



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

North Carolina Charter School Application

RISE ACADEMY

Opening in the 2021-2022 School Year

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Application Instructions

APPLICATION AND APPLICATION FEE DUE DATE/TIME	
Fast-Track and Acceleration Applicants (2020 Opening)	5:00pm EST on July 29, 2019
Traditional Timeline Applicants (2021 Opening)	5:00pm EST on August 26, 2019

APPLICATION SPECIFICATIONS

Applicants can submit applications prior to the deadline. **All applications must be submitted using the online portal.** Applicants are to use the following specifications:

1. All applications must be submitted using the online platform. Applications submitted outside of this platform will not be accepted.
2. All submitted applications must be from a nonprofit group approved by the NC Secretary of State, unless being submitted by a municipality.
3. Each major section (Mission, Purposes and Goals, Education Plan, Governance and Capacity, Operations, and Financial Plan) must be located within the designated section, as indicated in the online document.
4. If a particular question does not apply to your team or proposal, respond “Not Applicable,” AND state the reason this question is not applicable to your team or proposal.
5. Each required Appendix must include a title page with the title of the Appendix and the Proposed School Name.
6. Any answer given within the application that is not original to the applicant must include a citation to the source of the answer.
7. Review all elements of the application for completeness before submitting.
8. The full application (including the narrative and all appendices) must be submitted as one PDF document.
9. The budget spreadsheet must also be submitted separately as an excel file.
10. The application narrative, without appendices, may not exceed 100 pages. Applicants submitting special requests are given an additional 5-page allowance, per special request.
11. Each section of the application should be clearly labeled according to the table of contents.
12. Late submissions **will not** be accepted. **No exceptions.**
13. Applicants must turn in the application fee and fee payment form by the stipulated timeline.

Application Contact Information

1. Name of Proposed Charter School: **RISE ACADEMY**
2. Organization Type: Municipality Nonprofit Corporation
 3. Name of non-profit organization under which charter will be organized or operated:
RISE Academy
4. Has the organization applied for 501(c)(3) non-profit status? Yes No N/A (Municipal)

5. 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: Renorda Pryor, Esq.

Title/Relationship to Non-Profit: Board Chair

Mailing Address: 130 Commerce Parkway, Suite 103

City/State/Zip: Garner, NC 27616

Primary Telephone: (919) 522-9245

Alternate Telephone: (919) 522-9245

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

Geographic County: Wake

LEA/District Name: Wake County Public Schools

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

Yes

No

Give the name of the third-party person or group: Torchlight Academy Schools, LLC

Fees provided to the third-party person or group? "0"

8. Provide a full detailed response of the assistance provided by the third-party person or group while preparing this application and when the assistance will end:

Torchlight Academy Schools, LLC provided technical writing support and consulting to the governing board. Torchlight Academy Schools, LLC has entered a management contract with the governing board to manage the day-to-day operation of the school.

9. Is this application a conversion from a traditional public school or private school?

Yes. Complete the Conversion Special Request Section.

No.

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

Yes. Complete the Replication Special Request Section.

No.

Do you want your replication application to be considered for Fast-Track?

Yes. Complete the Fast-Track Special Request Section.

No

11. Do you want your application to be considered for acceleration?

Yes. Complete the Acceleration Special Request Section.

No.

12. Do you want your application to be considered for an Alternative Charter School?

Yes. Complete the Alternative Charter School Special Request Section.

No.

13. Grade Levels Served and Total Student Enrollment

Projected School Opening Year: 2021-2022 Month: August

14. Will this school operate on a year-round schedule? Yes No

15. Enrollment Summary. Complete the following table, graying out (or leaving blank) any rows for grades the school will not serve.

Number of Students						
Grade Level	Year 1 2021-2022	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	At Capacity 2025-2026
K	42	42	42	42	42	42
1	42	42	42	42	42	42
2	42	42	42	42	42	42
3	42	42	42	42	42	42
4	42	42	42	42	42	42
5	0	42	42	42	42	42
6	0	0	42	42	42	42
7	0	0	0	42	42	42
8	0	0	0	0	42	42
9	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	0	0	0	0

Totals	<u>210</u>	<u>252</u>	<u>294</u>	<u>336</u>	<u>378</u>	<u>378</u>
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16. Complete the following table, providing projected enrollment for each of the following demographic groups.

Anticipated Racial/Ethnic Demographics (%)	% of Economically Disadvantaged Students	% of Students with Disabilities	% of English Language Learners
White 47%	>90%	14%	7%
Black 23%			
Hispanic 23%			
Other 7%			

17. Describe the rationale for the number of students and grade levels served in year one and the basis for the growth plan outlined above.

The total number of students in Wake County (158,642) and Johnston County (35,538) presents a substantial pool of potential student applicants. We anticipate that the need for an educational choice far exceeds our initial capacity to start a public charter school. Our numbers are predicted upon available facilities, start-up capacity, and over 250 surveys suggesting strong parental interest.

Certify

18. This subsection is entirely original and has not been copied, pasted, or otherwise reproduced from any other application. I certify I do not certify

Explanation (optional):

RISE ACADEMY board of directors has approved the language used in this section of the application. Part of the language may contain standard language used by our contracted management services provider and their technical writer which help prepare this section of the application.

Charter Application Special Requests

Acceleration

Do you want your application to be considered for acceleration?

Yes. Answer questions A1-5.

No. Stop. Do not complete this section.

A. Per State Board of Education policy [CHTR-013](#), the State Board of Education, in its discretion, may accelerate the mandatory planning year to increase the number of high-quality charter schools. In considering whether to accelerate the planning year, the applicant must meet the following requirements:

1. Demonstrate a clear and compelling need for the accelerated planning year.

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Demonstrate an exceptional need for the charter school in the proposed location.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Agree to participate in the planning year while the charter application is being reviewed without any guarantee of charter award.

Yes

No

4. Is a facility identified by the applicant that is feasible for opening on an accelerated schedule?

Yes

No

5. Demonstrate that the facility identified by the applicant is feasible for opening on an accelerated schedule.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Attach Appendix A1 Acceleration Evidences to demonstrate that you have a facility secured for opening on an accelerated schedule.

B. Once evidence for the requirements has been verified, the State Board will also consider the presence or absence of the following factors in making its determination:

1) Unique mission and educational program.

2) Local, state, and national nonprofit partnerships committed to assisting the school.

3) Potential for economic and educational development of the region.

4) Mentoring by a successful organization that has experience in creating public schools.

- 5) Obstacles to educational reform efforts that leave chartering as an available option.
 - 6) Commitment to work with a successful charter school board as a guiding mentor.
 - 7) The length of time the board of directors has existed.
 - 8) Whether the proposed board has previously operated or currently operates a successful public charter school.
- C. The above list is not exclusive or controlling and is intended to guide the exercise of the State Board's discretion. An applicant requesting acceleration must submit the request to the State Board of Education prior to the application due date for consideration.

Conversion

1. Is this application a Conversion from a traditional public school or private school?
 Yes. Go to Question #2.

No. Stop. Do not complete this section.

2. Is the Conversion Public or Private? Public. Complete Question #3 below.

Private. Complete Questions #4 and 5 below.

3. Public Conversion Information

*Give the name and six-digit identifier of the school being converted: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

If application is for a public conversion, submit Appendix A2.1: Public Conversion Evidences

Conversion evidences must include:

- 1) Statement of Support signed by the majority of the teachers and instructional support personnel currently employed at the school
- 2) Last payroll outlining current staff receiving compensation from the traditional public school
- 3) Current school enrollment
- 4) Parent support of the conversion

4. Financial History

Outline the 3-year financial history of the proposed converted charter school in the chart below as evidenced in either financial statements or the IRS Form 990. Supporting documentation will be attached as Appendix A2.

Financial History 3 Years Prior	Financial History 2 Years Prior	Financial History 1 Year Prior

5. Private Conversion Information

Name of the private school being converted: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

City and state where private school is located: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

- 1) Describe the rationale for converting from a private entity to a public school. Include information regarding how the proposed charter school will be nonsectarian in nature and will be open for all students (not just those currently attending the private school).

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

- 2) Provide a detailed description of the existing private school's financial status, including the process in which these financial assets or deficits will be transferred to the non-profit organization.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Provide a copy of the organization's IRS Form 990 for the last three years as Appendix A2.2 Private Conversion Evidences. If the current organization does not have a Form 990, tax information for the last three years along with financial statements must be included as Appendix A2.2 Private Conversion Evidences.

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

Replication

Per SBE policy [CHTR-016](#), the State Board of Education (SBE) may, in certain well-defined instances, grant permission for a non-profit corporation board of directors (board) to replicate either its own successful model, or to employ an educational management company (EMO) or a charter management organization (CMO) to replicate a successful model currently being operated under the management of the EMO or CMO. The SBE may also, in certain well-defined instances, grant permission for a non-profit corporation board to “fast track” such a replication by foregoing the planning year normally required for newly-approved charter applicants.

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

Yes. Go to Question #2. No. Do not complete this section.

2. If yes, please provide the name of the charter school and the state that the charter school has been authorized to operate in.

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

3. Are you a board of directors currently operating a charter school in NC and applying to replicate its currently existing model?

Yes. Answer questions #4-6. No. Go to Question #7.

4. A board of directors that currently operates a charter school in NC is eligible to apply to replicate its currently existing model only if the board’s current school or schools demonstrate a consistent record of academic, financial, and operational success. If the board operates more than one school, each school must meet this standard. To meet this standard, the board must meet each of the following conditions:

A) Each school operated by the board must have academic outcomes at least comparable to those of the students enrolled in the LEAs in which they are located. In addition, each school operated by the board must meet or exceed student growth consistent with State standards, for three years immediately preceding the application, and maintain that growth throughout the application period.

B) Each school operated by the board must have unqualified audits for the three years immediately preceding the application, and must maintain that fiscal standard throughout the application period.

C) Each school operated by the board must have resolved any noncompliance issues cited by NCDPI during the three years immediately preceding the application and must maintain this standard throughout the application period.

D) A majority of the board and 50% or greater of the board’s officers must be North Carolina residents.

Does your board meet the each of criteria listed above? Yes No

Attach as Appendix A3.1 Replication Educational Outcomes - for the replicated school for the last three academic years.

5. Describe which academic qualifications the non-profit board has met that qualify them for replication. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

6. Outline the 3-year financial history of the proposed replicated charter school in the chart listed below as evidenced in financial statements or IRS Form 990. Attach the related documents as Appendix A3.2 Replication Financial Evidences.

Financial History 3 Years Prior	Financial History 2 Years Prior	Financial History 1 Year Prior

7. Are you a board of directors that does not currently operate a school but is partnering to replicate an existing model operated by an EMO/CMO?
 - Yes. Answer questions #8-10 below.
 - No. Go to Question #11.

8. Eligibility Criteria
 - A) A board of directors partnering to replicate an existing model operated by an EMO/CMO must demonstrate that each of the schools being managed by the EMO/CMO in North Carolina
 - 1) have an academic proficiency comparable to the LEAs in which the current schools are located; or
 - 2) meet or exceed growth for the three years immediately preceding the application at issue.

If the EMO/CMO does not manage any schools in NC or the schools it manages in NC do not yet have the data listed above, the board must demonstrate to the SBE that the schools operated in other states by the EMO/CMO meet similarly rigorous standards for academic performance. The EMO/CMO must continue to meet these standards throughout the application period.

- B) The board must demonstrate that each of the schools in North Carolina managed by the EMO/CMO have unqualified audits without fiscal compliance issues for three years immediately preceding the application.

If the EMO/CMO does not currently manage any schools in NC or the schools in NC it manages do not yet have the data listed above, the board of directors must demonstrate to the SBE that the schools operated in other states by the EMO/CMO meet similarly

rigorous standards for financial performance. The board of directors must maintain this standard through the application period.

Does the EMO/CMO partnering with the board meet the criteria listed above? Yes
 No

Attach as Appendix A3.1 Replication Educational Outcomes - for the replicated school for the last three academic years.

9. Describe which academic qualifications schools managed by the EMO/CMO have met that make them suitable for replication. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

10. Outline the 3-year financial history of the proposed replicated charter school in the chart listed below as evidenced in financial statements or IRS Form 990. Attach the related documents as Appendix A3.2 Replication Financial Evidences.

Financial History 3 Years Prior	Financial History 2 Years Prior	Financial History 1 Year Prior

11. **Fast Track Replication**

Do you want your application to be considered for Fast-Track Replication?

Yes. Complete the Fast Track Eligibility Criteria below.

No. You have completed the Replication Special Request section. Please attach the required appendices **3.1 Education Outcomes** for the replicated school(s) for the last three academic years, and **3.2 Replication Financial Evidences IRS Form 990**, bank statements for the replicated school(s) for the prior three years.

Fast Track Replication Eligibility Criteria

Per State Board of Education policy [CHTR-016](#), a non-profit corporation board that does not currently operate a charter school in NC is eligible to apply to replicate through fast-track replication an existing model operated by an EMO/CMO. The non-profit corporation board is eligible to apply only if the schools operated by the EMO/CMO have a consistent track record of academic, financial, and operational success. The non-profit corporation is eligible to replicate an existing model operated by the EMO/CMO only if the non-profit corporation board meets each of the following conditions:

1. The non-profit corporation board must demonstrate that each of the schools being managed by the EMO/CMO in North Carolina (1) have an academic proficiency comparable to the LEAs in which the current schools are located; or (2) meet or exceed growth for the three years immediately preceding the application at issue. If the EMO/CMO does not manage any schools in NC or the schools it manages in NC do not yet have the data listed above, the non-profit corporation board must demonstrate to the SBE that the schools operated in other states by the EMO/CMO meet similarly rigorous standards for academic performance. The EMO/CMO must continue to meet these standards throughout the application period.

