



## **NORTH CAROLINA CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION**

# **Ridgeview Charter school**

**Public charter schools opening the fall of 2018**

**Due 5:00 pm EST, September 19, 2016**

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 2018-2019 school year**

**APPLICATION DUE DATE/TIME**

**September 19, 2016** 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 19, 2016 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.
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: Ridgeview Charter school

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

Name of non-profit organization under which charter will be organized or operated: *Ridgeview Charter School*

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: *Reshall Lavonne Williams*

Title/Relationship to nonprofit: *Board Chair*

Mailing address: 15207 Gathering Court  
Charlotte NC 28278

Primary telephone: 980-208-7782 Alternative telephone: 908-230-7144

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

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

County: GASTON

LEA: 360-Gaston County Schools

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

No:

Yes:

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

No:

Yes:

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

No:

Yes:

Acceleration

Yes:

No:

What is the name of the nonprofit organization that governs this charter school? *Ridgeview Charter School*

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

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

Projected School Opening: Year 2018 Month August

Will this school operate on a year round schedule?

No:

Yes:

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

<b>Academic School Year</b>	<b>Grade Levels</b>	<b>Total Projected Student Enrollment</b>
First Year	K,01,02,03,04	345
Second Year	K,01,02,03,04,05	414
Third Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06	483
Fourth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07	552
Fifth Year	K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08	621

*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. Additionally, the board is aware that if this application is approved by the State Board of Education, the approval is contingent upon successful completion of such planning year.*

jaydub49  
*Signature*

Reshall Williams, Board Chair  
*Title*

jaydub49  
*Printed Name*

09/18/2016  
*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:*

Ridgeview Charter School provides a nurturing academic environment committed to achieving excellence. All students are challenged through rigorous instruction to provide a solid foundation of skills and knowledge.

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

It is our belief that with a nurturing academic environment, engaged faculty, high expectations and academic rigor every child has the potential to master the skills required to succeed in a challenging learning environment. With the international learning model, that serves as the framework for IB schools, blended with the NC Essential Standards and Common Core national standards, we believe our students will be prepared for college preparatory classes, college acceptance and college success.

### **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.*

RCS is committed to serving all students who are eligible to attend public school in North Carolina. RCS's marketing plan will focus on diversity with the end goal being a student body that is reflective of Gaston County.

The demographic makeup of Gaston County, according to the 2013 Census, is 75% white (only), 15.8% Black/AA, 6.2% Latino, 1.4% Asian, .5% Native American and 1.7% Multi Racial. The LEA's demographic makeup is very close with 62.4% White, 21% Black/AA, 10.9% Latino 3.9% Multi racial, 1.5% Asian and .3% Native American and Pacific Islander. Leading economic indicators strongly suggest the economy is gaining traction due to the outward growth of Charlotte, Gaston County's proximity to a major thoroughfare and recent outside investments that have been made in the area. Considering Gastonia's growth projections with the demand for a well educated, skilled labor force on the horizon it is remarkable to report that fewer than 20% of the residents hold a college degree. RCS wants to be instrumental in contributing to the number of residents who will earn college degrees. By offering a strong K-8 academic program, county residents will graduate with a solid academic foundation and the skills and knowledge to succeed in high school college preparatory classes, which can lead to college acceptance and graduation.

The need for high quality schools of choice is great in Gaston County. While Gaston County currently has two charter schools they spread between Gastonia and Mt. Island; there is a third option one county to the East in Lincolnton County. For families who live further than 15 miles from either school, transportation becomes an obstacle and for families who live within 15 miles of either school they have that one charter school choice and the wait list makes it difficult to successfully enroll.

RCS will offer Gaston County a high quality school of choice for any parent who wishes to place their child in a strong academic environment that celebrates diversity in race, culture, economics and gender. We will market and attract families who prioritize these values and who embrace gender specific classroom instruction in the middle school years.

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

The total projected enrollment at RCS will be 621 ADM in grades Kindergarten through eighth. We will open with 345 students, grades Kindergarten through fourth and will add a grade level each year until we add on the eighth grade. In order to maintain small class size we will establish class size at 23 students and enroll children until we meet that maximum, giving us 69 students per grade level over the next five years.

RCS's first year projection of 345 ADM represents a K-4 student body. When compared to Gaston County's 2015-2016 enrollment of 14,499 ADM for K-5 students we anticipate RCS will effect the LEA's ADM by 2.5%. The second year RCS's enrollment projection is 414 ADM and represents a K-5 student body. When comparing RCS's K-5 to the LEA's K-5 (using the same 2015 numbers) our percentage of students is less than 3% of the total number of K-5 students Gaston County enrolled in the 2015/16 school year.

Year three we will open with our sixth grade and by year five our projected enrollment for the middle school program is 207 ADM. Using the most current enrollment data from Gaston County's 2015/2016 enrollment numbers, the total number of students enrolled grades 6-8 was 7,030 ADM. RCS's total middle school enrollment is 3% that of Gaston county's middle school enrollment.

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

The heart of Ridgeview Charter School's education plan will be the blending of Common Core State and Essential Standards with the International Curriculum. This education plan is a sequential, rigorous, and comprehensive program from kindergarten through middle school. The result of aligning the International Curriculum (IC) to North Carolina's Common Core and Essential State standards, is that it fills the International Baccalaureate niche for the county that was closed years ago. Currently there is no IB school in Gaston County and although we have no current goal that suggests we will become a certified IB program, we are offering the curriculum that is used in IB schools.

Another difference between RCS and the LEA is our commitment to our core values; 1). Distributive Leadership: RCS believes in providing leadership opportunities to all its constituents; students and staff. Students have the opportunity for leading their learning unit during the multi-level process used in the instructional model. This allows synthesis and creative expression of knowledge at the highest cognitive level. 2). Personal accountability and investment. In effort to meet individual academic needs, RCS students will maintain a personal file monitoring their own successes and challenges that will be reflected upon during regularly scheduled student-teacher conferences. 3). International Mindedness. RCS will offer opportunities for students to engage with the outside world and develop the skill set for students to interact with various cultures and communities. 4). Psycho-Social Development. RCS staff will be trained to teach students in a manner that is brain based and developmentally appropriate. 5). RCS believes it must stay current on technological and instructional information while mastering the fundamentals of education, thus preparing students for academic excellence.

RCS is also unique to Gastonia by offering its middle school students gender based classroom instruction during their core classes. Students will have the opportunity to engage in co-education during the entire elementary years; and during electives, lunch and building wide programs in middle school. We believe that the developmental phase of the middle school student demands a different approach that will minimize the distractions to learning that come with this pre-adolescent stage called "group identity vs. alienation".

According to Piaget (Newman & Newman, 1995), "a student's priority at this time is the development of friendships, particularly with same sex peers, in order to form a dyadic friendship with mutuality of power, status and the sharing of intimate information". Student centered classrooms is a direct application of this theory and by offering gender based classrooms during core instruction RCS is putting the needs of the student first in order to reach its mission of nurturing students and academic excellence.

Finally, while many schools and educational programs prescribe to the STEAM or STEM model, RCS does not market itself as such because our learning model adapts to every subject and is comparable to successful STEAM and STEM programs. We choose not to adopt a STEAM or STEM label to maintain a level of flexibility and autonomy that will allow us to build a strong academic program in all areas without the putting on a label.

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.*

1.RCS is committed to the professional development of its teaching staff and, by following a Distributive Leadership Model, will create leadership opportunities for teachers to own the learning program. Teachers will be encouraged to participate in webinars, courses, partnerships and conferences offered through the NCDPI. RCS will create a safe culture that encourages dialogue, coaching and model teaching as teachers work toward mastery of their craft. Teachers will receive ongoing formal and informal feedback from administration on instruction and student performance. In addition, the International Curriculum provides assessments for teacher performance with each unit. The teacher assessment gives feedback on teacher's mastery of a topic taught and the effectiveness of their instruction. This data will be used when meeting with their mentor, grade level meetings and when writing PD goals with the Lead Administrator. As teacher effectiveness and mastery grows, leadership opportunities will be offered such as Lead Teacher, Dean, committee work, and other administrative duties. As an organization, all staff will be evaluated on a merit based system where tenure does not guarantee raises, position or promotion rather effectiveness, mastery and community investment will impact one's success and longevity as a teacher for RCS.RCS will provide a nurturing environment for all.

5.In effort to build a solid foundation of skills and knowledge RCS will provide remediation and enrichment opportunities to create a successful learning environment for each student, particularly at-risk and AIG students. Through our continued assessment process, teachers receive regular feedback on student performance to help guide instruction. If the performance of students in a grade level or as a whole school is very low RCS will institute a protected intervention time for reading and/or math. This protected time is "all hands on deck" for instructional and administrative staff and will target gaps in learning for the "at risk" and extension for AIG. This protected time demands no class or building interruptions such as non emergency announcements or activities. Additionally, students who are "at risk" or AIG, can qualify for an after school tutoring time that will take place Tuesday - Thursday for one hour per day. An extreme effort for at risk students will require them to not participate in electives, a quarter at a time, until improvement or the decision to stop has been made by staff.

In addition to the remediation and enrichment opportunities RCS has gender based classrooms during core subject instruction for grades 6-8. Middle

school students will experience coed instruction during electives, recess etc., however, we contend that the importance of core instruction requires us to remove any distractions that may interfere with performance, providing additional support of our "at risk" and AIG students. According to Educational Psychologist, Robert Havighurst (Newman & Newman, 1995), the stage of development that middle school students (pre-adolescents) experience preoccupies them with peer pressure, i.e. group identity vs. alienation. This psycho-social theory is an important component to understanding early adolescent relationship building, self esteem and self image; this particular peer pressure has tremendous impact on student behavior and academic performance. By offering gender based core instruction one more obstacle has been removed for the "at risk" student.

Academic committees including the MTSS and AIG committees, for at risk and gifted students, will work collaboratively with teachers, EC staff, intervention specialists and parents to create a culture of individualized and collective achievement that is research and brain based and developmentally appropriate. Committees will coordinate academic programs such as science and math olympiad, author's corner, artist guild, study skills and organization and leveled book clubs.

### **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.*

RCS's Board of Directors has created performance and metric goals that were developed to demonstrate overall organizational success. Success in the four key areas required by the state are: operational, academic, finance and governance. The Lead Administrator will submit updated reports at board meetings that include educational, enrollment, personnel, budget, technology, facility and other items affecting operations. RCS Board will undergo an annual audit by a third party that will thoroughly report on its academic, financial, operational and governance status. This report will be submitted to the state and any other entity required under its charter. In addition, RCS will publish an annual report to parents in June of each year highlighting the school's accomplishments, honoring individual achievement, recognizing volunteers, and providing an outlook for future years. Lastly, the Board of Directors will create and adopt a 5-year strategic plan by the end of the first year of operation. RCS Board of Directors has developed the following SMART goals:

#### 1. Operations:

Specific: Enrollment, food, transportation, furnished facility, supplies and an updated website are secured before opening day of school each year.

Measurable: Goals, planning and timelines are measured for continuous improvement

Attainable: Targeted marketing and effective project management will ensure success.

Relevant: Students must be present and equipped to fulfill our mission.

Time Bound: Goals must be reached before school begins each year and must be maintained during the course of the year.

2. Academic Growth: RCS students will show academic growth at the end of each academic year.

Specific: 2018-19 year one will not have a baseline; students will meet or exceed the proficiency level of similar schools in the area. Years 2-5 students will meet or exceed level 3 on the EOG/EOC assessments in the areas of math, reading, science and social studies. By year 5 90% of students will meet this goal.

Measurable: After year one RCS will show a 10% decrease in the percentage of students scoring levels 1 or 2 on the EOG/EOC assessments.

Attainable: RCS's commitment to adequate resources and qualified teachers provides a solid foundation to reach this goal.

Relevant: This goal supports our mission's promise to provide rigorous instruction.

Time Bound: After the first year RCS will have its baseline for student performance at which time, and every year thereafter, goals will be analyzed and strategies revised during the annual strategic plan meeting.

3. Finance: Each year RCS will demonstrate integrity in fiscal management

Specific: Internal and external control systems to protect RCS's finances and assets will be part of the accounting system. Financial reports will be submitted to all external entities as required. A certified public accountant will be hired for the annual fiscal audit.

Measurable: Financial goals will be measured by our end of year compliance and budget summary

Attainable: RCS is willing to amend the budget to honor its mission and the Lead Administrator will provide monthly reports to the Board to stay proactive.

Relevant: RCS's sustainability as a charter is dependent upon its fiscal management of public funds.

Time Bound: In addition to Board and state reports being submitted timely, RCS will have an annual audit.

4. Governance: The Board will function as a governing body and uphold the terms of the charter contract.

Specific: Develop and implement policies regarding operations, finances, academics and governance that support RCS's mission.

Measurable: Continual school-wide improvement and surveys will measure the effectiveness of governance.

Attainable: The Board has processes in place to develop policies.

Relevant: The Board founded the charter and its involvement in the school's performance is key to its sustainability.

Time Bound: Policies will be approved before school opens, the Board considers updates every March for the next year.

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

RCS's Board of Directors has developed a process of reporting that will provide complete understanding of RCS's progress in achieving it's mission and goals.

