



## NORTH CAROLINA CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

# Aurora Prep

**Public charter schools opening the fall of 2017**

**Due 5:00 pm EST, September 25, 2015**

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction  
NCDPI/Office of Charter Schools  
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Raleigh NC 27601-2825  
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## CHARTER SCHOOL

### 2016 Application Process

To open a charter school in the 2017-2018 school year

#### APPLICATION DUE DATE/TIME

**September 25, 2015** A complete **online** application package, in the Office of Charter Schools **by 5:00 pm EST.**

**\*Non-Refundable \$1000 Application fee due to the Office of Charter Schools\***

*Application Fee Payment Details can be found on the Office of Charter Schools Website*

#### APPLICATION SPECIFICATIONS

Applicants can submit applications prior to the deadline September 25, 2015 at 5:00 pm EST. **All applications 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 in the appropriate places within the application.
2. **Any** answer given within the application which is not original to the applicant, the applicant must provide a citation to the source of the answer.
3. Review all elements of your application for completeness before submitting. **An incomplete application will result in the elimination of the application.**
4. **Any** document attached to the application or within the online system **must be** in PDF format.
5. Late submissions **will not** be accepted. No exceptions.

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**I. APPLICATION CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name of proposed charter school: Aurora Prep

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

Name of non-profit organization under which charter will be organized or operated: *Aurora Preparatory Charter Academy, Inc*

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

Name of contact person: *Vivian R Lamb*

Title/Relationship to nonprofit: *Board Member, Secretary*

Mailing address: 714 Homestead Park Dr.  
Apex NC 27502

Primary telephone: 919-924-8664 Alternative telephone: 919-362-7341

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

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

County: *BEAUFORT*

LEA: *070-Beaufort County Schools*

Was this application prepared with the assistance of a third party person or group?

No: X

Yes:

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

No: X

Yes:

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

No: X

Yes:

What is the name of the nonprofit organization that governs this charter school? *Aurora Preparatory Charter Academy, Inc*

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

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

Projected School Opening: Year 2017 Month August

*Will this school operate on a year round schedule?*

No: X

Yes:

*Proposed Grade Levels Served and Total Student Enrollment (5 Years)*

Academic School Year	Grade Levels	Total Projected Student Enrollment
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*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 governance, operations, finances and student performance.*

*I certify that I have the authority to submit this application, that the initial board members and I were regularly involved in the development of this application, and that no part of this application is plagiarized. 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.*

vivianrlamb

*Signature*

vivianrlamb

*Printed Name*

Vivian R Lamb, Board Secretary

*Title*

09/25/2015

*Date*

## II. MISSION and PURPOSES

(No more than three total pages in this section)

### **Mission:**

*State the Mission of the proposed charter school in **thirty-five 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:*

To provide, within a culture of civility, access to worldwide knowledge through technology and personalized guidance that, together, enable every student to build an excellent foundation for a rewarding career, constructive citizenship, and lifelong growth.

*Clearly describe the mission of the proposed charter school:*

The mission of Aurora Prep is to promote pleasant and productive learning for all students. To achieve this, a peaceful and healthy learning environment will be created through training from the successful Peaceful Schools-NC program. Then every student will be enabled to master an excellent foundation of concepts, skills, and applications, based on the NC SCOS, by means of blended learning, where the use of digital lessons allows teachers to give each student personalized guidance.

### **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.*

Beaufort County's population in 2014 was estimated at 47,585 according to Census data. The percentage of school-aged children is 11.2% of the total population with an estimated 7,300 K-12 students in the county. While we will have open enrollment through Beaufort County, our initial targeted population will be southeastern Beaufort County. The area is rural and sparsely populated, with Aurora as its largest town. (See Appendix .) Although we may attract some enrollment from outside that area, for simplicity we'll look at demographics from the most recent Census data(2010)for three zip codes(or ZCTAs--zip code tabulating areas--defined by the Census Bureau) that cover the area. The population and racial/ethnic percentages of these three ZCTAs are given in Table 1(Appendix A). The racial composition of the targeted population in 2010 was roughly 59% white,41% black; we expect that the composition of our enrollment would reflect similar demographics. It should be noted that Richland Township,in which Aurora is located, has a 49% white,49% black composition, as it doesn't include as much of the predominantly white Blount's Creek. The school system for the county in which Aurora Prep would be located is Beaufort County Schools (BCS). The racial/ethnic percentages (2010 Census) of the county as a whole are 60% white, 40% black.

The selection of location and student body are an integral part of the vision for Aurora Prep. Due to limited choices in southeastern Beaufort County, our school helps to bring a needed community educational opportunity to parents wishing to stay in the area. The district high school in Aurora was closed in 2000 and the students were consolidated with the district at Southside High School, in Chocowinity, which is 19 miles from Aurora. The remaining district school in Aurora--S.W.Snowden, a K-8 Title I school--has not produced favorable academic results (an F rating after the 2014-2015 year--see Table 2 in Appendix A), has continued to decline in enrollment, and is now under consideration for closing and consolidation of students into the Chocowinity area. Many parents of K-8 students in the area have looked for other educational options: some try homeschooling; some go to Pamlico County to a district, charter, or private school there. The town of Aurora continues to lose businesses, and fails to attract any new residents due to the lack of educational options that are higher in quality. The current mayor of Aurora, together with Mack Paul, our Board Chair, have been trying to attract new development, and with it new residents, to the area. It is with confidence that the Mayor and local stakeholders expect growth in Aurora to no longer be hindered if a new K-12 charter school becomes an anchor to the community.(See Mayor Williams' letter in Appendix A.) The vision for Aurora Prep is to offer every K-12 student in the southeastern Beaufort County area an excellent public education at a school centered in the community. This charter school would offer an option that is governed by a majority local Board of Directors, all of whom want a school where their students can get an excellent education and that--even if small--brings the residents of the area back together and becomes a respected, integral part of a growing community.

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

The projected opening enrollment for grades K-8 is 120; the total projected enrollment of the charter school in grades K-12 will be 200. The total grade K-12 enrollment of Beaufort County Schools(BCS)now is approximately 7,247. So our total projected enrollment would be only 2.7% of the BCS enrollment. But while our enrollment will be a small percentage of the county numbers, it is a larger percentage of the estimated student-age population of southeastern Beaufort County:  $200/644 = 31\%$ .

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

Current Beaufort County Schools in and near the proposed area are very traditional in delivery and educational offerings. The only LEA school in southeastern Beaufort County is S.W.Snowden, a K-8 Title I school in Aurora, with a current enrollment of 163. The school offers a traditional K-8 education with less than desirable results. Although Southside High has recently initiated some online courses, the dominant education plan in the area would still be called Traditional.

The education plan of Aurora Prep has all of the components described below as a digital-age education. Aurora Prep will utilize a blended learning design of instructional delivery; but will ensure that content is aligned to

the North Carolina state standards. Aurora Prep will design and integrate personalized learning and flexible resources optimized for each student based upon feedback from digital formative and summative assessments. These assessments will help drive advancement that is not based primarily on time spent in class, but on advancement based on demonstrated mastery of the content and competency in applying what has been learned.

We will seek to serve Beaufort and surrounding county students through an innovative blended learning model that allows the teachers and students to take ownership of the teaching and learning process through personalized and customized application of knowledge. Students will spend roughly 60% of their time with face-to-face teachers and 40% of their time with digital content. Our school will work to ensure age appropriate use of technology in terms of time on computers. In order to meet our mission, we anticipate integrating content with informal learning experiences outside of school and project-based and community-based learning activities, thus connecting school and students' lives outside of school. Aurora Prep will move education for K-12 students in southeastern Beaufort County into the digital age.

4. *In the appendices (Appendix A1), 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-218, 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.*

Aurora Prep will satisfy Purpose 1 by creating satisfying new professional opportunities for teachers. It is a common misconception that the Blended Learning instructional method always diminishes the role of the teacher. To the contrary, the goals of the educational program can be set higher because more basic functions can be done well by the computer and the teachers are

freed for higher level functions that can result in greatly improved learning by the students. Teachers are the key: they create a safe and orderly environment for student learning. And that learning is heavily dependent on the teachers continually observing their students' mastery of the lessons and, using all data available, facilitate choice of resources and interact with each student to engage, motivate a challenging pace, and enrich with additional insights. Teachers must let students know that their intense efforts to learn are recognized and supported. The relationships with the students created during this process should provide a very rewarding experience. The learning program also depends greatly on the library of resources amassed--that we have available in every subject area the lesson packets and additional resources we need to present the curriculum to each student at an appropriate level and format. We will have an excellent library to start, but each teacher must continually contribute to reviewing new resources in her subject, recommending the best for inclusion, as well as creating new lessons from time to time. This should contribute to satisfying professional development in a subject area.

Aurora Prep will fulfill Purpose 2 by making itself accountable in its strategic goals for meeting a certain measurable student achievement result: percentage of students meeting or exceeding their growth trajectories, using NWEA MAP testing data. We will track student achievement data in many other ways as well, publishing the results on the School Dashboard for all stakeholders to see, and holding ourselves accountable for improvement over time.

As for Purpose 3, there are currently no charter schools in the area that we are targeting, so we will definitely be providing parents and students with an expanded choice. With Snowden currently rated an F school and the remoteness of Aurora from other schools, parents do not have good options for their students. Many students are leaving the county to attend other schools, which creates hardships for parents who then are not able to interact with their child's school. (See comments by Shawna W. on flyer in Appendix A.)

Aurora Prep is definitely attempting Purpose 4--to improve student learning. The 2014-15 school report cards for schools in the targeted area show Snowden with a D in Reading and an F in Math. Chocowinity Middle was graded with a D in both Reading and Math. Performance-based accountability will be ingrained within Aurora Prep's model to improve current proficiency gaps in standards implementation. Through performance-based accountability, higher academic and behavioral expectations, innovative teaching/learning strategies, and a focus on individual student learning plans, Aurora Prep will work to improve student learning with a goal to match the state proficiency and growth standards. Our goal will be to be a C school in Year 1-2 with expectations of a grade of B by Year 3.

The environment we create will promote Purpose 5 with increased learning opportunities for all students, helping them feel comfortable asking questions and engaging in discussions, and motivating them through small group work with other students. Our utilization of a blended learning instructional method--presenting an excellent curriculum by combining interactive lessons at the computer with a teacher available for personalized guidance--will promote learning for all students, making it

possible for each student to work, at an appropriate pace and level, with a coach able to offer guidance as data indicates.