The non-profit corporation board meets at least one of the qualifications above. Yes No

*Attach as Appendix A3.1 Replication Educational Outcomes - for the replicated school for the last three academic years. Describe which academic qualifications the non-profit board has met that qualify them for replication.

2. The non-profit corporation board must demonstrate that each of the schools in North Carolina managed by the EMO/CMO have unqualified audits without fiscal compliance issues for three years immediately preceding the application. If the EMO/CMO does not currently manage any schools in NC or the schools it manages in NC do not yet have the data listed above, the non-profit corporation board must demonstrate to the SBE that the schools operated in other states by the EMO/CMO meet similarly rigorous standards for financial performance. The non-profit corporation board must maintain this standard through the application period.

The non-profit corporation board meets at least one of the qualifications above. Yes No

3. Each school operated by the non-profit corporation must have resolved any noncompliance issues cited by NCDPI during the three years immediately preceding the application and must maintain this standard throughout the application period.

The non-profit corporation board meets at least one of the qualifications above. Yes No

4. A majority of the non-profit corporation board members and 50% or greater of the board officers must be North Carolina residents.

The non-profit corporation board meets at least one of the qualifications above. Yes No

Alternative

Do you want your application to be considered for an Alternative Charter School?

- Yes. Continue to the next section.
- No. Stop. Do not complete this section.**

In order to qualify for designation as an “alternative school” for purposes of accountability under this policy (CHTR-020), the charter school must demonstrate that it serves a student population as follows:

1. The school must include grades 9-12.
2. At least 75% of the school’s population in grades 9-12 must be at-risk of academic failure as defined in [DROP-001.I.B.](#), and must also meet one or more of the following:
 - a. The student must either be recently released from a juvenile justice facility, or otherwise be subject to and participating in the juvenile justice court process;
 - b. The student must be currently served by a treatment facility licensed pursuant to Chapter 122C of the General Statutes, or have recently been discharged from such a facility;
 - c. The student must be currently under long-term suspension from a public or private school; or
 - d. The student must be a high-school dropout as defined in GCS-Q-001 (linked above); or be imminently at risk of dropping out as demonstrated by adequate documentation in the charter school’s application for designation under this policy.

Does your proposed school meet the minimum criteria?

Yes. No.

*A charter school meeting the eligibility criteria set forth in this policy and seeking designation as an “alternative school” must submit an application to the Office of Charter Schools describing in detail the school’s mission as it relates to the request for the designation; the criteria the school plans to use that will meet the eligibility requirements set forth above, including the documentation the school will use to support its admissions process; how the school intends to serve the select population, educationally and otherwise; and the goals the school is setting for academic achievement for this population. The application must also include an admission plan that is well-defined and specifically limited to serving at-risk student as described in the application. A plan that is not well-defined will not be approved.

*The school must, in its application, designate which of the alternative accountability options it is requesting under [ACCT-038](#). The option selected, if approved, cannot be changed except at the time of renewal (as outlined in [CHTR-020.III](#)).

Proposed Management Organization (EMO or CMO)

1. Does the Charter School plan to contract for services with an “educational management organization” or “charter management organization?”

Yes No. **Stop do not complete this section.**

2. Name of the Company: Torchlight Academy Schools LLC

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 19191

City/State/Zip: Raleigh, NC 27619

Phone Number: (919) 538-8060

Contact Person: Don McQueen

Email Address: torchlight.director@gmail.com

Website: tlaedu.com

3. Explain how the contract with the specified EMO or CMO will be in the best educational and financial interest of the charter school.

Torchlight Schools’ first school was Torchlight Academy, located in Wake County where RISE Academy is seeking to establish. The board members of RISE Academy were made aware of Torchlight Schools due to their proximity and success with socioeconomically disadvantaged students in our home county.

Torchlight Schools has also offered to provide \$50,000 in available funds to pay for the planning year, marketing, furnishings, and whatever else is necessary to successfully and efficiently open and operate RISE Academy.

Torchlight offers a turn-key solution that provides our board with various areas of expertise and experience that include academics, facility, financial, and charter school operational requirements.

Attach Appendix A4.1: Executed Management Contract

4. What other EMO/CMOs were pursued and why did the applicant select this one? Please include information regarding other management organizations' fees and financial/academic records that led to the selection of the proposed EMO/CMO as the best fit for this proposed school.

RISE Academy examined multiple management companies that operate in North Carolina such as KIPP, National Heritage Academies, and Team CFA. These organizations all had varying levels of success in North Carolina, and none of them offered blatantly obvious financial benefits by partnering with them.

KIPP currently has four schools with “KIPP” in the name in North Carolina. Of those four, three are D schools and two are not meeting growth.

CFA currently has three schools with “CFA” in the name in North Carolina. One did not meet growth, and none exceeded growth this past year.

NHA operates a large amount of schools in North Carolina with one recently opening in Johnston County. NHA also operates Preeminent Charter north of where we anticipate placing RISE Academy. This school had been a D school for three years up until this most recent year.

We ultimately decided to go with Torchlight Schools because of their history of exceeding growth every year, their accomplishment as operating a school with the highest academic growth of any charter school in the state, their roots in North Carolina, and their willingness to invest in our success by providing \$50,000 which can be found in Appendix M.

5. Provide and discuss student performance, governance performance and financial data from other schools managed by the management company to demonstrate how this organization is a good fit for the targeted student population. Nationally, what are the highest and lowest performing schools of the EMO/CMO? Why are these two schools so different in overall achievement?

Torchlight Schools’ data and Garner school data can be found in Appendix O. They vastly outperform surrounding schools’ percentage of grade proficient students among Black and economically disadvantaged students. With their two-decade long track record serving an urban community like that of Garner, their model makes logical sense in transitioning south of the county.

6. Describe how the governance structure will be affected, if at all, by the EMO/CMO, and particularly discuss how the board of directors of the charter school will govern the school independently of the EMO/CMO.

The EMO is a vendor of the charter school. The EMO will have a representative that will be made aware of all board meetings to keep abreast of all issues. The EMO will advise in academic, financial, and operational matters, but the ultimate decision and authority lies with the charter school board.

7. Provide a description of the relationship that will exist between the charter school employees and the Management Organization.

The employees of the charter school, except the teachers, will be hired and directly report to the EMO. The board will sign-off on the Lead Administrator and will review teacher hiring's, but the staff ultimately reports to the management company. The teachers will be jointly hired by the board and management company.

8. Explain how the contract includes measurable objectives whereby the charter school board can evaluate annually the performance of the EMO/CMO, and if necessary, terminate the contract without significant obstacles.

The school can terminate the contract without cause as long as a 90-day notice is given. The facility is not owned by the EMO, and the board will receive regular reports of the school's performance each month by the agreed upon Lead Administrator. The contract does not have specific measurements that relate to termination. The board has the autonomy and choice to eliminate the contract at any time. The board will evaluate the EMO yearly based upon the goals set in this application and goals set as the school matures.

9. Is the facility provided by the EMO/CMO? Yes No

Attach Appendix A4.2 Facility Buyout Agreement, if applicable

10. List the fund balance and surpluses for each school managed by the EMO/CMO over the last three years in North Carolina.

Torchlight Academy
2018=\$204,089
2017=\$110,336
2016=\$320,068

Attach Appendix A4.3: EMO/CMO Financial History

Provide as Appendix A4.3 the financial history and statements of the EMO/CMO over the last three years. Specifically, if contracting with an EMO, provide confirmation that the EMO is in good standing by providing bank statements from the prior three years.

Attach Appendix A4.4: IRS Form 990

Provide as Appendix A4.4 the IRS Form 990 (or equivalent documents if the organization does not file a 990) for the prior three years.

Section 1 Mission, Purposes, and Goals

1.1 Mission and Vision. State the mission and vision of the proposed charter school. The mission statement defines the organization’s purpose and primary objectives, describing why it exists. The mission statement should indicate in measurable terms what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree. The vision statement outlines how the school will operate and what it will achieve in the long term. The vision statement should describe what the school will look like when it is achieving its mission. The mission and vision statement provide the foundation for the entire proposal.

The mission and vision statements, taken together, should:

- Identify the students and community to be served;
- Illustrate what success will look like; and
- Align with the purposes of the NC Charter School Law.

1. The mission statement of the proposed charter school is as follows (35 words or less):

“To provide students a well-rounded education to prepare them for a globally competitive society.”

2. What is the vision of the proposed school? What will the school look like when it is achieving the mission?

RISE is an acronym for Restoration, Innovating, Students for Excellence. Students graduating from RISE Academy’s terminal grade level will have received a well-rounded education which enables them to think critically and to appreciate the Arts. RISE’s Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) Infusion program and foreign language study will give students an international focus which enables them to understand and compete globally.

When the school is achieving its mission, students will be fully engaged in a rigorous STEAM Infusion Program and studying foreign language. Parents and stakeholders will give the school high marks for the quality of its programming and the success of its students. The school’s use of active-based learning is designed to provide the school’s educationally disadvantaged student population with a research-based best educational practice whose foundation is in the brain-based sciences. The school’s teachers will receive training in culturally responsive teaching and “Teach Like a Champion” which complements the overall strategy of providing educationally disadvantaged students with a high-quality education.

Educational Need and Targeted Student Population of the Proposed Charter School

3. 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. Additionally, how it will reflect the socioeconomic status of the LEA, SWD population, and ELL population of the district?

[See G.S. 115C-218.45\(e\).](#)

RISE Academy will initially serve 210 students with 150 from Wake County and 60 from Johnston County. Wake County Public School's total student population is about 47 percent White, 23 percent Black, and 23 percent Hispanic. Johnston County Schools' student population is about 56 percent White, 16 percent Black, and 16 percent Hispanic. The immediately surrounding school population, as seen in Appendix O, is 29% White, 36% Black, and 30% Hispanic. The school will draw a population which is comparable to the local school districts in terms of race, ethnicity, students with disabilities, and English language learners. The school will be physically located in Wake County. About 34.2 percent of Wake County students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. It is anticipated that RISE Academy will draw a substantially higher percentage of students in poverty as compared to the local district. RISE Academy anticipates that about 14 percent of its students will be students with disabilities, and about 10 percent will be English language learners based upon area data.

4. What are the enrollment trends and academic performance outcomes of surrounding schools in the selected community? What elements of your educational model will meet the needs of your target student population?

The local school district enrolled 124,315 students in grades K-8 in 2015-2016, the total was 124,471 in 2016-2017, and 114,616 in 2017-2018. Enrollment peaked in 2016-2017 and declined in 2017-2018. The achievement gaps between White and Black students exceeds an average of 20 percent in Vandora Springs Elem., Smith Elementary, Creech Road Elementary, Aversboro Elementary, East Garner, North Garner, and Rand Road Elem. The White/Hispanic achievement gap exceeds an average 12 percent at the same schools. Students with disabilities were about 26 percent proficient, English language learners 38 percent proficient, and Economically Disadvantaged students 39 percent proficient in 2018. Students in Garner are performing well below the Wake County average and is in dire need of a local, high-quality school of choice.

RISE Academy's target student population consists of a large population of educationally disadvantaged students. The school's STEAM Infusion program along with its use of active-based learning strategies and Teach Like a Champion (TLAC) is designed to engage all students and provide a rigorous academic setting that prepares students to compete at the global level.

5. 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 in grades 9-12).

RISE Academy will serve 210 students in grades K-4 in year one. By year five, RISE Academy will serve about 378 students in grades K-8. Wake County Schools has about 114,616 students in grades K-8. RISE Academy will serve about 3/10 of 1% of Wake County Schools' comparable grade levels.

6. Summarize what the proposed school will do differently than the schools that are now serving the targeted population. What will make this school unique and more effective than the currently available public-school options?

RISE Academy is a STEAM Infusion school which will use active-based learning strategies as its overarching instructional method. RISE Academy will distinguish itself from the local school district school by its STEAM focus, its use of active-based learning, its teacher training in Culturally Responsive Teaching, its foreign language program, its leadership and ethics education, Teach Like a Champion, and the school's distinct school culture. The combination of these strategies is anticipated to make RISE Academy more effective than the available public-school options with the targeted student population.

7. Describe the relationships that have been established to generate support for the school. How have you assessed demand for the school? Briefly describe these activities and summarize their results.

RISE Academy's board of directors has been working to organize a public charter school in the community for the past two years. We have conducted surveys, community forums and other events. The school conducted a survey that brought in over 250 surveys with 100% of respondents indicating they would support opening a new public charter school in the Garner area. 75% of the total respondents had grade age children.

In addition, our board is comprised of multiple church leaders in the community. These leaders have been seeking to open a school in the area for the past two years. The board has long-standing relationships with the community and has worked with a multitude of organizations over their years in the community.

Attach Appendix A: Evidence of Community/Parent Support. Provide evidence that demonstrates parents and guardians have committed to enrolling their children in your school. 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).

1.2 Purposes of the Proposed Charter School

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. In one page or less, describe how the proposed charter school will achieve one or more of the six legislative purposes, as specifically addressed in the NC charter school statute GS 115C-218, and the proposed school's operations.

RISE Academy is a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) infused school. Its mission and vision include providing a well-rounded education to its students. Use of the STEAM model is designed to help students develop the reasoning and analytical skills needed to succeed in a globally competitive society. The school will fulfill the legislative purpose of “[creating] new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunities to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.” RISE Academy’s management plan is to hire teachers that are provided a new professional opportunity which makes them responsible for the onsite learning program. The teachers will receive training in active-based learning and “Teach Like a Champion.” Teachers will also be training in data-drive instruction. Each teacher will be responsible for their students’ academic achievement. Teachers will be evaluated based primarily upon student academic outcomes.

