanding of how to use student data allows teachers to modify instruction in order to increase student achievement.

Teachers must know how to direct cooperative groups. In order to collaborate effectively and fairly, students need to learn specific skills for dividing labor, setting goals, communicating, and holding each other accountable, and teachers must be able to facilitate and monitor these structures. Teachers also need to know how to facilitate discussions about controversial topics in order to improve critical thinking, understanding of moral complexity, and respectful communication skills that students need to achieve academically and to become responsible citizens and capable communicators in diverse careers and communities.

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

AHA offers the Future-Ready Core course of study requirements to attend a 4-year university or other post-secondary institution. The seminar course will give them specific study, organizational, and other skills necessary for succeeding in school, so that university or college-bound students are prepared for the heavier course load and responsibility that those institutions require. The senior apprenticeship will help students build professional connections, gain real-world professional experience, and develop soft skills that will be useful in any trade.

One of the factors that leads to success in life is an overall sense of confidence, critical intelligence, and self-determination that helps people to relate interpersonally and make positive choices. AHA students will graduate as well-adjusted citizens prepared to take charge of their own lives, through a curriculum that also addresses social development and builds connection to heritage in a region that has struggled with misunderstanding and negative stereotypes from both within and without.

6. *If implemented, describe how the proposed charter school will meet the Future-Ready Core requirements. Provide details on how the students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts?*

AHA will offer courses that satisfy the Future-Ready Core requirements. In order to achieve the elective requirements, we will offer at least Spanish I and II, and students can choose an elective course concentration in arts education, agricultural science, or CTE. CTE classes can be taken through AB Technical Community College, where students can participate in the Career and College Promise Program. Regardless of the elective course concentration students wish to complete, all students must take one arts education and one agricultural science class in order to graduate.

Grade-point Averages (GPA's) are calculated based on a quality point conversion using a 4.0 scale with some exceptions. Students will be able to earn one extra "HONORS" quality point in courses by completing enrichment projects that demonstrate a mastery level above highly proficient--these projects must satisfy predetermined assessment objectives as developed by the teacher or PLC and approved by the Principal. Students enrolled in AP courses and/or college courses at AB Tech that are eligible to transfer to a state university will receive one extra quality point. However, the board reserves the right to modify this system if it appears to hinder students' competitiveness when applying for college.

AHA will not calculate class rank, as we do not wish to create a school

environment where students are competing against one another, but rather an environment where students are invested in each others' success. In order to give colleges and scholarship committees a deeper understanding of the success of our students, transcripts will include GPA, courses completed with grade, community service hours acquired each year, leadership activities, and information on the student's apprenticeship (including number of hours completed and duties). Furthermore, transcripts will include a profile of the school that explains our unique education model.

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

We have chosen a modified year-round calendar for 3 main reasons: 1) The LEA in which we are located, Asheville City (111), is moving toward a modified year-round. We desire to coincide with ACS so that families will be able to follow a consistent calendar if they have children in different schools. 2) It allows us to better focus on our mission by aligning with the agricultural calendar and allowing for more outdoor and experiential education in the summer. 3) It allows us more time for professional development, to support our goals of community-building and special teacher training as described above. The board reserves the right to change this calendar if necessary to meet the needs of the student body and school mission.

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.*

The Appalachian Heritage Academy will set up multiple safeguards to keep students from "falling through the cracks." Each freshman will be paired with a faculty mentor; the mentor will serve in this role for the rest of the student's time at AHA (whenever possible). Our schedule allows for a mid-day 30-minute advising period that will be used for regular mentor meetings, academic tutoring, club meetings, college advising, and special events. Teachers will provide tutoring on a rotating basis, and interested older students will be trained to tutor younger students. A required seminar class each year will focus on teaching students the skills they need to be successful in high school and beyond. Teachers will use the PLC model to identify learning objectives and assess whether or not students have mastered these objectives. When data shows that intervention is needed, the advising period will be used to hold conferences for students who are struggling academically, and these students will be placed in an increasingly directive and supportive seminar session until they are back on track. The small size of our school is a preventative measure in itself, as it allows teachers and staff to provide more individualized attention to each student.

Recognizing how important parent involvement is to student success, faculty will regularly communicate with parents about the academic progress of their

students through phone calls, emails, and parent-teacher conferences. Furthermore, AHA will hold family workshops and disseminate newsletters and messages regarding steps families can take to help their students be successful in school.

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.*

1. All entering students will be asked on their enrollment form about the language spoken in their homes as well as what language they first learned. Additional information will be gathered from students' previous schools. Subject teachers and mentor teachers will refer students whose language skills suggest a need for testing. Students who are identified as potential ELL students will be assessed with the WIDA Model for grades 9-12.

2. ELL students will have their own personal plans based on their strengths and challenges as well as on the NCDPI ELD SCS. Teachers will be trained to use the WIDA performance definitions. All students will have mentor teachers with whom they regularly meet. Peer tutoring will assist ELL students to apprehend more of the educational material. Teachers will be trained in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) on an as-needed basis to work with ELL students. Additional services will be contracted out to a licensed professional or provided by staff.

3. Progress, success, and readiness to exit ELL services will be monitored on a regular basis by way of 1) meetings between subject area teachers and mentor teachers to discuss the progress and effectiveness of ELL programming, 2) formal communication of progress to parents in quarterly Progress Reports and Report Cards, 3) meetings between mentor teachers and their students to discuss progress and student needs, and 4) formal assessments of student progress. ELL students will have additional student folders stored inside the regular student records folder.

4. We will work with community organizations such as Center for Participatory Change to enhance our ELL family services. We can partner with the CFPC to use resources such as a simultaneous interpreter. In addition, a partnership with CFPC will allow us to connect with their extensive networks to develop an even stronger community-based ELL support program.

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.*

Students will be identified as intellectually gifted in several ways. First, enrollment forms will include a question asking if there has been a previous placement in AIG. Second, staff will review student folders from previous

schools to see if there has been a previous placement. Third, students can be referred by staff due to observations, evidence from EOC scores, and classroom assessments. The AIG committee will review information for potential AIG students to see if they have 4 out of 6 identifiers (85+% on EOC's, 90+% on report cards, parent recommendation, teacher recommendation, community member recommendation that includes evidence of high community involvement, and 80+% on the Cognitive Abilities Test on either the Verbal Battery or the Quantitative Nonverbal) and always including either the EOC or CogAt scores. The CogAt will be administered if 3 of the other factors are considered likely to qualify a student.

In addition to these strategies, all students will be able to do supported independent and small group study and projects to enrich and extend their learning, regardless of whether or not they are identified AIG.

1. Specific instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities:

Once students are identified, the AIG committee will plan out a selection of opportunities for each student based on the student's strengths. Subject teachers will implement these plans as part of differentiated instruction in their classes. Students qualified through the AIG Committee will have the opportunity to take classes at the community college, work as peer tutor leaders, and potentially take AP classes at AHA. They will meet regularly with their mentor teachers to formulate avenues to apply their interests more deeply in academic subjects, and will be able to create their own independent studies or small group projects as their schedules allow. Students will have as much choice for individualizing their program of study as possible.

2. Plans for monitoring and evaluating progress and success:

Progress and success of AIG students will be monitored on a regular basis by way of 1) meeting between subject area teachers and mentor teachers to discuss the progress and effectiveness of AIG programming, 2) formal communication of progress to parents in quarterly Progress Reports and Report Cards, 3) meetings between mentor teachers and their students to discuss progress and student needs, and 4) formal assessments of student progress. AIG students will have additional student folders stored inside the regular student records folders.

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

1. *Explain how you will identify students who are enrolled within the charter school that have previously been found to be eligible for special education services or are protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.*
2. *Provide the process for identifying students who may be eligible for special education*

services as identified in the federal 'Child Find' mandate. Be sure to include how student evaluations and assessments will be completed.

3. *Provide a plan detailing how the records of students with disabilities and 504 Accommodation plans will be properly managed.*
 - a) *Requesting Records from previous schools*
 - b) *Record Confidentiality (on site)*
 - c) *Record Compliance (on site)*

1. Identification (504):

AHA will follow students' existing IEP and 504 plans with developmentally relevant adjustments for high school. Teachers will refer students whose behavior or test scores suggest a likely need for identification and protection under IDEA. AHA will use the NCDPI statewide forms and norms for the identification of students who need services, and for the creation and renewal process of developing IEPs and 504 plans.