Monthly Board Meetings: During monthly board meetings, RCS's Lead Administrator will present a monthly report to the Board; providing evidence of RCS working toward its mission. Updated data will be provided for academic areas (proficiency and growth), attendance, enrollment, budget, and

staff and community involvement and satisfaction. The Lead Administrator will also provide feedback on special programs, and beginning the academic year 2021/22, RCS will also provide feedback on gender based classrooms.

Annual Report: Each year the Lead Administrator will provide data on the SMART goals developed by the Board of Directors. Evidence from EOG/EOC assessments, MAP tests, curriculum assessments, Power School and program data will be provided as proof that goals are being addressed strategically. A summary of the marketing strategy, enrollment, status of the facility, and supplies and equipment will show progress in operations. To demonstrate sound fiscal management of school funds the budget audit will also be included, however the Board will already have that information directly from the auditors. Data from annual surveys administered to staff and parents will be collected and summarized to determine the climate of the school culture. This total collection of data will make up the Lead Administrator's annual report to the Board of Directors and used for its annual strategic planning meeting.

The Board of Directors will hold an annual strategic planning meeting, no later than 45 days after EOG/EOC scores are available. During each annual meeting the results of the previous action plans will be reviewed and modified to address the upcoming year. The Board will have a thorough discussion of academic gains, school growth, waiting lists, enrollment, finances, school improvement and school culture and climate. The purpose of the strategic planning meeting is to develop action plans to drive the operations and school goals for the upcoming year. The action plans are updated annually to establish and create the means by which SMART goals can be reached and to identify the people and define the roles necessary to ensure success.

### 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.

Major instructional methods: The primary philosophy behind RCS's instructional methods is to use research based strategies that have been proven effective with preparing students of all demographic backgrounds for college preparatory high school courses including IB and AP courses. The model will align with cognitive process theory that focuses on what children should learn based on age and brain development. Instruction should be comprehensive and rigorous with a clear process of learning. RCS will use the International Curriculum (IC) as a school wide instructional framework. The framework will include resources for organization, curriculum planning instruction and assessment. The IC is a comprehensive curriculum with a clear process of learning and specific learning goals for every subject: for personal learning and international mindedness. The instructional approach is focused on skill acquisition as a developmental process. The international teaching model emphasizes the identification of three stages of skill acquisition for a student: beginning, developing and mastering. This level of learning and skill assessment gives teachers the information and resources required to effectively meet a student at their current level and provide a structured approach to develop the student for the next level of learning. Teachers begin planning by identifying the standards NC requires them to teach. Teachers then introduce the theme through an activity and a mind map to establish prior knowledge, what students want to know and how they want to learn it. Subject research activities are incorporated into learning the facts and seeing the "big picture", promoting inquiry and leading to a defined learning goal aligned to NC standards. Teachers facilitate subject recording activities allowing students to process and present the information they learned through a full range of multiple intelligences. This is followed by an assessment and an exit point that is an event towards which learning was built; this can be creative and includes parent participation. The success of this model relies on the consistent use by every teacher at every grade level. The IC provides enough flexibility that it can be adapted to the needs of all students: beginning, developing and mastering.

IC is the framework for instruction however day to day lessons will incorporate strategies such as whole group-teacher directed, technology assisted instruction, independent research and project based application of concepts. These strategies will be integrated into every unit to provide different opportunities for students to acquire and demonstrate their level of learning.

Assessment Strategies: Students are assessed continuously. RCS will provide formative, benchmark and summative assessments in addition to the pre and post assessment included in each lesson. Throughout the instructional process the lessons have questions and prompts used to check for understanding, this will provide feedback to the teacher about understanding. RCS will also provide formal assessments in the form of teacher created assessments, NWEA MAP given three times per year and all state required assessments.

The instructional framework is setup to meet the needs of individual students. With the NWEA data and by determining a student's level of knowledge for each unit as beginning, developing or mastering, students will have individual learning paths. This will allow for data based instruction with small groups, technology centers and special intervention for remediation, reinforcement and extension for all students.

### **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.*

RCS will provide students with a safe, positive and clean community in which they can learn, explore and reach their potential as lifelong learners who can think and express themselves intelligently. To support our mission of providing academic excellence, we will allocate space for core classes and electives to include art, music, physical education and media/tech. Electives for middle school will expand.

The basic classroom is student centered. The dynamics of the classroom will be designed to foster students' academic and psycho-social development. It is our belief that a school environment must foster a healthy sense of self, self image and a student's prospects of who and what they want to become. The instructional framework allows for diversity in learning styles, through technology, small and large group, research and presentations. The classroom will reflect that with the following learning stations: teacher lead, technology, independent research, and small group/student lead. Units are presented and prior knowledge is determined as a whole group, followed by students rotating through the appropriate stations. Kindergarten through 5th grade will be self contained and have dedicated assistants who will focus on K-2 or 3-5 grade levels. Teachers in elementary will ensure each student has the foundation needed to be successful in middle school. Student work that is language rich and reflective of NC standards will be displayed in classrooms and hallways. Class size will not exceed 23 students.

Middle school classrooms will not exceed 23 students, and will use learning stations and have dedicated assistants focused on grades 6-8. Middle school students will have gender based classrooms for their core subjects: ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies. Middle school students will enjoy co-education in all other areas of middle school life, however to best serve the psycho-social development of pre-adolescents, RCS believes that separating genders will allow students to move through this phase of development with more ease. "Creating an environment that eases the mastery process of a developmental phase will result in a student with fewer disruptions that could otherwise have negative effects on learning and self

worth "(Philips, 1984; Holloway, 1988). Gender based classes will offer boys and girls a unique opportunity to develop same sex relationships with regard to who they are individually and as a member of a social group. Each class, co-ed and gender based, will allow for flexibility of varying lessons. Students will rotate through core subjects each day in addition to electives that will include languages, engineering, robotics, art, music etc.

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.*

Curriculum:

The curriculum will be standards based and aligned with the Common Core and NC Essential Standards. For every core subject RCS will use text books or e-books that have been approved by the NCDPI. All teachers will also have access to online resources from which they can select materials that will assist them with effectively teaching the targeted NC standard to their students.

The curriculum is aligned with Common Core and NC Essential Standards. The IC framework is also the foundation of IB programs found in the United States and other countries. While RCS does not have a goal of becoming an accredited IB school, we will provide the same sound teaching that is provided in the curriculum thus offering our students a challenging curriculum and preparing them for the rigors of high school and college preparatory courses. According to C. Theokis and R. Saaris, 2013, students who take IB and AP courses in high school "are in challenging classes designed to provide a head start on a college education,...In addition to helping students prepare for college-level course work, they increase students chances of college admission and success". The population in Gastonia has an income distribution that shows 62% of the residents earn less than 50K per year with 40% earning less than 30K per year ([www.city-data.com/income-Gastonia-North-Carolina](http://www.city-data.com/income-Gastonia-North-Carolina)). " The Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights collects data to monitor participation and success rates by race/ethnicity of students and it shows each year more than half a million low income students and students of color are missing from AP and IB participation- students who would benefit from these advanced opportunities if they participated at the same rate as other students" (C. Theokis and R. Saaris, 2013). This is a highly structured curriculum that will provide rigor and challenge students to perform at their best and because of its consistency, will foster a sense of excellence and high personal expectations throughout the school culture.

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 overall academic strategy is to teach students according to the Common Core and NC Essential Standards to discover, synthesize and apply knowledge through inquiry and brain based learning. Teacher success requires mastery of the multi step learning process and the activities used to engage students. All teachers receive extensive training in this model the first two years of employment with RCS. Throughout the year specific aspects will be addressed during individual coaching, during teacher development days in addition refresher training will be given to all staff annually. The multi step process is:

1. "Entry Point" is the activity or event to immerse students into the theme. The goal is to get the students engaged. There is a common platform so each child has an experience from which to draw as they progress through the unit.
2. "Knowledge Harvest" allows the teacher to find out what a student knows and how they want to learn it. Here teachers will use a mind map to provide a visual of what is learned and the connections to what they already know.
3. "Big Picture" is the time teachers explain the theme using facts to support the unit. Before assigning tasks, the teacher helps the students see the "big picture".
4. Subject research activities are open ended events to promote inquiry leading to a defined learning goal/NC standard. Activities can be experiential, exploratory, collaborative etc.
5. "Subject Recording Activities" allow students to process and present the information they gained through a full range of multiple intelligences.
6. Assessment for learning.
7. "Exit Point" is an event towards which learning has been built. Creativity is important and the exit involves exhibitions, displays, performances etc. Parent participation is encouraged.

Middle school teachers will have additional training on the pre-adolescent stage of development and how it manifests in the classroom. Teachers will identify best practices within their classroom in effort to strengthen learning among a specific gender and share their experiences and best practices with staff.

These strategies support skill acquisition and the developmental process, thereby creating an environment for age appropriate independence and interdependence. It also allows teachers to monitor struggling students as subjects are being taught thereby intervening early with children who may require MTSS intervention.

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.*

Every teacher will send parents a general introductory letter at the beginning of school. This letter will highlight class expectations and NC required competencies for successful completion of the class. They will also receive information about the units of study and the Common Core and NC Essential Standards that are being covered for the year.

During the first month of school parents will receive an academic profile of



their student. The profile will include information on core competencies required to successfully graduate to the next grade. The profile will also include their student's NWEA scores and the growth required for that child to successfully graduate to the next grade. For the middle school student, the profile will also include program requirements such as their final research project (8th grade only) and community service hours.

Progress reports will be sent to parents each marking period and conferences held each semester to discuss their student's progress toward mastering grade level competencies. The curriculum provides constant progress monitoring during each unit allowing some students to receive remedial support and others to receive accelerated support. Additionally, the class setup will allow students to work in small groups, use technology and take part in independent study designed to take students to the next grade level. Lastly, because the International Curriculum is the same curriculum used for IB schools, RCS students will be well prepared for the rigors of high school including IB, AP and other college preparatory coursework.

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?*
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.*

RCS's proposed calendar has been designed to provide students with the opportunity to learn content included in the school's curriculum while also providing instructional staff with the support and professional development time they need to grow as teachers. The calendar meets the number of hours and days required by the state for a complete school year, while allowing for ample professional development opportunities for teachers.

RCS's start date will be no earlier than the Monday preceding August 27, 2018 and end date will be no later than the Friday closest to June 11 ( unless a weather related calendar waiver has been approved). The calendar covers at least nine calendar months. RCS's calendar has a minimum of 185 days of instruction as required by federal law.

There are eight teacher PD/work days. RCS's school board will designate 1-2 work days on which teachers may take accumulated vacation leave. School will not be held on Sundays. Veteran's Day shall be a holiday for RCS students.

RCS's calendar, which outlines both the learning opportunities for students as well as the professional development opportunities for teachers, supports our mission of placing each student in a nurturing environment committed to achieving excellence and that our students and staff will have the time and training to build a solid foundation of skills and knowledge for the purpose of being prepared for high school and college preparatory courses.

## **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.*

RCS is committed to providing academic excellence to each student, K-8. Any student at risk of not making adequate academic growth will have clear methods of intervention provided to them as required by the NCSBE through the North Carolina Multi Tiered Support System (MTSS). The MTSS model is based on a three tier model of intervention steps.

RCS will implement the MTSS model with three tiers. Tier I level, all students will receive support through general education instruction. Teachers will differentiate instruction to meet students' needs and regularly assess students to determine understanding and progress. Teachers will also have the opportunity for small group intervention and the use of teacher assistants for one on one help. This data, will be reviewed during grade level meetings where best practices can be shared while collaborating with peers. For students who continue to perform below grade level in Tier I intervention, RCS will act in accordance to North Carolina Accountability Standards and provide a Personalized Education Plan (P.E.P) to target areas in reading, writing, math and/or behavior.

The development of a P.E.P places the students in the next Tier of intervention, Tier II. In Tier II a teacher, along with the intervention team will create goals for the P.E.P that are founded in evidence based intervention strategies of moderate intensity. Goals will be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) and work in addition to the instructional process the student receives in class. The intervention team will include an administrator, the students' teacher, the teacher for the next grade, and an EC teacher. The teacher will implement and document intervention strategies and their outcomes. The teacher will meet regularly with the intervention team to discuss student progress.

For students who meet the goals of their PEP, the student will be exited from Tier II and re-enter Tier I. For the student who does not meet the goals identified in the Tier II intervention, the intervention team will move the student to Tier III of the MTSS intervention model. This level requires intensive evidence based intervention and other best practices appropriate for this level of need to support students academic and/or behavioral proficiency. RCS has not settled on specific programs, however the following have been considered: Focus Math, Compass Learning and Reading Recovery. Students who move into Tier III for behavioral concerns will enter into a behavioral contract.

For students unresponsive to Tier III intervention strategies, the intervention team may offer a different strategy or refer the student for Exceptional Children testing and services.

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.*

#### IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

According to the 2013 census Latino Americans make up 6.2% of the overall population in Gastonia, while Asian Americans make up 1.4%. Assuming that our student population will reflect that of the community, we anticipate the following number of Latino and Asian Americans in the first 5 years: Latino 20 ADM, 25 ADM, 29 ADM, 33 ADM, and 37 ADM. Asian: 3 ADM, 4 ADM, 5 ADM, 6 ADM and 6 ADM.