At-risk and accelerated students, whose pace may differ widely from the average, will benefit even more. With at-risk students who need a slower pace, with more repetition and practice of skills, data-driven instruction from the blended learning technologies will help teachers provide targeted interventions such as 1:1 mentoring, and multiple media formats for students who may fall behind. Accelerated students will benefit greatly from being allowed to progress more rapidly through the lessons, and being challenged by the teacher's choice of resources, and perhaps deepening their understanding through helping other students in the small group activities. Both at-risk and accelerated students will enjoy the relative privacy of a setting where no one pays attention to what lesson another student is working on.

Aurora Prep will be encouraging the use of different and innovative teaching methods - Purpose 6. Our core instructional model will be a blend of problem/project-based learning strategies, digital technologies, competency-based teaching and assessment strategies and positive behavioral support. We will encourage teachers to use these strategies in order to build a passion for learning within their students. By supporting effective face-to-face instructional strategies with technology, teachers will be empowered to use one-on-one coaching, mentoring, and/or tutoring techniques as well as hands-on group projects and peer learning strategies.

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

- 1. Provide specific and measurable goals for the proposed school for the first 5 years of operation outlining expectations for the proposed school's operations, academics, finance, and governance. Address how often, who, and when the information will be communicated to the governing board and other stakeholders.*

The following four goals will allow us to demonstrate how well our expectations for Aurora Prep's academics, operations, finance, and governance are being fulfilled.

Goal 1. At least 66% of the students in the school will meet or exceed one year of growth each year in Reading, Language Usage, and Math, as measured by NWEA MAP testing.

This goal reflects our belief that the academic program will result in expected growth for all students, but also that many students who are below their grade level at the start of a year will exceed expectations beyond one year's growth. The school will implement the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures for Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) assessments which will provide detailed, actionable data about where each child is on their unique learning path. MAP assessments will also help us pinpoint the goal-strand level where our students are ready to advance, and where they need help. These assessments combined with quality curriculum and instruction will improve student achievement and maintain a high level of accountability.

Goal 2. The school will meet its grade level expansion goal in at least three out of the first five years in operation.

This goal reflects our expectation that Aurora Prep will build smoothly toward the vision of a small rural K-12 school that can offer educational excellence to all students in the region. The Board, the Head of School, the teachers and staff, and community supporters will all be engaged each year in planning for the next enrollment expansion. We will execute a strong marketing plan to recruit homeschoolers and to regain the confidence of parents whose students are currently attending school(s) outside the county due to lack of a high quality local choice.

Goal 3. The organization will ensure a five percent contingency fund after year one.

This goal reflects our expectation that after the first year, through our academic results, we will increase enrollment and cultivate donors, and achieve the financial vitality to put 5% of the budget into a contingency fund. The Board and other stakeholders will realize that the goal has been achieved through the end of fiscal year report at the Annual Meeting. Being a small, rural school will also allow us to ensure that funds go directly into the classroom where they are needed.

Goal 4. The Board will review at least one-third of all policies annually, so that all policies are reviewed at least every three years.

This goal reflects our expectation for the governance capacity of the Board--that it will observe carefully through the year any evidence of difficulty arising from a policy specified by the board, and be willing to investigate and consider a change in policy when it seems advisable. Each of the standing committees of the Board may see evidence from time to time of a difficulty arising from a policy. For example, the Finance Committee may receive a letter in November concerning the results of the annual audit and suggesting a change to a policy. The committee may report that to the full board at the next regular meeting, and the Strategic Planning Committee would take that report under advisement. The Strategic Planning Committee would review that policy as well as 1/3 of other board policies in time to put suggested changes to a vote at the annual meeting.

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

The mission is expressed in more qualitative terms than the strategic goals above. We can use a mixture of quantitative data and survey results to judge progress toward the mission. We can assess whether the students are building an excellent foundation by looking at student progress through the curriculum in all subjects, not just in Math and ELA. The establishment of a culture of civility could be assessed by looking at data over time on student absenteeism and on the number of serious infractions of the student code of conduct; and at the results of a survey asking for suggestions on how to improve the school culture. The provision of access to knowledge in the form of digital educational resources could be assessed by whether the teachers are finding the resources they need for each student in each subject area. We can also ask the students to rate resources by whether they are engaging enough to help maintain academic focus. We can evaluate how up-to-date our library of resources is with data on how many new resources teachers are recommending. We can also look at how many partnerships with outreach programs we have found that allow our students to participate in

exceptional educational projects through videoconferencing. The personalized guidance of our teachers could be assessed by asking students whether they find their teachers approachable and knowledgeable; and by looking at the teachers' logs to see how many contacts they make in each period. And we can look at student input on their personal goal-setting plans to judge whether the students are starting to take responsibility for their own progress.

### 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 establishment of a healthy learning environment is a basic component of the instructional program for Aurora Prep. The training of staff and students to create a culture of civility in a peaceful school will be given by Peaceful Schools-NC, and then will be continued by the whole school community, with some retraining when necessary. An additional part of the program will be teaching students the ability to hold academic conversations--to have respectful discussions with their classmates. This social-emotional learning may be very important to their future success.

The instructional method at Aurora Prep will be a form of blended learning. The content in each subject area will be broken up into lessons that will be presented on laptops and tablets, and have a teachers to guide the student to mastery as he or she works through the lessons. Our chosen curriculum is based on the NC Standard Course of Study: the Common Core State Standards for Math, Reading, and Language Usage; and the NC Essential Standards for Science, Social Studies, and the Visual Arts and Music. Many excellent educators have developed a large number of resources and tools to aid in presenting the curriculum. Looking at the CCSS for Math for grade K in Appendix B.2, the subject area is broken into four domains, and under each domain are a number of clusters; each cluster has two or more content standards; we will present roughly one lesson per standard. There are now many good sets of digital lessons that are aligned with the Common Core standards--some of them free! We will find the best sets to personalize the instruction for every student, and create any others we need. There are also many providers of sets of practice problems aligned to the Common Core standards that can be used as assessment tests (ixl.com is a good example). A packet of resources will be created for each lesson--a preassessment test, a set of questions on the important concepts and vocabulary of a lesson, perhaps a game to practice the lesson skill, a final test of whether the skill was mastered, and then a lesson activity--away from the computer--that is an application of the lesson concept. Thus there are four levels of assessment embedded in the packet with which to judge whether the student has mastered the lesson. When a student has mastered all the lessons in a cluster, there is a student-teacher conference where teacher and student together discuss the students' portfolio of work from the lessons. Lesson packets in all subject areas will be created in much the same way, with variations to suit the material. For example, Science lessons will be studied in the lab and the activity will always be an experiment.

Our instruction makes use of the station rotation form of blended learning, combining direct instruction by the teacher (to a mix of small group and

whole class), independent study, and collaborative work where the student help each other understand the lesson through discussion or an activity. There will be many levels of assessment to inform instruction. Teachers will regularly use assessment data obtained through the lessons (daily, weekly, and quarterly) to determine the need for remedial or enrichment opportunities. Teachers will ensure that students are progressing through the standards and objectives and intervene appropriately at all student levels.

### **Curriculum and Instructional Design:**

*Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure for each grade span (i.e. elementary, middle, high) the school would ultimately serve.*

With the enrollment as envisioned through year 5, the number of students per grade will remain small, and grades will be grouped into classes: K-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11-12, with about 26 students per class. The upper grade class is larger, but students in those years may naturally form smaller study groups depending on the curriculum specialization they choose. Also, students in those grades may well be taking some virtual courses in their areas of specialization, perhaps for early college credit, and will be working with a teacher supplied by the course.

The K-1 class is the only one that doesn't travel, except to the Science/Art Lab for experiments and activities. The classes for grades 2-12 will travel to subject area classrooms, staffed by a qualified teacher and usually an assistant as well. Then within each classroom, the students will use the station rotation environment described previously: large group direct instruction, independent study, small group work, or collaboration with peers. In the upper grades, when the blended learning habits are ingrained, the rotation won't need to be prescribed--the students can move around according to their study needs.

In the K-5 ELA classes, the teacher would introduce the lesson concepts and then circulate as the students practice the skills, individually and in small groups, with educational games, activities, and assessments presented digitally, on tablets in the younger grades and laptops for the older. We will make use of the new Core Knowledge K-5 Language Arts curriculum where it fits into our basic curriculum, and thus have much more direct instruction as we follow their prescription of a large read-aloud component to the course.

Provide a synopsis of the planned curriculum, including:

1. *One sample curriculum outline (in graph form) in the Appendices (Appendix B) for one core subject (specific to the school's purpose) for each grade span (i.e. elementary, middle, high) the school would ultimately serve.*
2. *If you are proposing a high school, as Appendix B2, provide a visual disseminating what courses (core content and electives) will be offered at the charter high school to ensure students meet the proposed charter school's graduation requirements. 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.*

The Aurora Prep digital curriculum, based on the NC Standard Course of Study for grades K-12 (with NC OCS available in the high school years also) aligns with our mission in that it will enable all of our students to build an excellent foundation for the future. Once we create the lesson packets aligned to the content standards of the basic curriculum, we can reorganize and modify the packets to align with the curriculum needed by any of our students. For example, for EC students, we can organize a lesson sequence aligned with the NC Extended Course of Study. For ELL students we can enhance the lesson packets to accommodate a talking dictionary, use graded text, introduce some resources in their native language, or other suggested modifications. For AIG students, there are sets of lessons recommended highly for use by accelerated learners in addition to the regular curriculum. And since all students will be covering the basic set of NC content standards, the alignment with the NC Accountability Model should be assured. With a strong focus on the academic and social growth of all students, we know that proficiency will be obtained in time and we will lay the foundation for effective citizens ready for career or college upon the completion of high school.

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 for each grade span (i.e. elementary, middle, high) the school would ultimately serve.*

The primary instructional strategy that we expect teachers at Aurora Prep to master is the transition from lecture mode to facilitator mode, which requires much more interaction with the students. Positive classroom relationships between teachers and students, teachers and families, and amongst students are the cornerstone of academic achievement. Teachers must be cheerleaders for each student as they navigate their instructional program. Teachers must remain tuned in to student progress. They must be skilled in data collection and analysis to ensure the effectiveness of each individual student's achievement. They must communicate effectively with students and parents to ensure that everyone is aware of each student's goal and the progress towards it. A teacher's effective decision making and knowledge of varying instructional methods is critical for student success. Teachers must familiarize themselves with the instructional materials and also be prepared to teach in the digital age. They must be prepared to guide students towards information as opposed to providing all of the information. Blended learning requires that the teacher be versed in direct instruction, remedial instruction, enrichment instruction, small group, whole group, and station based instruction. These are the skills we see in the most effective educators and these are the skills we want to instill in our teachers. This, coupled with varying assessment strategies will put students on the path to success.