AHA will provide an annual review to ensure that students' needs are being met. When students need re-evaluating on the standard three-year cycle, AHA will follow all laws and best practices ensuring that IEP teams, called Student Nurturing Teams, are composed of an EC specialist, an administration member, a classroom teacher, the parent or guardian, and the teacher-mentor for the student. We will implement all recommendations from the IEP and 504 committees so that students will have the accommodations they need to learn in a meaningful, thriving way. (NOTE: the term "Student Nurturing Team" is subject to change.)

2. Identification (Child Find)

The Federal Mandate Child Find is primarily focused on toddlers and the transition to kindergarten. The aspect that is related to this high school is that parents who believe their child could be a potential candidate for special services will contact AHA in writing at the time of enrollment. AHA will act on teacher and mentor observations as well as independent evaluations performed by licensed professionals. AHA will post current Child Find posters in the school office.

3. Records:

i) Requesting records from previous schools: Upon enrollment of a student with an existing IEP or 504, AHA will send a formal request for the student's records to the student's previous school within 15 days.

ii) Record confidentiality (on site): All student records held by AHA will be stored in a secure location, the school office or the EC office. All records will remain in the office in a secure and locked storage container unless signed out by a professional employee of AHA, whereupon the professional has the responsibility to keep such records secured. All records will be returned to the office as soon as reasonably possible.

iii) Record compliance (on site): AHA will follow all standard compliance expected of an LEA as stated in the 2008-2009 Guiding Practices published by NCDPI and as stated by NC 1502-17.

Exceptional Children's Education Programming

1. *Describe the educational programs, strategies, and additional supports the school will provide to ensure a full continuum of services for students with disabilities.*
2. *Describe the methods and support systems that will be in place to ensure students with disabilities receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).*

3. *Describe how implementation of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be monitored and reported to the student, parents and relevant staff.*
4. *Describe the proposed plan for providing related services.*

1. AHA's basic plan is for as much inclusion, following the Least Restrictive Environment clause, as is reasonably possible. We believe it is best for all members of a community to learn and grow together regardless of personal abilities. AHA will provide highly qualified teachers, as defined by the State of NC, in each of the core academic subjects, and train them to teach students of all abilities and disabilities inclusively as members of an interconnected community.

Small class size, peer tutoring, regular mentor-student meetings, and hands-on experiential learning allow opportunities for those of less common learning modalities to demonstrate their comprehension of lessons. AHA focuses on studying Appalachian heritage through arts and agriculture. As these are primarily experiential in their modalities, students who learn differently have other avenues to achieve. The senior apprenticeship is an excellent way for EC students to integrate into their community and be successful in nontraditional ways that are practical.

2. AHA will provide materials adapted to EC students and assistive technology needed to access those materials as per NCDPI's 2008-2009 Guiding Practices and NC 1501-2.3. Students will meet regularly with their mentor teachers for informal conversations so that AHA is apprised of the condition of its students.

3. It is the responsibility of each subject area teacher to ensure that s/he is following the directions of each EC student's IEP in his/her class. The teacher mentor of each EC student will include an evaluation in quarterly progress reports and report cards that describes how the IEP is being implemented. Staff will meet regularly to review what practices are being used in each class to ensure that students' IEPs are implemented. Any documents will be copied to parents. Parents will be invited to all meetings about their students.

4. AHA will contract as needed for services which staff cannot provide. AHA will acquire assistive technology as needed.

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.*

1. The standards are percentages based on 1) student portfolios developed from individual growth plans, including grades, community service, and apprenticeship and senior project evaluation, 2) student attendance, 3) performance on outside tests such as ACT, 4) post-graduation success, and 5) graduation rates. Please see "Goals" in the "Mission, Purposes, and Goals" section for a detailed description of these performance standards and their measurements.

2. Teachers will work in Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) as much as possible to create common assessments (both formative and summative) to collect data on what has been learned and how instruction can be improved. Teacher-led PLC's will create rubrics and share them with students at the beginning of courses to guarantee that students know what they are to learn and how they are to demonstrate that they have learned. The refined curriculum and assessments will be a part of school records. The evaluation and assessment model will be based upon ideas described in Leaders of Learning by Dufour and Marzano.

Student learning will be measured through student portfolios, which include grades, personal growth plans, apprenticeship and senior project evaluation, and community service. These aspects align with our mission of whole-person growth and empowerment, service to community, and real-world experience that leads to deeper learning and global citizenship skills.

3. Students must earn a minimum of 7 credits to be promoted to the next grade level. Special needs students will need to meet the modified goals specified in their IEPs in order to gain credit for each course they take. Because disabilities in an identified area can also affect student performance in other areas, AHA will make adjustments to IEP plans as necessary. Promotion criteria will be communicated in the student handbook, during the four-year planning aspect of the freshman and sophomore Seminar curriculum, and through regular communication from teachers to parents about student progress.

4. All students must complete a year-long apprenticeship and a senior project based on their apprenticeship. The senior project will be a product determined by the student and his/her mentor, and it will be graded by a rubric created by a PLC at AHA. Through the completion of the apprenticeship and senior project, students will demonstrate (and be evaluated for) skills they have learned through this experience as well as through the Seminar courses and throughout their high school years: these include soft skills such as communication skills, creative problem-solving, leadership and initiative, and personal effectiveness that will help them be more productive members of the workforce. In addition, students will leave their apprenticeship having mastered a professional skill or skill set.

Since each student will have a faculty mentor, there will be a consistent adult keeping up with the academic progress of each student according to the goals s/he set during the freshman Seminar class. When a student has measurable and realistic goals, and when s/he is held accountable for reaching those goals, the student is more likely to be successful. The mentor will communicate with the student's teachers and family members. If a student is not reaching his/her goals, and appears to be at risk of dropping out, then the level of involvement of the family, mentor, and school

counselor will increase. As faculty members, all mentors will understand the graduation requirements and be able to guide their students on the path toward graduation.

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.*

Our student conduct plan is based on our core values of student empowerment, personal responsibility, community collaboration, and experiential learning. We use aspects of the Restorative Justice model (see references below) to support these values. This model focuses on teaching students the consequences of their actions, repairing harm done, and re-integrating troubled students into the community, in order to support all students' growth and give them a better chance of succeeding academically. Suspension and expulsion will be used only when absolutely necessary, e.g. for safety or legal reasons. Please see Appendix D for further details on this model and its demonstrated benefits.

We believe that if students feel involved in the student conduct plan and have opportunities for leadership in the school, they will be more motivated to uphold positive conduct and act as role models. By empowering students through independent real-world projects, the peer mentor program, input in classroom rule-making, and leadership opportunities, AHA will inspire students to act with an awareness of their moral responsibility to the larger group. By fostering a spirit of relationship-building in our Education Plan through components like group work and community involvement, we will instill in students the importance of everyone working together and holding each other accountable. AHA will also provide regular training in anger management, communication, and other social skills through the Seminar course, in order to prevent discipline problems and improve behavior. Bullying, peer pressure, and prejudice will be directly addressed as topics in this and other classes through safe, structured discussions.

When addressing discipline problems, AHA will utilize a combination of strategies as appropriate to the type and severity of the problem, including classroom intervention, teacher-student dialogue, conflict mediation, parental involvement, and restorative conferences. These conferences are structured conversations which can involve the student in question, any victim(s) of an abusive act (if they wish to be present), family or other

relations, and other affected community members. Sometimes a peer jury, consisting of students who have been specially trained for this purpose, will be present. Through a structured dialogue managed by the school counselor and/or other trained faculty/ administrator, the student who misbehaved will be assisted in recognizing the effect of his/her actions on others and in determining a suitable reparation, which may include service (see Appendix D for more details).

We recognize that this model will be new to many people. Orientation to the Code of Conduct will be part of an orientation for families and students at the beginning of the school year. We will hire an outside Restorative Practices trainer to train the school counselor as well as select teachers and staff. Part of our model is a spirit of self-reflection among all administrators, faculty, and staff, which they role model to students and which helps them to adjust the program to student needs.