RISE Academy shall also satisfy the legislative purpose of “increasing learning opportunities for all students, with a special emphasis on at-risk or gifted students.” RISE Academy’s use of the STEAM Infusion model provides students with increased learning opportunities by addressing the logical and analytical reasoning side of the education variable as well as the creative and artistic side of learning. The well-rounded education provide by RISE Academy increases the learning opportunities for both at-risk students and academically gifted students by its focus on the logical-analytic as well as the creative-artistic sides of learning.

Lastly, RISE Academy will fulfill the purpose of “improving student learning.” Students in this area are doing worse than the county average and are not offered local schools of choice. Our school will provide a new environment and program that has experienced success in other socioeconomically disadvantaged, urban areas.

1.3 Goals for the Proposed Charter School

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

The governing board of RISE Academy will adopt a matrix of goals for which the school's lead administrator shall submit an annual report to the governing board and the school's stakeholders (including parents) each year at a date and time to be fixed by the board. The annual report shall report the school's progress toward achieving said goals. RISE Academy goals to be reported upon for each of the first five years are as follows:

Operations

The school's lead administrator shall include progress on the operations matrix goals as part of its monthly report at each governing board meeting. The operating goals are as follows:

1. Meet 100% of all requirements for facilities inspections for fire, health, and safety.
2. Meet 100% of health and sanitation requirements for the school's child nutrition program.
3. Meet 100% of safety requirements for the school's bus transportation program including bus inspections.
4. Meeting 100% of state licensure requirements for staff, including teachers and other personnel requiring a professional license.
5. Meet 100% of requirements for recordkeeping including student records, exceptional children records, business, and financial records.

Academics

The school's lead administrator shall include progress on the academic matrix goals as part of its monthly report at each governing board meeting. The academic goals are as follows:

1. The school will test greater than 100% of all students required to be tested under the N.C. Accountability Program.
2. Each student subgroup matriculating at the school will achieve a minimum of 1.2 times growth over the previous year or the beginning of year benchmark test.
3. Each student subgroup matriculating at the school will exceed the performance composite of the local school district for the same subgroups by 5 points.
4. All non-state tested grades will show 1.2 times growth over their beginning year benchmark test by the end of the school year.
5. All non-state tested grades year end performance composite will exceed their initial benchmark performance composite by 5 percent.

Finance

The finance goals shall be reviewed each quarter by the governing board where indicated:

1. The governing board will adopt an annual operating budget each fiscal year for the next fiscal year by June 15th of each year.
2. The school's annual single audit, completed by a Local Government Commission approved Independent Certified Public Accountant, will show no deficit and zero "0" adverse finding.
3. The school will have zero "0" non-compliance finding in its financial operations for all state, local, and federal programs.
4. The governing board shall receive 12-month financial reports each year, one for each month of the year which shows the schools financial position including the approved budget, funds received, and funds expended.
5. The governing board shall monitor its Dun & Bradstreet Credit Report each quarter and assure that all its current bills are paid on time and the school maintains a high credit rating.

Governance

The governance goals shall be reviewed by the governing board each quarter where indicated:

1. The board shall conduct a minimum of ten (10) regular board meeting per year.
 2. A total of 100% of governing board members will complete an annual conflict of interest disclosure by June 30th each year.
 3. The governing board will complete an annual self-evaluation by June 30th each year.
 4. The governing board will complete a formal evaluation of the lead administrator by June 30th each year.
 5. The governing board shall complete a formal service evaluation of the contracted educational services provider by June 30th each year.
 6. The governing board and all staff will complete an annual updated background check.
2. How will the governing board know that the proposed public charter school is working toward attaining their mission statement?

RISE Academy’s governing board will establish several matrices to inform itself that the school is working toward attaining its mission statement. Those matrices, at a minimum, will include academic, operations, financial, and governance indicators. The school’s mission is “To provide students a well-rounded education to prepare them for a globally competitive society.” The mission ties directly to student academic performance. Therefore, student academic performance shall be one indicator the board will require regular reports on. For example, the board will require a full report on each benchmark test provided to students including being appraised of students’ overall academic progress toward grade level proficiency.

Section 2 Education Plan

2.1 Instructional Program

1. 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.

RISE ACADEMY is a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) Infusion school. STEAM “is an educational approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking.” (EducationCloset.com) The school will provide a well-rounded education to students to prepare them for a globally competitive society as stated in the school’s mission statement. The school will merge several research-based best practice methods to create its overall educational plan. Those elements include STEAM Infusion throughout the entire curriculum, use of active-based learning as the overarching instructional method, use of Teach Like a Champion as the major classroom management strategy, use of Culturally Responsive Teaching training to prepare teachers to address the needs of a diverse student population, implementation of foreign language study, computer coding, and training in leadership and ethics to round out the course of study. Finally, the school’s emphasis on improving students’ reading, math, and science test scores is embraced in the school’s overall strategy and school culture.

RISE ACADEMY instructional program’s philosophical underpinnings include a blend of John Dewey’s philosophy of pragmatism, and Maria Montessori’s scientific pedagogy. The

school's educational plan's elements trace back through multiple generations of research-based practices to Dewey and Montessori's educational philosophies. The instructional program is brain-based and academically rigorous. The school will use the North Carolina Standard Course of Study as the educational standards for the schools reading, math, science, and social studies programs. The school will supplement the North Carolina Standard Course of Study with "Integrated K-8 Arts Integration & STEAM Curriculum Supplement" from EducationCloset.com. The primary instructional method or strategy is active-based learning strategies. The school will draw content materials from multiple sources including content resources available in School Net. The school will use testing resources from School Net to conduct benchmark testing at the beginning of the school year and at the end of each marking period. The culminating summative assessment will come from School Net, mClass, and the N.C. End-of-Grade (EOG) Test.

RISE ACADEMY will ultimately serve grades K-8. Public data shows that educationally disadvantaged grades K-8 students significantly underperform majority students on End-of-Grade (EOG) Test in the target area. Longitudinal analysis of the target population's academic performance indicates these students ultimately experience high student dropout rates, and experience significant achievement gaps on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Many of these students are identified as operating within a school-to-prison pipeline. Research-based educational best practices data indicates that our proposed educational model will build a strong academic foundation for our students and divert them from the school-to-prison pipeline.

Active-based learning strategies are brain-based learning strategies which fully engage students by stimulating multiple learning domains during each lesson. It has been demonstrated that students engaged in active-based learning retain information longer and gain a more in-depth understanding of the information the first time they learn it. The active-based learning method has demonstrated success in helping students achieve consistent high academic growth with Torchlight Academy in Raleigh and has produced high performance composite scores with students in Success Academy Schools with educationally disadvantaged students in New York.

RISE ACADEMY is a data-driven school that will use data-driven instruction to focus its academic program in reading, math, and science. Teachers will receive professional development in data-driven instruction and implement the same under the leadership of the school's instructional leader. Data-driven instruction means that, as a first element, teachers will begin the school year with a pacing guide which lays out an annual schedule for teaching students' mastery of the N.C. Standard Course of Study grade level standards. Next, the initial benchmark test will assess where students are in mastery of grade level standards at the beginning of the school year. Each marking period students will be assessed to determine progress in mastery of grade level standards. Data is used, starting with the initial benchmark, to determine whether students are making adequate progress or if they are in need of any special interventions such as special small group instruction, tutoring, or other academic interventions. The essence of data-driven instruction is using data as a diagnostic tool to determine student needs as early as possible and to use the data to facilitate incremental student progress.

The school calendar provides in excess of 1025 hours of instruction for the academic school year. The typical school day runs from 7:00 a.m. to 3:35 p.m. The school's emphasis on building successful readers includes a daily scheduled 90-minute reading/ela block. Students also have a daily 60-minute mathematics block.

RISE Academy will use phonics-based reading instruction embracing the Orton-Gillingham model for reading instruction in the early grades. The reading program will expand to a blend of phonics and whole language instruction by grade 2. The school's reading program will

place an emphasis of student’s learning about classical literature and the great works of Western Civilization including the Declaration of Independence, and the U.S. Constitution.

RISE Academy’s mathematics program is based upon the objectives of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The program will encourage teachers to develop a “profound understanding of math” as presented by Dr. Liping Ma in her seminal work entitled, “Knowing and Teaching Elementary Mathematics.” The math program will heavily focus the understanding of place value and the basic elements and properties of numbers.

RISE Academy’s science program will use many resources from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s public resources. The school will work to give students a global awareness of science and expanding global technology.

RISE Academy’s arts program will include engaging students in performance and artistic expression. Students will be introduced to music appreciation, appreciation of great works of art in painting and sculpture, and the introduction of art through the ages.

STEAM Infusion

RISE Academy will use the Integrated K-8 Arts Integration & STEAM Curriculum Supplement to support its STEAM Infusion Program. RISE Academy will infuse STEAM into the core curriculum as follows:

Reading/ELA

RISE Academy will infuse STEAM into the school’s reading program by requiring that teachers select reading material and classroom presentations that include STEAM subjects, topic discussions, and STEAM related activities. For example, students may spend time reading about inventors, scientists, engineers, and artists.

Math

RISE Academy will infuse STEAM into the school mathematics program by requiring that teachers include materials and classroom presentations which embrace STEAM subjects, topic discussions, and STEAM related activities. For example, students may participate in projects designed to illustrate how student math lessons relate to engineering problems, and so forth.

Science

RISE Academy will infuse STEAM into the school science program by requiring that teachers include materials and classroom presentations which embrace STEAM subjects, topic discussions, and STEAM related activities. For example, students may explore NASA programs.

Social Studies

RISE Academy will infuse STEAM into the school social studies program by requiring that teachers include materials and classroom presentations which embrace STEAM subjects, topic discussions, and STEAM related activities. For example, students may explore how technology impacts the social environment.

Other Classes

RISE Academy none core classes will include direct STEAM related topics. (See: Appendix E: Daily/Weekly Calendar).

Curriculum and Instructional Design

2. 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.

The school will serve grades K-8 in a classroom-based educational model. The target class size is a minimum of 18 students and maximum of 22 students per classroom. The minimum teacher-to-student ratio is 1 to 21. Each classroom will have a teacher with training in strategies of “Teach Like a Champion.” “Teach Like a Champion” includes about 40 strategies to manage student behavior and fully engages students in a rigorous academic program. As brain-based learning proponents, the school will provide teachers with professional development in managing the classroom environment’s lighting, temperature, and acoustics to ensure the optimum learning environment. The instructional leader will periodically monitor the classroom ecology and consult with teachers to ensure teachers are providing students the optimum learning environment. Each classroom will have access to computers for a portion of the school day. Each classroom will be equipped with an interactive whiteboard and document camera. Teachers will provide a 21st Century classroom experience to students.

3. Identify how this curriculum aligns with the proposed charter school's mission, targeted student population, and North Carolina Accountability Model. Provide evidence that the chosen curriculum has been successful with the target student population, how the plan will drive academic improvement for all students, and how it has been successful in closing achievement gaps.

The curriculum and target student population alignment to the school’s mission is characterized by the STEAM Infusion program and use of active-based learning as an overarching instructional strategy. Active-based learning is designed to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students. We define curriculum to mean the educational standards, instructional strategies, content materials, and assessment plan which governs the school’s academic program. The main operant feature of our chosen curriculum includes active-based learning strategies. Active-based learning strategies have been successful with achieving high academic growth with educationally disadvantaged students at Torchlight Academy and have produced high academic performance composites with Success Academics in New York with educationally disadvantaged students. As a brain-based strategy, active-based learning is in the tradition of Maria Montessori’s scientific pedagogy and John Dewey’s philosophy of pragmatism. The practices have demonstrated success with multiple student groups including the students proposed to attend RISE ACADEMY. The school’s chosen curriculum will drive academic improvement for all students by providing a step-

by-step process for guiding instruction and obtaining feedback on progress through assessment. The systematic management of student academic progress will enable teachers and the instructional leader to experience success in closing achievement gaps by empowering the instructional staff (teachers and instruction leader) to identify achievement gaps early and work systematically to ameliorate them through a structured approach.

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.

Teachers are expected to master active-based learning strategies. Active-based learning strategies embrace teacher's understanding of student learning styles, recognize the social side of learning, and create fun and exciting learning experiences to make learning experiences unforgettable. Active-based learning strategies represent state of the art brain-based learning experiences which fully engage students' cognitive processing skills and stimulate active student participation in the learning experience. Teachers will receive professional development in active-based learning strategies prior to the start of the school year plus ongoing professional development in active-based learning strategies. Teacher mastery of grade level and subject appropriate active-based learning strategies will significantly enhance teacher's teaching skills-kits and give them confidence to proactively manage their classrooms and measure outcomes on a daily basis. Active-based learning strategies work because they are designed based upon how students actually learn as opposed to how students theoretically learn.

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.

RISE Academy's instructional plan is designed to facilitate student mastery of grade level standards and content materials. The plan facilitates student readiness to transition from one grade to the next at the end of each school year. Student mastery of grade level standards and content materials will prepare students to transition to the next grade span with a foundation which prepares them for success in the next grade span. The school's promotion standards require students to sufficiently master grade level standards and contents to succeed at the next grade level.