5. *Explain how the proposed instructional plan and graduation requirements will ensure student readiness to transition from grade to grade and to the next grade span upon program completion.*

Using a standards based model and assessing student readiness to move forward to the next set of objectives guarantees that students are prepared for the next set of grade level standards. Individualized programming also allows for the pace of instruction to become less of a negative and allows

the teacher to create an environment where students can work at the level of competence demonstrated on assessments. Finding students "where they are" and creating a growth plan allows for quicker movement through standards and objectives.

Blended learning in grades K-8 sets the stage for high school students to explore distance learning and be better prepared for the rigor and pace that exists in virtual learning. They will have the skills necessary to work at a set pace and to work collaboratively within groups. They will have a knowledge of their preferred learning style and know specific strategies to be successful.

- 6. If you are proposing a high school, describe how the proposed charter school will meet the Future-Ready Core requirements. Provide details on how the students will earn credit hours and how grade-point averages will be calculated?*

Aurora Prep will exceed the state requirements and model the expectations for admission to an NC public college or university. (See Appendix B2.) The Future-Ready Core requirements are the NC high school graduation requirements. It also includes an OCS course of study for students with special needs. Credit hours are one per course to reach the graduation requirements. Grade Point Average will be calculated on the traditional point scale: A = 4 (93-100), B = 3 (85-92), C = 2 (77-84), D = 1 (70-76) and F = 0 (69 or below). One bonus point is given for honors classes, 2 bonus points for college level classes. Points will be added and divided by the number

- 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.*

Our mission is to provide access to a course of coached study that will enable every student to build an excellent foundation. Thus we strive to provide as many instructional days as possible within the budget, for at home some students may not have Internet access or the support of a teacher. Our calendar has the official holidays. As for teacher workdays, there are ten workdays scheduled before the first day of school, for teacher development; three that are needed for grading and teacher development after the end of each quarter; and two after the last day of school, for final administrative duties and teacher development. We easily satisfy the minimum 1,025 instructional hours criterion.

### **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.*

Aurora Prep is dedicated to providing quality instruction and clear methods of prevention and intervention to students who are at-risk of not making adequate academic growth. The blended learning instructional method makes it much simpler than in a traditional classroom to have a student try a new lesson personalized for his or her needs. Any at-risk student who is not

showing progress in Reading, Writing, or Math will be introduced quickly to one of a variety of research-based programs. (As one example, the digital interactive Nessy Reading and Spelling program, based on Orton-Gillingham principles, specifically addresses reading difficulties due to dyslexia and other formal reading disabilities but has also proven effective for students who need remediation.) The student's teacher will observe carefully whether the student is responding to a new type of lesson with increased progress. Given the small and personalized nature of the school, we can ensure that every child will receive individual attention to find their best learning methods.

There are several methods and systems that will be employed for prevention and intervention of students not performing at expected levels:

1. Teachers will have the daily interaction with and be responsible for directing a student's instructional program. Should regular data suggest a student is not performing appropriately, the teacher will implement new strategies or complete a more in depth look at the area of difficulty. This may require using an additional resource, adjusting the starting level of the student, or reaching out to the home for additional practice opportunities.

2. An after school program will be developed that may become a resource for additional remedial instruction on a skill or objective.

3. The MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) process will be utilized school-wide. An MTSS team made up of the Head of School, the child's teacher, the counselor and two additional teachers not in that child's grade level will evaluate all student performance brought to the committee. Tier 1 requires classroom strategies be implemented and evaluated. Tier 2 (Targeted Intervention) may include pull out or remedial support and Tier 3 (Intense Intervention) is a more comprehensive remedial and testing schedule and could involve possible placement in an Exceptional Children's program.

The goal of all of these systems is to ensure the academic success of all students. Once strategies are identified that allow for the student to be successful, they will be documented and passed from teacher to teacher to ensure those strategies are continued. Should it be determined a student is an Exceptional Child (EC), then an IEP will be written and followed by everyone in the school under the rules of IDEA.

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.*

Aurora Prep recognizes the importance of creating an instructional plan and curriculum that includes all learners, including ELL students. In accordance with the North Carolina adoption of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium English language development standards, all prospective and current ELL students should be identified, evaluated, and monitored to ensure their academic success. We will identify new ELL

students through the following criteria: (1) upon admission to Aurora Prep, their family completed the Home Language Survey and have indicated that English is their second language; or (2) their teachers have referred them to an Intervention Team for deficiencies in the English language. We will administer the WIDA Access Placement Test (W-APT) to newly identified ELL students. Current ELL students, identified by prior school records, will be given the WIDA-ACCESS test. The results from this assessment will provide teachers and parents with knowledge of the students' ability in a variety of reading, writing, speaking, and listening contexts. Based on this information, Aurora Prep teachers will create individualized lesson plans, using specialized resources to support the students in the appropriate literacy focus areas. When necessary, ELL students will receive additional support and modified assignments. There are many excellent online resources available for ELL students that can be utilized. Teachers will monitor the learning growth of all ELL students using the data from regularly planned assessments. For students in grades 3-8, Aurora Prep teachers will confer with the school testing coordinator to add any necessary accommodations for state testing. Teachers will meet with parents of all ELL students to discuss their progress during regular conferences. In addition to monitoring ELL students, teachers will observe and evaluate any Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students who appear to be struggling with the English language. If they are not making adequate growth Aurora Prep teachers will further individualize their lesson plans to meet their needs, ensuring that all students have equitable access to instruction. Continued observation and testing will be used to determine when students no longer need the specialized instructional resources.

**Identification:** Aurora Prep will administer a Home Language Survey to determine the primary language spoken at home. If it is determined that the primary language is not English, the student will be scheduled for a state approved assessment of English Language proficiency. If it is determined the student is classified as ELL, a specific plan will be created for the student.

**Programs:** Aurora Prep will deliver all ELL services as required. A contracted part time ELL teacher will be hired to deliver specific instruction and provide training to teachers on classroom strategies that can be implemented. Classroom curriculum will also be specifically selected to allow for modified instruction when necessary. It is our hope to minimize the amount of time a student is pulled out of regular classroom instruction, however, this will depend on the level of services necessary for the student.

**Monitoring and Evaluating:** The WIDA will be used as the test of progress and possible exit from the ELL program. ELL students will participate in all other school level assessments and state tests as required by statute.

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.*

Aurora Prep will offer a full range of services for students who are intellectually gifted. For grades K-8, there will be a Schoolwide Enrichment Model program. The major goal of the SEM is the application of gifted education pedagogy to total school improvement. The SEM provides enriched learning experiences and higher learning standards for all children through three goals: (1) developing talents in all children; (2) providing a broad range of advanced-level enrichment experiences for all students; and (3) providing advanced follow-up opportunities for young people based on their strengths and interests.

The SEM focuses on enrichment for all students through high levels of engagement and the use of enjoyable and challenging learning experiences that are constructed around students' interests, learning styles, and preferred modes of expression. Over twenty years of research has shown that this model is effective at serving high-ability students in a variety of educational settings and in schools serving diverse ethnic and socioeconomic populations. These studies also suggest that the pedagogy of the SEM can be applied to various content areas resulting in higher achievement when implemented in a wide variety of settings, and when used with diverse populations of students including high ability students, students with learning disabilities and underachievers.

The most recent research on the SEM has focused on the use of digital learning in enrichment learning and teaching. In one digital application of the SEM ([www.renzullilearning.com](http://www.renzullilearning.com)), individual computer-generated student profiles are used as the basis for matching personalized resources from a data bank that contains thousands of carefully selected enrichment resources. These resources and students' profiles can be used for curriculum planning, differentiating instruction, and individual and small group Project Based Learning. At the high school level, all students will be given the opportunity to participate in a full range of Honors classes, Advanced Placement classes, and college-level courses offered once the school has a full K-12 program. This will include courses offered by the North Carolina Virtual Public Schools and East Carolina University and others.

The evaluation of students in K-8 will have a portfolio-based component and include assessments designed to measure collaborative skills, leadership, initiative, and problem solving abilities. It will include participation in seminar discussions, development of leadership skills, and evaluation of projects based on rubrics. The evaluation of Grade 9-12 students includes end of course tests, AP exams, and teacher assessments.

### **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. We can identify students enrolled in Aurora Prep who have previously been found to be eligible for special education services or are protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act through a statewide search of CECAS, using the student's name, date of birth, and gender. Aurora Prep will participate in the CECAS program, managed by the Department of Exceptional Children's Services. This is a computerized management program that maintains the confidential records of students with disabilities. If the student's records are in CECAS, we will use the designated CECAS procedure to access them. If a student has been previously found to be eligible for special education services or to be protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, but the special education record is not in CECAS, their name will still appear in the CECAS data base, as it is linked to Power Schools, the information data management program used by school systems in NC to maintain general information of students. The student's special education records can then be obtained by sending a form to request the records from a previous school.

2. Child Find brochures, published by the public schools of NC, will be distributed to local daycare facilities, churches, pediatricians and other medical professionals, preschool programs, Head Start programs, the Beaufort County Health Department, and any other local agencies where young children may be found. Aurora Prep will have a representative who will attend the Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC) Meetings for Beaufort County, and will consult with the Beaufort County Schools to ensure that any child eligible for special education services is located and provided services by Beaufort County Schools (?by whom, Aurora Prep?). We will also assist in identifying eligible children of 3-4 years of age, and ensuring that they receive specially designed instruction in accordance NC 1501-4.2. from whom? Children with disabilities must be evaluated in accordance with NC1503-1 through NC1503-3. Aurora Prep will follow the requirements as stated in the Procedures Governing programs and Services for Students with Disabilities (amended, July, 2014). Referrals will be made to the LICC and Aurora Prep will contract with licensed related services staff to ensure that all eligible children ages 3 through 22 are appropriately evaluated. Contracted staff will include psychologists, speech-language therapists, physical therapists, occupational therapists and others.

3.1 If a needed record for a student with disabilities is not found in CECAS, then Aurora Prep will send a form to request the record from the student's previous school. All school districts have to maintain paper copies of special education records because of the legal requirements on forms that require signatures. Similarly, a release form can be sent to a previous school to ask for the release of the paper copies for students who have been identified under Section 504 and who have an accommodation plan.

3.2 All records of students with disabilities and 504 plans will be kept in

locked filing cabinets in a central location in the school. There will be a checkout process with a confidentiality form that school personnel will sign in order to access these records. Only teachers who teach a particular student will have access to his or her records. The Administrative Staff will have access to all records.