In accordance to North Carolina's participation in the World Class Instructional Design Assessment (WIDA) Consortium English Language development standards, any students current or prospective, should be identified, monitored and evaluated to ensure their academic success. RCS will work immediately to identify new ELL students and administer the WIDA Access Placement Test (W-APT) upon establishing the following criterion has been met:

1. In accordance to NCSBE families have identified on their Home Language Survey that English is their second language.
2. A student identified by staff will have the W-APT administered. If previous academic records show previous ELL accommodations, then the teacher will proceed with preparing an instructional plan based on the students level of proficiency.

#### INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

RCS faculty will determine the appropriate means of instruction, modifications and accommodations for ELL students based on results of the W-APT and previous academic records, parent input, student observations and any other data relevant to the students language and academics. RCS supports a language immersion approach for ELL students and will work toward keeping a student with the class however if the language barrier is significant then pull out will be arranged.

Our instructional program is designed to teach students with language rich material that requires reading, investigation, writing and using real world and personal references. The instructional program provides initial and post assessments to demonstrate academic growth. RCS will ensure that ELL students meet the same challenging English proficiency standards and objectives required of all other students. RCS will supplement the curriculum with bilingual dictionaries, grammar and supplementary print and audio support and research based on-line instructional sites. Assuming each student will require ELL services the ELL teacher will cycle through the grade levels servicing ELL students on a daily basis. In addition RCS will seek teachers who are bilingual to help ELL students transition into the RCS culture.

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.*

RCS provides its students with a challenging curriculum that is designed to establish a solid foundation of skills and knowledge. Intellectually gifted students (AIG) will receive differentiated general instruction in their classroom. Teachers will be trained to differentiate instruction to AIG students that target their learning style and capabilities. Similar to the "at risk" student, the AIG student will have instruction differentiated, small group, technical assistance, independent research time and projects during class.

During RCS's first year a school-wide baseline will be established for our academic goals; during which time AIG students will be identified and referred to the AIG program that will begin year two of operations.

Following the NC Academically or Intellectually Gifted (NCAIG) Program Standards, when identifying AIG students RCS will rely on prior school records to determine a student's status as AIG. Any unidentified students who displays gifted abilities in one or more subjects can be referred to the AIG team. The team is lead by the AIG teacher and includes, but is not limited to, an administrator, the student's teacher and two other teachers who show interest in the AIG student. The team will evaluate the students classwork, assessments and READY EOG scores to determine AIG programming.

In order for a student to be eligible for the AIG program, a student must

1. Demonstrate a need for a special program, superior intellectual development as measured by an intelligence quotient (IQ) of at least two standard deviations above the mean. Student must also possess gifted characteristics according to the standard scale or checklist; or
2. Be a member of a under-represented group, or low socio-economic status and meet the criteria in an approved public school plan for increasing participation in gifted education by under-represented groups; or
3. Be nominated for screening by a parent or other individual who suspects a gifted ability.
4. Additional screening when a student demonstrates potential gifted ability.

Students who meet the criteria must then meet the criteria of the NCAIG Program standards in the state plan. When that criteria is met, an Education Plan (EP) is developed in 30 days of determining eligibility to receive services. RCSs AIG team will meet to develop a plan to meet the student's academic needs. This program will include, but is not limited to: independent study, Odyssey of the Mind programs, group research requiring higher critical thought analysis and problem solving, early college programs and curriculum modifications.

AIG students will undergo the initial evaluation using the K-TEA Assessment or those scoring two or more positive standard deviations on normative assessments will receive the appropriate services for that student. Follow-up meetings to review the AIG students standing will occur 1-2 times, at minimum, per year and will include the parent, teacher and administrator.

**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)*

RCS will fully comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), the Child Find Mandate, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and all general statutes with regard to the Exceptional Child. RCS will hire licensed exceptional children staff who will monitor and ensure compliance.

In accordance with the requirements of IDEA and Child Find, RCS will identify, locate and evaluate students with disabilities. Upon enrollment, parents will be required to fill out enrollment packets that will inquire about any services their student may have received at their previous school or any diagnosis that may affect the students learning, e.g. IEP or 504 Plan. In addition, RCS will formally request this information upon receipt of the students school records. If records are not received within a reasonable time frame (2-4 weeks), an administrator, or designee, will drive to individual schools to gather student files.

RCS will comply with the federal Child Find mandate to identify and evaluate all students who either have, or are suspected of having disabilities and need special education services. Teachers, parents, support staff, the student and school administrators will be an integral part of the identification process as students may exhibit behaviors or disabilities only in certain areas. Students may be referred for an EC evaluation by staff or parents. Prior to an evaluation, however, RCS in cooperation with the NCSBE , will direct the child to the( MTSS) intervention team to address the academic or behavioral concern. If after moving through the MTSS process a students is determined to require further help then a referral for evaluation will be made with parental consent.

Based on the results of the evaluation the IEP team, including parents and guests, will make the appropriate determination of eligibility and services for the student under one or more NCDPI identification policies. Students who are classified Otherwise Health Impaired (OHI) will be placed under the care of the 504 plan team. The 504 team will develop a plan that lists specific accommodations, supports or services for the student. The 504 team will also identify the source of each service and the person responsible for ensuring the plan is implemented. Students determined to have a learning

disability will be referred to the IEP team that will make appropriate placement for the student in an environment that least restrictive. If all options are exhausted and the child is deemed ineligible for EC services, then the teacher of record will continue to implement research based interventions with the student in effort to make academic growth. IEP and 504 plans will be reviewed regularly in accordance to Special Education Laws.

RCS will work cooperatively with community programs such as Gaston County Health Dept... Head Start, Gaston Community Services and the Child Find project that is part of a statewide network providing services to children with special needs including: vision and hearing screening, placement in exceptional education programs and information on other community resources. Requesting records. Within 30 days of student enrollment, RCS will request the students records, including IEPs and supporting documents and/or 504 Accommodation plans from previous schools. The students name, date of birth and district number will also be requested.

Record Confidentiality (on site). All student education records will be kept confidential in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and IDEA. Files will be kept in a locked facility and will be authorized in accordance to NC 1505-2.5.

Record Compliance (on site). All required student records will be prepared, retained, and disposed of in a manner consistent with federal and state statutes. Paper records will be stored in fireproof cabinets or reduced to electronic documents for storage. Records will be retained per state and federal guidelines and will be destroyed by shredding.

#### 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.*

RCS will comply with IDEA and provide accommodations and special education services for any exceptional student based on the students IEP. RCS stands firm in the belief that a student with a disability is entitled to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment that will enable the student to progress in the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible. RCS promotes an inclusion model. As stated earlier, RCS has an educational plan that allows all students to learn using a variety of learning styles and EC students will receive differentiated, relevant, data driven instruction in all classes. RCS will also use strategies such as co-teaching to ensure additional attention and small group work for EC students. RCS will also reserve a classroom for EC students who require pull out, one on one instruction or other services up to and including self-contained instruction. EC teachers are responsible for monitoring EC students IEPs and modifying the classroom instruction, assignments and assessments to maintain compliance.

RCS will contract additional staff as needed in order to accommodate EC students. Contractual services will be secured through qualified community resources available in the LEA and surrounding areas. RCS will build relationships with established community programs and organizations who

specialize in their respected area of service and have experience with working in the school environment.

RCS respects the role of the parent/guardian in this process and will maintain communications between the student, parents/guardians and school. Parents are invited to all annual reviews, quarterly meetings or any other meeting regarding their students progress. All ideas will be considered for the sake of the student. RCS will provide to the parent/guardian a copy of the IEP and a description of parents rights during the IEP or via mail in a language understandable to the general public and the native language of the parent.

### **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.*

RCS academic goals project that in the first year our students EOG/EOC scores will meet or exceed that of other students in the LEA with comparable demographics. Beginning year two, we also project that our student performance will show a reduction in the percentage of students who score 1 and 2 on the EOG/EOC by 10% each year so that by year 5, 90% of our students will show EOG/EOC levels of 3 or better. RCS will use NC EOG/EOC scores to grade performance for the school as a whole.

In addition to the state's EOG/EOC scores, RCS will use NWEA MAP scores to monitor student growth and proficiency in Math and ELA. NWEA is administered three times per year. NWEA provides detailed data on student strengths/weaknesses in reading and math. The data will identify specific skill deficiencies and strengths that teachers will use when remediation/acceleration is scheduled during the day and for quizzes/tests.

RCS grade level teams will lead in the development of benchmark assessments in reading and mathematics based on the Common Core National and NC Essential standards. The data from these assessments will be used in addition to any state or federally mandated tests to drive instruction and improve curriculum over time. Teachers will use data to form small groups of students who demonstrate similar challenges or strengths during the course of instruction. The data will also direct the teacher in the area of large group re-teaching and serve as the basis of quizzes and other prompts to check for understanding. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure proper oversight of student progress.

The decision to promote or retain a student is based on different factors

that are objective and data based. Factors include: classroom grades, maturity and social skills, annual academic growth and state EOG/EOC scores. Teacher may make a recommendation to the Lead Administrator. No student will be retained for athletic purposes. In order for a student to be promoted, the following criteria must be met as set forth by the Board of Directors:

All students shall meet all attendance requirements.

All students shall earn a yearly average of 60 or above to pass any subject area.

All students must pass language arts, reading, and mathematics at or above the minimum acceptable grade level.

RCS takes into account students with special needs. Special need groups include EC and ELL. Students who meet their IEP goals will be promoted even if the standardized tests and class assessments do not show adequate performance. ELL students who have less than 2 years of ESL instruction and are below grade level due to language barriers will be promoted. In addition RCS will abide by the state mandates with regard to the Read to Achieve legislation for 3rd grade students; students will be retained who fail to meet legislative criteria for promotion.

Students progress at their own rate and the significance of their age and/or grade level is de-emphasized. There are times, however, when it is believed that it would benefit a student to spend an additional year at the same grade level. Parents will be notified by mail and conference at Q3. The final decision for promotion will be made after EOG/EOC testing is complete. A parent who does not agree with the decision to retain may appeal the decision to the Lead Administrator. The State of North Carolina and RCS has vested all final promotion authority with the Lead Administrator of the school.

EXIT: To graduate all students must, at minimum, be at grade level in reading and math and pass their EOC tests. In addition, all students must complete their 8th grade cross curricular research project, and community service hours. Students who do not meet these requirements will attend summer school with subsequent assessment that will determine promotion or retention. Students with special needs will have alternative assignments/assessments that demonstrate an expected level of proficiency identified in their IEP or ELL plans.

### **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.*

*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.*

School Practices:

Part of our mission is to provide a nurturing environment for students as they work toward excellence. RCS will build a community that feels nurtured, and strives for excellence. To promote school-wide community, staff and students will attend morning assembly directly after attendance Monday - Friday. Assembly will include patriotic songs, brief talk about a character quality from "Focus on Character" and announcements, lasting approximately 15 minutes. On Fridays the assembly will include special recognition of the "Student of the Week" recipients. Based on Harry Wong's "First Days of School" Teachers and students will work cooperatively in order to create a safe and inviting classroom. Teachers will inform parents the first week of school about classroom expectations and involve them in activities throughout the year.

A school-wide discipline plan, based of Harry Wong's discipline system, will be utilized to motivate and reward students for positive behavior and progress. This will be reinforced daily by the Lead Administrator. The Lead Administrator will also present "Student of the Week" awards every Friday to one student per class who the teacher identified as exemplifying strong character in a social or academic situation.

Zero Tolerance Offenses:

RCS has a strict discipline policy for students who engage in behavior that is disruptive, aggressive and/or dangerous. Certain behaviors may result in immediate suspension or expulsion from the school. Certain behaviors include: 1. cheating; to act dishonestly or unfairly in order to gain an advantage in academic work 2. bullying; using one's strength or influence to intimidate (someone), typically to force him or her to do what one wants 3. fighting; taking part in a violent struggle involving the exchange of physical blows 3. bomb threats, verbal or in writing 4. threats to kill, shoot or cause harm to students, verbal or in writing 4. weapons on campus for any reason 5. possessing, distributing or using illegal drugs on campus.

Rights of Students with Disabilities:

EC students will be disciplined according to the state and federal EC guidelines and the behavior intervention plan prescribed in their IEP. If the child accumulates 10 days of suspension, RCS, the parents and members of the student's IEP team will meet to determine if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability. IEP services will not be interrupted while the student is enrolled in RCS.

Due Process Rights Regarding Suspensions or Expulsions:

Parents will be notified in writing of their right to appeal at the time of suspension or expulsion. Appeal forms will be made available to the parent upon request. Parents may appeal the decision to suspend or expel their student beyond the Lead Administrator to the RCS Board of Directors which will determine the final decision, unless the suspension warrants the involvement of the judicial system. The appeal must be made within five (5) school days of the suspension notice. The Board will make reasonable effort to hear the appeal within seven (7) school days. At minimum, two board members shall hear the appeal and they will record the decision.