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

RISE Academy's mission is "To provide students a well-rounded education to prepare them for a globally competitive society," and the educational plan includes active-based learning strategies. The calendar coincides with the mission statement and the education plan by providing in excess of the number of hours required by state law for instruction. The calendar includes ten (10) days of professional development during the summer and eight (8) days of professional development during the regular school years. The calendar provides mandatory professional development time needed to ensure that teachers and staff are fully prepared to implement active-based learning

strategies, TLAC, and CRT. The calendar permits the necessary training and unfolding of the elements of the school culture which supports the mission and education plan.

7. Describe the structure of the school day and week. Include the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Note the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times.
Explain why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning.

The school's day is designed to be optimal for students and parents. Student arrive at 7:00 a.m. and the school day ends at 3:35 p.m. Students have breakfast and then morning meeting. Morning meeting is designed to set the tone for the school day and includes messaging regarding the school culture and school etiquette. The morning meeting is followed by a 90-minute block for Reading/English Language Arts, and then 60-minute block for Mathematics. Students then have Foreign Language, Ethics, or Leadership study. Recess is structured for K-2 and free play for grades 3 and above. In the afternoon, students have a 60-minute block for Science followed by a 60-minute block for Social Studies. The school days ends at 3:35 p.m. A total of 4.5 hours is dedicated to core subjects each day. (See: APPENDIX E-Daily and Weekly Schedules).

8. Describe a typical day for a teacher and a student in the school's first year of operation.

The typical day for a teacher starts at 7:00 a.m. Teachers are onsite and in the morning meetings by 7:20 a.m. each morning. Teachers get at least one (1) hour of planning time during the school day each day while students are in non-core classes. Teachers' lunch will be duty free or scheduled on and off days. For example, one set of teachers may have lunch duty for one week and then another set of teachers will have lunch duty the following week, and so forth. The teacher's day primarily consists of instructional duties, planning, or carrying out classroom administration.

The school is designed for students to have a rigorous instructional day. The students arrive at 7:00 a.m. Morning meeting is mandatory for all students and staff. Students have two core subjects in the morning and two core subjects in the afternoon. Active-based learning strategies means that students' day will be highly interactive with other students, teachers, and instructional staff. Student will have lots of hands on activities, small group activities, and opportunities for presentation. The school days ends at 3:35 p.m.

High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness (High Schools Only)

9. Describe how the proposed charter school will meet the Future-Ready Core requirements. Provide details on how the students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered.

N/A. RISE Academy will not operate grades 9-12.

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

N/A. RISE Academy will not operate grades 9-12.

11. Explain what systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting the proposed graduation requirements.

N/A. RISE Academy will not operate grades 9-12.

Attach Appendix B: Curriculum Outline per Grade Span (for each grade span the school would ultimately serve). One sample curriculum outline (in graph form) in the Appendices for one core subject (specific to the school’s purpose) for each grade span the school would ultimately serve.

Attach Appendix C: 9-12 Core Content Electives. Provide a visual disseminating what courses (both 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.

Attach Appendix D: Yearly Academic Calendar (minimum of 185 instructional days or 1,025 hours)

Attach Appendix E: Daily and Weekly Schedule Provide a sample daily and weekly schedule for each grade band (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) the school ultimately plans to serve.

2.2 Special Populations and “At-Risk” Students

1. Explain how the school will identify and meet the learning needs of students who are performing below grade level and monitor their progress. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports you will provide for these students.

RISE Academy will use a Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model to manage teacher and staff response to data collected from initial benchmark tests and end of marking period benchmark testing. The school will collect data through its assessment program and plan which will enable the school’s instructional leader and teachers to specifically identify students who are performing below grade level very early in the school year. The assessment data will identify student academic performance as compared to their grade level peers. The RTI system is the management plan to address data-driven academic interventions to help students perform at or above grade level by the end of the academic school year. Intervention strategies are tiered and may include whole class instruction, small group instruction, individual instruction, tutoring, technology-assisted instruction, and other intervention methods designed to facilitate student academic progress.

2. Describe the extent to which one or more of the founding board members has experience working with special populations (students with disabilities, students with 504 Plans, ELs, students identified as gifted, and students at risk of dropping out). If no founding board members have experience working with special populations, describe the school's pre-opening plan to prepare for special populations.

RISE Academy's pre-opening plan to prepare for special populations is based upon the expectation that the school will attract special student populations in a similar ratio as exists in the traditional local school district. The school will hire a licensed exceptional children's teacher with the qualifications to serve as the school's exceptional children's director. The exceptional children's director, under the supervision of the Lead Administrator, will prepare the school to provide a full range of services to exceptional children services and proper accommodations to Section 504 students whom may enroll in the school. The board will adopt a policy and procedure for identifying exceptional children and 504 students during the student registration process prior to the start of school (after lottery). The school will hire a licensed EL teacher who is qualified to serve as the EL Program Coordinator. During the student registration process, all students will be required to complete the Home Language Survey. The Home Language Survey is the foundational tool which starts the process of identification of EL students in need to services. The Instructional Leader will select a team of teachers to form the school's Professional Learning Community to formulate strategies to identify and accommodate academically gifted students. The school's 21st Century instructional program is designed to accommodate gifted students by establishing a means for students to matriculate as slow as their cognitive abilities require but also as fast as their cognitive abilities enable them. The school's overall academic program and school culture is designed to address the needs of educationally disadvantaged students.

3. Explain how the instructional plan and curriculum will meet the needs of English Learners (EL), including the following:
 - a. Methods for identifying EL students (and avoiding misidentification).
 - b. Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for EL students.

- c. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of EL students, including exiting students from EL services.
- d. Means for providing qualified staffing for EL students.

RISE Academy will be fully prepared to address the needs of EL students within the context of the school's instructional plan and curriculum. The school's objective is high student academic performance for each subgroup. The school will facilitate EL's students' full access and participation in the instructional plan and curriculum by providing services which eliminate the language barrier which may block access to the instructional plan and curriculum. First, parents of students will complete the Home Language Survey during the school registration process after the student has been accepted for enrollment at the close of the school lottery. Students whose first language is not English or for whom English is not spoken at home as identified on the Home Language Survey are tested using the W-Apt and Wida Screener. The school will use the state scoring standards to determine if a student is eligible for EL services and at what level. Students identified as in need of EL services shall be provided the level of services indicated. The school will provide push-in services for EL students in the regular classroom. The school will provide pull-out services for students whose EL Plan provides for it. Students will be tested each year using the ACCESS test to determine progress and adjust the level of services. The ACCESS test will be used as an exit assessment tool for students who have gained adequate levels of English language proficiency to independently function in the classroom. The school will seek teachers with dual certifications which include EL certification during the initial teacher hiring process.

- 4. Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of gifted students, including the following:
 - a. Specific research-based 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 gifted students; and means for providing qualified staffing for gifted students.

RISE ACADEMY will identify and meet the needs of gifted students by providing an instructional program which is designed to enable students to matriculate as slow as their cognitive abilities require but also as fast as their cognitive abilities enable. The school will treat all student as being academically gifted.

2.3 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 education teachers 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.

After the initial enrollment application and lottery, parents of students who are accepted will be required to complete student registration within 10 days of formal written notice of acceptance. Student registration forms will include questions which seek to identify whether the student has been previously found to be eligible for special education services or are protected under the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Subsequently, the school will send a student records request to the student's prior school which specifically includes a request for any exceptional children's or 504 records. Finally, the Exceptional Children's Director will review all previously mentioned records to determine the student's status. Prior to the first day of school, the Student Information Management staff will run list of students who are identified as Exceptional Children and 504 from the databases of POWERSCHOOLS and CECAS. On day one of the start of school, Exceptional Children and 504 Students will receive required services and accommodations.

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. Include how the school will avoid misidentification of special education students.

The school will post 'Child Find' posters at strategic locations within the school, on the school's website, and discuss 'Child Find' at open house and parent orientation meetings. The school's staff, including all teachers and instructional staff, will receive professional development in 'Child Find.' Parents, teachers, instructional staff, and other professionals working with a student may

refer the student for evaluation for eligibility for Exceptional Children’s services or 504 status. The school will adopt a specific policy and procedure regarding referrals. Once a referral is made and the parent has provided consent, the eligibility determination process will be completed within 90 days as required by law. The Exceptional Children’s Director will obtain reports from all teachers who are teaching the student. The student will be immediately scheduled for testing by the school’s contracted educational psychologist. The Exceptional Children’s Director will obtain any written reports from outside professionals which can be provided by parents. The Exceptional Children’s Director shall make every effort to ensure that a complete record is made and the eligibility determination meeting (Individual Education Plan-IEP) is timely held. Student evaluations and assessments will be completed by professionals. The school will maintain, on file at the school, a copy of the School Psychologist’s professional license, the Certifications of all personnel involved at the school level involved in processing the referral, and the Exceptional Children’s Director shall review the complete record along with another qualified staff or consultant to verify there are no misidentifications of special education students.

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

The school will manage Exceptional Children’s and 504 student records in accordance with federal and state law. All staff will receive professional development prior to the start of school to ensure that staff is familiar with the Federal Educational Right to Privacy Act (FERPA) and other privacy laws regarding the handling of student records and information sharing issues. The school will request records from the student’s previous school during the final student registration process (after lottery) which includes a specific request for records which indicate Exceptional Children or 504 status. The records clerk will establish a separate, locked, records room for all Exceptional Children’s and 504 Accommodations records. The records clerk shall immediately file Exceptional Children and 504 student records in secure locked filing cabinets. The room will have restricted access, including a specific sign-in and sign-out procedure. Record confidentiality shall be maintained by the restricted access to records and the professional training of those who have

access to the records. The Exceptional Children’s Director or qualified designee shall make a review of Exceptional Children’s records each marking period to determine that each record is in compliance with federal and state requirements. For example, review shall include, but is not limited to, determination that all eligibility determinations were completed within the required 90 days. The review will examine whether all proper signatures were obtained from parents and IEP teams. The review will determine whether all DEC forms were timely and properly completed. The school will adopt a written internal compliance audit protocol.

Exceptional Children’s Programming

4. Explain how you will meet the learning needs of students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible.

The properly constituted IEP Team is charged by law with making the determination of how each individual Exceptional Child’s learning needs are met in the least restrictive environment possible. All staff which may be involved on an IEP team will have proper training and credentials. All staff will have received training in the concept and requirements for a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Each IEP Team will take into consideration whether a student’s disabilities are mild, moderate, or severe when creating, modifying, amending, or discontinuing an IEP. Special Education Students receive their status because an eligible disability has been shown to adversely impact student learning. The purpose of the IEP is to attempt to remediate the adverse impact of the disability on the student’s ability to learn. It shall be the policy of the school to use data-driven instruction will all students, including students with disabilities and 504 Accommodations. The School’s Lead Administrator shall coordinate with the Exceptional Children’s Director to regularly review student progress data (at least each marking period) to determine whether Exceptional Children, as a subgroup, are making adequate progress. The school will offer a full range of Exceptional Children’s Services. Exceptional Children Teachers may push-in to regular classroom or students may be pulled-out of regular classrooms for special instructional services dependent upon the student’s IEP. The school will also have a self-contained classroom available if needed. Students may be homebound as needed. The school and the IEP Team will be responsive to the individual needs of students and provide services to students in the least restrictive environment as determined by the IEP Team.

5. Describe the specific educational programs, strategies, and additional supports the school will provide to ensure a full continuum of services for students with disabilities. How will the school ensure students' access to the general education curriculum?

The school will provide regular classroom push-in services, regular classroom pull-out services, small group instruction, tutoring, self-contained classroom, and homebound services as needed based upon the student's IEP. The school's general education curriculum will be the basis of the school's educational program for Exceptional Children as well as all other students. Regular education and special education students are tested using the State's end-of-grade testing unless a student's IEP has approved alternative testing. Students whose disabilities require alternative testing may be provided a modified version of the general education curriculum which is consistent with the approved alternative testing. On a continuum, Special Education Students with less severe needs will participate in the general education curriculum in the regular classroom. These students may be pulled-out for speech therapy or occupational therapy as indicated in the IEP. Other students with greater needs may be pulled-out of the regular classroom for modified reading or math instruction in a small group setting based upon the IEP. There may be students with severe needs which may be educated in a self-contained classroom. All teachers and instructional staff shall be required to provide students access to the general education curriculum and prepare students for success on the end-of-grade test. The only exception to full participation in the general education curriculum is where an IEP Team has determined that student is in need of a modified curriculum and alternative testing.

6. Describe the methods and support systems that will be in place to ensure students with disabilities receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

FAPE is an acronym for the legal requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to provide a Free and Appropriate Education. Special Education and 504 students will not be charged any student fees that regular education students are not charged. The school will pay the cost for all services provided in the IEP or 504 Plan. The school, through the IEP Team, will ensure students receive an education which is appropriate to their disabilities in the

professional opinions of the IEP Team. The school, through the IEP Team, shall ensure, to the extent possible, that Special Education and 504 students are educated in a public-school setting. The exception is if a private school placement is deemed in the best interest of the student and properly approved. If a private school placement is necessary, the cost is born by the school. The methods and support systems used to ensure FAPE include the school's general education program, its Exceptional Children's Program, the availability of related services providers, having qualified and properly credentialed staffing, proper staff training, appropriate policies and procedures, and proper program supervision. The education we provide to our Exceptional children and 504 students is designed to prepare them for the future, including higher education, career, employment, and personal independence.

7. Describe how implementation of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be monitored and reported to the student, parents and relevant staff.