3.3 Each special education teacher will maintain records of students with disabilities and insure that all requirements are followed according to state guidelines. Aurora Prep will contract to provide CECAS training to all special education staff and to ensure that both paper and computerized records are maintained according to state regulations to ensure confidentiality.

#### 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. According to NC1501-3.2, a continuum of services will be made available to meet the needs of students with disabilities. The continuum of services will include regular classroom placement, co-teaching or specialized content instruction in the regular classroom, instruction in resource or part time special education classes, full time special classes or hospital or home instruction. Aurora Prep will work with the Division of Exceptional Children Services at the state level for assistance in locating specialized services for students who are in need of state operated programs (e.g. Governor Morehead School for the Blind) or some other residential facility.

2. NC1500-2.13 mandates that a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) be provided. This means that Aurora Prep will provide appropriate services at no cost to the parent and meet the requirements of IDEA. Each student identified as having a disability is required to have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that must be developed by an IEP committee. This committee is required to be made up of the LEA representative (the Head of School), the special education teacher, a regular classroom teacher and the parent. The student will be invited to the meeting if he or she is at least 14, or will turn 14 during the course of the IEP.

This committee will make decisions regarding the evaluation, identification, placement, development of the IEP, as well as the annual review of placement and development. This committee will also make decisions regarding reevaluation, changes in the IEP due to discipline issues, and will be responsible for conducting functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans.

3. Aurora Prep will ensure that one or both parents of a child are members of any group that makes decisions in the educational placement of their child. Immediately following the development of the IEP, Aurora Prep will provide the parents with a copy of the proposed IEP together with the required notice of procedural safeguards and parents' handbook of rights. Progress towards goals on the IEP will be reported each grading period when report cards are issued. The parent will be given a written report on this progress.

If a student has met goals established during the course of the school year, then the IEP team (including the parent) will convene to discuss amending the IEP to add new goals. Students will be invited to each IEP meeting if the student is or will be 14 during the course of the current IEP. Beginning at age 14 and younger if deemed appropriate, student-led conferences will be held at least once during the school year in order to report progress toward meeting the goals in the IEP. A portfolio of student work will be maintained and sent home with each grading period so that a parent will be kept abreast of progress the student is making on IEP goals and how that progress relates to access to the general curriculum. Compliance with state and federal guidelines will be maintained in four ways: (1) use of CECAS, which has a fault in system of compliance; (2) participation in the state's continuous improvement plan; (3) evaluation of 10% of the IEPs each year to ensure compliance; (4) employment of an auditor if a large percentage of records are found out of compliance.

4. Aurora Prep will contract with related services staff, including licensed psychologists, speech language clinicians, occupational therapists and physical therapists and any other related services that will allow a student access to the general curriculum. Specialized transportation will be provided as well if needed. Interpreting services will also be provided on an as needed basis. This is not an all-inclusive list of services required by IDEA.

### **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. Student performance on End-of-Grade tests in reading and math in grades 3-8 and science in grade 5 and 8 will be the initial data points for Aurora Prep. It is our initial goal to outperform the local district by 5 percentage points in all areas and across all subgroups and obtain a Performance Grade of C or higher in our initial year of operation.

Once high school grades are added End-of-Course tests in Math I, English II, and Biology will become part of our composite score and factor into our Performance Grade. Once we administer these tests, we again intend to outperform the local district by 5 percentage points across all subgroups and obtain a Performance Grade of C or higher.

The addition of high school also brings other factors into our composite score and Performance Grade.

High School Graduation Rate will be 100%, ACT scores will outperform the state average, and

WorkKeys scores (when appropriate) will outperform the state average. We also plan to track the percentage of students that attend an institution of higher learning after high school graduation.

2. We will use the NWEA MAP testing for Math, Reading, and Language Usage three times during the school year Fall, Winter, Spring for all students, grades 2 - 12. The Fall student RIT score can be used to estimate an expected learning growth trajectory for the student; the Winter and Spring scores can then be used to measure how the students actual learning growth over the course of the school year compared to his or her expected trajectory. With these data for all students we can form an assessment of how effective our instructional program has been. Even if the program has been effective, it can always be improved. But if it has not been effective, we must carefully analyze the reasons in order to make the right changes to improve the instruction and curriculum for the benefit of the students and set new goals that will move us toward achieving our mission.

We recognized that MAP is not a diagnostic test; for progress monitoring in Math and Reading we will use Skill Navigator monthly to assess which skills each student has mastered. These formative assessments will be extremely useful in judging our curricular materials and the accuracy of our lesson tests at measuring lasting student learning.

3. Student progress from one grade to the next will be communicated to parents and students in the parent handbook. It is important to note that the principal of the school has the final say on matters of promotion but will use the following factors in making that decision:

a. Student grades- a student must maintain a 70% average to receive credit for a class.

b. Student mastery of objectives- Students must demonstrate mastery of grade level objectives as measured by EOG tests, EOC tests, or some alternative measure. It should be noted that grade 3 Read to Achieve legislation must be followed for third grade reading.

c. Student growth- as measured by state tests or an alternative measure of demonstrating appropriate growth.

d. Teacher recommendation of student readiness.

4. Aurora Prep will require all students who graduate from our school to obtain 24 credits in the college preparatory model and 22 in the Occupational Course of Study. While we will follow the state graduation

requirements, we anticipate local requirements being added that support our mission. These may include:

- ONE online course requirement
- ONE Digital Citizenship requirement (certificate of achievement or attendance in 5 hour seminar)

Students graduating from Aurora Prep will have a sound and applicable knowledge of Math, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, Technology, and Leadership Principles.

**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.*
1. The most effective discipline comes from outstanding and engaging instruction, which will be Aurora Preps priority. Aurora Prep students will be taught how to make positive, productive decisions that promote a culture of lifelong learning and a peaceful environment. Aurora Prep will incorporate a peaceful schools environment which will help them focus not only on academics but also on effective communication and conflict resolution skills.
2. At Aurora Prep, the School will utilize a variety of methods for addressing challenging student behavior with a focus on positive reinforcement, communication and the personalization of its students. Suspension and/or expulsion are consequences for the most egregious or pervasive behavior. An explicit list of unacceptable behavior that may result in suspension or expulsion is outlined in the Student Handbook in Appendix D and includes the possession, use, or sale of firearms, weapons, or destructive devices;  
The unlawful possession, use, or sale of any controlled substance, intoxicant, or any drug paraphernalia, including alcohol, drugs and tobacco;  
Being unlawfully under the influence of any controlled substance or intoxicant, including alcohol, drugs and tobacco;  
arranging, negotiating selling or furnishing any substance or material that is represented to be a controlled substance or intoxicant;  
causing or attempting to cause physical assault and/or bullying/harassment, including but not limited to fighting, threatening behavior, assaulting students or adults;  
theft or extortion and/or knowingly accepting stolen materials;  
causing or attempting to cause damage to school or other private property on school grounds;  
performing or

attempting to perform an obscene act or engaging in profanity or vulgarity; disrupting school activities by causing or participating in riots or chaos; causing or attempting to cause a fire; trespassing; unauthorized use of the schools technology including computer, tablets or personal electronic devices; knowingly participating in gang activity, pornography and/or sexual behavior; making, attempting to make or conspiring to make a bomb threat or false alarm.

3. All students with disabilities will have the benefit of modified instruction as designated in their IEP pursuant to state and federal laws. Students with disabilities may not be subject to disciplinary penalties based on their individual disabilities. The Student Handbook (see Appendix D) describes how discipline of students with disabilities will be addressed. Aurora Prep will comply with all federal and state laws governing discipline and students with disabilities.

4. The Aurora Prep Student Handbook (see Appendix D) sets forth the policies and procedures for due process rights, including grievance procedure for student suspension or expulsion and general parent/student grievance procedures. Aurora Preps policies and procedures will follow state and federal laws and be updated as necessary to maintain continuous compliance with those laws. Students who have been long term suspended may appeal the suspension beyond the Head of School to the Aurora Prep Board of Directors which will determine the final decision, unless the suspension warrants the involvement of the judiciary system.

**IV. GOVERNANCE 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 upon application submission.

*Name of Private Nonprofit:* Aurora Preparatory Charter Academy, Inc

*Mailing Address:* Aurora Prep Charter Academy

*City/State/Zip:* Apex NC 27502

*Street Address:* 714 Homestead Park Dr

*Phone:* 919-924-8664

*Fax:* 919-362-7341

*Name of registered agent and address:*

Mack Paul  
3705 Shadybrook Dr  
Raleigh, NC 27609

*FEDERAL TAX ID:* 47-4905336

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Board	Board	County/State	Current	Past or Present	Has any disciplinary
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Member Name	Title	of Residence	Occupation	Professional Licenses(s) Held	action been taken against any of these professional licenses?

**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.*

Charter schools serve the public and do not operate for any individual's personal gain. The governing board's primary function is to ensure that the school's focus is always on serving the public. The board fulfills this function through carrying our fiduciary duties--attending board meetings regularly, becoming informed about matters before the board, using independent judgment to make objective decisions in the best interest of the charter school, putting the school's interest in any transaction ahead of their personal interest, avoiding a conflict of interest in any transaction, being true to the charter school's purpose and goals as stated in the Articles of Incorporation and bylaws, and abiding by the terms of any instructions from the state of NC that describe how the school's funds are to be used.

The board takes on many roles, with the most important probably being that of employer of the Head of School--the board recruits, hires and oversees the School Head. The board, in collaboration with the Head, hires the staff and faculty--they will work for the Head but are employed by the board. After start up, the board is responsible for governance and oversight; but the Head is responsible for the management of the school.

The responsibilities of a charter school board in providing the required governance are so extensive that just some examples are presented: deciding on academic programs, evaluating student outcomes, approving and terminating contracts, developing policies and procedures, controlling all expenditures, raising funds to ensure that all needed funds are available, evaluating the Head of School, evaluating program effectiveness, establishing and monitoring current goals and objectives, evaluating and planning for the schools future, working to build the reputation of the school in the community, and recruiting and orienting new board members and helping the board develop its ability to provide governance.

The governance role of a charter school board is often stressed, but Aurora Prep considers the oversight role to be of equal importance to the success of the school. The board must continuously monitor the three major components of the school--Academics, Operations, and Financial Vitality--to ensure they are implemented with fidelity and are effective and true to the school's charter. Our goal is to gather as much data on every component as needed to make such oversight possible. Data that should be publicly accessible will be displayed and kept current at least weekly on the Dashboard of the school's website, so that board members and all other stakeholders can catch problems early. The standing committees of the Aurora Prep Board of Directors each have primary responsibility for a portion of the monitoring. Each committee chair will provide a brief summary of the previous month's activity at each regular meeting.