**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:* Ridgeview Charter School

*Mailing Address:* 15207 Gathering Court

*City/State/Zip:* Charlotte NC 28278

*Street Address:* 15207 Gathering Court

*Phone:* 980-208-7782

*Fax:* 704-990-8639

*Name of registered agent and address:*

Reshall L. Williams  
15207 Gathering Court  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28278

*FEDERAL TAX ID:* 46-4246150

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

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

Yes (copy of letter from federal government attached: Appendix D)

X No

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

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

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

Please complete the table provided depicting the 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?
June Brook	Secretary	GASTON	Manufacturing	N/A	N
Shezarr ah Keane	Vice Chair	MECKLENBUR G	Human Resources/ Realtor		N
Reshall William s	Board Chair	MECKLENBUR G	Educator	N/A	N
Brian Edwards	Board Member	MECKLENBUR G	ROTC Instructor	N/A	N
Sherwo d Smith	Treasu rer	MECKLENBUR G	Mechanical Engineer	N/A	N
Travaul Godfrey	Board Member	MECKLENBUR G	Educator Special Education	EC , teacher	N

**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.*

In accordance with NCGS 115C-238.29E (d) the primary function of the Board of Directors of Ridgeview Charter School will be to decide matters related to operation of the school, including budgeting, academics and operating procedures. The Board of Directors has been established in conventional fashion with non-compensated offices and directors and shall operate in accordance with ratified bylaws. The Board will retain ultimate and final authority and responsibility for decision making with regard to policy, procedure, finance, curriculum and other operating instructional and non-instructional matters.

The officer roles within the Board will include: Board Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. In addition, board members are required to work on one subcommittee at a minimum. Sub-committees will included: Curriculum, Facility, Budget, Fundraising, and Community Development. These committees will be voted on in accordance with RCS bylaws. That said, the Board of Directors will observe the boundary between governance and management, delegating management tasks and charges to the school's Lead Administrator. The school's lead Administrator has been identified and will assume position pending approval of this application. Future hiring practice of the Lead Administrator will included a national search through a national educational recruiting site as well as local and statewide search using various forms of medium including job fairs, charter conferences and other charter specific resources, job sites and print medium.

The Lead Administrator will be selected by the Board after careful review of qualifications, experience and integrity are duly considered. Priority will be given to candidates with educational leadership experience that includes management of a complex organization. The Lead Administrator will be subject to an employment background check, drug screening and a agreement specifying the chain of command.

In Ridgeview Charter School's mission statement, it states that RCS will provides a nurturing environment committed to achieving excellence. All students are challenged through rigorous instruction to provide a solid foundation of skills and knowledge. The Lead Administrator will meet monthly with the Board of Directors to ensure compliance in enforcing our mission. The Lead Administrator will be evaluated annually by the Board of Directors or a committee thereof via a process that will included official and unofficial feedback surveys from teachers and parents as well as a quantitative and qualitative analysis and review of academic, financial and operational performance. The Board will also utilize established market based modules and tools such as Marzano Leadership Evaluation Model to evaluate its Lead Administrator. Each year the Lead Administrator will have three formal meetings, in addition to unscheduled informal meeting as part of the evaluation process. This first meeting will be held before school opening to review the annual goals established in the previous spring. The second meeting will act as a midpoint review, to update the Board on the progress being made on reaching goals and Board impression of the administrator status. The third meeting will determine if goals were met, if goals were not met, the Board of Directors will implement a corrective action plan with a strategic timeline and verifiable results. During the third meeting the Lead Administrator will be notified of the Board's plan to retain him/her as a leader. The Lead Administrator will have opportunities for corrective actions regarding their performance and professional development throughout the year to equip them as a leader and visionary in schools of choice and school reform. This meeting will also be utilized to plan for the upcoming 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.*

In accordance with NCDPI's Department of Charter Schools, RCS Board Of Directors will include a range of members greater than five but less than ten, with a preference toward an odd number to ensure a working majority. Since the membership on the Board of Directors will not be a passive position, it is and will be populated with members who are committed to active participation in the governance of a charter school. In 2016 RCS was approved by CSAB, with a majority vote 7-2, in August of 2016 the SBE decided not to follow the recommendation of the CSAB and denied our approval. Our Board has been consistent in making recommended changes needed to obtain approval by all parties. RCS Board has shown commitment to duty and will always strive to have members who represent committed, diverse and professional background.

Roles of the board shall include Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary and general board members. The Board will also include committees such as finance, facility, community development and curriculum. The continued training and development of board members will also be a priority to ensure that RCS mission and vision is fulfilled. The current board includes a parent, from Gastonia, a former charter school Lead Administrator, who have lead successful charter schools in Michigan and Indiana. A certified EC Teacher and various professionals who work and have investment in Gaston

County. The skills and expertise of our members include: charter school leadership, special education, human resources, ROTC and engineering.

The diverse composition of the board will contribute to the operational and educational success of the school. Each board member will bring his/her unique knowledge, talents, experience and networks to the table. This combined knowledge will create a synergistic process from which a framework of integrated policy, procedure, strategic planning, and the successful implementation of a periodic evaluation will emerge. This framework will serve as the catalyst for the mission, vision and operational and educational success of RCS.

The board of directors will evaluate the success of the school through a process that includes the report from an annual audit that will expose all financials of RCS, combine with the data from EOG and MAP tests and data from surveys taken by parents and staff. From the information, a (SWOT) Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats, analyses will be created to form the basis of an action plan to make improvements where necessary and keep our strengths relevant for the upcoming year.

The board will also perform an annual self evaluation. This will employ a systematic means for gathering input from the various stakeholders such as staff, faculty, parents, with specific data driven components from the financials audit, student testing performance and enrollment/retention statistics. The results will provide the basis of clear short and long term SMART goals and related strategic plans and benchmarks. The results will also serve in the development of quarterly reviews of operations, finances, and academics completed by the school leader.

In accordance with North Carolina open meeting laws, all activities, opportunities and meeting will be posted on RCS's website and in a visible location near the main office in the school. RCS board will also abide by all laws, rules and best practices regarding conflict of interest to ensure the highest integrity of the RCS organization.

The Board will invite and welcome input and feedback from key stakeholders and the community and will set aside time during each board meeting for the public comments during which stakeholders can speak directly to the board as to RCS's perceived successes, general concerns, the effects of proposed or ratified policies and procedures. In addition the board will actively encourage stakeholders to participate in the school's leadership through service on board subcommittees.

*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?*

Board Recruitment. Half of the RCS board members have been a working team for multiple years; this application is a re-submission and we have maintained our interest and dedication to seeing this mission through. As a result of the North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board's interview held in the Spring of 2016, RCS passed the interview with a vote of 7-2. In August of 2016, the SBE chose not to accept the CSAB recommendations for

five applicants and Ridgeview was part of that group. Our Board is committed and we are resubmitting based on changes recommended by the CSAB during the spring interview. Our unwavering passion to serve Gaston County will guarantee that our plan meets its mission and provide a quality school of choice to area residents.

Board members have been recruited based on their interest and enthusiasm for working collaboratively to open a high quality school of choice and the talents and experience that they bring to the table. Board seats have a limited life span at which time new members will be elected through the approved election process; the process will include procedures for elections held at the expiration of terms, and unexpected resignation of board positions during the course of the term. The election process will also allow for the reelection of board members who are in good standing.

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

The RCS Board will have a monthly meeting at least eight (8) times per year in addition to an annual meeting and committee work sessions. All meetings will conform to the rules and regulations of the NC Open Meeting Laws.

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.*

New members will take part in a 1/2 day orientation within thirty (30) days of joining the Board. The orientation will address board policy and procedure, member responsibilities, member expectations and the fundamentals of governance. Annually, the entire Board of Directors will undergo a full day of board training. Topics covered will include governance v. management, finances, leadership, conducting effective meetings, managing legal matters, managing parent matters, conflict resolution and an NCSBE Policy review. The first board training will take place within ninety (90) days of charter school approval by the NCSBE.

The timetable for board training:

- June, 2017 - orientation, Board role review and marketing training
- July, 2017 - Board will complete marketing plan and review facility options
- August, - Facility training: state requirements etc.
- September, 2017 - Curriculum overview and Lottery
- October, 2017 - Board Finances training and planning
- January, 2018 - Complete budget projections for opening year and lottery review
- March 2018, - Power School and staff evaluation training
- April 2018 - Staff recruitment training and planning
- May 2018 - Financial review and staff benefit planning
- June 2018 - grant writing and community development

Each training is required for board members. Training's will be recorded and saved for future references. All training will be facilitated by a professional in the field of expertise and will include updates on all other areas of operation such as: finances, curriculum, enrollment, facility (to include food and transportation) and vendors. RCS Board will look to work with government entities and organizational representatives who may

facilitate these training's without cost.

The list of training and development is a working draft and as a result the order may shift to accommodate state training offered through the NCDPI and those offered by the North Carolina Charter School Association.

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

The Board realizes the level of responsibility that comes with its members being charged as stewards of the public trust and that each member's ethical conduct is a reflection on the entire organization. The RCS Board of Directors is committed to preserving the public trust by taking proactive measures to ensure the highest ethical standards are observed and practiced by every board member and, in turn, the Board as a whole. Specifically, the Board has adopted a comprehensive conflict of interest policy with the purpose of avoiding conflict of interest and potential conflicts of interest between board member's private interests and their public duties. Every member has an affirmative duty to provide any and all information that a reasonable person would conclude is necessary to fully disclose about existing or potential conflicts of interest.

Any individual(s) identified to have a potential conflict shall be excused from relevant decisions and voting regarding the topic of discussion. The member(s) will be excluded from quorum requirements during that meeting.

There are no current concerns about members and any potential conflicts of interest. Going forward, general concerns to be monitored include 1). the respect of rules of confidentiality regarding, staff, students and other sensitive information 2). the receipt of favors, gifts or money 3). financial benefits to a member's organization and/or business and 4). nepotism and preferential treatment of family members and/or students.

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

Adoption of school policy by a quorum of the Board at a legally called meeting will result as the culmination of a process that seeks, via a sub-committee of the Board, input from interested /affected constituent groups within the school community, research of data and available alternatives, careful study of the impact and costs of a potential policy and thoughtful deliberation of preliminary solutions. Upon completion of the process, the sub-committee will make a policy recommendation to the Board that will ratify the recommendation, take no actions or refer the matter back to the sub-committee for additional input, research, study and deliberation.

When deliberation and discussion is complete, board members will work toward consensus by keeping student needs central. While majority vote is required, buy in by all members is always the goal to maintain the strength of solidarity with the Board and school community as a whole.

The RCS Board of Directors will continue to exercise governance vs. management in policy making as well. The Board will oversee the development of policies that support the school's mission, vision and goals. Policies that include charter school renewal, admissions, teacher license and board processes will be the focus on the Board. School policies that are designed to manage the day to day operations of RCS will be developed by the Lead



Administrator. The Lead Administrator will submit policies during the second semester each year for the Board to approve for the upcoming academic year. Any addendum to management policies must be initiated and submitted by the Lead Administrator for Board's consideration and vote.

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.*

RCS supports the use of councils and associations whose priority is providing our students with the best their organization has to offer and aid in their education. RCS, therefore, will provide opportunities for a parent association and a school advisory team. Each will advise the Lead Administrator, in a non-supervisory role, in effort to reach the organization goals needed to live our mission and vision.

The parent association will serve as an avenue for parents to become more actively involved in RCS. The parent organization will lead student fundraising efforts, organize volunteer and coordinate school-wide and community events, and other student and/or parent special programs. The parent organization will have no formal authority and is not a committee or sub-committee of the Board of Directors, therefore, no direct reporting avenue will exist between them. The parent organization will have no role in the evaluation of the Lead Administrator or the staff.

In effort to encourage the buy in and support of its constituents, RCS will establish a school advisory team. The advisory team will report to and advise the Lead Administrator in its role as liaison between parents/community and the Lead Administrator. the advisory team will include parents, staff and student leaders who will provide insight from the perspective of their constituents with regards to decisions about day to day management. When appropriate, the team will address the RCS Board of Directors regarding issues, however, the team has no formal role on the Board and no role in the evaluation of the staff or Lead Administrator.

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

The Board will establish a standing Grievance Committee. The purpose of the Grievance Committee is to evaluate and determine the merits of a properly filed grievance by a parent or member of the faculty and staff and to possibly make a recommendation to the Board for consideration. Filing a valid grievance requires that the aggrieved party addresses the issue with the following individuals in the proper sequence as follows:

STAFF:

First Step - Seek resolution of the matter with whom the staff member has the disagreement.

Second Step - Seek resolution via the employee's immediate supervisor

Third Step - Seek resolution via the Lead Administrator. Assuming no resolution, the staff member may file a grievance with the Board of Directors.

PARENTS:

First Step - Seek resolution with the child's teacher

Second Step - Seek resolution with the teacher's department chair or supervisor (if applicable)

Third Step - Seek resolution with their Lead Administrator. Assuming no

resolution, the parent may file a grievance with the Board of Directors.

Grievance forms are to be provided without cost by the Lead Administrator within 48 hours of being requested by the aggrieved. The aggrieved is not required to provide a reason to the Lead Administrator as a condition of receiving the grievance forms. Multiple grievances may not be combined in one form, however, multiple grievances may be submitted concurrently on separate forms. Grievances must be individually submitted and individually reviewed by the Grievance Committee.

The aggrieved has the right to an expeditious, objective and thorough review of the grievance. Upon receipt of the grievance, the Chairperson of the Grievance Committee shall convene a quorum of the Grievance Committee within a reasonable time, not to exceed twenty (20) calendar days from the date of receipt.