The Exceptional Children's Director is responsible for oversight of the implementation of the IEP. The Exceptional Children's Director will conduct a conference at least once each marking period to discuss student progress with parents and the students. The Exceptional Children's Teacher, regular education teachers, and other appropriate staff will participate in weekly data-review sessions where all students' progress is discussed including students with disabilities. The Exceptional Children's Teacher will maintain services schedules. There shall be services schedules for related services. The Exceptional Children's Director shall review IEP's and services schedules each month to ensure that all Exceptional Students are receiving proper services according to their IEP. The Exceptional Children Director shall report on the progress of Exceptional Children at least once each month on an agreed upon schedule. Exceptional Children are a state established student subgroup within the school for testing and accountability purposes. The school will make every effort to ensure that Exceptional Children and 504 students receive a high-quality education and are able to perform on end-of-grade test to the best of their abilities.

8. Describe the proposed plan for providing related services and to have qualified staffing adequate for the anticipated special needs population.

The board recognizes that hiring qualified staff and providing proper training and planning is critical to a successful exceptional children’s program. The human resources committee will conduct a nationwide search through teachers-teachers.org, conduct interviews of qualified candidates, and select the best qualified staff based upon our overall program and proposed school culture. The Exceptional Children’s Director shall solicit services proposals from qualified related services providers. The school will select the best qualified providers. The school will also maintain a standby list of providers to timely provide proper related services. Related services include but are not limited to the services of an educational psychologist, a speech pathologist, audiologist, occupational therapist, and optometrist.

2.4 Student Performance Standards

1. Describe the student performance standards for the school as a whole.

RISE Academy adopts the grade level performance standards set by North Carolina Accountability system for North Carolina Public Schools for end-of-grade testing. Students in general at Rise are expected to reach or exceed grade level proficiency at each grade level in reading, math, and science. Students are expected to reach and 70% or greater individual report card average for classroom work, quizzes, exams, and other teacher assigned work. The EOG will factor into the student’s final grade.

Grading Scale

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Point System</u>
A	90+
B	80+
C	70+
D	60+
F	Below 60

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.

RISE Academy will use School Net as its primary benchmark assessment tool, in addition to state and federally mandated test. The school will conduct benchmarks at the beginning of school and at the end of each marking period. The benchmark data will be used to determine each student's year-to-date grade level proficiency. Teacher and instructional leaders will use the data to identify student progress each marking period toward grade level proficiency. Teachers and the school's instructional leaders will use the data to identify students in need of special interventions such as small group instruction, individual instruction, and tutoring. The data yielded from the benchmark testing will guide the instructional plan and support services to students. The data will also inform parents of student progress and help facilitate parent support. The data will empower students to understand their status and work in cooperation with staff to achieve academic goals.

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.

RISE Academy will require all students to meet a minimum of 70% on the individual report card as a requirement for promotion to the next grade level. Benchmark test scores will be factored into the student's overall performance. Special needs students will be subject to the same grading system and promotion standards as all other students, except that special needs students will receive the accommodations required by their IEP or 504 Plan. Special needs student may also follow a pre-approved alternative accountability system if it is part of their IEP. Promotion criteria will be included in the Parent/Student Handbook which will be provided to all parents and students at the beginning of the school year as well as be posted on the school's website.

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 students at risk of dropping out.

RISE Academy's terminal grade is grade 8. Students' reaching grade 8 will be required to demonstrate grade level proficiency by meeting the minimum 70% across all core subjects to graduate past the school's terminal grade level.

2.5 School Culture and Discipline

1. Describe the culture or ethos of the proposed school. Explain how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.

RISE Academy will systematically work to achieve a family type school culture and ethos. The school will promote positive communications between students and between students and staff. The school's staff will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual development through teaching and modeling behaviors. The school's use of active-based learning strategies promotes the social aspect of learning which contributes to student intellectual and social development.

2. Explain how you will create and implement this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents starting from the first day of school. Describe the plan for acculturating students who enter the school mid-year.

RISE Academy will provide professional development during the summer (10 days/80 hours) which includes strategies to implement the school's culture. All staff will have roles to play in developing the school culture. The staff will be specifically assigned tasks including teaching the school etiquette, setting classroom rules, and establishing expectations for student conduct and performance. Staff will begin implementing the school culture on the first day of school. Subsequently enrolled students and their parents that join us later in the school year will be provided an orientation into the school culture.

3. Provide a brief narrative that delineates 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:
 - a. Practices the school will use to promote effective discipline.
 - b. A preliminary list and definitions of the offenses which may result in suspension or expulsion of students.
 - c. An explanation of how the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities in regard to these actions that may or must lead to suspension and expulsion.
 - d. Policies and procedures disseminating due process rights, including grievance procedures, for when a student is suspended or expelled.

RISE Academy's Parent/Student Handbook will be distributed to all parents and students at the beginning of the school year. Parents and students will be provided an orientation on the Handbook. The Handbook shall include the grading and promotion standards as well as the Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct will outline the behavioral standards and expectations of the school. It will include a list of the 16 statutory mandatory report offenses listed in N.C. Gen. Statutes. RISE Academy embraces the definitions of the 16 offenses as defined in North Carolina law. The Student Code of Conduct will provide for three levels of offense including (a) minor offenses, (b) mid-level offenses, and (c) serious offenses. Students who commit serious offenses are subject to long-term suspension or expulsion. Any student who receives the sanction of long-term suspension or expulsion shall be provided a copy of the school's Parent/Student Grievance Policy and Procedure and informed of their right to appeal the decision to the governing board. Students with disabilities are subject to the same discipline as all other students, except that students with disabilities shall receive the services required by their IEP on the 11th day of any cumulative suspensions received during the school year. All students and parents will be provided a copy of the Parent/Student Handbook at the beginning of the school year. The Handbook shall outline students' due process rights and provide a copy of the Parent/Student Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Certify

This subsection is entirely original and has not been copied, pasted, or otherwise reproduced from any other application. Yes No

Explanation (optional): RISE ACADEMY board of directors has approved the language used in this section of the application. Part of the language may contain standard language used by our contracted management services provider and their technical writer which help prepare this section of the application.

Section 3 Governance and Capacity

3.1 School Governing Body

1. Private Non-profit Corporation (NCGS 115C-218.1)

The nonprofit corporation must be officially authorized by the NC Secretary of State upon application submission.

Name of Private Non-profit: RISE Academy

Mailing Address: 130 Commerce Parkway, Suite 103

Street Address: 130 Commerce Parkway, Suite 103

City/State/Zip: Garner/NC/27529

Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx): (919) 522-9245

Fax: (xxx-xxx-xxxx): (919) 850-9961

Name of Registered Agent and Address: Renorda Pryor - 130 Commerce Parkway, Suite 103, Garner, NC, 27529

Federal Tax ID:

2. Federal Tax-Exempt Status (NCGS 115C-218.15)

If the non-profit organization has yet to obtain 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.

The private non-profit listed as the responsible organization for the proposed charter school has 501(c)(3) status:

Yes. **Attach Appendix F Federal Documentation of Tax-Exempt Status**

No.

N/A. The applicant is a tax-exempt municipality.

3.2 Governance

The private nonprofit corporation or municipality 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.

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

Board Member Name	Board Title	County of Residence	Current Occupation	Past or Present Professional Licenses Held	Any disciplinary action taken against any of these professional licenses?
Renorda Pryor	Chair	Wake	Lawyer	Licensed Attorney	No
Ursula Rowland	Secretary	Wake	Project Manager	X	No
Cynthia Easter	Member	Wake	Teacher	Teacher's License	No
Keith Lucas	Member	Wake	Marketing	X	No
Ashraf Mehdi	Treasurer	Wake	Accountant	X	No

2. Describe the governance structure of the proposed charter school, including the governing board's functions, primary duties, roles and responsibilities as it relates to overseeing the charter school. Include how the board will recruit, hire, and supervise the lead administrator.

The RISE board consists of five members with equal voting powers. If the board ever reach an even number and the vote is a tie, the board chair has the power to break it. The board's primary responsibilities include creating policies and procedures that operate the school, overseeing financial viability, ensuring operational compliance with all NC DPI requirements, and to supervise the implementation and fidelity of the stated academic program in this application. The board has worked to entrench itself in the community and has already scheduled a fundraiser for September. We have also established a relationship to have computers supplied to our school at a reduced rate.

RISE Academy will conduct a nation-wide search for their Lead Administrator. The Lead Administrator will value the well-rounded education of a child, have experience with STEAM schools, and have read our application and agreed with its tenets. We will post on online job sites and attempt to hire locally by posting in newspapers, hosting forums,

and encouraging community members to recommend lead administrators.

The board will oversee the lead administrator by requiring monthly reports, by gauging success according to the NC Accountability Model, and by having constant dialogue with leadership. The Lead Administrator will be held to the SMART goals listed in this application and be required to comply with other metrics deemed necessary as the charter school matures.

3. Describe the size, current and desired composition, powers, and duties of the governing board.

The current size of the board is five members with three women and two men. The board is racially diverse and represents the Wake County and Garner. The board's powers include creating, overseeing, and ensuring the implementation of policies that operate the school. The ultimate responsibility of the school's operational, academic, and financial success lies with the board of directors.

4. Describe the founding board's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, including capacity in such areas as school leadership, administration, and governance; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; performance management; and parent/community engagement.

The board of directors is built with diverse skillsets. Our members include a lawyer, project manager, marketing consultant, experienced accountant, and local educator. In addition, some of our members are also pastors and well known within the community. Our board is positioned to quickly engage the community and ensure enrollment. We believe this diversity of skillsets positions our board to manage key components required to operate a successful charter school. The management company is expected to supplement areas such as charter school operational compliance and school leadership. If we were to operate without a management company, we would add capacity in the form of consultants and/or board members with charter school experience and school operations.

Our board members include parents of local school children that have heard the frustrations of other parents. Our willingness to engage the community is the very reason this board was established, and our board is committed to continuing to engage and hear the community's desires in their school.

5. 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.
 - A. Our board is constructed of diverse business professionals who regularly utilize their skillsets to serve clients in varying industries. The board's ability to apply their skillsets to the clients they serve qualifies this thoughtfully composed board the necessary tools to operate a nonprofit entity that oversees the operations of a charter school.
 - B. The board will evaluate the success of the charter school by following the standards outlined in this application. We will assess the school leader based on the criteria this application lays forth and require monthly reports that speak to the academics, finances, and operations of the charter school.
 - C. Our board is already composed of local parents that have a vested interest in the educational outcomes of Garner. Additionally, the board will create a Parental Advisory Council as well as a Community Volunteer Group that will participate and advise the board on the issues they deem important.
6. Explain the procedure by which the founding board members have been recruited and selected. If a position is vacant, how and on what timeline will new members be recruited and added to the board?

The founding board members were recruited by Renorda Pryor and Ursula Rowland. Both of these members had engaged parents over the years who had expressed dissatisfaction in the educational opportunities for their children. After hearing this for multiple years, the two made the decision to form a board and pursue a charter school. This occurred three years ago. The ultimate result is the board outlined in this application.

Process for recruiting new board members:

The Board will continuously seek prospective board members by various methods, including discussions during open public board meetings, and active discussion of board duties and obligations with any interested party. The Board is committed to continually seeking out qualified candidates who will add to the experience, passion, and diversity of the board. As detailed in Article III - Board of Directors, Section 2 of the By-Laws of RISE Academy: A person needs to be at least eighteen (18) years old to be qualified as a Director. Any qualified person seeking to become a Director of the RISE Academy Board will apply including a resume and explanation of why he/she is seeking membership to the Board and undergo a criminal background check. When a vacancy or vacancies occur, either by death, resignations, and removal from office, end of term, tenure limit, and/or for any other reason, the remaining RISE Academy Board Members will review the applications submitted and elect the applicant(s) seeking to become a member of the RISE Academy Board of Directors. The sitting Board Members may conduct interviews with the perspective Board Candidates. Vacancies: As detailed in Article III - Board of Directors, Section 6 of the By-Laws of RISE Academy, "If a vacancy should occur in the

Board of Directors by death, resignation, disqualification, or otherwise, the remaining Directors may continue to conduct the Corporation's business. The vacancy will be filled immediately." A Director who is chosen in this manner shall hold office for the unexpired portion of the term of the person whom the newly elected Director succeeds. After this period, they can seek to remain on the Board via the requirements outline for new board members in the By-Laws and mentioned previously. Describe the group's ties to and/or knowledge of the target community.

7. Describe the group's ties to and/or knowledge of the target community.

The RISE Academy board all reside in Wake County, and many live in and around Garner. Ursula Rowland has served as a Pastor in the area for many years and has come to know and understand the Garner community. Our board applied for a charter school last year and have continued to speak with parents and community leaders about the creation of a charter school directly in Garner.

8. Outline the strategic board calendar detailing how often the board will meet according to the bylaws established.

The board will abide by open meetings laws and provide notice so that the public has the opportunity to attend, except authorized closed sessions. The exact number of minimum meetings is laid out in the by-laws. The board plans on exceeding the minimum amount of meetings and meeting monthly.

9. 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.

The board of directors recognizes the need to maintain a high-quality board with members that have the necessary skills to carry out the board's functions. The board has identified attractive skill-sets to seek out such as legal, accounting, finance, nonprofit governance, teaching, educational administration, marketing and community relations, business, and construction and building maintenance. Board members also need to understand Robert's Rules of Order and how to participate as board members in a public charter school that is subject to North Carolina Open Meetings Laws and the North Carolina Public Records Act.