For evidence of success of Restorative Justice Practices, please see <http://www.restorativejustice.org/programme-place/02practiceissues/schools-1> or "Safety with Dignity," 2009 by the NY Civil Liberties Union (www.nyclu.org/files/Safety_with_Dignity.pdf)

Responses to questions 1-4 are included in the Appendix D student handbook.

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: Appalachian Heritage Academy Foundation

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 898, Asheville, NC 28802

City/State/Zip: Asheville NC 28806

Street Address: 74 Brownwood Ave.

Phone: 828-333-8223

Fax:

Name of registered agent and address: Pending: Darcel Eddins (Chair), 74 Brownwood Ave. Asheville NC 28806.

Formerly: Aja Wright, 74 Brownwood Ave. Asheville NC 28806.

FEDERAL TAX ID: 46-3921211

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)

X No

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

Governance and Organizational Structure of Private Non-Profit Organization:

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

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

Board Member Name	Board Title	County/State of Residence	Current Occupation
Aja Wright	Member	BUNCOMBE	math teacher,

			MSA intern
Andrew Weatherly	Member	BUNCOMBE	GED teacher at AB Tech Community College
Brook Thompson	Member	BUNCOMBE	GEAR UP family and community facilitator
William Roberts	Member	BUNCOMBE	commercial real estate agent
David William Kaylor	Member	BUNCOMBE	business/finance manager
Justin Goldstein	Member	BUNCOMBE	rabbi
Robin Funsten	Member	BUNCOMBE	youth mediation coordinator
Darcel Eddins	Chair	BUNCOMBE	executive director, Bountiful Cities (non-profit)
Mindi Friedwald	Secretary	HENDERSON	substitute teacher (licensed), writer

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's function is to govern the school. Its primary duties are to create long-range plans, monitor current school function, seek and develop resources for the school, and ensure fiduciary health and legal compliance. The board carries out its responsibilities through committees and monthly meetings, which interface with school advisory groups. The board as a whole will evaluate the metrics associated with student performance, student and teacher retention, student body composition, number and strength of community partnerships, compliance with applicable laws, financial viability and stability, and school leadership effectiveness.

Committees of the board serve to provide continuous monitoring over specific areas determined by the board. As the operational executive of the board, the principal is required to attend all board committee meetings unless otherwise noted.

The learning committee is chaired by the principal, and is composed of teachers, EC/ELL/AIG teachers, a student council representative, the safety team (composed of principal and other staff), and other stakeholders. It oversees student and teacher performance outcomes, and interfaces with the School Improvement Team.

The family committee is chaired by a parent board member, and is composed of parents, community partners, other stakeholders, and a student council representative. It oversees the relationship between parents and the school,

and interfaces with the Parents' Organization.

The community committee is chaired by a board member, and is composed of parents, partners, stakeholders, the community coordinator, and a student council representative. It oversees community partnerships and projects, as well as marketing and outreach, and interfaces with the community coordinator at the school.

The finance committee is chaired by the board treasurer, and is composed of various stakeholders, including parents and partners. It is responsible for overseeing the school budget, supporting business aspects of the school, seeking funding through grants and donations, and contracting audit services.

The policy committee is chaired by the board secretary. It oversees the maintenance of written documents of the board, most particularly the Board Policy Handbook, Employee Handbook, and Parent/Student Handbook.

The board requires that the principal hold a current NC Principal's license, as well as a teaching and leadership philosophy that aligns with the mission of the school. It will recruit the lead administrator by advertising the opening internally to the school's staff, and then by advertising to the public at large in print and electronic job postings. The board will select candidates to be interviewed based upon their resumes and letters of interest, and will determine the interview questions. Once a lead administrator has been hired, the board will engage in the NC School Executive Principal Evaluation Process. It will also monitor the success of the lead administrator via the school and student performance metrics set out in this charter.

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

The board will be composed of 8-12 parents, educators, and community stakeholders. Its powers are to hire/fire the lead administrator, approve other hires, approve budget and monitor financial success, and plan events on behalf of the school. Its duties are to monitor school function, hold itself accountable for educational and financial success, seek additional resources for the school, and facilitate the building of the school's reputation in the community. The key skills of the board are team-building, financial planning, marketing, creating and maintaining a community network, conflict resolution, goal setting, communication, problem-solving, consensus decision-making and evaluation. The board will also include members with expertise in curriculum/ instructional design, parenting, art, and agriculture.

Diverse perspectives on the board (parents, educators, community partners) will ensure that the vision of the school is supported in its many aspects. The board's decision-making will be based on principles of Dynamic Governance, a consent-based approach (see Appalachian Heritage Foundation by-laws). This process aligns with our mission of community collaboration,

and serves as a model for how the school is governed. One of our current board members is already on another board that uses Dynamic Governance and so is familiar with the process; another board member attended a two-day training on Dynamic Governance in March 2013 (www.dynamicgovernanceinstitute.com), and has trained the rest of the board in the process.

Success is defined by student performance standards, student and teacher retention, composition of student body, number and strength of community partnerships, compliance with laws, financial stability and viability, board performance, achievement of school improvement plan goals, and principal performance on the NC Principal evaluation.

The board ensures active and effective representation of stakeholders in two ways. First, committees of the board are structured to interface with stakeholders in specific and meaningful ways. Second, the board will have a constant recruiting cycle where new and highly qualified board members are sought out, and applications will be held in reserve so that any opening on the board can be filled by a qualified person as soon as possible. Ongoing training in board operation will ensure the continual development of the board as a whole.

- 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?*

The AHA was first envisioned by staff at ArtSpace Charter School, with one board member a former teacher of ArtSpace, and one board member also sitting on the ArtSpace governing board. Other founding board members have been recruited by word of mouth, particularly through community networks at the three existing K-8 charter schools in the area, and through our community interest meetings. We have also sought board members through the professional networks of seated board members. Interested board members answered and submitted the first half of Appendix E as an application to the board.

Moving forward, the board will constantly seek and recruit highly qualified new board members so that we have a list of applications on file to fill any positions that become vacant. The board will actively recruit from the families of our students, our community partners, and the community at large.

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

Monthly board meeting (11/year), monthly work meetings, annual retreat

- 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).*

Orientation for new board members shall consist of:

- attendance at at least one regular board meeting;
- an orientation meeting with a subset of the board where the mission, duties, and expectations are discussed;
- attendance of at least one faculty meeting;
- a visit to the school during instructional hours;
- receipt of the board handbook and any other pertinent documents and

information.

Professional development for the board will include (but is not limited to) the following topics: governance training, board performance review, finance review and financial planning, goal setting, evaluating the principal, building and maintaining community partnerships, grant seeking/ planning/ writing, understanding student performance standards, outreach to diverse communities, marketing and reputation-building for the school. The board will follow the "Board Development and Monitoring Schedule" as outlined in our Board Policy Manual, and the board reserves the right to change this schedule as needed to increase board and school success.

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.*

All board members must sign both the Board Member Code of Ethics and the Conflict of Interest Policy (see Board Policy Manual for copies of those policies). This Code of Ethics requires that board members provide equitable, responsive, and unbiased service to all AHF stakeholders, represent the interests and ideals of the organization rather than private interests or goals, respect confidentiality at all levels, approach decisions with an open mind and the intention to support the community as a whole, and ongoingly build and improve the skills necessary for the most effective operation of the board and school.

At this time, there are no actual conflicts of interest on the board. There are board members who would be qualified for staff positions in the school. Should those members choose to apply for a staff position, their role on the board would be limited according to the Conflict of Interest policy.

On ongoing procedure for mitigating perceived conflicts is to ensure that our board processes are transparent and accurately minuted. If such a conflict is perceived, this will be specifically addressed in our public minutes.

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

The creation or revision of school policy shall occur when the need for such is revealed or necessitated by: regular monitoring of school or board operation, strategic development planning, new laws or regulations, legal council, recommendation by the State Board of Education, or an unforeseen occurrence.