### 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 E)
2. A one-page resume from each founding board member and responses to the questions found on the Charter School Board Member Form (Appendix F).
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 G).
4. A copy of the articles of incorporation from the NC Department of the Secretary of State. (Appendix H)

### 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.

Ridgeview Charter School overall leadership and staffing philosophy is based on Distributive Leadership/Distributive Intelligence. This particular model emphasizes tapping into the strength of staff, shared responsibility and capitalizing on the resources within the environment; therefore it is important that staffing not only match the projected enrollment, but that internal development and ownership is nurtured.

Ridgeview Charter School will be lead by one Lead Administrator and one Assistant Administrator. The Board of Directors and Lead Administrator will start a legal search in February, 2018 for a Assistant Administrator. This search will comply with Ridgeview Charter School Bylaws and EEOC regulations.

As stated in the governance a Lead Administrator has already been identified to lead the school.

Finances, Human Resources, Marketing and Auxiliary Services will be outsourced to a third party. The following positions are proposed to be filled the first year of operation.

- (1) Lead Administrator
- (1) Assistant Administrator
- (3) Elective Teachers
- (3) Assistants Teachers
- (1) Clerical-(Part-time)
- (1) Food Staff-(Part time)
- (1) Custodian-(Part time)
- (1) EC Related Service Contract
- (1) PE Teacher
- (1) ESL Teacher Teacher
- (1) Substitute Teacher
- (2) EC Teachers
- (3) Kindergarten Teachers
- (3) Grade One Teachers
- (3) Grade Two Teachers
- (3) Grade Three Teachers
- (3) Grade four Teachers

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

Include the following information for the proposed charter school:

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

In support of our mission's goal Ridgeview Charter School believes that well prepared teachers who strive for continuous growth, in a community that nurtures development and leadership are critical to our school realizing its goal. To accomplish this, Ridgeview Charter School recruitment strategy is to attract diverse, smart and innovative teachers who are passionate and dedicated about the mission and who reflect the diversity of our students and Gastonia.

Ridgeview's recruitment strategy will be delivered by using Teach for America, the Internet, and job sites like Indeed.com, CareerBuilder.com and Teachers - Teachers.com. We will also advertise in the local and surrounding newspapers in North Carolina and other states. Universities and colleges will be contacted and informed of positions available through their job search service departments. Ridgeview Charter School will utilize agencies like the Chronicle of Higher Education and Education Week to conduct national searches when needed.

Drawing from a Distributive Leadership Model, Ridgeview Charter School will retain its teachers through;

- (A) Competitive wages and benefits
- (B) A strong leadership based community that trickles down from the Board of Directors to the students.
- (C) We will create teacher lead positions, Deans, Coaches and other leadership opportunities.
- (D) We will provide a nurturing and safe environment
- (E) Constructive coaching by the Lead Administrator and Assistant Administrator
- (F) Annual Pay increases
- (G) Participation in SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats) analysis and annual goals setting.
- (H) Internal promotions
- (I) We will encourage input, innovation and feedback from staff and teachers.
- (j) Encourage and support teacher development.
- (K) Ridgeview Charter School wants to be an employer of choice, we celebrate our successes and recognize accomplishments and work together to solve any issues.
- (L) Create a detailed job description.

*2. Provide a description of the relationship that will exist between the charter school employees and the nonprofit board.*

Every member of the faculty and staff of Ridgeview Charter school will have open and equal access to grievance process and will contribute, likely through formal and informal surveying, to the annual process of evaluating the school Lead Administrator and Assistant Administrator.

Employees will elect a staff representative annually to serve as a liaison to the Board of Directors. This liaison will attend board meetings, provide a faculty and staff insights on issues of importance and provide feedback to the Board of Directors with regard to policy and procedure. In addition, teachers and staff will be encouraged to serve on subcommittees of the Board and attend monthly board meetings.

The Board Of Directors is responsible for reviewing and, if satisfactory, approving the terms and conditions of all employment contracts that is recommended to the Board of Directors by the school Lead Administrator.

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

The hiring process will generally include the following steps, but may be modified slightly for particular positions or unique circumstances: Initial applications for employment will be screened by the Assistant Administrator for appropriate experience, certification, education, credentials and other stated prerequisites for the position. A qualitative review of applications will be conducted by the personnel committee. Qualified candidates will be granted a first round interview with the Lead Administrator and the Assistant Administrator, and any other designee of the Board. A candidate chosen from the first round interviews will proceed to second interview with the personnel team (primarily teachers). After the second interview an examination and verification of education, certification, achievements and references will be completed. The candidate will be required to submit to national background check and pre-employment drug screening. This drug screen will be provided by a professional drug screening company. Assuming a successful second interview and the return of a favorable background check, satisfactory, references, verified credentials and clean drug screen, an offer of employment will be extended to the candidate.

RCS will establish a comprehensive protocol for evaluating employees, that includes the NC Teacher Evaluation Model. In instances where staff/faculty members are identified as under performing, the faculty/staff member will be counseled by the Lead Administrator and may be required to participate in a corrective action plan that establishes clear expectations, timelines and benchmarks for continued employment. Progress on the corrective action plan will be monitored regularly. The employee will be retained or discharged based upon progress. Employees who commit acts of violence, endangerment or other behaviors that compromise student and workplace safety maybe discharged without notice or remediation.

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

All full-time employees will be offered Major Medical Insurance and disability. RCS intends to pay a portion of the premium costs. Economic conditions and uncertain market dynamics, however, may not make it economically feasible for the school to fund the program.

RCS will also make supplemental insurance available through a section 125 Cafeteria Plan. Such coverage includes cancer, dental, life, vision, and other insurance. The section 125 plan premiums would be the employee's responsibility.

RCS employees will be provided with fixed number of personal days to use as needed.

RCS will offer participation in a tax deferred, defined contribution retirement plan. RCS will contribute up to 50% of every-dollar towards the retirement plan; a portion thereof for employees contribution up to a maximum amount as defined in the plan documents. Employee eligibility and vesting with certain benefits will be determine by law.

Administrative & Support Personnel:

Lead Administrator Salary:	\$75,000-\$84,417
Assistant Administrator Salary:	\$55,000-\$61,903
Clerical Salary:	\$24,000-\$26,047

Food Staff Salary:	\$26,000-\$29,262
Custodians Salary:	\$26,000-\$29,262

Teachers salaries with adjustment up depending on experience and credentials.

Instructional Personnel:

Average Teacher salary:	\$50,000
Average Assistant Teacher Salary:	\$20,000-\$28,136
Average Elective/Specially Teacher salary:	\$50,000
Average Exceptional Teacher Salary:	\$50,000
Average ESL Teacher salary:	\$50,000
Average Physical Education Teacher Salary:	\$50,00
Average Substitute Teacher salary:	\$10,000-\$10,000

This position will be contracted out.

Average EC Contractor/ Speech, Physical Therapy, salary \$20,000-\$21,854

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

RCS Board of Directors will establish a standing Grievance Committee. The purpose of the Grievance Committee is to evaluate and determine the merits of a properly filed grievance by a member of the faculty or staff and to possibly make a recommendation to the Board for consideration. The aggrieved party must address the issue in the proper sequence as follows:

FIRST STEP: Seek resolution of the matter with whom the staff member has the disagreement

SECOND STEP: Seek resolution via the staff member's Dean, if applicable

THIRD STEP: Seek resolution via the Lead Administrator. Assuming no resolution,

the staff member may file a grievance with the Board. In accordance with federal law,

RCS forbids retaliation when it comes to any aspect of employment, including grievance complaints.

RCS will establish a comprehensive protocol for evaluating, mediating and terminating employees. In instances where staff or faculty members are identified as under performing the staff/faculty member will be counseled by the Lead Administrator and may be required to participate in a written corrective action plan that establishes clear expectations, timeline and benchmarks for continued employment. Progress on the corrective action plan will be monitored periodically through the expiration date of the plan. Upon reevaluation,

the employee will be retained or discharged based upon progress. Employees convicted of or pleading "nolo contendere" to a felony or to a certain Class A1, 1 or 2 misdemeanors may be discharged without notice to the extent that the law permits. Employees who are discharged with a felony or certain Class A1, 1 or 2 misdemeanors may be suspended with pay pending outcome of trial or hearing. Employees who commit acts of violence, assault, endangerment or other behaviors on school property or during school sponsored events that compromise student and/or workplace safety maybe discharged without notice.

7. *Identify any positions that will have dual responsibilities (within or without the organization) and*

*the funding source for each position.*

Some specialty teachers may have dual responsibilities, which may include, intervention/tutoring, library services and reception area work.

*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.*

Assuming Exceptional Child(EC) enrollment at 15% of the total student population, the year 1 EC staff will include one EC Coordinator and one EC teacher. EC staffing will fluctuate up or down as EC enrollment and IEP requirements dictate. With the uncertainty of the first year's EC numbers and 2 dedicated EC staff, RCS will work to recruit two teachers for K-4 positions who also carry an EC license, this will ensure the special needs of EC students are addressed immediately.

The faculty will include at least one certified teacher with ESOL/ELL certification or endorsement; year 2 will include a TD certified teacher. EC teachers will have a BA/BS Degree in education, curriculum and instruction, or a related field from an accredited college or university and will hold a teacher's certification reflecting mastery of the principles of exceptional child education, special education curriculum and instructional theory and use of data to drive student progress and program improvement.

*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).*

Faculty and staff will be required to hold the appropriate licenses, certifications, endorsements, and experience necessary to faithfully and satisfactorily fulfill the roles and responsibilities for which they were hired and as required by their job description. Faculty and staff will conduct their work to the manner consistent with RCS's mission, the needs of every student and the expectations of all stakeholders.

TEACHERS:

Minimally, 75% of elementary and 50% of middle-school classroom teachers at the school will hold a valid North Carolina Standard Professional (SP) One Professional Educator's License and RCS will develop, maintain and as necessary have approved by the NCDPI a teacher licensure program, allowing teachers to progress from SP1 to SP2 license and renew SP2 licenses. Educators who qualify for lateral entry in North Carolina, will be considered for employment as teachers. Teachers designated as Department Heads will be responsible for necessary evaluation and reporting to School Lead Administrator on programs and staff and will possess experience and/or advanced credentials commensurate with the position.

LEAD ADMINISTRATOR:

The school's Lead Administrator will provide educational and operational leadership, contractual accountability and logistical direction as part of his/her responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school. The Lead Administrator is responsible for hiring, observing and evaluating all staff and determining annual increases for each staff person. The Lead Administrator is accountable to the Board of Directors. Minimum qualifications include a Master's Degree in administration, social science, educational leadership, curriculum and instruction or a related field and at

least 3 years of experience at the executive leadership level. Preference will be given to a candidates with experience in charter school leadership and a background in strategic planning.

**ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR:**

Assistant Administrator is responsible for interim management of the school in the absence of the School Lead Administrator. The Assistant Administrator will assist in the supervision of instructional and non-instructional staff, will oversee and coordinate beginning teacher and professional development programming and will serve as the chief disciplinarian in the event of student misconduct. The Assistant Administrator reports to the Lead Administrator. Qualifications include possession of a valid state teaching certificate with a minimum of three years classroom experience. Administrative program (accredited or recognized) or other related masters program is required.

**OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE / SUPPORT PERSONNEL:**

Other administrative support personnel, e.g. Food Staff, Clerical, will be responsible for carrying out support functions as delegated to them by the Lead Administrator and will require applicable credentials and requisite experience based on the position's duties and responsibilities.

**Staff Evaluation and Professional Development**

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

The School Assistant Administrator, is responsible for maintaining teacher licensure and professional development. This process will be monitored by the Lead Administrator. Teachers are responsible for following through with PD within the timeline.

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.*

RCS will model the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Process which is based on the framework for the 21st Century Learning and the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards in order to assess the teacher's performance in relation to those standards and to design a plan for professional growth.

The LEAD

Administrator or a designee will conduct the evaluation process in which the teacher will actively participate through the use of self-assessment, reflection, presentation of artifacts and classroom demonstrations.

Instructional staff will be evaluated based on the six aligned standards adopted by the NCSBE: Leadership, Establishing a Respectful Environment, Content Knowledge, Facilitation of Learning, Critical Reflection, and Contribute to Academic Success.

The evaluation process will include the following components:

**Component 1: TRAINING**

Before participating in the evaluation process, all teachers, administrators and peer evaluators must complete training on the evaluation process.



#### Component 2: ORIENTATION

Within two weeks of a teacher's first day of work in any school year, the Lead Administrator will provide teachers with the evaluation rubric that will be used during the evaluation process and a schedule for completing each component of the evaluation process.

#### Component 3: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Using the evaluation rubric along with feedback, growth and improvement plans from previous evaluations, the teacher will conduct a performance self-assessment from the beginning of the year through to the date of the most recent evaluation period.

#### Component 4: PRE-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE

Before the first formal observation, the Lead Administrator will meet with the teachers to review and discuss the self-assessment, the teacher's most recent professional growth plan, and the lesson(s) to be observed. The teacher will provide the Lead Administrator with a written lesson plan. The goal of this conference is to prepare the Lead Administrator for the observation. In the event that there are multiple observations, pre observation conferences are not required for subsequent observations.

#### Component 5: OBSERVATIONS

Formal observations by the Lead Administrator will be made for the minimum of 45 minutes or the entire class period. If a class period is less than 45 minutes, then the evaluation will be made over two class periods to fulfill the minimum time requirement. Those teachers who are designated as "Probationary" will undergo no fewer than three formal classroom observations, one of which must be conducted by a peer designated by the Lead Administrator. Career teachers will be evaluated no fewer than two times per year. During observations, the Lead Administrator and the peer will note, in writing, the teachers performance in relation to the standards contained in the evaluation rubric.