Board Member Orientation

The board will regularly recruit potential new board members and replacement board members to ensure the board maintains the threshold number of board members identified in the By-Laws. The board will also prepare individuals for participation on any formed Advisory Boards or committees. All potential board members will be required to participate

in a new board member orientation prior to being formally nominated and considered to serve on the board of directors. The new board member orientation consists of a two, two-hour training sessions. The first session will include Robert's Rules of Order (modified), Board By-Laws, review of North Carolina Open, meetings laws, and review of the North Carolina Public Records Act. The second session will review the North Carolina Charter School Act, Charter School Policies and Procedures of the North Carolina State Board of Education, the N.C. Accountability Program, Non-Profit Board of Director Ethics (including the Boards Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedure), and Board Policy and Procedure. Once the four hours of training have been completed and the background check is completed, the potential board member will be eligible for nomination, interview, and vote to be accepted as a regular board members or advisory board (or committee) member. Completion of the four hours of training is required and must be completed prior to participation on any of the boards as a member.

Board Member Professional Development Program

After "Board Member Orientation," each existing board member is required to participate in a minimum of ten (10) hours of professional development annually. Board members will make regular reports of their participation in professional development to the full board including an explanation and overview of the professional development experience. The board will conduct an annual retreat for professional development which includes a review of board North Carolina Open Meetings Laws and North Carolina Public Records Act compliance, Federal Education Right to Privacy Act requirements, Financial Compliance, and review of the Governance Compliance requirements.

The annual retreat, at minimum, will include federal program compliance for Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, and IDEA. All board members are required to participate in the annual retreat training. The board will send board representatives to the National Charter School Conference and State Charter School Conferences to participate in external board training and obtain new information which will support the objectives of a high-quality charter school. The board will set professional development goals and participate in an annual self-evaluation. Board Members and Officers will be required to participate in specialized training related to correct board meeting minutes, review and use of data, formal board reports, policy development, and internal compliance programs.

10. 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 has adopted a conflict of interest policy that addresses exactly how conflicts of interest be handled. This policy is found in the Appendix. There are no current conflicts of interest the board that the board has been made aware of.

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

The board will engage in active discussions among the board, parents, and community stakeholders when making decisions. When possible, decisions will be made by unanimous decision. When a unanimous decision is not able to be made, the board will decide by majority rule. When time permits, and finances allow, experts in related fields will be asked to provide consultation.

12. 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.

The board has not currently made any advisory bodies, but fully plans on forming a Parent Advisory Council upon approval. The by-laws of the Parental Advisory Council shall be reviewed and approved by the board of directors. Members of the Parental Advisory Council shall submit their resumes to the School Administrator and be voted upon by the board of directors. The board of directors reserves the right to form various other advisory councils that may relate to finances, academics, community outreach, among many.

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

Parents will be given the Student Handbook at the beginning of each year that discusses due process rights and the process for filing a grievance. If the grievance happens to be because of a student suspension, a conference between the parent and Lead Administrator will take place at either the school or parent household. If the parent is still unsatisfied, the parent may submit a grievance to the board of directors in writing.

Any employee that feels as though they would like to file a grievance can file a grievance after discussing it with the parties involved. If the conflict is not resolved, the Lead Administrator shall attempt to mediate the issue. If that mediation is unsuccessful, the aggrieved party may submit a formal grievance to the board of directors in writing within 10 days of the meeting with the Lead Administrator.

If the party involved includes the Lead Administrator, the filing can be submitted directly to the board of directors in writing. After the board receives and hears the grievance, the board will make a decision, with the potential assistance of legal counsel, that is final.

***Attach Appendix G Organizational Chart**

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).

***Attach Appendix H Charter School Board Member Information Form and Resume**

A **one-page** resume from each founding board member and responses to the questions found on the Charter School Board Member Form

***Attach Appendix I Charter School Board Member Background Certification Statement and Completed Background Check for Each Board Member**

***Attach Appendix J Proposed By-Laws of the Nonprofit Organization or Municipality**

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.

***Attach Appendix K Articles of Incorporation or Municipal Charter**

If the applicant is a non-profit board of directors, attach a copy of the articles of incorporation from the NC Department of the Secretary of State.

If the applicant is a municipality, attach a copy of the municipal charter.

3.4 Staffing Plans, Hiring, and Management

Projected Staff

1. Complete the staffing chart below outlining your staffing projections. Adjust or add functions and titles as needed to reflect variations in school models. Be mindful that your predicted administration and staff match the projected enrollment noted in Section I, course offerings, and align with the proposed budget.

Position	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Principal/School Leader	0	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Principal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dean(s)						
Additional School Leadership		1	1	1	1	1
Core Classroom Teachers		10	12	14	16	18
Specialized Classroom Teachers (e.g. special education, ELL, foreign language, etc.)		3.5	5	7	8	9
Student Support Positions (e.g. social workers, psychologists, etc.)						
Student Support Positions						
Specialized School Staff		2	2	2	2	2

Teaching Aides or Assistants						
School Operations Support Staff						

Staffing Plans, Hiring, and Management

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

Recruitment:

The board and management company will seek out teachers that have the aptitude to creatively differentiate instruction in an active-based learning environment. The board will hire teachers with the idea of STEAM at the forefront. Teachers must be comfortable and recognize the value of a STEAM curriculum, the incorporation of arts in teaching, and the goal of creating a love of math and science in our students.

The school will provide professional development and instructional infrastructure to help teachers realize their full potential as professional educators. We will offer teachers the opportunity to innovate and exercise their craft without traditional restrictions that can impede teacher and student success. The Board will: 1) Create detailed job descriptions for each position. 2) Post job openings on the school website, social media, recruitment sites, local newspapers and other resources and collaborative community programs, to include local colleges and universities. 3) Participate in job fairs 4) Have school Board members and leaders share recruitment activities at national conferences and other networking opportunities. 5) Examine recommendations from Management company for review.

Retention:

Our school will use research-based best practices in the retention of high-performing teachers. These include but are not limited to: 1) Creating a culture of high expectations for teachers and students 2) Evaluating teachers based on performance and offering annual salary increases based on their evaluation 3) Provide students academic growth data to inform instruction 4) Providing professional development opportunities for all teachers 5) Engaging teachers in decision-making for school 6) An intentional focus on teacher retention by including it in school goals.

3. If already identified, describe the principal/head of school candidate and explain why this individual is well-qualified to lead the proposed school in achieving its mission. Provide specific evidence that demonstrates the capacity to design, launch, and manage a high-performing charter school. If the proposed leader has never run a school, describe any leadership training programs that (s)he has completed or is currently participating in. If no candidate has been identified, provide the job description or qualifications, and discuss the timeline, criteria, and recruiting/selection process for hiring the school leader.

The school leader will have a familiarity with a STEAM program and hold a license to operate as a school principal. The principal or school leader will also receive training from the management company. With this school opening in 2021 and the infrastructure of a management company at our disposal, we don't anticipate hiring a lead administrator until much closer to the school year. It is anticipated that we will begin to look for a school administrator in the fall of 2020 and look to make a hire sometime around March of 2021.

Attach in Appendix O the School Leader's Resume. If school leader has been identified, include the school leader's one-page resume in Appendix O.

4. Provide a description of the relationship that will exist between the charter school employees and the school's board of directors.

The board of directors will create policies that instruct the operation of the school, but the employees will report directly to the management company. It is the management company's responsibility to ensure employee performance. If an employee has a grievance with the management company/lead administrator, they may submit a grievance directly to the board of directors.

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

A job description outlining the duties and qualifications will be developed for each position authorized by the charter school board of directors. Positions will be properly advertised, utilizing online tools such as Indeed, Monster, and TeacherMatch. This job description will detail our educational philosophy and the interview process will ensure staff member support of our mission as a prerequisite for hiring. We will follow the criminal background-check policy as outlined by the LEA we reside.

The hiring procedures are as follows:

The Board, Lead Administrator, and management company will discuss and agree to the board procedures for both hiring and firing. Submitted resumes are reviewed by the administrative staff, the TLS management company, and the Board. The Lead Administrator will make final hiring recommendations to the Board in accordance with terms of the charter.

Panel interviews will be conducted with attention to specific responses regarding teaching diverse and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations. Candidates will be required to teach a sample lesson or provide video of instruction during the interview process. Complete reference checks will be done for each employee before hiring. The criminal background check policy shall follow the criminal background check policy of the Local Education Agency.

To dismiss school personnel:

- Every effort will be made to assist employees who are not performing adequately to improve their job performance. Dismissing a staff member can occur only after a progression of actions beginning with a warning, and in compliance with NC regulations.
- Creation of a performance coaching plan: the goal will always be to help the employee grow and succeed.
- The Lead Administrator will evaluate and report on the results of the created coaching plan. All procedures will be documented per NC statutes.
- Lastly, there will be an opportunity for the staff member in question to appeal to Grievance Committee of the Board (see Procedures for Employee Grievance or Termination).

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

Lead Administrator: \$65,000

Core Content Teacher: \$37,000-\$42,000

Instructional Assistant: \$28,000

EC Teacher: \$37,000-\$42,000

ELL Teacher: \$32,000-\$40,000

Substitute Teachers: \$100/Day

The school will not participate in the N.C. Teacher Retirement System or the N.C. Teachers Health Plan. The school will offer an independent health plan and retirement benefits for all employees.

7. Provide the procedures for handling employee grievances and/or termination.

Any employee who feels that they have been treated unjustly or unfairly for any reason has recourse to have their issue heard, per these procedures: Discuss the problem with the person or persons involved as soon as possible after the event has taken place. If an agreement as to how the problem will be handled is not arrived at, the employee should file his/her grievance, in writing, with the Lead Administrator. A conference will be held with the Lead Administrator, the aggrieved and other parties.

If a resolution is not reached, the aggrieved party has the option to continue with the grievance process. Such intent must be submitted in writing to Lead Administrator within 10 days following the grievance conference. If no resolution can be reached, the employee must submit to the Lead Administrator a written request to the Grievance

Committee of the Board to seek a final resolution. This request must be submitted within ten days of receipt of the Principals decision. After hearing the grievance, and with advice from legal counsel, the decision of the Board Grievance Committee is final.

8. Identify any positions that will have dual responsibilities and the funding source for each position.

Exceptional Children's Teacher: Will also serve as Director when there is only one.
LEA/State

Assistant Admin: Will also serve as Testing Coordinator. LEA/State

9. Describe the plans to have qualified staffing adequate for the anticipated special needs population and means for providing qualified staffing for EL and gifted students.

Teachers will be hired in the first year who are able and qualified to complete compliance paperwork in conjunction with the management company, per agreement. We will hire only licensed exceptional children's teachers and licensed EL teachers. We will vet each teacher and the management company will provide special start up training to all staff which is designed to assure our staffing can meet the needs of all our students.

RISE Academy will develop and maintain relationships with at least one Psychologist, Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapist within the community. These services will be contracted on an as-needed basis per IEP. Many of our service providers will be able to bill Medicaid in addition to Medicaid reimbursement, RISE Academy has allocated funds within the budget to meet these needs.

TLS has a broad reach and presence across the state that can help attract and recruit experienced, successful teachers.

10. Provide a narrative detailing the roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and appropriate licenses that each position must have to be hired by the school's board of directors and effectively perform the job function(s).

The Lead Administrator will have a teaching and administrative license. Core Content Teachers will have at least a teacher certification. At least fifty percent (50%) of the teaching staff will be certified teachers, as required by state mandate. The EC and physical education Teachers will possess the appropriate teaching licenses. These will be the minimum standards for the positions listed above.

The Lead Administrator

- Hold a Bachelor's Degree and 5 years of school administrative experience

- Oversees day-to-day operations
- Supervise all staff
- Serve as board liaison
- Provide a STEAM perspective and background

Administrative Assistant will serve as a general office receptionist, manage the purchase of supplies for the office and classrooms, and assist the management company in the collection of financial, licensure, and other compliance paperwork.

Food Service Staff will oversee the breakfast and lunch order counts as well as delivery of food to classrooms.

Bus Drivers will safely transport our students to and from school.

Instructional Coach: The instructional coach will work directly with teachers and focus on data-driven instruction. The Instructional Coach is purely dedicated to observing student data, consulting with teachers, and working to improve student achievement.

Classrooms Teachers: Will plan and execute rigorous and active-based learning experiences for their students, manage classroom behavior, and nurture a positive, safe learning environment, make regular contact with families, analyze data to identify trends and gaps in learning, and adjust their instruction accordingly.

Teacher Assistants: Will have experience supporting classrooms or be recent graduates from local colleges. These teachers will assist in supporting remediation, managing break-out sessions, and other duties requested by Classroom Teachers.

EC Teacher/Coordinator will work with the management company to coordinate, oversee and implement special education services for identified students; work with classroom Teachers to ensure students' needs are met in the most appropriate environment.; provide pull-out or push-in services as required by a student IEP.

EC Instructional Assistant will help provide EC services to students. under the direction of the EC Teacher/Coordinator.

ELL Teacher: An ELL teacher will speak Spanish to provide ELL students a comfortable atmosphere to ask questions and learn.

Substitute Teachers will cover and supervise classes when a classroom Teacher is absent. They will help supervise students that have been temporarily removed from the classroom.

3.5 Staff Evaluations and Professional Development

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

The school's Lead Administrator bears the primary responsibility for maintaining teacher licensure requirements and professional development information and records. This task may be delegated to clerical staff. The management company will be actively invested in ensuring all teachers are striving towards teaching licensure.

2. Provide a detailed plan noting how the school will mentor, retain and evaluate staff in a format that matches the school's mission and educational program. Plan should also describe how the school will meet the teacher certification and licensure requirements for teachers as prescribed by state and federal law. Be sure this overview matches with the projected staff and funding of the proposed budget section.

The Board of Directors has high expectations of staff performance in meeting the school's mission and obtaining its goals set for student performance. The Board is committed to supporting high-quality teaching and a school culture which promotes academic rigor and academic success. The school has budgeted about \$10,000 annually for professional development. In addition, the school will seek Title IIA funding for recruiting, preparing, training, and developing its teachers.