Although it is the role of the entire board to recruit, hire, supervise, and evaluate the Head of School, the Human Resources Committee will take primary charge of organizing recruitment and hiring. First they will establish

criteria for the position and set the desired range of pay. Then they will recruit in national and regional publications, and contact regional consultants who are knowledgeable about administrators experienced in the blended learning method of instruction. Through this search the committee will present a list of candidates to the full board and conduct reference and background checks, interviewing and hiring. Once the Head of School is hired and the startup period completed, the board must be careful to observe the distinction between their role of governance and oversight and the Head's role of management and try to develop a good working relationship. The Strategic Planning committee has primary responsibility for evaluating the School Head annually, but all board members will be engaged in evaluation throughout the year.

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

The board of directors of Aurora Prep has six initial members, who demonstrate diversity of work experience, board experience, academic experience, gender, age, and race. All have in common the experience of parenting school age children, as well as their commitment to creating an excellent new educational option for Aurora.

Our Directors have among them skills in the areas of fundraising, finance, facilities, governance, academic excellence, human resources, and public relations. Our Board President and Chair is an attorney with deep family ties to Aurora who has been working with the Town Mayor for years laying the groundwork for bringing business development to the town and building up the community; he has precious board governance experience, is very knowledgeable about fundraising and facilities, and will chair the Strategic Planning committee. Our Treasurer, a bank vice president, will chair the Finance Committee; she has current experience with the weakness of the local LEA school and is committed to promoting change. Another Director has a career in medical insurance, and organized the PTO for the Beaufort County high school her daughter attended; she will chair the Human Resources committee and promote ties with parents and the community. Another Director manages her own business, is experienced in public relations, and will chair the Operations committee; she has homeschooled her six children and is committed to the possibility of creating a public charter school that offers a culture of civility, personalized guidance, and emphasis on mastery learning that homeschoolers prize. A fifth Director, a retired minister with previous board governance experience who in the past oversaw the budget for a large church organization, will serve on the Finance committee and also the Human Resources committee; he has a grandchild who is flourishing in a charter school in Wake County and is now a vocal proponent of the potential of good charter schools. The only Director without previous Aurora ties is a retired CA and NC educator with a science background and past board experience who has spent recent years following the national growth of both the charter school movement and the blended learning instructional method; she will serve as Secretary and chair the Academic Excellence committee.

With regard to desired composition, we would prefer to start the planning year with at least seven Directors and will seek to add at least one member at that time. We will be looking for a person who has teaching and

curriculum experience in the Beaufort County Schools, but is open to innovative methods of instruction.

Once through the startup period, the educational and operational success of the school will be assured by the capability of the Head of School, and the data gathering and oversight capabilities of the standing committees of the board that make possible timely intervention by the full board to enact careful governance.

The Head of School will be invited to all regular board meetings to summarize the previous month's activity and answer any board questions. The board can thus evaluate the Head's performance throughout the year. At the end of the year the Strategic Planning committee will conduct a more formal evaluation and report to the full board, which can decide to retain the School Head with recommendations for improvement or terminate.

The board will ask the Head to produce a weekly video for the website summing up the school's activities and announcing news and coming events. Where there is a choice to be made, the Head could ask for input and there will be a contact form where each stakeholder could respond with opinions and suggestions. In this way we will encourage active and effective representation of key stakeholders, including parents. The Head will also organize community supporters of the school as volunteers.

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?*

Ever since the LEA Aurora High School was closed and consolidated with a high school in Chocowinity in 2000, and as the remaining K-8 district school grew weaker, the current town mayor felt a sense of urgency to pursue a better educational option for the town. Mack Paul, an attorney who has deep family ties to Aurora and a second home there, had worked with the mayor laying the groundwork for development. The mayor asked Mack to recruit help to look into creating a new excellent educational option. Mack approached Vivian, who had a deep interest in charter schools for rural counties and in the potential of blended learning to enable teachers to offer personalized guidance and help every student succeed. Mack and Vivian met with a cross section of citizens and became convinced that there was enough community interest to support the proposal of a charter school offering a Peaceful Schools program and high achievement through more personalized instruction. Faith Stilley, who knew school age children that were not flourishing at the LEA school, and George Jones, a longtime resident who had watched the town stagnate, were willing to join the prospective board. Faith recommended Debbie Tripp, who knew the weakness of the existing LEA K-8 school, and had experience organizing a high school PTO, was very interested in joining the effort. The mayor recommended Wendy Whitehurst, a homeschooler who was intrigued by the possibility of creating a public charter school that could offer the personalized guidance of homeschooling.

As soon as we enter the planning year we would add at least one new member to the board. The bylaws of Aurora Prep assign the task of taking charge of the search for new board members to the Human Resources committee. The Board Governance Training Manuals suggest quite a lengthy recruitment procedure, but point out that the board will be much better for the care. The committee should develop a profile of the current board and develop recruiting priorities, then use that to develop a job description that spells out the responsibilities of board directorship. Next they should develop a list of potential Directors, making use of recommendations from

present board members and other community supporters. The committee makes contact with these potential members, in writing and/or personal phone calls, to supply information about the charter school and judge interest in serving. If the prospect wants to be seriously considered for board directorship, they are invited to attend an in-person orientation session and are offered an opportunity to visit the charter school if they are unfamiliar with it. Additionally the prospective board Director can be invited to attend a board meeting to get an idea of how the school board makes its decisions and conducts business. Finally, the committee meets to review all of the individuals who participated and discusses whether each candidate can bring the time, skills, and ethics to be a productive Director. The committee prepares a slate and the full board would vote on the new board Directors at the Annual Meeting in June.

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

Aurora Prep's fiscal year is July 1 to June 30. According to the bylaws we will have at least 10 regular meetings per year; generally, all months except July and December. At the August meeting, there would be a review of the Strategic Plan done in January. The Annual Meeting would be in June with a major presentation by the Finance Committee.

*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).*

A basic component of Aurora Prep's mission is to promote learning through guided study, optimizing breadth and depth of learning by taking advantage of the immense resources now available in digital form. Thus our plan for orientation and training of new board members, as well as for ongoing professional development for existing board members makes use of interactive digital lesson packets on relevant topics. For new board members there will be lesson introducing all the governing documents, the Board Policy Manual, and topics in building the foundation for an effective charter school governing board, with completion of the lessons expected by the next regular meeting. For existing board members, the secretary will send out with the next meeting's agenda, a link to a board development packet on a topic relevant to the matters on the agenda for the meeting. Such topics might include financial oversight, relationship between board and Head of School, policy development, and committee structure. The lessons would be brief enough that members could complete them before the next meeting. Thus the timetable for professional development of board members would be an ongoing commitment.

*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.*

Aurora Prep takes a holistic and multifaceted approach to insuring ethical conduct. First, all Directors, officers, and key constituents sign a Code of Ethics, wherein each person pledges to know Aurora Prep's mission and work collaboratively to pursue this mission in keeping with the highest orders of integrity, honesty, openness, and trustworthiness. The Code of Ethics then contains certain stated practices to help achieve these high standards. Second, Aurora Prep utilizes a comprehensive Conflict of Interest Policy to safeguard the integrity, reputation, and interests of Aurora Prep by

fostering proper and unbiased conduct. In addition, the Conflict of Interest Policy serves to educate Directors, officers, and staff about situations that generate conflicts of interest, to provide a means for Directors, officers, and staff to disclose and manage conflicts of interest, and to promote the best interests of the organization. Specifically, the Conflict of Interest Policy addresses situations in which a Director, officer, or employee (or a family member of close relation of a Director, officer, or employee) could obtain some advantage--personal, professional, financial, or otherwise--from Aurora Prep. The Policy involves: annual and ongoing disclosure of any actual or potential conflicts of interest for Director, officers, and staff; bidding guidelines for qualifying transactions; independent review and approval of any conflict of interest transaction; abstention and recusal of any interested parties during final decision making; recordkeeping obligations to ensure that these processes are followed and documented; and an absolute requirement of ultimate fairness and that the transaction be in the best interest of the organization.

Currently the only potential conflict of interest derives from the fact that Faith Stilley, Aurora Prep's Treasurer, is currently employed by Southern Bank and Trust Co., and it is possible that Aurora Prep could open a depository account with this bank. Legal advice has been sought and the board was advised that a deposit relationship of the type indicated would not constitute a conflict of interest.

Finally, Aurora Prep has adopted an Anti-Nepotism Policy to prevent both actual and perceived conflicts. Aurora Prep recognizes that the employment of immediate family members can cause various problems including but not limited to charges of favoritism, conflicts of interest, family discord and scheduling conflicts that may work to the disadvantage of Aurora Prep. In order to avoid creating or maintaining circumstances in which there could be conflicts of interest, the appearance or possibility of favoritism, or management disruptions, the Anti-Nepotism Policy requires that, among other prohibitions, no voting member of the Board of Directors shall be an employee of Aurora Prep or an employee of a for profit organization that provides substantial services to the school for a fee. Many additional guidelines are included in the policy to ensure that such situations are avoided.

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

Aurora Prep is a mission-driven organization, and all efforts of its Board of Directors and the personnel of the school they govern shall further this mission and be consistent with Aurora Prep's tax exempt purposes. All of Aurora Prep's operations and policies shall support that mission, and policy development and implementation shall take place at many levels with many constituents involved.

Beyond full board oversight and responsibility, much of the work of policy development and ongoing review of policies will take place in board committees. First and foremost, the Strategic Planning Committee will inform the process of policy development and review policies in light of its assessment of progress toward Aurora Prep's mission. Several other committees will work in collaboration with the Strategic Planning Committee in developing subject-specific policies, namely: the Finance Committee will help develop policies related to budget, fundraising, and expenditures of the school to ensure compliance and best practices. The Human Resources Committee will help with developing policies related to personnel, grievances, discipline, community involvement, and generally creating a healthy learning environment. The Operations Committee will help to develop

policies related to technology, to ensure the organization can meet its administrative functions efficiently and its teachers can maximize the effectiveness of their instruction; facilities, to ensure that the school's grounds, building, and equipment provide a safe environment conducive to teaching and learning; food, to ensure that nutritional needs are met to allow students optimal opportunities to learn and grow; and transportation, to ensure safe transit to and from school and school-sponsored activities.