Policy changes will be proposed in our open board meetings. The board will review any background information needed to make a decision. If necessary, the board will conduct research to acquire the needed information. Board members will ask clarifying questions until all members understand the need for the policy change and the proposed policy completely. Board members will voice any concerns they have about the proposed policy change. The board will use the decision-by-consent process (see Dynamic Governance process, AHF by-laws) to decide on the policy. Consent is defined as the absence of any unresolved mission-based objections.

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.*

Parents Organization:

This group is composed of volunteer parents, an elected teacher representative, an elected student representative, and volunteer community partners. Each member shall serve a term of one year, and meetings are open to the public. The role of this group is to support the school by planning events, acquiring resources, facilitating communication among all stakeholders, providing a forum for stakeholder ideas and concerns, and identifying potential school improvement goals. The chair of the board's Family Committee will be the liaison with this group.

Student Council:

This group is composed of students elected by their peers, as well as a staff facilitator. Each member shall serve a term of one year, and meetings are open to any student or staff member. The role of this group is to provide a forum for student ideas and concerns, as well as to plan student events. Student Council will elect two of its members to represent it at the Parents Organization meetings. Student Council will provide a monthly report to the School Improvement Team.

School Improvement Team (SIT):

This group is composed of the principal and teachers, and is open to community stakeholders. The role of this group is to identify, plan, and evaluate improvement goals for the school. The SIT will elect one of its teacher members to sit on the parents organization. The principal and the Faculty Representative will report monthly to the Board of Directors. The SIT representative will report monthly to the Parents Organization.

Safety Team:

This group is composed of the principal, Facility Manager, and other staff. Its role is to create and maintain safety plans for the school that include but are not limited to: fire, tornado, lockdown procedures, and monitoring visitors to the school. The Safety Team is a subset of the School Improvement Team.

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

Parents or staff members with a grievance should first approach the relevant parties directly if possible. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved through discussion, it should be brought to the attention of the principal in writing. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved with the principal, it may be brought to the Board of Directors. Issues must be brought in writing and signed by the person bringing the grievance with documentation showing that the chain of responsibility has been followed. The entire board will hear and address the grievance, with the exception of any directors who have an identified conflict of interest. The board will be the final authority in resolving grievances, using mediation processes and securing professional mediation services if necessary.

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:

We will advertise in local print and electronic media, including the Urban News (an e-news targeted toward the African-American community) and La Noticia (a regional Spanish language newspaper). Hiring for teachers and other positions will be delegated to the principal, who will form a hiring committee. We expect highly qualified teachers to be attracted to our school by the small class sizes, our structure for inter-staff support, collaboration, and joint leadership, opportunities for creative teaching methods, and the mission of our school which aligns deeply with the values of many people in this area.

Teachers will be encouraged to stay employed at the AHA in several ways. First, competitive wages and benefits will be offered to the greatest extent possible. Second, teachers will have a schedule with various types of planning time built in: personal, PLC/data team, and times for meetings.

Third, teachers will both lead and receive professional development that will increase their skills as professionals, and they will have input into the types of PD offered. Fourth, the school will be run using Dynamic Governance, as an interlinking hierarchy, which means that teachers and staff will always have a say in decision-by-consent processes that affect them. Fifth, teachers will be surveyed to assess their satisfaction levels and what can be done to increase their satisfaction. The board and principal will use this data to determine and implement, to the greatest extent feasible, organizational changes that will increase teacher satisfaction. Sixth, teachers will be evaluated in an objective and fair manner, and will receive specific and timely feedback on their performance.

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.*

Faculty will elect one of their members to serve on the Board of Directors. This faculty member will not have power as an individual, since the board must speak with one voice. No director will have the power to give directives to any staff member, for that power shall be reserved for the principal. The board can, with one voice, give directives to the principal. The principal can give directives to the staff. Directives will be based on existing policies and/or on policy decisions made through Dynamic Governance's decision-by-consent process. In this process, each group in the hierarchical chain of command elects a member to represent it in the next higher group. In this way, even though the board is above the staff of the school, the staff always has a say in decisions affecting them, and the board is kept informed of how changes or decisions are playing out in everyday practice. In cases where staff members work with all or part of the board (as in the office manager's funders database development), that relationship shall not be directive but shall be supportive.

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

The hiring committee (HC) will place jobs postings in electronic and print media in both local classifieds and national professional job boards. Once resumes and cover letters have been received, they will be assessed to determine: level of qualification, level of experience, evidence of previous success, alignment with our mission, and ability to take on multiple roles. Interviews and reference checks will be conducted by the HC. The HC will choose the most qualified candidate, and the principal shall have tie-breaking power should the HC be unable to agree. A criminal background check shall be conducted before the position is offered. Once the position is offered, the candidate will sign a contract. Contracts signed by candidates and the principal shall be presented to the board for final approval.

Dismissal of personnel shall be in accordance with board policy. As "at will" employees, employees in any position may be terminated for any legal reason by the principal. Any employee who has been dismissed for cause will be ineligible for re-employment. Any terminated employee has a right to appeal the termination to the AHF board. If the board decides to hear the appeal of termination, its decision will be final.

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

All licensed employees will be paid according to the state salary schedule.

Budgeted amounts for salaries will allow us to hire: teachers with an average of 9 years experience and NBPTS certification; office manager with 6 years experience and BA; a CFO with 12 years experience and CPA license; a counselor with 10 years experience and MA; and a principal with 26 years combined experience and advanced degree. Our budget does provide for a 1% increase in salaries beginning in year 3.

The reasoning behind our salary range is that we wish to make salaries competitive to attract highly qualified staff, while at the same time balancing our budget to provide for small class sizes and individualized attention, which are key components of our mission. Narrowing the traditional disparity between administrator salary and staff salaries also sends a clear message to school and community that we are truly aligned with the vision of shared leadership we put forth in our advertising.

All f/t employees receive FICA benefits, hospitalization, and retirement. All f/t employees are salaried, and are not expected to work on school holidays, or during times that are not included in their contract (e.g. in the case of 10-month employees). P/t teaching staff will be paid prorated percent of state salary, with FICA benefits, (i.e. half time is paid at .5 salary, quarter time at .25 salary, etc.). P/t teaching staff are not expected to work any days the school is closed, and are expected to attend PD days. P/t classified staff shall be paid an hourly wage commensurate with duties and experience, and shall receive paid holidays (according to our school calendar) that fall during the pay period in which they worked.

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

Once the board has received a grievance according to appropriate procedure, it will convene within 30 days to deliberate the grievance. The board has the right to dismiss the grievance or request more information. Once the board has made a final disposition of the grievance, all records created or submitted during the process are to be forwarded to the School Attorney for safekeeping. Grievance records are not maintained as public documents, and are not to be disclosed, published, or released. Board members may not make any public comments regarding the specific grievance, deliberations, or disposition.

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

All full time teaching staff will have additional non-instructional duties during the school day that include monitoring and mentoring students. Faculty members will elect one person for each of the following roles: board representative, and any other committee or group which should appropriately contain a faculty member. The board reserves the right to define roles with dual responsibilities depending upon the skill sets of staff who are hired. At this time, all positions are funded through the ADM funding.

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.

All teachers will have training in teaching diverse populations, with particular attention to providing enrichment for gifted students and monitoring/ assessment of independent study projects, appropriate use of IEP/504 modifications, and teaching ELL and EC students in a heterogenous classroom.

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).

Understanding of and philosophical alignment with the school's mission is a requirement for all positions.

The principal shall serve as the strategic, instructional, cultural, human resource, managerial, external development, and micro political leader for the school as defined in the North Carolina School Executive: Principal Evaluation Standards. The principal must have a current NC Administrator license.

The chief finance officer is in charge of daily accounting, preparing reports for the board, and business development. The CFO must hold a CPA license and/or have at least 5 years experience working for a non-profit school and possess an appropriate degree.

The development director is responsible for developing and maintaining a funder's database, developing and maintaining community partners database that includes apprentice masters as well as other partners to support the educational program, and supporting business development. The development director should have at least 5 years of experience performing a similar job in a non-profit setting, and possess at least bachelor's degree.

The school counselor must perform the duties as outlined in North Carolina Professional Counseling Standards. They must hold a current NC School Counselor license and be able to implement a comprehensive school counseling program.