The Board will conduct an annual evaluation of the Lead Administrator which will include review of student performance, school discipline, parent relations, and compliance with governmental regulations. The Lead Administrator will be responsible for the periodic evaluation of all other staff. The Board will adopt a policy and procedure which mandates that all staff participate in all professional development required by the school. Each teacher will be required to have a personal professional development plan which sets forth specific goals and objectives required to maintain (License Renewal Plan) or obtain a North Carolina Standard II Professional Teachers License.

The school will also participate in the Beginning Teacher Licensure Support Program. Teachers in their first three years as a teacher will be subject to a Beginning Teacher Licensure Support Program Policy and Procedure which will include mentoring, regular evaluation, professional training, and restrictions on non-voluntary nonteaching related duty assignments. The school's staff evaluation program will include video review, analysis of data driven instruction, and evaluation of relationships with students, parents, and other staff. The school has committed resources in its budget to ensure the school maintains a percentage of licensed teachers above the threshold for charter schools as required by state law. The school's resources commitment is further designed to meet the goal of 100% highly qualified teachers and participation in state mandated testing as required by the No Child Left Behind Act, et seq. (ESSA).

Student performance, based upon the schools testing and evaluation program and state accountability requirements, will be major factors in the school's staff evaluation program. The school's goal is to recruit, prepare, train, and retain highly qualified teachers and staff. The school's budget reflects an annual 3% cost of living increase as a financial incentive for staff retention. The school will also seek to maintain a high-quality professional environment which attracts high-quality teachers and incentivize staff retention. The school's mission and educational program is aggressive and requires a high-quality staff. The school will also use a Professional Learning Community (PLC) model of teacher and staff interaction to ensure that all staff are working together for the common goal of producing a high-quality educational program which results in high student performance.

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 core elements of the school's professional development plan include summer intensive training for 2 weeks prior to the start of school, monthly internal training opportunities (individualized), and external professional development opportunities at outside conferences, workshops, and seminars.

The school will also have online professional development for teachers and staff. The professional development plan is designed to establish the foundation for the school's culture, help teachers meet licensure requirements, and ensure teachers build a valuable toolkit of instructional skills which benefit their students. The professional development will require teachers know how to implement data driven instruction, set progress goals, and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all learners in their classes. Professional development will also help teachers and staff improve the quality of interactions with parents and the community.

4. Provide a schedule and explanation of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what will be covered during this induction period and how teachers will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods.

Prior to school opening two week (10 day) training schedule will be as follows:

Day 1: Staff Orientation, CPA, Health & Safety, Reporting Requirements, Parent Relations, General Procedures, Grievances, and other topics TDA.

Day 2: FERPA, FAPE, Duties to Exception Children, EL Students, Gifted Students, and At-risk students. STEAM Infusion strategies.

Day 3: STEAM Infusion Strategies, Active-Based Learning.

Day 4: Active-Based Learning, School Culture

Day 5: TLAC, CRT, Assessment, Data Drive Instruction

Day 6: Teacher Planning-Pacing Guides

Day 7: Lesson Planning

Day 8: School Etiquette, Emotionally Intelligent Leadership

Day 9: Planning

Day 10: Planning

These topics will prepare staff for the opening of the school.

5. Describe the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year, and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure accommodate this plan.

There are a total of 18 teacher workdays built into the school calendar. Ten teachers' workdays occur before the start of school for the students. There are 8 mandatory workdays during the school year. This core professional development and planning consists of a minimum of 50 hours of training related to school culture, school etiquette, testing and data, curriculum pacing, and other instruction related topics.

There are 6 work days established during the school year which will include about 24 hours of professional development time. After the last day of school for students, there are 5 teacher work days which include 20 hours of professional development. The post-school training includes debriefing for the year to review what we learned and how can improve while it is still fresh. The school's calendar is designed to illustrate 21 teacher workdays and 94 hours of professional development.

3.6 Marketing, Recruitment, and Enrollment

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 115C-218.45 carefully.

Marketing Plan

1. 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 enrollment and marketing plan will include traditional and innovative approaches to reach our anticipated target population in the communities bordering Johnston and Wake Counties. We will send out, in both Spanish and English, half-page mailers directly to the door of potential students and their families. Our area is supported by strong media outlets which include radio, print, and television. We will use a combination of paid advertising along with public service announcements to spread the word about the opening of RISE Academy. Will also conduct interviews on both radio television and in print, asking participants to respond via our Facebook page and our website. Our Board members are community activists and have many contacts through their churches and places of work to spread the word about the new school. They are uniquely positioned to be welcomed into and offered platforms to speak in neighborhoods among our targeted demographics, where our presence and push is already underway. We plan to make appearances with parents and supporters who speak Spanish and can draw students and families from the Latino community.

The public, especially parents and grandparents, will be encouraged to come meet the Board at various venues and events in and around the neighborhood where we plan to establish the school. We will seek public input to receive buy-in from community leaders, parents and children in order to be responsive and sensitive to the needs of those we intend to serve. Parents and children will be encouraged to come together from across county lines to meet each other and to begin forming relationships in anticipation of their first days as RISE students. Families will be encouraged to bring friends and relatives to these celebrations where they will be surveyed. Parents are encouraged to ask questions, express their concerns and otherwise engage in productive dialogue about what they want in their child's school experience. These regular gatherings build community relationships and ultimately lead to more name recognition. We will also use social media to report on the success of our events and to continue inviting others. We plan to gather book bags from local retailers and fill them with school supplies to do a book bag and school supply giveaway, promoting our school as well as local retailers that support educational choice.

We will begin a more aggressive marketing campaign in September of 2020 as parents begin to finalize their school decision for 2021. We will continue to stay in touch with parents who've displayed an interest early on that may have forgotten about the school through the course of the year. We will also visit area daycare centers and ask to present our school concept to parents and families.

2. Describe how parents and other members of the community will be informed about the school.

Various marketing methods will be utilized to reach all students. These methods include:

- Door-to-Door Marketing
- Mailers

- Public Service Announcements
 - Newspaper Press Releases
 - Social Media Engagement
 - Regular Public Forums/Events
 - Association Engagements
 - Day-care outreach
 - Word of Mouth
 - Television
 - Radio
3. Describe your plan to recruit students during the planning year, including the strategies, activities, events, and responsible parties. Include a timeline and plan for student recruitment/engagement and enrollment, with benchmarks that will indicate and demonstrate suitable recruitment and enrollment practices over time.
- November 2020
 - o Host a public forum to announce school opening in 2021
 - o Send radio clips in both English and Spanish to local radio stations to be aired as PSA's
 - o Begin full-website development
 - o Advertise on Social Media
 - December 2020:
 - o Participate in holiday activities of all religions to engage diverse communities
 - o Advertise upcoming open enrollment
 - o Interview with a local television station
 - o Finalize website
 - January 2021:
 - o Open Enrollment Begins
 - February 2021
 - o Open Enrollment Ends, Lottery event is held, and parents are contacted to confirm acceptance
 - o Parents are required to finalize enrollment by submitting required information
 - March 2021:
 - o Open Enrollment is re-opened if target student number is not met
 - o A celebratory event is held at the campus site for accepted and enrolled students
 - April 2021:
 - o Public Forum is held for parents that are on waiting list and what that means for their chances of attending our school
 - May 2021:

- Back-to-School Information is sent to the address of enrolled students
- Book-Bag Giveaway event held
- June 2020:
 - Advertise Meet-the-Teacher Event in July
 - Hold a Cook-out for enrolled students/parents
- July 2021:
 - Hold a Meet-the-Teacher Event for all upcoming students
 - Contact all parents/students that did not attend to confirm interest and attendance in August
- August 2021:
 - Hold a week-long program leading up to school to ensure school interest and attendance come the start of school
 - Hold Student/Parent Orientation

Metrics:

- ROI on events and the number of applications submitted
- Parent surveys from parents at our orientation event that asks where they first heard of the school, if the applied online or in-person, and an open-ended question making recommendations on best ways to engage their family
- Website views/Facebook likes that occur after each event/marketing push. This will help us understand how successfully our marketing/community engagement tactics work to facilitate parental action to learn more

We hope to keep the cost of obtaining an application under \$5. With a marketing budget of \$5,000 in the first year, this would put us well under budget.

4. Describe how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the school. Specifically, describe any plans for outreach to: families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, English learners, and other students at-risk of academic failure. If your school has a specific area of focus, describe the plan to market that focus.
 - Our community is constituted by many economically disadvantaged families and a unnerving proportion of at-risk students. Our message will have to be directed at these students, not only because they need it most, but because at-risk students make-up such a large student base.
 - Our marketing materials will be in both English and Spanish to engage ELL students and families. We have ties with the local Latino community and know they will be receptive to our message.
 - Free transportation and free and reduced lunch will be advertised so economically disadvantaged families are aware that our charter school serves all students.

5. What established community organizations would you target for marketing and recruitment?

- Church Congregations
- Homeless Shelter
- Head Start
- More At Four
- Local Daycares

3.7 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.

Once the charter is approved, the board will expand our marketing efforts, including through daycare and preschool facilities, Head Start, More At Four, and private preschools in the area. At this time, a more aggressive media campaign will begin with social media, board member and prospective parent/child radio and YouTube conversations, and print media ads. We will hold educational social events around the cities of Garner and Clayton. One concept we are working on is hosting free track-out and holiday camps for parents who need to work during these times when school is out. This will create opportunities to interact with the community and a chance to talk about what our plans are for the new school. We plan to provide a free summer-camp for children and families in the community to further strengthen ties to the school, which occurs just prior to opening. We will be enrolling in the Summer Food Program to provide free breakfast and lunches during the summer for struggling families. We will provide limited transportation for those families slightly outside of our immediate area to test our transportation system and perfect our plan for the upcoming school year. In addition, we have contacted other summer camp program directors who conduct robotics camps, drone camps, science camps, and the Boys and Girl Scouts of America to work in collaboration with our summer recruitment efforts.

During these events, there will be a strong component of literacy built-in, introducing and testing some of the teaching models and styles we will be using. These events will continue to develop the critical parent involvement necessary to the success of RISE Academy. Parental and community engagement is considered a lever for school improvement. DPI lists elements of a comprehensive community engagement plan and provides resources for schools: -

- Regular, two-way, meaningful communication.
- Promote and support responsible parenting.
- Inform and involve family members in children's learning so that they may play an integral role.
- Volunteering

- Ensure that family members are welcome in the school.
 - Advocacy and Decision Making
 - Include family members as partners in decisions.
 - Training for family and school personnel.
 - Collaborate with community agencies to provide resources to strengthen school programs, families, and student learning.
 - Promote health awareness among families by addressing the need for health programs and student health services, which are linked to student learning.
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.

RISE seeks to foster authentic, and meaningful community and parental engagement. We see parents and community stakeholders as valuable partners in the privilege of educating students. Parent involvement will begin, as outlined in the Marketing Plan above, with many neighborhood and community meetings and events designed to strengthen the RISE community bond. Attendance by families at RISE sponsored events is a critical component of building a positive school culture. The events include a variety of topics in order to provide as many families as possible the opportunity to attend at least two events throughout the year from January - June 2020. Pep-Rallies-Night RISE: Parents are welcomed to the school between 5:30-7:30 pm to learn how they can help their child succeed academically. Some RISE Academy suggested events are: Strong Start-Meet the Teacher/Helping your Child Get & Stay Organized / RISE-ing STEAM Night (How they work together) / Tricks for Reading Comprehension / Everyday Everywhere Math / Testing Skills and Tips.

We will develop veins of communication with parents to better assist them in becoming informed advocates for their children. Building upon the foundation initiated in the Marketing Plan, we will include ancillary programs specializing in literacy tutoring. These efforts will be supplemented by mailings, texts and phone calls.

3. If already identified, describe any programs you will offer to parents and/or the community and how they may benefit students and support the school mission and vision.

Parent Workshops- (Monthly, time and location TBD)

- Parent Volunteer Training Workshop
- Parents as Tutors Workshop
- Family Budgeting and Financial Workshop
- Family Support of Academic Success

- Personal Development Workshop
- Child Discipline
- Time Management Workshop
- Reading at Home
- Math at Home Science at Home
- Fundraising Workshop

3.8 Admissions Policy

1. Provide the school's proposed policies and the procedures for admitting students to the proposed charter school, including:
 - a. 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.
 - b. Clear policies and procedures detailing the open enrollment lottery plan, including policies regarding statutory permitted student enrollment preferences.
 - c. Clear policies and procedures for student waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers.
 - d. Explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities (if any) for students or parents.
 - e. Clear policies and procedures for student withdrawals and transfers.

RISE Academy's board of directors will adopt an admissions policy which details the school's admissions process. Open enrollment will be scheduled for a minimum of 30 days in January, in accordance with state statute. The lottery will take place in February. We will run public service announcements in local news media and social media to announce the period of open enrollment and lottery prior to the first day of open enrollment. On the first day of open enrollment, an admissions application will be available online and via printed copies. We will email a link to the admissions application to our developed email list, that we have been gathering through the application process. We will mail an admissions application form by U.S. Postal Service to those on the list that do not use email. We will conduct a significant effort to get the word out about open enrollment. We will collect admissions applications for the first 30 days of open enrollment. If the number of applications exceed the number of seats available at any grade level, we will conduct a lottery for that grade level on the scheduled lottery date. Admissions applications received after the close of open enrollment will go to the secondary wait list in the order received.