While all final policies are reviewed by the full Board and voted upon by the full Board, in addition to the input of the board committees, the Head of School and key staff will be asked to provide information and input on policy development as appropriate. The Board will ensure that policies adhere to key values and the mission, and the school leadership will ensure that the policies are operationalized as the Board envisions they should. Finally, the Board will seek the advice of outside counsel (legal, CPA, etc.) and community representatives whenever appropriate and possible.

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

In an effort to utilize digital-age communication to its fullest, Aurora Prep will look to all stakeholders for advice and counsel. The school website will offer a contact form for all communications from community members to the Head of School. From time to time the Head of School or other staff will post a video on the website, explaining a current situation at Aurora Prep or changes to be made, for example, and asking for input, encouraging all stakeholders to express their opinion. We feel that the school leadership will receive a much wider sample of opinion with this "crowd sourcing" technique than by appointing a smaller formal advisory body.

The Board will maintain a listserv of key supporters who have indicated they are interested and willing to share advice from time to time. This gives the board the means to solicit a broad sampling of opinion in a timely manner when needed; but there is no formal organization to appear on the Organization Chart.

The Head of School will encourage the formation of a group of volunteers willing to help the school with various tasks when needed. The group could solicit members from among students, parents, staff, community supporters, and board directors. Funds from a membership donation could perhaps be used to offset the cost of providing a monthly school dinner for parents to attend, a sequence of events that Aurora Prep envisions as a good way to strengthen the bond with parents. This informal organization will be under the guidance of the Head of School.

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

Parent complaints or disagreements with any parties at Aurora Prep will be addressed in a timely and consistent manner. At Aurora Prep we strive to maintain a culture of civility in all aspects, and especially in the context of dispute resolution. The guiding principle is that disagreements should be solved whenever possible among the people most closely involved, while preserving positive relationships. Therefore we set out the following guidelines:

1. For a complaint about a situation in the classroom, parents should seek to resolve the issue with the appropriate classroom teacher or teacher assistant.

2. If a resolution with the teacher or assistant is not possible, or if the complaint is with a school-wide policy or procedure, the parent should seek to resolve the issue with the Head of School.

Complaints should be made in writing. The Head of School will reply within 48 hours to set up an appointment to address the matter.

3. If resolution is not possible with the Head of School, parents should address a complaint to the Board of Directors as follows:

a. Complaints should be made in writing.

b. The Board of Directors in general will not address a complaint based on hearsay or made on behalf of another parent or family.

c. The Board of Directors, in general, will not address a complaint if resolution with the appropriate individuals in items 1 and 2 has not yet been attempted in good faith.

d. The Board of Directors reserves the right not to address a complaint that is made anonymously.

e. The Board of Directors, in general, will not address specific complaints about the performance of individual school employees in a public meeting. If such a complaint is brought at a public meeting, the Board will take the complaint under advisement and will provide an appropriate response at a later time.

f. The Boards of Directors reserves the right to notify individual school employees about complaints brought against them. Parents may request that they are not personally identified as the party bringing the complaint.

g. The Board of Directors will discuss said grievance in closed session and respond to said complaint via a written letter. This will occur within 30 days of receiving said grievance.

4. If a parent complaint is not addressed to the satisfaction of the people involved, parents have the right to seek resolution through the NC DPI. (Address will be supplied.)

5. This Grievance Policy is not designed to supersede or supplant federal law and parent rights under the most current versions of IDEA and FERPA.

The policy for a grievance of a staff member is analogous. That policy is included in full in the Employee Handbook and is given in full in the answer to a staff grievance question below.

### 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 from the NC Department of the Secretary of State. (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**

**Charter School Replication:** *complete ONLY if the proposed charter is a replication of an existing charter school. Otherwise, mark "Not 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:**

Outline below, 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.

Here is a list of positions for the opening year, to correspond to our projected enrollment of 120.

- 1 Head of School (Principal) (full-time)
- 1 School Counselor (part-time initially and full-time in Year 3)
- 1 EC Teacher (full-time) adding 2nd EC Teacher in Year 4.
- 1 Kindergarten Teacher (full-time)
- 2 Elementary Teachers (full-time)
- 2 Middle School Teachers (full-time)
- 4 High School Teachers (full-time)
- 1 Receptionist/Data Coordinator (full-time)
- 4 Assistant Teachers /Bus Drivers) (full-time)
- 1 Resource Teacher (Music/Art)

**Staffing Plans, Hiring, and Management**

Include the following information for the proposed charter school:

We will utilize an extensive network of innovative teacher contacts, a strong partnership with ECU's School of Education as well as leverage organizations like Teach for America. Careful attention will be given to instructional staff that possess strong technology skills and will bring innovative teaching practices to our school. The public searches will identify teachers who are committed to our focus of a peaceful school, high academic achievement, and collaborative participation. It is the commitment of the Board to hire teachers as educational leaders in the classroom who are creative professional problem-solvers who make sound decisions based on

best practices and current research and have opportunities to grow as professionals. Aurora Prep will also make use of the following options:

1. Pay using the state salary scale, with supplements given when the budget allows.
2. Offer in house professional development guaranteed to meet licensure requirements.
3. Offer health and retirement benefits.
4. Frequent surveying of staff for input regarding the school and ways to improve instruction and services. Give teachers a voice in shaping the growth and direction of the school.
5. Small class sizes and instructional aides at all grade levels.
6. Pay for masters degree and antional board certification.

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

The final vote on hiring and dismissal lies with the Board and thus all staff are employees of the Board. The Board sets the policies under which an employee works, which are published in the Aurora Prep Employee Handbook, a copy of which is available on the school website and provided to each employee, and the understanding and receipt of which must be acknowledged by a signature from the employee (and a draft of which is provided in Appendix O).

The most basic policy defining the relationship between the employees and the Board is that of nondiscrimination. Aurora Prep School is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate against any applicant or employee on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, veteran status, disability, genetic information or other legally protected status, except where it is an occupational qualification. This policy extends to all terms, conditions and privileges of employment as well as the use of the schools facilities and participation in all activities sponsored by the school. Another important policy defining the relationship between employees and the nonprofit board is that Aurora Prep is an at-will employer. The employee is free to terminate the employment relationship with the School at any time; the School, in its sole discretion, also reserves the right to modify or terminate the employment relationship with the employee for any or no reason at any time.

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

The procedure at Aurora Prep for hiring personnel starts with the Human Resources Committee of the Board and the Head of School working collaboratively to provide a job description and salary range for the employee position to be filled. The Head of School will conduct the search for candidates filling the description and within the allowed salary range. The Head of School will narrow the search results through an initial phone screening conversation; an onsite interview that includes a demonstration by the candidate of the required skills, where applicable; and a final conversation. Information on the best candidates is then sent to the Board Human Resources Committee, who will conduct a check of professional references, a criminal background check and a review of citizenship or eligible status. The Head of School will then bring the two best candidates to the full Board for interviews and a final decision. Personnel can be hired conditionally before the background checks are completed, pending the

results of the checks. Throughout the process a rubric will be used to give consistency and fairness to the evaluations. With regard to the criminal background check, all applicants for employment and any current employee will be required to submit to fingerprinting as part of the background check process. The refusal to consent to a criminal records check or fingerprinting will result in the applicant not being offered employment, or the employee's employment will be terminated, as applicable. A violation of Aurora Prep employee policy can lead to dismissal. Staff can also be dismissed for unsatisfactory job performance; in this case, the Head of School will make every effort to resolve the issues prior to dismissal. If unable to resolve the issues, the Head of School will recommend dismissal to the Board and the full Board will vote on the matter.

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

Aurora Prep will use the North Carolina State Salary Schedule as a baseline for all levels of employment. Aurora Prep will offer a private Health Insurance and a 3% matching retirement benefit in all years for all full-time employees.

Proposed Salary Ranges:

Teachers (to include EC and Specialty teachers) (\$40,000 - \$50,000)

Administrator (\$60,000 - \$70,000)

Teacher Assistants (\$24,000 - \$30,000)

Clerical (\$24,000 - \$29,000)

Guidance Counselor (\$40,000 - \$50,000)

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

It is expected that any employee with an issue should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with their supervisor. If an employee feels that their issue is still a concern after speaking to their supervisor and that the issue has risen to the level of a grievance then the employee may initiate the grievance procedures as described below. A grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by an employee that states that a specific action has violated a school policy, board policy, or law or regulation, and includes whistleblower complaints. A grievance does not include claims of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. Step 1: The employee must submit a letter in writing stating the School policy, board policy or law or regulation that was violated including details of the actions and the place, date and time of the violation. The written letter should be submitted to the Head of School or if the Head of School is implicated in the grievance, then to the Chair of the Board of Directors. Step 2: The Head of School will have up to five (5) School days to respond to the grievance in writing. Step 3: If the employee is not satisfied with the response from the Head of School, the employee may file an appeal by submitting a letter to the Board of Directors. Step 4: The Chair of the Board of Directors will review it and if the grievance of appeal is proper, it will be heard at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The decision of the board will be communicated to the individual within 7 days. The Board's decision concerning the grievance or appeal is final.

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

The Assistant Teachers will have a dual role, as they will also serve as bus drivers. State and local funding will be used for both positions.

*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.*

Our instructional method is based on the possibility that each student in a classroom is working on his or her own lesson sequence, specially planned to accommodate individual needs. This should greatly simplify the integration of special needs students into the regular academic environment. The percentage of special needs students for Beaufort County Schools as a whole, calculated from a December 2014 count is roughly

12.5%. For our projected opening enrollment of 120 students, we would expect roughly 15 special needs students. One EC teacher could be expected to handle this caseload in our classroom situation. If the special needs population that is enrolled is higher than expected, we would be prepared to contract for additional qualified personnel immediately. The EC teacher we hire may well be qualified to help gifted students as well, but all teachers will be familiar with the challenging resources suited to AIG students.

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).*

The Head of School must pursue the vision and execute the mission of the school, provide leadership and direction to the staff, supervise and observe all instructional practices in the school, hire, evaluate, and terminate staff, administer scheduling, enrollment and curriculum, serve as liaison to the Board, preparing data and materials for board meetings; implement and follow policies and procedures; ensure proper budgeting, accounting and financial planning, and provide a safe environment for learning. The qualifications include a BA or BS degree or graduate degree; administrative certification a plus (but not mandatory); have demonstrated successful leadership in a senior administrative position in a public or private school preferably working with a board; Agreement with and commitment to the academic goals and philosophy of Aurora Prep; exhibited leadership working with professional staff, students, and the community; commitment to accountability, including a rigorous student testing regime; experience with data management and presentation; demonstrated success in encouraging parental involvement.