The office manager must have experience managing an office, preferably at a school. The office manager should demonstrate skill with organizational systems, appropriate software, budgets, and grant writing. A college degree is preferred but not required.

Full and part-time core-teaching staff shall perform their required duties in accordance with the NC Professional Teaching Standards, which include demonstration of leadership, establishing a respectful environment for a diverse student population, knowing their content, facilitating learning for all students, reflecting on their practice, and contributing to students' academic success. Math, Science, English, History, and EC teachers must hold a current license for the area they teach.

Elective-only teachers do not have to be licensed, but must show they are masters of the content they propose to teach. These teachers will be required to take an in-service professional development course that includes instruction about the developmental needs of the students, holding high standards, assessing student performance, and adherence to laws, regulations, and policies.

Staff Evaluation and Professional Development

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

It is the task of each teacher to maintain and furnish records of any outside PD to the principal. The principal will keep records necessary for maintenance of CEU records from in-service PD and ensure licenses are

updated annually.

- 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.*

All teachers will participate in state-required evaluation systems, for example the McRel teacher evaluation system. Each teacher will also create an annual Individualized Growth Plan, and meet with the principal to discuss those goals. The principal will observe and monitor teachers and evaluate them according to their self-selected goals.

Teachers will have the opportunity to earn CEUs through in-service such that they can maintain their licensure requirements. They will work in Professional Learning Communities in order to provide mentoring and continual improvement for staff. All teachers will be a part of the School Improvement Team.

- 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.*

Most PD will be conducted internally by various members of the staff. When appropriate, we will employ community partners who specialize in areas for a particular PD subject. Our preference will be to locate a qualified trainer in the local area, to reduce costs associated with travel and lodging. When possible, creative compensation such as a work exchange will be used as payment. Topics include Professional Learning Communities, Dynamic Governance, differentiated instruction for diverse learners, using and training students in conflict mediation, teaching study skills, and coaching students in the development of leadership skills.

Content-specific PD will be conducted externally on an individual basis, but will be facilitated and supported by the school. We also encourage teachers to be members of professional organizations such as NCCTM (North Carolina Council of Teachers of Mathematics) or NSTA (National Science Teachers Association).

- 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.*

There will be 5 days of PD prior to the opening of the first school year. The order in which these topics are addressed is subject to change. On one of the evenings during this PD week, we will have an open house for students and families. We will contract the services of a trainer for implementing the Code of Conduct and for Differentiation for a Diverse Classroom.

7/28
Creation of a collaboration document for entire staff, instruction in how to do this with students.
Student handbook, employee handbook.
Daily schedules and expectations.
Implementing the Code of Conduct Part I: Introduction

7/29

Basics of Dynamic Governance and nominations for Faculty Representative to the Board.

How to work in a PLC; PLC's will hold initial meetings to set goals and deadlines for the year.

Looking at student data in a PLC.

7/30

How to teach study skills, how to provide levels of increasingly directive support for students.

Code of Conduct, Part 2: supporting struggling students.

How to differentiate in a very diverse classroom, including classroom management, modification of goals and assessments, supporting and evaluating student design of independent/ small group study.

7/31

Code of Conduct, part 3: Minor and Major problems and appropriate response.

How to use and teach mediation.

Planning for interdisciplinary units.

8/1

PLC meetings: planning to use student data to drive instruction during first 9 weeks.

Planning for future PD days.

Complete individual growth plans.

Time to work in classrooms.

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.

Our proposed calendar has 13 full teacher workdays and 5 half teacher workdays. The calendar provides for one day of inservice each quarter, and one day of time for teachers to work on grades and PLC meetings. The half days will be used for inservice where full and part-time teachers will work to train adjunct teachers before their courses commence. Some inservice presentations will be created by staff, some by community partners, some by the principal, and some by several parties working collaboratively.

All teachers will have one hour of common planning time daily, before the students' instructional time begins, for the purpose of professional development via PLC meetings.

Enrollment and Marketing:

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

Marketing Plan

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

We will continue to hold community meetings and send representatives to other meetings such as the Pisgah View garden meeting or PTA meetings at private and charter schools. Our website will give updated information about how to participate in the development of our programs. We are coordinating with the Parents of Educational Freedom Parent Liaison Initiative to work together on outreach to the community. Our contact, Connie Medford, has many connections in the Latino community here in Asheville.

We have already had one radio interview. We will do more radio interviews with Asheville FM. We will also write press releases to local and regional publications, including the Urban News, La Noticia, Mountain XPress, and Asheville Citizen Times. We will continue to publicize our school and meetings by flyering in grocery stores and community centers and YWCA.

Parent and Community Involvement

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

1. The Family Committee will host or attend pre-existing community meetings to educate community members about AHA and the admission process. We will collaborate with the Parent Liaisons of Parents for Educational Freedom in NC to raise awareness about charter schools and AHA. AHA will host an Open House before school begins and at mid-year. AHA will also have a Title I Parent Involvement Plan, with meetings subject to NC General Statute 143-318.10.

Meetings for prospective students and parents will also be open to community members. The community committee will work to create, develop, and maintain partnerships with organizations and individuals who share our values and wish to support our education plan. Community members will be invited to share their expertise with students through the apprenticeship program, classroom presentations, hosting field trips, and special assemblies. We will hold meetings for prospective apprenticeship masters, and some of the prospective masters will help us develop training methods for this program. Community members will be notified, in accordance with open meeting laws, of all meetings via a bulletin board at the school, newsletters, and our website.

2. Our plan is based on "Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement" and aligns with our mission.

PARENTING: Help all families establish home environments to support children as students. This includes home visits for new students, neighborhood meetings to build understanding between families and schools, and, if possible in collaboration with community partners, parent education courses or training.

COMMUNICATION: Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress. This includes conferences with every parent at least once a year, with follow-ups as needed on improving grades. To the greatest extent possible, we will have language translators to assist families as needed. AHA will communicate regularly with families through useful memos, notices, and phone calls, and

will provide clear information on choosing schools, courses, programs, and activities within schools, and all school policies, programs, reforms, and transitions. The family committee of the board will interface with the Parents Organization at monthly meetings that will include workshops on academic skills, the college admission process and financial aid, and conflict resolution skills.

VOLUNTEERING: Recruit and organize parent help and support. Families will be asked to volunteer at the school 10 hours per year. Parents will be notified of various opportunities through the Parents Organization, a monthly newsletter, phone calls from administration, and AHA's website. An annual survey will be used to identify parents' available talents, times, and locations.

LEARNING AT HOME: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning. AHA will provide such information through interactive calendars, family participation in student goal-setting, and a schedule of homework that requires students to discuss and interact with families.

DECISION-MAKING: Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives. The community committee, designed for parent participation, will also have a member who sits on the board to ensure that parents are fully informed and a true force in decision-making.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development. AHA will provide information for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, and summer academic programs. AHA will require community service and a senior apprenticeship for all students, through community partnerships. Alumni will participate in school programs for students.

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.*

1. For the current school year, applications will be accepted until the 20th day of the academic year. For the following school year, applications will be accepted beginning the 1st day of the current school year. All completed applications must be received prior to the first Monday in March at 4pm to be included in the AHA lottery, while others will be placed on the wait lists in the order received.

2. By law (NCGS 115C-238.29F(g)6), charter schools must conduct a lottery to fill any openings by grade level. If the number of completed applications

received by the annual lottery date exceeds the capacity of the grade level, then students will be admitted by lottery. If the number received is less than the capacity by grade level, then students will be admitted on a first-come basis until school capacity is reached.

Currently enrolled families are contacted in January and asked if they have any siblings to be enrolled and included in the lottery. Sibling applications should be returned by the first Monday in March at 4pm. Siblings are admitted via the procedure outlined above.

3. Wait List: A wait list will be established for each grade level whenever AHA's capacity is exceeded, and students on the list will be contacted if and when an opening occurs. A separate wait list will be maintained for each grade level. Applicants will be updated on their wait list placement periodically in the spring and summer. When an opening becomes available, applicants will be offered a slot according to the order of the Grade Level Wait List. The applicant will be notified and given a specified time frame in which to accept or decline the opening. Wait list applications will be held until a new enrollment period begins, and then archived. Families will be contacted regarding the new enrollment period, upcoming lottery dates, and PIN/Open House dates, and will be given new blank applications.