#### Component 6: POST-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE

The Lead Administrator, and peer for probationary teachers, will conduct a post observation conference with the teacher being evaluated no later than ten days after each formal observation. During the post-observation conference, the Lead Administrator and teacher will discuss and document on the evaluation rubric the performance strengths and weaknesses during the observed lesson.

#### Component 7: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Based on the teacher's performance, a professional development plan will be crafted that outlines specific areas for improvement, strategies for improvement, benchmarks to be met and a timeline for re-evaluation.

RCS believes that mastery comes through nurturing a desire for improvement within its staff. In addition to the formal evaluations the Lead Administrator and designee, will provide continuous informal feedback to teachers. Lead Administrator will prioritize a daily walk-through ensuring each teacher has a weekly visit where a walk-through form is left for teacher to review and, if necessary, a follow up meeting.

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.*

The RCS professional development plan has at its core a commitment to a mission-driven charter school, high quality instruction and constant improvement of student learning. Through the use of qualified contractors, trained in-house staff, professional conferences, guest speakers and online learning, the professional development (PD) program will include topics of current interest and instructional relevance such as international curriculum, gender based instruction, effective classroom management, evidence-based

instructional strategies, subject specific texts and reading, technology in the classroom. Other applicable professional development programs will emphasize small group instruction and discussion, peer collaboration and teamwork. Work place issues will be incorporated into the professional development program covering topics such as maintaining a safe workplace, First Aid / CPR / AED training, effective communication, preventing sexual harassment, engaging families and cultivating a culture of diversity in the workplace.

To the extent to which PD will be conducted internally or externally and will be individualized or uniform, RCS will schedule:

1. Individualized PD: Peer and mentor ( for beginner teachers) observations, along with administrative feedback provides valuable professional development for staff. The Lead Administrator, or designee, will ensure the coordination of support , coaching, guest teaching and other assistance.

2. Learning Communities: Teachers are expected to meet in small groups weekly. The groups with which teachers will meet will vary in order to allow grade level, subject specific and cross curricular collaboration. Beginning teachers will have monthly meetings, as a group, to develop mastery.

3. Formal development will be scheduled during many days during August training, teacher work days and staff meetings. Development will be facilitated by administration or a guest with expertise in the identified area.

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.*

Pre-opening professional development will begin ten days prior to the first day of school for students. Faculty and staff will report to school at 8am and remain until 3pm. Each day will include approximately 60- 90 minutes for classroom setup and 30 minutes for lunch. The remaining 50 hours will be used for professional development. Approximately ten hours will be used to train staff on all operating policies and procedures including school safety plans, Code of Ethics, employment policy review, student discipline, the EC referral process, managing workplace violence, sexual harassment and other procedural, safety and policy topics.

An additional forty hours will be used to build instructional leaders who embrace the curriculum, gender based instruction for middle school and a

culture of collaboration among staff based on the distributive leadership theory and various team building exercises. The time used to orient staff toward school-wide instructional goals will address measurement criteria for student performance. During this time breakout sessions will be incorporated into the instructional objectives training for instructional/grade level teams. These sessions will be led by lead staff whose objective will include defining specific objectives within their grades, development of team-wide instructional strategies, creation of action plans for anticipated obstacles and challenges, the coordination of lesson plans and to synthesize curriculum components within grades.

Preparing RCS staff for the implementation of the international curriculum school wide and gender based core classes in the middle school are unique and potentially challenging aspects of our instructional methodology. For this reason professional development in this area will be the focus of the ten days of instructional and cultural training planned for the pre-opening weeks. Specific effort to secure an expert in the international curriculum to train staff during pre-opening week will be a priority for the Lead Administrator during the planning year. With gender based classrooms beginning in the middle school, which will not occur during the first year of operation, RCS will have an additional two years to secure a consultant with expertise in the area of gender based schools and / or classrooms to train and mentor RCS math, ELA, Science and Social Studies teachers. Additionally, the extra two years will give RCS the time to secure funding for conferences and workshops specific to gender based instruction. This future training will take place during the pre-opening week or summer, depending on the conference schedule and will continue, along with other unique topics, to be part of staff development days throughout the academic year.

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.*

Continued professional development is important to the success of RCS. Our

mission's objective for academic success through rigorous instruction can happen by developing master teachers. RCS's school calendar, therefore, provides 8 teacher workdays, in which 7 will be mandatory professional development days throughout the school year. There will be 10 professional development days prior to the beginning of school, where teachers will receive intensive training in curriculum, policy and classroom management and eight days throughout the year providing continuous support and training for the faculty and staff.

Approximately 4-18 hours of additional designated staff development time will be in the form of half days, which will be incorporated into the calendar in September, October, November, December, January, February and April. School will not be in session for students during these days but faculty and staff will be required to report to work at normal business hours. The programming for each day will be determined based on trending topics and needs identified by the board, administration and/or faculty and staff. In addition, the school will advise teachers of short (1-2 hr.) topic-specific online and webinar based voluntary learning opportunities that are available throughout the year. If teachers choose to participate in such opportunities, arrangements will be made in advance so that classes can be covered during the time that the teacher is participating in staff development.

The school's calendar and staffing structure supports this plan through its master schedule that provides for common planning time for teams of teachers to work on interdisciplinary units, analyze and disaggregate student data and implement the MTSS model. These PD meetings will occur during regularly scheduled staff meetings and planning meetings. A structured mentor program will help provide additional support for new teachers. A draft of the yearly calendar is included in Appendix C.

### **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)).*

The school will use a variety of methods to promote the school and attract students and families. Some of these methods may include, but are not limited to the following: 1. Holding periodic informational meetings with local community, civic and religious organizations along with individual meetings with local business and civic leaders and other people who may be able to inform and/or influence families and students to enroll at the school, 2. Creating a referral network by fostering relationships with local

childcare centers, the Boys and Girls Club of Gaston County, community sporting leagues and the Gaston County YMCA; advertisements throughout the community; 4. Creation and promotion of online marketing videos and 5. Promotion of the RCS website where parents can find enrollment and recruitment literature.

The Board of Directors recognizes the importance of community awareness and recruitment of parents and students who reflect the racial/ethnic and demographic composition of the Gaston district. In order to promote a neighborhood school, the marketing strategy will start in the local community immediately and then broaden to the mass market. Marketing to residents in the surrounding communities will be the primary focus. In order to ensure strong demand, marketing will occur to all appropriate populations, e.g. geographic, ethnic, age etc. We anticipate that the majority of students will live within a 25 mile radius of the school and, thus, reflect the local community being served. Targeted marketing will be used to focus on this geographic area. Additionally, select marketing materials will be created and produced in multiple languages based on the demographics of the local area. RCS has allocated \$15,000.00 in our budget for marketing, this money will be used for advertising through media such as The Gaston Gazette, radio, bill boards, and TV adds.

### **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.*

RCS believes that engaging community members, parents and volunteers creates meaningful ways to include individuals in emotional experiences that help them connect to the school's mission and core values.

RCS will communicate and engage parents and community from the time that the school is approved through its opening. Upon its approval, RCS will maintain a website with current information about the school, including: a directory of the School Board with individual biographies, philosophy, curriculum, school calendar and an opening timeline. RCS will also utilize social media to increase its base of support and social awareness through forums such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. RCS will also partner resources like community action programs, daycare centers, churches and home owners associations to announce the opening of RCS followed by a statement to follow us on social media.

During the fall of 2017 Families will be invited to information sessions where the history, philosophy and curriculum will be shared with the community. This will serve as an opportunity for community feedback allowing the Board to build a data base of interested families, customize certain aspects of RCS and demonstrate to the community our desire for a strong relationship and set a positive tone in the community. Information sessions will become orientations in the spring of 2018. Orientations will follow the start of enrollment, per North Carolina rules, and serve to encourage enrollment of students and investment of parent time, talent and skills. RCS has identified a position of recognition for a lead volunteer, an official "parent ambassador". This person will work with the marketing to promote

RCS.

Informal activities that require the investment of time, talent and skill. We want the community to feel a sense of ownership, therefore RCS will coordinate events like "Earth Day" for the beautification of the exterior of the school and other school beautification projects to prepare the interior of school's classes, halls, office etc.

RCS will build engaging partnerships between the family and school that strengthen support for student learning by engaging parents in the life of our school. Through the efforts of our Parent Ambassador we expect to have a solid core of parent volunteers to represent parent interest through various ways that will be determined between the Board, School Leader and the Parent Ambassador. Additionally parents will support student learning through participation in school governance, leadership opportunities, School Advisory Team, PTA/PTO, and classroom and school volunteers. RCS will also create an opportunity for a "Grand-Friends" group to organize. Grand-Friends will include the Grand Parents of students and other senior friends who can volunteer time in the school.

Additionally, RCS will seek to nurture partnerships and relationships with other area charter schools and non-profit organizations committed to student learning by sharing information, expertise and talent as a means of fostering mutual support.

## **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.*

Except as otherwise provided by law or the mission of the school as set out in the charter, Ridgeview Charter School shall not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

Pre-admission activities will be limited to providing interested parents with a letter of interest that will include the child's, grade and contact information for the parents. The letter of interest will be clearly marked so as to identify that it is not an enrollment document or an application. It will be used for continued outreach and as a preliminary planning tool

for resources and staffing. We will enroll for the 2018-2019 school year, beginning the day following final approval by the NCSBE and continuing through April 2018. At that time, the determination will be made regarding necessary lottery or whether to continue rolling enrollment until all spaces are filled. If there is a need for the lottery, it will be held in late April, 2018.

We will enroll any eligible students who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade, level, or building. In this case, students shall be accepted by lottery. Once enrolled, students are not required to reapply in sequential enrollment periods, they will however, be required to re-enroll each year prior to the open application period begins. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, Ridgeview Charter School may refuse admission to any student who has been expelled or suspended from a public school under G.S. 115c390.5 through G.S. 115c390.11 until the period of suspension or expulsion has expired.

Any student, residing in the state of North Carolina, must complete the enrollment process to be considered for enrollment. The required enrollment form will consist of, and may not be limited to, the following:

personal data which includes student's name, place of residence, parent/guardians' names and addresses, student's birth date, current grade. Following the first year of operations, RCS may give enrollment priority to siblings of currently enrolled students who were admitted to RCS in the previous year and to children of the school employees. If multiple birth siblings apply for admission to a charter school and a lottery is needed under G.S. 115c238.29F(g) (6), the charter school will capitulate with prevailing law regarding the admission of multiple birth siblings.

No criteria for enrollment will be utilized other than a completed enrollment form and residence in North Carolina. A wait list will be maintained in the event that space becomes available and the school chooses to continue to fill any open enrollment positions. The parent(s) of student(s) may withdraw or transfer their child(ren) at any time. Student records will be forwarded as official documents to the child's receiving school. In order for parents to re-enroll their child(ren) at a later time, they must go back through the school's enrollment process.

## **Weighted Lottery**

*Does your school plan to use a weighted lottery?*

Yes:

No: **X**

*The State Board of Education may approve an applicant's request to utilize a special weighted, or otherwise limited lottery in certain circumstances. If the charter applicant wishes to deviate in any way from the open lottery normally utilized by charter schools, the following requirements must be met:*

1. *In no event may a lottery process illegally discriminate against a student on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or disability.*
2. *A lottery process may not be based upon geographic boundaries, such as zip code or current public school attendance zones.*
3. *A lottery process that deviates from the standard lottery must be based upon the school's unique mission and must be based upon educationally, psychometrically and legally sound practices, protocol and research.*

*If the applicant is requesting to use a weighted, or otherwise limited, lottery, please provide the following:*

1. *A thorough explanation of how the specific mission of the school, as set forth in the application, requires the utilization of the weighted or limited lottery.*
2. *A thorough description of the processes and procedures the applicant intends to use to effectuate the lottery.*
3. *The underlying research, pedagogical, educational, psychometric and legal, that supports the request and the procedures the applicant is requesting.*



**PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2018-19 through 2022-2023**

IDENTIFY LEA FROM WHICH STUDENTS WILL PROBABLY COME

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

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

	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021			2021-2022			2022-2023		
	LEA 360	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 360	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 360	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 360	LEA 600	LEA 000	LEA 360	LEA 600	LEA 000
Kindergarten	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0
Grade 01	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0
Grade 02	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0
Grade 03	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0
Grade 04	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0
Grade 05	0	0	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0
Grade 06	0	0	0	0	0	0	63	6	0	63	6	0	63	6	0
Grade 07	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	63	6	0	63	6	0
Grade 08	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	63	6	0
	315	30		378	36		441	42		504	48		567	54	

## 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.*

Our transportation strategy begins with selecting a location for our facility that is easily accessible, well lit and allows for smooth, orderly traffic flow. We believe that our current, targeted facility fulfills those requirements. The demographics of our targeted population leads us to the reasonable conclusion that, as a condition of enrolling their child at RCS, some parents will need school-provided transportation to safely transport their children to and from school. In accordance with state law, RCS will ensure that transportation is not a barrier to attendance or a deterrent to children who wish to enroll at Ridgeview. Ridgeview will either contract with or directly provide a limited busing option that will establish designated school bus drop off and pick up points throughout the community. The Lead Administrator will encourage parents to work with one another to arrange for children to be delivered to the pick up and drop off locations.