The Special Education Coordinator and Teacher is responsible for providing direct and indirect instruction; planning and addressing individual needs of students; evaluating students progress; providing an exciting, innovative learning environment; preparing written reports accurately and submitting them in a timely manner; effectively communicating and consulting with teachers, parents, and administrators to facilitate the IEP process; remaining current on regulations in special education law; maintaining privacy of student records and information ; and serving as primary liaison with CSE of students district of residence. We would look for these qualifications: appropriate state certification as a special education teacher and any other credentialing required and applicable; demonstrated ability to communicate and work effectively with parents; demonstrated ability to adapt to individuals specific needs.

All our Teachers should be prepared to maintain and enrich their expertise in the subject area they will teach; address individual needs of students in developing sequences of digital lesson plans that ensure the attainment of state learning standards and the additional specific grade-by-grade learning standards set forth in the charter; provide direct and indirect

instruction; evaluate students progress; prepare at least quarterly individual student achievement reports for parents; provide an inviting, innovative, learning environment; engage in effective and appropriate classroom management; accept and incorporate feedback and coaching from administrative staff; serve as an advisor to a students, including organizing advisory groups, overseeing the academic and behavioral progress; perform other duties, as deemed appropriate, by the principal. We would look for evidence of demonstrated expertise in the subject they will teach, as evidenced by personal skills and knowledge, an undergraduate major or minor or graduate degree in the subject they will teach, or direct subject-area teaching experience; possession of any required state teaching certification and meet any other applicable credentialing requirements including the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended; demonstrated communication skills; demonstrated ability and experience to engage the interest of school-age children; demonstrated ability to work with diverse children, including those with special needs; teaching experience in a public or private school; demonstrated ability to work well with parents; demonstrated ability to work effectively as a team member; demonstrated ability to evaluate tests and measurements of achievement; and demonstrated willingness to be held accountable for student results.

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

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

Each individual teacher and administrator is responsible for being aware of when his or her license is set to expire. The Head of School will be responsible for paperwork for Licensure and validating the CEUs earned.

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.*

If a teacher that is hired is in the first 3 years of her career, that teacher is considered a Beginning Teacher or BT. Every BT must be assigned a mentor. Arrangements will be made with the regional coordinator to ensure that experienced veteran teachers will receive mentor training. Mentors and mentees will meet monthly and document their meetings and report monthly to the Head of School. The Head of School will hold monthly mentor/mentee meetings to discuss topics that arise from the monthly meetings. The mentor will observe the BT at least once during the year. The Head of School will observe and evaluate the BT 3 times during the school year. These observations and evaluations will be documented using the NC Educator Evaluation System (NCEES). At the end of Year 3, BTs, if successful, will be recommended for a Standard II License and begin acquiring CEUs for license renewal every 5 years.

All teachers will utilize the NCEES for observations and evaluations to ensure every staff member is growing professionally. These observations often lead to recommendations of professional development opportunities. With the goal of professional growth, we want to ensure all staff members feel valued as professionals and empowered to become the very best educators possible.

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.*

Initial professional development will revolve around the blended learning model and ensuring that teachers understand the roles and responsibilities. There will also be a strong focus on data analysis and how to use data to inform decision making. These are core components of the school. The Peaceful Schools curriculum will also be part of professional development and plans are in place to deliver that instruction. The goal is to establish an inhouse trainer for Peaceful Schools so new staff members can be trained and existing staff members can receive periodic refresher training. Specific days have been built into the calendar at the beginning of the school year to deliver this initial staff development. Other professional development will be delivered as e-learning (electronically). A theme we want to develop is that everyone does not need the same training. Just as students come to school with differing levels of ability, so do teachers. We want to assess what teachers know and then provide growth opportunities.

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.*

The calendar has been created to allow for 10 days prior to the opening of school. That first week is focused solely on professional development:

Monday, 8/14: (a) Introduction to the school, review of handbooks, expectations, policies and procedures. (b) Peaceful Schools training begins.

Tuesday 8/15: (a) Peaceful Schools training continues.

Wednesday, 8/16: (a) Blended Learning training (b) Lesson creation and sharing (c) Examples of blended learning environments.

Thursday 8/17: (a) Blended Learning training; (b) Data (sharing what will be available); (c) MAP (Measuring Academic Progress) introduction and training.

Friday 8/18: (a) MAP training; (b) Mentor/Mentee work; (c) Discussion of NCEES and how to use it. This provides an introduction to the core items that will be utilized throughout the school (Blended Learning model, Peaceful Schools, and consistent data analysis).

During the 2nd week before school opens, teachers can receive targeted professional development through online professional learning communities that will be developed by our school. This will allow teachers a week to get classrooms prepared, lesson plans aligned prior to students' first day.

There will be follow-up sessions throughout the year at after-school meetings. Data meetings will be held weekly with teachers during planning times to continue to analyze results and make instructional decisions.

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.

There will be many opportunities for professional development throughout the year: (a) A 5-day training session at 7 hours per day, August 14-18, 35 hours; (b) Monthly after school meetings, 10 months at one hour, 10 hours; (c) Monthly mentor/mentee meetings, 10 months at one hour, 10 hours; (d) Weekly data meetings, 37 weeks at 30 minutes, 18.5 hours; (e) Digital professional development, length and times vary.

As evidenced, teachers will easily surpass the required hours for license renewal. BTs will be given training and support and all staff members will have opportunities to grow as professionals in a caring environment. Daily planning periods and monthly after school meetings provide time to accommodate trainings and the calendar was built specifically to provide

professional development for teachers. A small staff allows for these trainings to be conducted less formally within a culture of collaboration and a willingness to share ideas.

## **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.218.45(a-i) carefully.

### **Marketing Plan**

*Marketing to potential students and parents is vital to the survival of a charter school. Provide a plan indicating how the school will market to potential students and parents in order to reasonably reflect the racial/ethnic and demographic composition of the district in which the charter school will be located or of the special population the school seeks to serve: (G.S.115C-218.45(e)).*

Once our application is approved, we will begin to broaden support for the school among parents and with the community as a whole. Our plan is designed to achieve two crucial objectives: first, to raise the knowledge level within the community of what a charter school is, how it operates and what it will mean to the community; and second, to recruit a student body for our school that reflects the community's racial composition and its economic segments from poor to upper income.

**Building a Database:** Our first step will be to build a comprehensive database of parents who are prospects for enrolling a child at our charter school and other school supporters.

**Sending a Newsletter:** A monthly newsletter will be produced and sent to the schools contact universe. Content will include interesting information about Aurora Prep, profiles on students and teachers, an on-going school calendar. In the application phase, it has become very clear that the community is starved for news. It has no media of its own and receives very little coverage in media from adjoining counties. We expect to produce the kind of content for this newsletter that will help to create a sense of community for all its citizens.

**Our Mailer Campaign:**

According to post office data, Richland Township has 2,192 households and businesses centered in three communities: Aurora: 1,256; Blounts Creek: 836; and Edward: 102. We will prepare a series of what the post office calls an "Every Door Direct Mail" and send them as the first element of our marketing campaign. At 18.3 cents per piece mailed, this is a very low-cost way to reach every household in the township. The content of our mailers will present basic messages about the charter school and urge recipients to visit Aurora Preps website and read in-depth articles about the school.

**Our Website Videos Campaign:**

We will launch a highly interactive, attractive and informative website at the outset of the campaign.

The website will present three to five-minute videos (which we can produce

"in-house") featuring the commentary of teachers, students, administrators and community leaders all of the schools stakeholders. Viewers will be urged to respond with their views and comments.

**Our Phone Bank Campaign:**

One night following delivery of each "Every Door" mailing, a phone bank manned by volunteer supporters of the school will call approximately twenty percent of the households in the township. We will reach every household after mailing and calling for five consecutive weeks.

**Our Second Round of Calls:**

Once the phone bank has compiled a comprehensive list of households with school-age children, a second round of calls will be initiated to invite parents to participate in small group meetings with school personnel to determine if the charter school is the right place to send their child.

**Church Presentation Campaign:**

Churches represent a very strong center of community life in Richland Township. We will arrange for presentations at approximately twelve churches to explain the goals of the school and its approach. Most of these will be in a question and answer format. We will work hard to gain their trust and confidence.

**Our Goal:**

Our goal is to recruit at least 120 students for the school year beginning in August, 2017. By casting a wide net, and by emphasizing person-to-person communication, we believe we will not only attract the students we need, but also get their parents personally involved with the school. We see parental involvement as one of the most important keys to a successful school experience for our students.

**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.*

Aurora has conducted several community meetings as well as visited local churches. In addition, we have continued to place ads in the paper and relied on local community members using direct networking to communicate with parents.

Once we receive our charter, we will formally contact families through a variety of outlets to inform them about our school, the enrollment process, and how they can become involved. These outlets will include: newspaper, television, billboards, flyer distribution at churches and civic organization, and other paid media options. In addition, parents in the community surrounding the location of our school will receive invitations to participate in parent informational meetings and "meet-and-greets" with the Executive Director and Board members.

A monthly blog/newsletter, school website, and a school Facebook page will keep interested families connected to the happenings of the school as we

prepare to open. Social media sites will be an additional tool to assist us as we form connections between the school and parents.

Parental involvement will come through various volunteer opportunities, parent/student outings such as field trips and social events such as festivals at the school. The school will also establish a strong Parent Teacher Organization that will lead in fostering parent involvement.

Additional ideas will include:

Fall Barbeque:

After the start of school, Aurora Prep will sponsor a barbeque or picnic for the families of enrolled students and those on the waiting list. The emphasis at this event will be strongly oriented to fellowship. It will be held at a scenic location on the water near Aurora. This event will engage parents and create goodwill toward the school.

Monthly Parent Suppers:

Once a month we will have a catered supper for all Aurora Prep families. We may have the Peaceful Schools NC training staff give their workshops aimed at parents at several of these suppers, to help them understand and support the culture of civility Aurora Prep is intent on creating.

## **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.*

Any child who is qualified under the laws of the State for admission to a public school is qualified for admission to a charter school. Following Charter Law, Aurora Prep will not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability. Aurora Prep will open the application submission window, based upon final SBE approval of the charter, on or about February 1, 2017 and will close applications on the first Monday in March--March 6, 2017--holding an open, public lottery on the last Tuesday in March--March 28, 2017--if needed. Notices of the application period will be published, posted and advertised as per NCGS 143-318.12. The lottery will be conducted in a public forum. Each student must complete an application to be placed in the admissions lottery. The application packet will consist of, but may not be limited to, the following items: a personal application form that gives name, address of residence, parents name and address, birthday, present

school, and grade attending. The student application form must be completed and submitted by parent or legal guardian by due date.