Withdrawals and Transfers: Please see #5 regarding policies and procedures for withdrawals and transfers, below.

Re-enrollment: Students who withdraw their applications before the 20th day of the school year can re-apply for the next school year. Students will be eligible to apply for the next grade after the highest grade for which they have credit. If a student drops out from AHA and does not complete the school year at another school or home school, s/he must reapply for the grade s/he has not yet completed. AHA does not accept senior applications EXCEPT in the case where the student has completed the junior year at AHA, has not completed the senior year at another school or home school, and will not turn 22 or older during the next school year.

4. Students who wish to enter the 9th grade without having passed 8th grade must show that they are academically and socially ready to enter high school. By law, this decision is made at the discretion of the principal. The principal will review all available data, which may include cumulative records, interview, and former principal recommendation, to make this decision. There are no other pre-admission requirements.

5. For withdrawals, the parent/guardian will complete a withdrawal form that includes the name and contact information for the school the student will transfer to, a grade request, and list of any outstanding materials borrowed by the student. All teachers will provide a current grade for the student if the request occurs during the semester. Any items belonging to the school will be returned or billed to the parent/ guardian. If the school to which the student is transferring sends a record request, then the cumulative file and current grades will be securely sent to the new school. Copies of these records will be retained in a secure location for seven years and then destroyed.

PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2015-16 through 2019-2020

IDENTIFY LEA FROM WHICH STUDENTS WILL PROBABLY COME

LEA #1 Asheville City Schools
 LEA #2 Buncombe County Schools
 LEA #3

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

	2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020		
	LEA 111	LEA 110	LEA 000	LEA 111	LEA 110	LEA 000	LEA 111	LEA 110	LEA 000	LEA 111	LEA 110	LEA 000	LEA 111	LEA 110	LEA 000
Grade 09	40	40	0	37	38	0	27	28	0	28	27	0	27	28	0
Grade 10	40	40	0	33	32	0	27	28	0	27	28	0	28	27	0
Grade 11	0	0	0	32	33	0	28	27	0	28	27	0	27	28	0
Grade 12	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	25	0	25	25	0	25	25	0
	80	80		102	103		107	108		108	107		107	108	

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.

AHA will encourage parents to provide transportation for their children to school and will take an active role in promoting and helping to organize carpools. AHA will also make sure that its location is within the Asheville City Transit System and will work with the City Transit System to provide quick access to the school directly from the downtown bus terminal. We have budgeted funds to provide reduced annual bus passes to students whose families are living at or below federal poverty rates. We have also budgeted a limited amount of funds each year for alternative transportation by a contracted provider.

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.

AHA will work with the NC Cooperative Extension/ Buncombe County, and NC Division of Public Health Nutrition Services, Manna Food Bank, and other community organizations to ensure that students will be provided quality, healthy options for lunch.

We are working on locating property that will allow AHA to have a full cafeteria, and if this is not possible we are already working with GO! Kitchen Ready program located here in Asheville to provide daily ready-made hot meals. Counts for school lunch will be taken at the end of each day and followed up the next morning to determine quantities to be prepared. Parents utilizing AHA's lunch plan will prepay by sending a check and lunch account payment form. Each child's lunch account balance will be viewable through the parent portal in the computer system. We will use a service such as "My Hot Lunchbox" to manage ordering information.

Application information will be available to determine eligibility for Free and Reduced Lunch according to the 2015-16 income level chart. If financial circumstances change, applications can be submitted at any time during the school year. AHA will also make every effort to accommodate special dietary needs. AHA will work with area organizations such as Manna Food Bank to ensure that students who do not have the financial resources to purchase or prepare their own lunches will still have a healthy lunch every school day.

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		\$4,400.00
Officers and Directors/Errors and Omissions	\$1,000,000		\$.00
Property Insurance	\$63,000		\$.00
Motor Vehicle Liability	\$1,000,000		\$.00
Bonding Minimum/Maximum Amount	\$50,000	\$250,000	\$700.00
Other	\$615,000		\$4,613.00
Total Cost			\$9,713.00

*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.

deddins 11/09/2013

(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).

We will work with the City of Asheville Permits and Applications Department to determine what permits, licenses, and zoning are required, and the correct process for completing the documentation to obtain our Educational Certificate of Occupancy. Our board member, Bill Roberts, is a commercial real estate agent, and will lend his expertise and knowledge through this process.

Our board has determined that at capacity, we will require a building of 20,000sf. Mr. Roberts has investigated possible locations, and we are confident that we will find a facility with the appropriate size, location, and cost.

We are hoping that charter school positive legislation will be passed that allows charter schools to lease city owned facilities for a reduced price. Whether or not this is the case, we will pursue a partnership with the Asheville City Schools to share a facility that meets our needs. Since the ACS district has an interim superintendent, we will not pursue this partnership until we have a provisional charter and they have chosen a new leader.

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.*

The minimum space we can use is 8 classrooms, and an office sufficient for reception, administrative staff, and counselor, and space for several teachers for planning.

During this temporary situation, some of our programming in arts, agriculture, PE, and science labs would be limited. Our board chair is the Executive Director of the non-profit Bountiful Cities, which owns several agricultural sites, including their flagship garden of 1.5 acres with one covered outdoor classroom facility and outdoor kitchen, a greenhouse, and a wood-fired oven. Bountiful Cities has offered the use of this space for our school, and this will serve as a site for agriculture and science, and potentially PE and arts.

Potential short-term rental opportunities abound. One option is the Masonic Temple in downtown, which rents space for classes. We can also potentially rent the community spaces of the French Broad Food Co-op, the YWCA, the Orange Peel (a relatively large music venue), or various local churches. Board member and commercial real estate agent, Bill Roberts, will help to find a short term facility if it is needed. We have identified that we can lease the community spaces of one or more community/fellowship spaces owned by local churches. Working with a church in this way could potentially suffice for the first year of operation, if necessary.

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 1st 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 #1111 - Asheville City Schools

Revenue	2013-2014 Per Pupil Funding	Projected LEA ADM	Approximate funding for 2015-2016
State Funds	\$4,787.64	105	\$502,702.20
Local Funds	\$4,334.00	105	\$455,070.00
Federal EC Funds	\$3,743.48	20	\$74,869.60
Totals			\$1,032,641.80

LEA #2110 - Buncombe County Schools

Revenue	2013-2014 Per Pupil Funding	Projected LEA ADM	Approximate funding for 2015-2016
State Funds	\$4,694.21	105	\$492,892.05
Local Funds	\$1,850.00	105	\$194,250.00
Federal EC Funds	\$3,598.33	20	\$71,966.60
Totals			\$759,108.65

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

INCOME: REVENUE PROJECTIONS	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
-State ADM Funds	\$758,480	\$971,083	\$1,019,208	\$1,019,208	\$1,019,208
-Local Per Pupil Funds	\$494,720	\$633,860	\$664,780	\$664,780	\$664,780
-Exceptional Children Federal Funds	\$142,200	\$182,194	\$191,081	\$191,081	\$191,081
-Other Funds*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
-Working Capital*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Z - TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,395,400	\$1,787,137	\$1,875,069	\$1,875,069	\$1,875,069