Ridgeview Charter School will also work with the Gaston County Access Program to arrange for a public transportation option in the form of discounted bus passes for our students. We will also request that a transit point be added in front of the school.

Ridgeview will reach out to Gaston County Schools to open a dialogue regarding the options available for shared busing of students, including the identification of district schools to serve as shuttle stops for Ridgeview buses or possibly compensating Gaston County Public Schools for the transport of students to RCS. Although implementing a door-to-door busing pickup route for every student wishing to attend RCS would be ideal, it is cost prohibitive; however, we believe that RCS's planned investment in and commitment to student transportation provides reasonable access to all students throughout Gaston County.

Ridgeview Charter School will have their Transportation Plan finalized in June of 2018. This will allow parents time to decide on what shuttle location would better fit their needs.

### **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.*

Ridgeview Charter School is committed to ensuring that no student begins or ends the school day without a nutritious meal. We recognize the importance of providing meals to our students and we will provide a meal program that follows the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) procurement

requirements in compliance with Federal Regulation 7 CFR 210.16.

A food-service provider will be contracted to operate our food-service program; Preferred Meals or other such vendors. We expect that the majority of our students will qualify for free or reduced meals under the National School Lunch Program and we will process an application to receive reimbursement for the cost of those meals as a means of offsetting the ADM funds currently allocated to cover meal costs. No child at Ridgeview Charter School will ever be excluded from receiving a meal because of an inability to pay or because they failed to bring their own meal on a particular day.

All meals served by RCS will meet the nutritional requirements set forth by the United States Department of Agriculture in accordance with the National School Lunch Program. Our food-service provider will provide extensive support to the school with menu planning, nutritional analysis, food handling safety, and sanitation. A hot meal for lunch will be offered daily, and a cold breakfast will be offered if needed. The goal is to meet students' needs and ensure that students can focus on the work of learning and not their physical hunger. Our lunch program shall be under the jurisdiction of the Division of School Support, of the Child Nutrition Services of the Department of Public Instruction. RCS Lunch Plan and vendors will be finalized in June 2018.

**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	\$1,000,000		\$1,543.00
Officers and Directors/Errors and Omissions	\$1,000,000		\$4,277.00
Property Insurance	\$1,000,000		\$1,500.00
Motor Vehicle Liability	\$1,000,000		\$2,300.00
Bonding Minimum/Maximum Amount	\$250,000	\$1,000,000	\$250.00
Other	\$1,000		\$1,000.00
Total Cost			\$10,870.00

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

jaydub49                      09/18/2016

(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 specific steps the board will take to acquire a facility and obtain the Educational Certificate of Occupancy.

RCS's current facility plan is to locate the school in space created by the redevelopment project for the former Loray Mills in downtown Gastonia, NC. The Loray Mill and Loft Apartment Complex has been described as Gastonia's own "West Side Story". In what was once one of Gaston County's most crime ridden neighborhoods, Loray Mills is revitalizing the area, much to the delight of local residents, many of whom have family connections to the mill's historic past. RCS's Board has met with California-based JBS Ventures, the development company that is renovating and rebuilding the 600,000 square foot facility.

Phase II of the project is approaching its demolition date and Phase II has been identified as the location for RCS. Phase I of Loray Mills include 190 loft apartments, 79,000 square feet of commercial space and 34,000 square feet of amenities. The redevelopment company as well as the local political leadership of Gaston County and Gastonia have expressed their desire to have a charter school residing as a tenant within the facility. The developers have shared that the existing space can be customized to fit the unique needs of a charter school and because the project involves the award of new market tax credits and other historic preservation incentives, the potential lessor has stated that they are amenable to exploring lease terms that will coincide with our budget.

Any facility that Ridgeview occupies will, at least initially, have to be leased by the developer of the space. Upon being awarded a charter, Ridgeview will contact groups such as Charter School Capital to assist in identifying, purchasing, renovating and then leasing the potential site to the school, particularly if the originally planned facility site becomes impractical or cannot be secured.

*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.*

We are budgeting for an average cost of \$8 - \$12/sq. ft./ yr on a graduating scale. The average asking rental price per sq. ft./year for specialized industry properties in Gastonia, NC in 2015 ranged from \$7.00 - \$12.00 according to CityFeet.com.

**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.*

In the event that RCS's first location choice is not completed or acceptable lease terms cannot be established, a contingency facility has been identified in the same general vicinity. The facilities committee will meet semi monthly to monitor the progress of the planned site. Regardless of the stage of completion or lease negotiation, we will identify at least one contingency site and concurrently make plans to occupy the site should circumstances warrant. Ideally, any contingency site will meet all space requirements and will minimize the need to eliminate or curtail any programming. A contingency site with fewer square feet of usable space would also have to include sufficient property to supplement the square footage with a modular set up.

Possible contingency sites may include a church facility with instructional classrooms, a community center or other such facility that will provide sufficient, interim space for instructional programming and daily operations or the development of unused retail space. Ridgeview would also explore available raw land, including a large, retail parking lot, as an option to install a temporary modular facility until such time as a permanent facility can be completed. As a last resort, if instructional square footage is at a premium, administrative offices for the business operations as well as storage for supplies might be relocated off site.

Preparation for a contingency site will begin immediately upon award of the charter. We have engaged a realtor familiar with the Gaston County realty market and zoning requirements for school use and work collaboratively with the realtor to reach out to local land and property owners as well as organizations that occupy/own community centers. Since RCS has not finalized any agreements or contracts with our primary facility choice, engaging a realtor early in the process may also uncover options for a permanent facility alternative that makes more sense from an operational, practical or economic standpoint.

When considering facilities, RCS will determine cost of up-fits and structural changes required to meet local building and safety code requirements and, therefore, obtain a Certificate of Occupancy for Educational Use and make a final decision on a permanent facility based on the best combination of location, capacity and price.

## 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 2018-19**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**LEA #1 360 - Gaston County Schools**

Revenue	2016-2017 Per Pupil Funding	Projected LEA ADM	Approximate funding for 2018-2019
State Funds	\$4,933.33	315	\$1,553,998.95
Local Funds	\$1,344.60	315	\$423,549.00
Federal EC Funds	\$3,579.70	38	\$136,028.60
<b>Totals</b>			\$2,113,576.55

**LEA #2 600 - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools**

Revenue	2016-2017 Per Pupil Funding	Projected LEA ADM	Approximate funding for 2018-2019
State Funds	\$4,852.22	30	\$145,566.60
Local Funds	\$2,457.30	30	\$73,719.00
Federal EC Funds	\$3,579.70	7	\$25,057.90
<b>Totals</b>			\$244,343.50

**Total Budget: Revenue Projections 2018-19 through 2022-2023**

<b>INCOME: REVENUE PROJECTIONS</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>
<b>-State ADM Funds</b>	\$1,699,566	\$2,039,479	\$2,379,258	\$2,719,152	\$3,059,046
<b>-Local Per Pupil Funds</b>	\$497,268	\$596,574	\$696,003	\$795,432	\$894,861
<b>-Exceptional Children Federal Funds</b>	\$161,087	\$193,320	\$225,540	\$257,760	\$286,400
<b>-Other Funds*</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>-Working Capital*</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Z - TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$2,357,920	\$2,829,373	\$3,300,801	\$3,772,344	\$4,240,307

**\*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 J.**

**Personnel Budget: Expenditure Projections 2018-19 through 2022-2023**

*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	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021			2021-2022			2022-2023		
	Num Staff	Avg Salary	Total salary	FTE	Avg Salary	Total salary	FTE	Avg Salary	Total salary	FTE	Avg Salary	Total salary	FTE	Avg Salary	Total salary
Administrative & Support Personnel:															
Lead Administrator	1	\$75,000	\$75,000	1	\$77,250	\$77,250	1	\$79,567	\$79,567	1	\$81,954	\$81,954	1	\$84,413	\$84,413
Assistant Administrator	1	\$55,000	\$55,000	1	\$56,650	\$56,650	1	\$58,350	\$58,350	1	\$60,100	\$60,100	1	\$61,903	\$61,903
Food Service Staff	.5	\$26,000	\$13,000	.5	\$26,780	\$13,390	.5	\$27,583	\$13,792	.5	\$28,410	\$14,205	.5	\$29,262	\$14,631
Custodians	.5	\$26,000	\$13,000	.5	\$26,780	\$13,390	.5	\$27,583	\$13,792	.5	\$28,410	\$14,205	.5	\$29,262	\$14,631
Clerical	.75	\$24,000	\$18,000	1	\$24,072	\$24,072	1	\$24,794	\$24,794	1	\$25,537	\$25,537	1	\$26,047	\$26,047
A - Total Admin and Support:	3.75		\$174,000	4		\$184,752	4		\$190,294	4		\$196,001	4		\$201,625
Instructional Personnel:															
Core Content Teacher(s)	15	\$50,000	\$750,000	18	\$51,500	\$927,000	21	\$53,045	\$1,113,945	24	\$54,636	\$1,311,264	27	\$56,275	\$1,519,425
Electives/Specialty Teacher(s)	3	\$50,000	\$150,000	3	\$51,500	\$154,500	4	\$53,045	\$212,180	4	\$54,636	\$218,544	4	\$56,275	\$225,100
Exceptional Children Teacher(s)	2	\$50,000	\$100,000	4	\$51,500	\$206,000	5	\$53,045	\$265,225	5	\$54,636	\$273,180	5	\$56,275	\$281,375
Teacher Assistants	3	\$20,000	\$60,000	4	\$25,750	\$103,000	5	\$26,522	\$132,610	5	\$27,317	\$136,585	6	\$28,136	\$168,816
Esl Teacher	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	1	\$51,500	\$51,500	1	\$53,045	\$53,045	1	\$54,636	\$54,636	1	\$56,275	\$56,275
Physical Education Teacher	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	1	\$51,500	\$51,500	1	\$53,045	\$53,045	1	\$54,636	\$54,636	1	\$56,275	\$56,275
Ec Contactor / Speech, Physical, Occupational	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	1	\$20,600	\$20,600	1	\$21,218	\$21,218	1	\$21,854	\$21,854
Substitute Teacher	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	1	\$12,000	\$12,000	1	\$14,000	\$14,000	2	\$16,000	\$32,000	2	\$18,000	\$36,000
Aig Teacher	0	\$50,000	\$0	1	\$51,500	\$51,500	1	\$53,045	\$53,045	1	\$54,636	\$54,636	1	\$56,275	\$56,275



B - Total Instructional Personnel:	27		\$1,190,000	34		\$1,577,000	40		\$1,917,695	44		\$2,156,699	48		\$2,421,395
A+B = C - Total Admin, Support and Instructional Personnel:	30.75		\$1,364,000	38		\$1,761,752	44		\$2,107,989	48		\$2,352,700	52		\$2,623,020
Administrative & Support Benefits															
Health Insurance	2	\$1,500	\$3,000	3	\$1,550	\$4,650	3	\$1,600	\$4,800	3	\$2,000	\$6,000	3	\$2,100	\$6,300
Retirement Plan--Other	2	\$850	\$1,700	3	\$900	\$2,700	3	\$950	\$2,850	3	\$1,000	\$3,000	3	\$1,500	\$4,500
Social Security	2	\$1,775	\$3,550	3	\$1,791	\$5,373	3	\$1,856	\$5,568	3	\$1,872	\$5,616	3	\$22,000	\$66,000
Disability	2	\$75	\$150	3	\$80	\$240	3	\$85	\$255	3	\$90	\$270	3	\$95	\$285
Medicare	2	\$450	\$900	3	\$455	\$1,365	3	\$460	\$1,380	3	\$480	\$1,440	3	\$500	\$1,500
D - Total Admin and Support Benefits:	10		\$9,300	15		\$14,328	15		\$14,853	15		\$16,326	15		\$78,585
Instructional Personnel Benefits:															
Health Insurance	25	\$1,500	\$37,500	32	\$1,550	\$49,600	38	\$1,600	\$60,800	41	\$2,000	\$82,000	45	\$2,100	\$94,500
Retirement Plan--Other	25	\$850	\$21,250	32	\$900	\$28,800	38	\$950	\$36,100	41	\$1,000	\$41,000	45	\$950	\$42,750
Social Security	25	\$1,775	\$44,375	32	\$1,791	\$57,312	38	\$1,856	\$70,528	41	\$2,600	\$106,600	45	\$2,700	\$121,500
Medicare	25	\$450	\$11,250	32	\$455	\$14,560	38	\$460	\$17,480	41	\$480	\$19,680	45	\$500	\$22,500
Disability	25	\$75	\$1,875	32	\$80	\$2,560	38	\$85	\$3,230	41	\$90	\$3,690	45	\$95	\$4,275
E - Total Instructional Personnel Benefits:	125		\$116,250	160		\$152,832	190		\$188,138	205		\$252,970	225		\$285,525
D+E = F - Total Personnel Benefits	135		\$125,550	175		\$167,160	205		\$202,991	220		\$269,296	240		\$364,110
A+D = G - Total Admin and Support Personnel (Salary & Benefits)	13.75		\$183,300	19		\$199,080	19		\$205,147	19		\$212,327	19		\$280,210
B+E = H - Total Instructional Personnel (Salary & Benefits)	152		\$1,306,250	194		\$1,729,832	230		\$2,105,833	249		\$2,409,669	273		\$2,706,920
G+H = J - TOTAL PERSONNEL	165.75		\$1,489,550	213		\$1,928,912	249		\$2,310,980	268		\$2,621,996	292		\$2,987,130

**Operations Budget: Expenditure Projections 2018-19 through 2022-2023**

<b>BUDGET OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS</b>		<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>
	Disability	\$75	\$80	\$85	\$90	\$285
	Disability	\$75	\$80	\$85	\$90	\$4,275
	Health Insurance	\$1,500	\$1,550	\$1,600	\$2,000	\$6,300
	Health Insurance	\$1,500	\$1,550	\$1,600	\$2,000	\$94,500
	Medicare	\$450	\$455	\$460	\$480	\$1,500
	Medicare	\$450	\$455	\$460	\$480	\$22,500
	Retirement Plan--Other	\$850	\$900	\$950	\$1,000	\$4,500
	Retirement Plan--Other	\$850	\$900	\$950	\$1,000	\$42,750
	Social Security	\$1,775	\$1,791	\$1,856	\$1,872	\$66,000
	Social Security	\$1,775	\$1,791	\$1,856	\$2,600	\$121,500
	<b>Total Benefits</b>	<b>\$9,300</b>	<b>\$9,552</b>	<b>\$9,902</b>	<b>\$11,612</b>	<b>\$364,110</b>



discussed in the Educational Need section, Gaston County Schools continue to show lags in reading and math performance compared to the statewide composite. Although there are two charter schools operating in Gaston County, they are operating at full capacity and have consistent waiting lists for enrollment. Without additional opportunities for school choice, children are relegated back to a public school system that is still struggling to show achievement gains.