Process for Admission:

1. Completion and submission of student application form by parent or legal guardian by due date.
  2. Applications will be reviewed for completeness. Lottery cards will be assigned to each applicant.
  3. The timing of the lottery will be aligned with other area charter and private school application dates. The lottery will be conducted by a volunteer unaffiliated with the school or board. Applicants will receive confirmation of being in the lottery, the date, time and place. All lottery names will be placed in a large container and the volunteer(s) will draw cards from the container. This will be a public lottery and openings will be filled in each grade and class in the order drawn.
  4. A numbered waiting list for each grade level may be established to fill slots that become available at a later date during the academic year.
- Children of current faculty members are exempt from the lottery, provided their number does not exceed the number of available seats in a given grade. Children of the Board of Directors are exempt from the lottery in the opening year only, so long as (i) these children are limited to no more than ten percent (10%) of the school's total enrollment or to 20 students, whichever is less, and (ii) the charter school is not a former public or private school. If multiple birth siblings apply for admission and a lottery is needed under G.S. 115C-238.29F(g)(6), Aurora Prep shall enter one surname into the lottery to represent all of the multiple birth siblings. If that surname of the multiple birth siblings is selected, then all of the multiple birth siblings shall be admitted. During the lottery, a numbered waiting list for each grade level may be established to fill slots that become available at a later date during the academic year. Students/families requesting transfertoanother educational institution, for reasons of discipline or personal preference, will be processed immediately upon written request to the Head of School, and records will be sent to the transferring institution as soon as possible and/or within 48 hours.

**PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2017-18 through 2021-2022**

IDENTIFY LEA FROM WHICH STUDENTS WILL PROBABLY COME

LEA #1 Beaufort County Schools  
 LEA #2  
 LEA #3

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

	2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021			2021-2022		
	LEA 070	LEA 000	LEA 000	LEA 070	LEA 000	LEA 000	LEA 070	LEA 000	LEA 000	LEA 070	LEA 000	LEA 000	LEA 070	LEA 000	LEA 000
	120			140			160			180			200		

## V. OPERATIONS

### **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.*

Aurora Prep will ensure that no child is denied access to the school due to lack of transportation. The population density of southeastern Beaufort County is low, and we anticipate our students will be spread out over a large area; thus providing transportation is key to our enrollment strategy. Once enrollments are finalized, we will map the residence locations of our students, showing estimated travel time from home to Aurora Prep (see sample map in Appendix U). We will see if carpooling is feasible for some families, using our map to suggest groupings of families and perhaps offering gas cards to offset driving expenses. We are budgeting for three school buses, with assistant teachers having a dual role of instructional assistance and bus driving. All bus drivers and students will receive training from the Peaceful Schools program to establish a good environment during travel for all students.

### **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.*

Aurora Prep intends to offer free breakfast and lunch (and an afternoon snack) as an important component of our healthy learning environment. The local school is 78.9% FRL currently; thus we anticipate being a Title I school that qualifies for the FRL program. The School will contract with Preferred Meals, Inc. to provide the hot meals (breakfast and lunch) as well as an afternoon snack. Preferred Meals will ship meals to us and provide all heating equipment and training for storage, quality assurance, etc. Their company handles all the paperwork to get the reimbursement from the FRL program, while keeping prices within the reimbursement limits. We will maintain a small food budget to cover meal expenses for children who cannot afford lunches/snacks. Students who do not qualify for FRL will be expected to pay the fee for lunches or bring their own lunch.

### **Civil Liability and Insurance (GS 115C-218.20):**

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	\$2,000,000		\$1,788.00
Officers and Directors/Errors and Omissions	\$1,000,000		\$1,010.00
Property Insurance	\$5,000,000		\$2,300.00
Motor Vehicle Liability	\$1,000,000		\$4,000.00
Bonding Minimum/Maximum Amount	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$465.00
Other	\$250,000		\$450.00
Total Cost			\$10,013.00

\*The applicant must provide a quote from an insurance provider as part of this application (as Appendix P) 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 § 115C218.75.

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.

vivianrlamb 09/25/2015

(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 Q).

To this point we are exploring three options for a facility. Our first option will be the purchase of an existing building on land near the center of town--a large metal structure on a few acres. The size (about 9,000 sq ft) and location of the building and the low cost of remodeling to qualify for a Certificate of Educational Occupancy make it a feasible solution. To date we cannot consider buying the building until we are in our planning year, and the present owner currently will not guarantee it will still be on the market at that point, but will give us priority until March 2016.

The second option is to rent the education hall and classrooms of a church in Aurora. The local church leaders are willing because the current congregation numbers are very small and that option would help them maintain the building. But the final decision must be made at the state level of the church administration and has not been finalized yet.

The third option involves leasing a few acres of agricultural land and putting modular buildings on it. There is a lot of agricultural land within the town limits that has water and sewer running along the road in front of the acreage so that connection fees would not be large. We have talked to several land owners who would be willing to rent the land at a minimal price (see Appendix U for map and lease offer for one sample property). We have identified several pieces of property that would suit our needs and have consulted with several modular building specialists who work with charter schools frequently and gotten prices for various building configurations and setup costs. Our budget numbers reflect those estimates.

Please attach copies of Facilities Inspections as Appendix R.

*What is the breakdown of cost per square foot for the proposed facility? Outline how this cost is comparable to the commercial and educational spaces for the proposed school location.*

Not applicable. Aurora Prep has not decided on a facility yet.

**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.*

With the ready availability of reasonably priced land in the area, we have options for land leases and/or purchase. The following properties have been identified: <http://www.landwatch.com/Beaufort-County-North-Carolina-Land-for-sale/pid/322268546> and <http://www.landwatch.com/Beaufort-County-North-Carolina-Land-for-sale/pid/321392083>. We will purchase property and install modular as a contingency plan prior to a permanent building being constructed.

## VI. 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 2017-18**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LEA #1070 - Beaufort County Schools

Revenue	2015-2016 Per Pupil Funding	Projected LEA ADM	Approximate funding for 2017-2018
State Funds	\$4,860.80	120	\$583,296.00
Local Funds	\$1,734.00	120	\$208,080.00
Federal EC Funds	\$3,630.87	15	\$54,463.05
<b>Totals</b>			\$845,839.05

**Total Budget: Revenue Projections 2017-18 through 2021-2022**

<b>INCOME: REVENUE PROJECTIONS</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>

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

**Personnel Budget: Expenditure Projections 2017-18 through 2021-2022**

*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.*

BUDGET EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS Personnel	2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021			2021-2022		
	<i>Num Staff</i>	<i>Avg Salary</i>	<i>Total salary</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>Avg Salary</i>	<i>Total salary</i>									

**Operations Budget: Expenditure Projections 2017-18 through 2021-2022**

BUDGET OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022

**Overall Budget:**

<b>BUDGET OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>

**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.*

While the low population density of southeastern Beaufort County presents a challenge in contacting parents through networking, we had the most success in directing interested parents and other stakeholders to our survey on the Aurora Prep Facebook page through a targeted Facebook ad campaign in the last two months. Based on the survey results we gathered, and face to face contacts and conversations, we feel confident that we have a direct appeal to four main groups of families in the area. and can project the following enrollment. Aurora Prep can appeal to families with students now in the local LEA through our mission of academic excellence; to families with students now attending a charter or district school in an adjacent county through academic excellence at a local school (see Appendix U); for families with students currently in private schools inside and outside the county, we offer a small school personalized environment, but tuition free; and for families homeschooling their students we offer personalized instruction in a safe, orderly environment with the added socialization and emphasis on teamwork that is needed for jobs in the future. We project approximately 30 students from the local LEA whose parents are currently not satisfied with academic performance of their school(s) will attend, plus 60 of the over 100 students who are currently attending schools outside of the county, as well as 20 from homeschooled families, and 10 currently enrolled in private schools.

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

If anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated, Aurora Prep must pare any expenses considered nonessential for daily operation in order to cover the basic budget with those revenues. We will expand our grantwriting, our fundraising, and our donor base to cover the most important extras. Several board members and advisors working with the board have had high success in obtaining grants and philanthropic funding.

*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 working with Advantaged Capital for Education on financing our facilities and costs will be factored into the overall lease rate for the facility. The financing group will assume all responsibility for facility debt to include setup costs.*

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

The budget is built on a 20:1 ratio.

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

Aurora Prep will contract for exceptional children instructional support only if the EC student enrollment is well over the budget projection.

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

Aurora Prep's mission fundamentals are the peaceful environment, the high quality curriculum and personalized blended instruction that will lead students to academic success and college and career readiness. Our focus of putting funds directly into the classroom are realized through higher than average teacher salaries, technology resources and professional development for blended learning and peaceful schools training.

By hiring 4 teacher assistants our school can ensure greater teacher contact with students in primary grades - especially with students who may need additional remediation and/or time with mastery.

Our guidance counselor will provide key behavioral support for our Peaceful Schools program and will serve in a train-the-trainer model to ensure that all teachers are using the strategies in their classrooms.

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

The school expects to achieve a minimum 5% general fund balance for the first year. Subsequent years will see a minimum 7-1/2% general fund balance. A big factor in this expectation is that we won't have all the startup costs continued into the second year.

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

We are working with Advantaged Capital for Education on financing our facilities and costs will be factored into the overall lease rate for the facility. The financing group will assume all responsibility for facility debt to include setup costs.

- 6. 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.*

No, the budget does not include any assets from other sources.

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

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

The four basic functions of management are usually described as planning, organizing, directing, and controlling. Internal control is what we mean when we discuss the fourth function, controlling. Adequate internal controls allow managers to delegate responsibilities to subordinate staff and contractors with reasonable assurance that what they expect to happen, actually does.

Because charter schools vary in size, complexity, and degree of centralization, no single method of internal controls is universally applicable. Aurora Prep will develop an internal control systems, consistent with

our operations and mission. Internal control policy and procedures will be designed for:

1. Cash and revenue
2. Receivables
3. Payroll
4. Inventory
5. Fixed assets
6. Expenditures/Payables

In addition, Aurora Prep will assure the following are in place upon the granting of our charter:

- Policies and procedures that provide for appropriate segregation of duties to reduce the likelihood that deliberate fraud can occur
- Personnel qualified to perform their assigned responsibilities
- Sound practices to be followed by personnel in performing their duties and functions
- A system that ensures proper authorization and recordation procedures for financial transactions

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

Not applicable. We know of no such 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.*

Aurora Prep has chosen as its auditor Tom Robinson, who handled the financial certification of the board.

Tom Robinson, CPA  
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Washington, NC 27889  
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Fax: (252) 975-2840  
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