***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:															
Lead Administrator	1	\$65,000	\$65,000	1	\$65,000	\$65,000	1	\$65,650	\$65,650	1	\$66,307	\$66,307	1	\$66,970	\$66,970
Chief Finance Officer	1	\$45,000	\$45,000	1	\$45,000	\$45,000	1	\$45,450	\$45,450	1	\$45,905	\$45,905	1	\$46,364	\$46,364
Development Director	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	1	\$40,400	\$40,400	1	\$40,804	\$40,804	1	\$41,212	\$41,212
Counselor	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	1	\$40,400	\$40,400	1	\$40,804	\$40,804	1	\$41,212	\$41,212
Clerical	1	\$30,000	\$30,000	1	\$30,000	\$30,000	1	\$30,300	\$30,300	1	\$30,603	\$30,603	1	\$30,909	\$30,909
A - Total Admin and Support:	5	\$220,000	\$220,000	5	\$220,000	\$220,000	5	\$222,200	\$222,200	5	\$224,423	\$224,423	5	\$226,667	\$226,667
Instructional Personnel:															
Teachers (Core & Elective Offered By All Teachers)	9	\$40,000	\$360,000	14	\$40,000	\$560,000	14	\$40,400	\$565,600	14	\$40,804	\$571,256	14	\$41,212	\$576,968
Exceptional Children Teacher(s)	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	1	\$40,000	\$40,000	1	\$40,400	\$40,400	1	\$40,804	\$40,804	1	\$41,212	\$41,212
B - Total Instructional Personnel:	10	\$80,000	\$400,000	15	\$80,000	\$600,000	15	\$80,800	\$606,000	15	\$81,608	\$612,060	15	\$82,424	\$618,180
A+B = C - Total Admin, Support and Instructional Personnel:	15	\$300,000	\$620,000	20	\$300,000	\$820,000	20	\$303,000	\$828,200	20	\$306,031	\$836,483	20	\$309,091	\$844,847
Administrative & Support Benefits															
Health Insurance	5	\$5,192	\$25,960	5	\$5,192	\$25,960	5	\$5,192	\$25,960	5	\$5,192	\$25,960	5	\$5,192	\$25,960
Unemployment	5	\$704	\$3,520	5	\$704	\$3,520	5	\$711	\$3,555	5	\$718	\$3,590	5	\$725	\$3,625
Retirement Plan Nc State (14.23%)	5	\$6,261	\$31,305	5	\$6,261	\$31,305	5	\$6,324	\$31,620	5	\$6,387	\$31,935	5	\$6,451	\$32,255

Appalachian Heritage Academy

F.I.C.A./Medicare (7.65%)	5	\$3,366	\$16,830	5	\$3,366	\$16,830	5	\$3,400	\$16,998	5	\$3,434	\$17,168	5	\$3,468	\$17,340
Workers Comp Insurance	5	\$300	\$1,500	5	\$300	\$1,500	5	\$300	\$1,500	5	\$300	\$1,500	5	\$300	\$1,500
D - Total Admin and Support Benefits:	25	\$15,823	\$79,115	25	\$15,823	\$79,115	25	\$15,927	\$79,633	25	\$16,031	\$80,153	25	\$16,136	\$80,680
Instructional Personnel Benefits:															
Health Insurance	10	\$5,192	\$51,920	15	\$5,192	\$77,880	15	\$5,192	\$77,880	15	\$5,192	\$77,880	15	\$5,192	\$77,880
Retirement Plan Nc State (14.23%)	10	\$5,692	\$56,920	15	\$5,692	\$85,380	15	\$5,749	\$86,235	15	\$5,806	\$87,090	15	\$5,864	\$87,960
Unemployment	10	\$640	\$6,400	15	\$640	\$9,600	15	\$646	\$9,690	15	\$653	\$9,795	15	\$659	\$9,885
F.I.C.A./Medicare (7.65%)	10	\$3,060	\$30,600	15	\$3,060	\$45,900	15	\$3,091	\$46,365	15	\$3,122	\$46,830	15	\$3,153	\$47,295
Workers Comp Insurance	10	\$300	\$3,000	15	\$300	\$4,500	15	\$300	\$4,500	15	\$300	\$4,500	15	\$300	\$4,500
E - Total Instructional Personnel Benefits:	50	\$14,884	\$148,840	75	\$14,884	\$223,260	75	\$14,978	\$224,670	75	\$15,073	\$226,095	75	\$15,168	\$227,520
D+E = F - Total Personnel Benefits	75	\$30,707	\$227,955	100	\$30,707	\$302,375	100	\$30,905	\$304,303	100	\$31,104	\$306,248	100	\$31,304	\$308,200
A+D = G - Total Admin and Support Personnel (Salary & Benefits)	30	\$567,490	\$299,115	30	\$623,872	\$299,115	30	\$626,235	\$301,833	30	\$628,622	\$304,576	30	\$631,039	\$307,347
B+E = H - Total Instructional Personnel (Salary & Benefits)	60	\$224,884	\$548,840	90	\$209,884	\$823,260	90	\$210,778	\$830,670	90	\$211,681	\$838,155	90	\$212,592	\$845,700
G+H = J - TOTAL PERSONNEL	90	\$792,374	\$847,955	120	\$833,756	\$1,122,375	120	\$837,013	\$1,132,503	120	\$840,303	\$1,142,731	120	\$843,631	\$1,153,047

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

BUDGET OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS		2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
	Administrative & Support:					
Office:	Office Supplies	\$10,000	\$11,500	\$11,500	\$11,500	\$11,500
	Paper	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
	Computers & Software	\$20,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
	Communications & Telephone	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
	Copier leases	\$10,000	\$14,400	\$14,400	\$14,400	\$14,400
Professional Contract	Legal Counsel	\$8,000	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500
	I.S.I.S. Software Support	\$2,980	\$2,980	\$2,980	\$2,980	\$2,980
	Technology Support	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
	Payroll Processing And Tax Return	\$2,256	\$2,256	\$2,256	\$2,256	\$2,256
	Audit And Reviews	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
Facilities	Facility Lease/Mortgage	\$150,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
	Maintenance	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
	Custodial Supplies	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
	Custodial Contract	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000
	Insurance (pg19)	\$9,713	\$11,213	\$11,273	\$11,333	\$11,400
Utilities	Electric	\$28,646	\$29,500	\$29,500	\$29,500	\$29,500
	Gas	\$1,072	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200
	Water/Sewer/Trash/Recycling	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Transportation	General Fund	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Other	Marketing	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
	Child nutrition	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
	K - TOTAL Administrative & Support Operations	\$331,667	\$388,049	\$388,109	\$388,169	\$388,236
	Instructional:					
Classroom Technology	Computers And Software	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Instructional Technology	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Instructional Contract	Psych Services/O.T./Speech Therapy/ E.L.L. Support	\$17,000	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000
	Staff Development	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Books and Supplies	Instructional Materials	\$31,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
	Curriculum/Texts	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Copy Paper	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Testing Supplies	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000

Appalachian Heritage Academy

Books And Supplies	E.C. Supplies And Adaptive Devices	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
	L - TOTAL Instructional Operations	\$130,000	\$115,000	\$115,000	\$115,000	\$115,000
	K+L = M - TOTAL OPERATIONS	\$461,667	\$503,049	\$503,109	\$503,169	\$503,236

Overall Budget:

BUDGET OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
J - TOTAL PERSONNEL	\$847,955	\$1,122,375	\$1,132,503	\$1,142,731	\$1,153,047
M - TOTAL OPERATIONS	\$461,667	\$503,049	\$503,109	\$503,169	\$503,236
J+ M =N TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$1,309,622	\$1,625,424	\$1,635,612	\$1,645,900	\$1,656,283
Z - TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,395,400	\$1,787,137	\$1,875,069	\$1,875,069	\$1,875,069
Z - N = SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$85,778	\$161,714	\$239,457	\$229,169	\$218,786

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.

Student enrollment number is based on community demand for small school models and alternative models of education. More than sufficient demand for this type of small innovative school was calculated using incoming freshmen as the model.

1. The number of rising 9th graders matriculating from three existing k-8 charter schools is approximately 125 per year.
2. The number of high-school-aged students in home school in Buncombe County is approximately 979 high-school-aged students and approximately 252 14-year-old students (data found in 2013 NC Home School Statistical Study.)
3. The number of rising 9th graders in Buncombe County and Asheville City schools combined is approximately 2300, and assuming 6.5% wish to exercise their right to school choice, this yields 150 rising 9th graders.
4. The number of rising 9th grade students coming from area private schools that do not have high school grades (including Rainbow Mountain, The Learning Community, French Broad River Academy, Hanger Hall, Asheville Catholic, Emmanuel Lutheran, Heirborne Christian, and Nazarene Christian) is approximately 150 students.

All together, the approximate pool of students who could join our incoming freshman class is at least 677 within Buncombe County, and we are seeking to fill classes of 80 students in the first year, with grade level sizes decreasing to 50-55 students per class by the fourth year.