RCS also considered the economic climate and outlook for Gaston County and the fact that it holds promise as a growing community with an increased demand for high quality, public education. Gastonia's low cost of living and recent investments in infrastructure make it an attractive target for industry. As the third-largest county in the Charlotte region situated adjacent to the I-85 corridor and fewer than 15 miles from the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport, Gaston County has seen over \$300M in increased economic activity and outside business investment since 2009. National Gypsum, Dole Foods, REPI, Laxness, Curtiss Wright, FMC, Parker Hannifin, Bridgestone /Firestone, Buckeye Technologies and Hunter Douglas are some of the major corporations that have established roots in Gaston County in recent years. Workers and their families are migrating and/or being transferred to Gaston County and they are seeking educational opportunities for their children. The Gaston County EDC estimates population growth at 11% by 2020, largely as a function of the increased need for skilled workers in the region. Beyond providing for an influx of potential students, these businesses and their employees and leaders represent many countries around the world, bringing diversity and a global heritage to the region, thereby creating a natural connection to the international aspect of our curriculum.

Lastly, RCS used enrollment trends and 2015-16 waiting lists figures at charter schools within 20 mile radius and surveys to gauge demand and establish a basis for enrollment projections. Our first year projection of 345 ADM is based on the average three year enrollment growth and current wait lists at Piedmont Community Charter School, Mt. Island Charter School and Lincoln Charter School.

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

In the event that unforeseen circumstances negatively affect revenues, two strategies will be employed depending upon the cause. Assuming that funds from the state or local are lower than anticipated, RCS will apply for grants, seek corporate donations and fundraise. Assuming that funds are lower than anticipated due to low student enrollment, RCS will reduce staff and transportation to reflect lower enrollment. Other areas for consideration would be staff development, instructional supplies such as hardware, software and office supplies. RCS will look to identify dual role positions and if necessary reduce staff benefits and administrative pay. RCS will use every available resource to improve enrollment including radio, TV, Bill boards and expanded outreach to the community.

*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*

*The School will not rely on other sources of funds besides state, county, and federal funding in years 1 through 5. The School plans to apply for grants and seek corporate sponsorships; however, these funds will be used for supplemental materials or positions and not required operational budgetary items.*

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

Student to Teacher ratio is 23 : 1

- 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.*

The school plans to contract for student information and financial management services, speech therapy, psychological services, and other services required for legally compliant delivery of EC services. For these services and any future contracts for services, the school will follow the following steps: 1. The school's Lead Administrator will receive multiple bids for any contract over \$5,000. 2. The bidding vendors must provide proof of insurance, background checks, and any other necessary liability coverage. 3. Vendors will provide references and experience specifically related to NC charter schools. 4. Recommendations will be taken to the Board of Directors, and the Board will be required to approve all contracts.

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

RCS's budget aligns with the school's mission and curricular offerings in several ways. The budget calls for an investment of over 50% of its resources to direct instructional costs. Audits of schools that first opened in 2010-2012 reflect average direct instructional investments of 41%. This instructional investment shows our commitment to academic excellence through rigorous instruction and our transportation and food plans show our commitment to providing a nurturing environment.

Furthermore, while a majority of charter schools have historically submitted applications calling for arranging private transportation (carpooling) as a transportation solution, RCS believes that at-risk children, particularly those in urban areas, such as Gastonia and Gaston county, have no access to private transportation. RCS recognizes in some circumstances and among some populations, a lack of transportation can be a barrier. Those children, even if offered a better choice in education at a high-quality charter school, would not be able to leverage that choice because a school without transportation services, the solution simply isn't a viable option for them. RCS has, therefore, included in its budget a provision to provide a combination of student busing and public transit passes in order to make RCS accessible to the parents and children who seek a better alternative. While this may not provide a complete solution, we believe that making this investment constitutes a substantial effort to mitigate those barriers and advances our mission.

Furthermore, while a bring-your-own-lunch program is certainly an option for any child who attends RCS, we will also be making a lunch and breakfast program available to our students through a contracted, national service provider. The budget provides for \$2.16 per student, per day to be paid from

state and local ADM funds to fund the child nutrition program, but RCS intends to apply for certification and funding through the NSLP. Any portion of the child nutrition expenses paid from operating funds but recovered through NSLP reimbursements will flow directly back to our bottom line.

Lastly, our planned facility, and the costs associated with leasing it, are intended to leverage growth that will result from a major renovation of the LoRay Mills building in downtown Gastonia. The historic mill is beginning demolition on the second phase that will house a school; the first phase has undergone extensive renovation and revitalization. LoRay Mills will be a combination of loft apartments and retail markets and shops located in the center of a depressed area of Gastonia. Recognizing the benefits of having a school as a conceptual part of their project, the developers are willing to create space within the facility to fit our needs as a school for a reduced per square footage lease rate.

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.*

Fiscal best practices for developing a growth-oriented fund balance at a charter school include enacting policy that compels the board to operate on a zero-based, balance budget from year to year while maintaining a low debt-to-income ratio. The school will implement an (MVP) Maximum Value for Price procurement strategy to ensure that each spending decision creates saving that contributes to the accumulated fund balance of the school. MVP procurement includes codifying in fiscal policy the use of cost saving strategies such as looking for instructional equipment that is slightly used rather than buying new, obtaining competitive bids on purchases and leveraging volume discount. RCS will actively look for companies that are willing to make donations of things like furniture and school supplies. This will help build our general fund. RCS also intends to apply for federal grant awards that would supplant dollars that would otherwise be spent directly from ADM funds, thereby returning them to the general fund for investment in direct instructional needs, reduction or avoidance of debt or growth of the fund balance.

Ridgeview has not used expenditures as a basis for determining the percentage of the fund balance accumulated. Rather, RCS's goal is to achieve consistent annual growth to the fund balance of at least 10% over the prior year's balance. We believe that measuring growth over the prior year fund balance is more reliable and provides a better benchmark from which to track financial growth and communicate it to constituents.

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

Ridgeview will finance only what is necessary. Whenever possible, RCS will pay cash for or look for donations and fund raising opportunities. RCS will live within its financial means to the extent that it does not hinder working capital. However, it is expected that major purchases such as FF&E to be financed. We will attempt to minimize financing through our MVP procurement process, but in instances where leveraging debt is unavoidable,

Ridgeview will seek bids from multiple lenders and will pursue financing structure that strikes an ideal balance between cost of money (i.e. interest charges) and maximizing available working capital.

Certain equipment, such as photocopiers and laptop computers, are more practically financed through an operating lease. An operating lease is a monthly lease where the equipment is not owned by the lessee at the end of the lease term, but is returned to lessor. Generally, with expendable, high use electronics an operating lease makes more sense because the lessor replaces the equipment with new equipment and a renewed lease upon expiration of the lease term. Such arrangements, while slightly more expensive, ensure that the school has the latest technology.

Although no firm commitments have been made on lease terms for a facility, RCS will attempt to negotiate a multi-year lease that provides for a graduating lease rate, thereby deferring costs in the early years to the later years of operation. Any facility that Ridgeview ultimately occupies will, at least initially, have to be leased by the developer of the space.

Upon being awarded a charter, Ridgeview will contact groups such as Charter School Capital to assist in identifying, purchasing, renovating and then leasing a potential site for the school. We will continue to keep our options open, particularly if the originally planned facility site becomes impractical or cannot be secured.

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.*

N/A

**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?*

Ridgeview Charter School Board of Directors will establish internal control standards as well as financial policies and procedures to ensure compliance with Fiscal Control Act and to facilitate annual financial audits, the audit procedures, and the audit requirements adopted by the State Board of Education for Charter School. The RCS Board will also appoint members to a standing Finance/Audit committee. This committee will be responsible for the oversight of the financial accounting and audit functions at the school. Duties will include, but are not limited to:

- \* Work collaboratively with school personal and the Lead Administrator to draft and submit to the Board for approval an annual budget.
- \* Meet with the Lead Administrator and the Contracted Auditor on a weekly basis to view the budget report, cash flow and financial performance.
- \* Establish fiscal policy and procedures in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- \* Issuing the RFP and overseeing the selection process for an annual independent auditor.
- \* Establish the audit timeline and schedule for field work.
- \* Reviewing and presenting the results of the annual audit to the Board of Directors for approval.
- \* Draft the Management Discussions and Analysis (MD&A) that accompanies the audit report.
- \* Contribute to the preparation and review of the annual Form 990.
- \* Review potential financing/leasing instruments.
- \* Draft and oversee implementation of organizational and functional level internal controls.

Ridgeview Charter School will adopt both organizational structure and functional level internal control and will evaluate those controls annually to determine whether or not the implementation is practical and achieves its intended goals. If necessary, modifications will be made to realign controls with the schools financial and operational objectives.

Organizational level controls will document the organizational structure and operational nature of the school and include statements on integrity and values, management philosophy and operating style, training and commitment monitoring of the control environment. Drilling deeper, the school's functional level internal controls will consist of a comprehensive set of written functional level control documents for information systems, general ledger, accounts payable, accounts receivable, purchasing, cash disbursements, cash receipts, payroll including E-verify, journal entries, financial reporting, and fixed assets and depreciation. Each functional level control document will identify and define source documents, enumerate segregated duties and functions, specify output reports and summaries, appoint appropriate authorizer and levels of authorization and provide procedures for errors detection and correction. Lastly the Board of Directors will receive and review all financial information as it relates to Ridgeview Charter School.



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

Ridgeview Charter School is neither aware of nor currently contemplating any 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.*

RCS was trained by Rives and Associates, LLP, and is strongly considering this firm for our audit.

Evan Rives, CPA, CGMA

Rives and Associates LLP

212 W. Center St.

Lexington, NC 27292

336-596-0965 (PH); 336-596-0965

VII AGREEMENT PAGE

**Application Fee:**

*Pursuant to § 115C-218.1(c) the charter school applicant must submit a \$1000 application fee to the Office of Charter Schools. The applicant must submit their application fee by the September 19, 2016 5:00 pm EST deadline. Payments will be accepted in the form of a certified check. Cash is not accepted.*

*\*Application Note: The applicant must mail the certified check along with a letter indicating the name of the proposed charter school, contact information and the enclosed payment amount to be received before or on the due date of September 19, 2016 5:00 pm EST. Failure to submit payment by the stipulated timeline to the Office of Charter Schools will deem the application incomplete.*

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

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

*I understand the requirements pursuant to G.S. 115C-218.1(c).*

jaydub49

Date: 09/18/2016

**Applicant Signature:**

The foregoing application is submitted on behalf of Ridgeview Charter school (*name of non-profit corporation or individuals submitting application*). The undersigned has read the application and hereby declares that the information contained in it is true and accurate to the best of his/her information and belief. The undersigned further represents that the applicant has read the Charter School Law and agrees to be governed by it, other applicable laws, and SBE regulations. Additionally, we understand the final approval of the charter is contingent upon successful completion of a mandatory planning year. Per SBE policy TCS-U-013 All new nonprofit boards receiving a charter must participate in a year-long planning program prior to the charter school's opening for students. The planning year provides an applicant time to prepare for the implementation of the school's curricular, financial, marketing, and facility plans. During this planning year, regular meetings are held with the Board of Directors and consultants from the Office of Charter Schools to provide information on the following topics: school opening plans, staff development, finance, governance, board training, marketing, policies and procedures, securing a school site, and hiring a school administrator.

Final approval of the charter will be contingent upon successfully completing all of the planning program requirements.

Print/Type Name: jaydub49

Board Position: Reshall Williams, Board Chair

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

Date: 09/18/2016

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public Official Seal  
My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.