The student enrollment numbers include an attrition rate of 20% per grade level per year for the first three years. By year 3 we expect that our attrition rate will not be more than the number of new students who wish to enroll. Thus, in the first year we will serve 9th and 10th grades only, with grade level sizes of 80 students, but by the third year our grade level sizes will have stabilized at our ideal 50-55 students. Since we will not accept students in their senior year, we will anticipate that the senior class will always be slightly smaller than the other grade levels.

The break-even point for year 1 is 126 students, and 161 students in subsequent years. This is achieved by:

1. reducing the amount of money budgeted for the facility by 30%, which could result in a location more distant from the city center,
2. removing the 1% annual salary increases that were to begin in year 3,

3. reducing the amount of funds for professional development, i.e. PD courses will be created with in-house resources and community partners rather than contracting for outside professional development vendors,
4. reducing the reserve amounts by up to 40%.

With a combination of these strategies, the board can allocate resources in a flexible manner so that the school can open and operate successfully under a variety of conditions. Break-even calculations were created without reducing the number of teaching positions, as our board believes that quality teachers and low class sizes are vital for a successful education program.

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

Should revenues not be received on the timeline set by the SBE, AHA will secure a bridge loan in anticipation of state and local revenue. We are not able to secure written commitment until we have an approved charter.

If anticipated revenues are lower than estimated, appropriate operating costs will be reduced. Primarily, the facility will be impacted. Lower revenues will likely result in a location farther from the city center than is our targeted goal location.

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. We are confident that our unique and innovative program will garner many grants and private donations through our capital campaign, but our budget does not depend upon these outside sources of income.

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

16:1 in year 1, 14:1 in subsequent years.

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.*

Yes. All contracted services must go through the same process. A minimum of three bids for any potential contract must be acquired. Potential service providers who have provided bids will undergo a review of credentials, must show evidence of successful provision of the services to other charter schools or similar entities, and possess excellent references. Our board has already had conferences and requested bids from four accredited firms for audits, as well as made inquiries into a payroll processing firm. Once we have received the bids, the board will review them, ask clarifying questions, and make a decision about which firm should be contracted and for what services.

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

Our spending priorities reflect the education program that is dependent upon the small school model. For the development of our budget, we used the budget of the Hawbridge School, a NC charter school that is currently in its 16th year of operation. Hawbridge School has been very successful with this

small school model, and serves approximately the same number of students as our proposed school.

Our budget includes a high amount of our funding allocated to rent costs for facility, because we are committed to a location in the central part of Asheville so that the school is accessible to poor urban students. Our location will allow us to use urban agriculture methods as a central feature of instruction, as well as allowing our students proximity to the vibrant arts community in our city to increase the opportunities for collaboration and apprenticeships with those artists.

Our budget includes \$40,000 (\$30,000 in year 1) for food costs in order to ensure that all students have access to healthy food during the school day. This will allow us a greater range of flexibility in developing our school lunch program than if we chose to depend upon participation in the federal free/reduced lunch program.

Our budget is based on state and local allocation of funds, and our proposed benefits mirror the benefits offered by area LEAs. All salaries are aligned with the state salary schedule, and will allow us to hire experienced teachers, administrator, finance officer, development director, and counselor. Offering a competitive salary and benefits package will attract the highest quality teachers, and our board has determined through research that a high-quality teaching staff is the most important feature of a school that successfully raises achievement for all students. At the same time, our adherence to the state salary schedule is a measure of our commitment to fairness in public schools, as well as a response to community backlash against charter schools who pay their administrators much higher salaries than the law allows for administrators in "traditional" LEAs while simultaneously under-compensating their other staff. We have allocated \$20,000 annually for professional development in order to invest in our teachers and increase the retention of quality staff.

Our goal over time is to drive down operational expenses and increase revenue to support increased spending on costs directly related to instruction. We intend to lower expenses through the formation of strategic partnerships in our community, particularly a partnership with Asheville City Schools District, which could potentially result in drastically lowered facility costs. We will increase revenue through a capital campaign of targeted fundraising, and the writing of grants to support our program. However, our budget is independent and does not require grants or other funds in order to operate our school.

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.*

Our target is to have and maintain a minimum of six months of operating expenses in our general fund balance within the first decade of operation. This will be developed over the first five years by reserving an average of 11.65% of annual operating expenses. Calculations are based on operations over a 12-month span. After the first year, our reserve translates to .79 months of operating expenses. At the end of year two, our cumulative reserve is 1.83 months of operating expenses. After year 3, our cumulative reserve is 3.57 months of operating expenses, after year 4 the cumulative reserve is

5.22 months of operating expenses. We project we will achieve our target after year 5 when the cumulative reserve is 6.77 months of operating expenses.

In addition to our reserve funds, we plan to raise funds via private donations and grants. Funding raised through donations and grants will be applied to operations so that state and local funding saved can be added to the reserve. The board is committed to having a six-month reserve sooner than the five years in the plan outlined above.

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

Initially, our facility will be leased with a term and fixed percentage loan.

As soon as we receive a provisional charter, we will do a capital campaign to raise funds to supplement the state and local funding we will receive. In order to pursue grant opportunities as well as develop and maintain community connections and partnerships, we have budgeted for a full time development director in our personnel budget. In year 1, the development director will create a funders database will include but not be limited to: foundations, businesses, individuals, community partners and organizations, and other entities. The development director will work closely with the Principal, CFO, and board to coordinate the fundraising efforts at all levels of the organization.

Toward the eventual purchase of a facility, our financing structure will include debt from banks, bonds, CDFIs (Community Development Finance Institutions), or equity funds; equity/grants from foundations, fundraising, and the municipality; sponsor equity; and NMTC (New Market Tax Credit) equity. Potential entities to partner with for financing are Self Help Credit Union and Educational Facilities Financing Center (a division of Local Initiatives Support Corporation) have been identified.

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

We do not have any secured assets, and our plan does not depend upon assets from other sources. However, it is our intention to work closely with Asheville City Schools and other community partners, and share resources where feasible.

Asheville City Schools and/or the Asheville City Government could provide a facility at a low cost, and also could provide school furniture, shared transportation, and shared contracted services. Because ACS district has an interim superintendent at this time, negotiations for this partnership are not feasible until a permanent superintendent is hired. We are confident that ACS will choose to work with us once a charter is granted, but without assurance of our provisional charter and a permanent leader for the ACS district, we will delay talks until both have been approved.

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?

Segregation of duties is insured in that AHA will contract with at least three separate entities for the audit, the payroll, and hire a CFO for day-to-day accounting and record keeping, as well as to assist in business development. Depending upon the CFO's skill set, a fourth entity for ISIS support may be contracted, and funds for this are included in the budget.

Accurate and adequate record keeping is the responsibility of the CFO, while the Principal is responsible for daily oversight of this. The board is responsible for monthly to quarterly oversight, and is the ultimate body with fiduciary responsibility. The Board will maintain a finance committee, at least one member of which will be a licensed CPA when possible, and will set policies and procedures to ensure financial compliance and safeguard the assets of the corporation. Accounting staff will be large enough to ensure proper segregation of duties and will be properly supervised and their work reviewed by the firm chosen by the board.

An audit of financial records and procedures will be done annually. An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

The Board will modify accounting policies based upon the feedback from the annual audit to ensure that the policies in place are appropriate.

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

There are no known nor anticipated related party transactions.

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.

Our board has met with and requested bids from the following:

LB&A Certified Public Accountants, PLLC
212 W. Matthews St, Matthews, NC 28105
p 704-841-1120
f 704-841-4901

Carter, P.C.

48 Patton Ave #400, Asheville, NC 28801
p 828-259-9900
f 828-258-2790

Corliss & Solomon, PLLC
242 Charlotte St, Asheville, NC 28801
p 828-236-0206
f 828-236-0209

Crawley, Lee & Company, P.A.
59 Turtle Creek Dr, Asheville, NC 28803
p 828-274-5524
f 828-274.5591

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).

deddins

Date: 12/03/2013

Applicant Signature:

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

Print/Type Name: deddins

Board Position:

Signature: _____

Date: 12/04/2013

Sworn to and subscribed before me this
_____ day of _____, 20____.

Notary Public

Official Seal

My commission expires: _____, 20____.