After the lottery is completed, those students that were not successful in obtaining admission through the lottery will be placed on a wait list. The wait list order will be based upon the drawing. The school will publish applicant's assigned lottery number (no names) on the school website showing the applicant lottery number of students accepted by grade level and the ordered wait list. Parents and students do not have to be present to win the lottery. Immediately following the lottery, the school will send an official notice of acceptance for students accepted. We will also send a notice to students that were not accepted with waitlist instructions. Accepted students

and parents will have 10 business days to contact the school and accept admission. If admission is not formally accepted within 10 business days, the seat will be given to the next person on the waitlist. Admissions Acceptance Forms will be available on the date of the lottery.

Once a student has been formally accepted, parents will be required to submit student registration information. The initial Admissions Application will only include the student's name, address, residency, grade level, date of birth, sibling information, and preferred contact information and method. The full registration packet will include records request authorizations and detailed information including health, immunizations, exceptional children and 504 statuses, and so forth.

The school will conduct a series of introductory events prior to the start of school. The school admission policy will also address withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers. Students that withdraw because of parent military service, employment, or education have an admission preference if they return during the two-year period. Students that withdraw outside of the policy preference will be required to go through the lottery process over again. Students that transfer under the withdraw preference may return when a seat is available as a preference. The school will also recognize limited preferences for board members, teacher, and staff.

Weighted Lottery

*Does your school plan to use a weighted lottery? Yes. Complete the following section. No.

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, unless the charter school is operated by a municipality OR the charter school was converted from a traditional public school. Municipal charter schools may give enrollment priority to domiciliaries of the municipality in which the school is located (G.S. 115C-218.45(f)(7)), and charter schools that were converted from traditional public schools shall give admission preference to students who reside within the former attendance area of the school (G.S. 115C-218.45(c)).
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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. A thorough description of the processes and procedures the applicant intends to use to effectuate the lottery.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. The underlying research, pedagogical, educational, psychometric and legal, that supports the request and the procedures the applicant is requesting.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Certify

This subsection is entirely original and has not been copied, pasted, or otherwise reproduced from any other application. Yes No

Explanation (optional): RISE ACADEMY board of directors has approved the language used in this section of the application. Part of the language may contain standard language used by our contracted management services provider and their technical writer which help prepare this section of the application.

Section 4 Operations

4.1 Transportation Plan

1. Describe in detail the transportation plan that will ensure that no child is denied access to the school due to lack of transportation. Include budgetary assumptions and the impact of transportation on the overall budget. The details of this plan should align with the mission, identified need for the charter school, targeted student population, and the budget proposal.

If you plan to provide transportation, include the following:

- a. Describe the plan for oversight of transportation options (e.g., whether the school will provide its own transportation, contract out for transportation, attempt to contract with a district, or a combination thereof) and who on the staff will provide this daily oversight.
- b. Describe how the school will transport students with special transportation needs and how that will impact your budget.
- c. Describe how the school will ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations related to transportation services.

RISE Academy's budget contracts out transportation services/bus services. The transportation provider/coordinator will manage the day-to-day operations of the school's transportation program. The school will contract qualified bus drivers and buses. The transportation provider will set bus routes, pickup times, and locations. The school will use an alert system which uses a text messaging feature to communicate bus information and updates to parents. The school will make any special arrangements for special transportation needs. The school will use its dedicated transportation funds or amend its budget as needed to assure that all students in need of special transportation arrangements are able to get to and from school. The transportation coordinator will ensure that all school buses or other vehicles used for school transportation are regularly and properly inspected in accordance with state, local, and federal laws. The transportation coordinator will assure the buses are internally inspected at least monthly and that buses are in good repair and safe for our students.

The transportation provider will coordinate with the school's lead administrator to ensure that bus drivers receive training on the school's culture and the Student Code of Conduct and rules of discipline on the buses. The transportation coordinator and the lead administrator will provide parent orientations on the school's transportation program. The transportation coordinator will oversee the school's parent car pool program.

RISE Academy's transportation program is designed to ensure that no child is denied access to the school due to a lack of transportation. The school anticipates working closely with educationally disadvantaged students. The school's transportation is designed to help the school fulfill its mission by assuring that the children get to school in a bus atmosphere which is consistent with the schools proposed culture, mission, and vision.

4.2 School Lunch Plan

1. 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.

If the school intends to participate in the National School Lunch Program, include the following components in the response:

- a. How the school will comply with applicable local, state, and federal guidelines and regulations;
- b. Any plans to meet the needs of low-income students; and
- c. Include how the school intends to collect free- and reduced-price lunch information from qualified families. If a school intends to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision, describe the methodology the school will use to determine eligibility.

RISE Academy's governing board recognizes the interest between good nutrition and student academic performance. The school will provide students a high-quality breakfast and lunch for its students. The school will participate in the National School Lunch Program and provide high quality meals which are compliant with

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) standards. The school’s budget provides for a child nutrition coordinator whom will be responsible to the day-to-day operations of program. The school will establish procurement policies and procedures, and set up meal plans, serving guidelines, and address all health and safety issues related to food preparation, storage, serving, and sanitation. The child nutrition coordinator will ensure the school’s operation meets all local, state, and federal requirements. The school will initially collect family income data from student’s parents to determine whether the student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch. If the school reaches the required 40 percent threshold, the school will participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program and will use the Direct Certification process to determine eligibility.

4.3 Civil Liability and Insurance

The Nonprofit shall name the SBE as an Additional Named Insured to their liability coverage for operation of a charter school while obtaining and maintaining insurance at a minimum in the following amounts:

- a. Errors and Omissions: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence;
- b. General Liability: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence;
- c. Property Insurance: For owned building and contents, including boiler and machinery coverage, if owned;
- d. Crime Coverage: no less than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) to cover employee theft and dishonesty;
- e. Automobile Liability: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence; and
- f. Workers' Compensation: as specified by Chapter 97 of NC General Statute, Workers' Compensation Law.

1. Complete the table below, indicating the amount of each type of coverage as outlined in a quote obtained from an insurance provider.

Area of Proposed Coverage	Proposed Amount of Coverage	Cost (Quote)
Comprehensive General Liability	\$1,000,000.00/occurrence	\$1,368.00
Officers and Directors/Errors and Omissions	\$1,000,000.00/occurrence	\$3,057.00
Property Insurance	(Contents \$150,000.00)	\$450.00
Automobile Liability	\$1,000,000.00/occurrence	\$181.00

Crime Coverage Minimum/Maximum Amount	\$250,000.00 \$250,000.00	\$332.00
Worker's Compensation	\$500,000	\$5,692.00
Other Coverage	Umbrella	\$2,387.00
Head of Class Endorsement		\$82.00
Total Cost		\$13,549.00

***Attach Appendix L: Insurance Quotes**

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.

4.4 Health and Safety Requirements

All public charter schools are required to follow the regulations regarding health and safety as stated in G.S. 115C 218.75.

We, the Board members at **[RISE Academy]** 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.



8-26-2019

Board Chair Signature

Date

Start-Up Plan

1. Provide a detailed start-up plan for the proposed school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals (including compensation for those individuals, if applicable).

RISE Academy will submit this application, participate in the charter school interview, will schedule governance strengthening exercises, and participate in the board training provided by the Office of Charter Schools for the planning year. Each month the board will review and adopt policies and procedures for the operations of the school. In October, the board will announce that open enrollment will begin on January 1 and remain open for a period of 30 days and be followed by a lottery. The board will promote open enrollment through free public service announcements, news coverage from the local media, and social media. The school will also hold several community forums to promote student enrollment. The contracted management company and selected volunteers will provide staff support for start-up activities. In March, the school will begin advertising staff positions at the school, including teachers, administrators, clerical support, and other positions. In April and May, a selected board committee in coordination with the management

company assignee will complete application reviews and enter staff employment agreements. There will be two weeks (10 full days) of professional development for all teachers and instructional staff in July or August, prior to the arrival of students.

In April and May, an appointed board committee and the management company assignee will begin selecting furnishings, entering agreements for equipment and technology, and assembling everything the school will need to operate on day one. The team will work with the contractors and the landlord to ensure the facility will be ready with an educational certificate of occupancy by July 1. The board chair and the management company assignee will work together to ensure the school completes all its ready-to-open requirements by May 30 and be able to present the educational certificate of occupancy during the first week of July.

The school will begin processing student registrations after completion of open enrollment and lottery. The school will establish itself in the NC EDDIE system during the first week in July. The school will conduct open houses and parent orientation in August (at least two events). On the first day of school, a contingent of parent volunteers will be on standby.

2. Describe what the board anticipates will be the challenges of starting a new school and how it expects to address these challenges. Submit a Start-up (Year 0) Budget as Appendix O, if applicable.

RISE Academy anticipates the largest challenge to be securing a facility. Garner is growing, and real-estate is becoming more and more scarce. We have identified multiple options that are feasible, but it was hard to lock-in these facilities on an accelerated schedule. We believe that by submitting our application on a regular schedule, it will be easier to secure a facility after the application is approved.

4.5 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.

1. **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. Present a timeline with reasonable assumptions for facility selection, requisition, state fire marshal and health inspections, and occupation.**

RISE Academy's governing board has entered negotiations for a 39,425 SF site located at

1329 U.S. Hwy W., Garner, NC 27529. We anticipate being able to make minor cosmetic changes to the facility and have all inspections completed and have an educational certificate of occupancy in hand by July 1, 2020.

2. **Describe the school’s facility needs based on the educational program and projected enrollment, including: number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, classroom types, common areas, overall square footage, and amenities. Discuss both short-term and long-term facility plans. Demonstrate that the estimate included in your budget is reasonable.**

The school will need ten (10) regular classroom plus one (1) additional classroom in the first year of operations. Each classroom will be approximately 800 SF per classroom. The school will have a multipurpose room which will serve as a cafeteria and meeting assembly room. We will use less than 20,000 SF in the first year of operations and have expansion space of about 19,245 SF.

3. **Describe school facility needs, including: science labs, art room, computer labs, library/media center, performance/dance room, gymnasium and athletic facilities, auditorium, main office and satellite offices, work room/copy room, supplies/storage, teacher work rooms, and other spaces.**

The facility has all the space the school needs. The school facility has more than adequate classroom space, teacher’s workroom, administrative offices, cafeteria, and other flex space.

4. **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.**

The cost per square foot is about \$7.55 per SF for leasing. We found similar facilities in the region with lease cost per SF ranging from \$4.00/SF to \$30.00/SF.

5. **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 the chose facility becomes unavailable RISE Academy’s board of directors and the management company have developed a collaboration with a local commercial realtor who has worked and continues to work closely with us to identify a suitable facility in the targeted area.

6. **Describe the board’s capacity and experience in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations, as applicable.**

The board has experience in law, finance, and experience with situations that address the facilities issue.

Certify

This subsection is entirely original and has not been copied, pasted, or otherwise reproduced from any other application. Yes No

Explanation (optional): RISE ACADEMY board of directors has approved the language used in this section of the application. Part of the language may contain standard language used by our contracted management services provider and their technical writer which help prepare this section of the application.

Section 5 Financial Plan

5.1 Charter School Budget

All budgets should balance indicating strong budgetary skills. Any negative fund balances will, more than likely, generate additional questions by those evaluating the application. 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.

***Attach Appendix M: Revenue Assurances**

Assurances are needed to confirm the commitment of any additional sources of revenue.

***Attach Appendix N: Proposed Budget for Year 1 through Year 5**

Budget template can be located on the Office of Charter Schools Application website.

5.2 Budget Narrative

Please include additional information that explains the assumptions used in the 5-year budget.

1. How was the student enrollment number projected?

The student enrollment project for the school's first year of operations is 210. Several factors were taken into consideration in making the projections for years one thru five. First, we considered the potential need for the school and potential applicant pool within a 50-mile radius or approximately 1 hour bus ride to the school location. Next, we considered the limitations on startup resources and the feasibility of providing facilities and bus transportation.

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

Our research indicates that parents of educationally disadvantaged students have all but given up on having a school choice option which meets the needs of their students. Our data indicates that more than a sufficient number of parents will select RISE Academy as a school choice for their students.

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

RISE Academy break-even point for its first year of operations is 180 students.

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

RISE Academy governing board will amend its budget or use a contingency budget is

anticipated revenues are less than estimated. Contingency budgeting involves establishing priorities of what can be cut first and establishing an order to timely reduce expenditures to assure the school operates within the available resources and does not run a deficit. The plan also considers cash flow issues such as timing of inflows and outflows of cash. The board will set priorities to first assure the integrity of programs which could impact student outcomes. The school will not rely on revenues which are not committed and have a reasonable expectation of being received. The school's core program will operate from state and local funds. Federal funds are considered supplemental and will not supplant state and local funds.

- 5. 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. Also, describe any committed contributions and in-kind donations of goods or services to be received by the charter school that will assist in evaluating the financial viability of the school. Clearly indicate between those grants or in-kind donations which have already been firmly committed and those the board is planning to pursue. Be sure that the appropriate assurances documentation is provided in the appendices.**

RISE Academy budget does not rely upon sources of funds other than state, county, and federal funds. If any other funding commitments arise, the school will not rely upon said funds without a written commitment and without verifying the reliability of the sources.

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

RISE Academy budget was built upon a student to teacher ratio of 21 to 1. The core teacher to student ratio does not include specials courses or other instruction which may not involve the core teacher. The core teacher ratio does not include or account for the impact of planning time or other times the core teacher is not with his/her class. The school recognizes the student to core teacher ratio as a valuable but limited metric in planning high quality educational programs.

- 7. Describe the board's individual and collective qualifications and capacity for implementing the financial plan successfully.**

RISE Academy governing board recognizes its limitations and capacity. Therefore, the governing board has worked to assure it engages individuals with background, training, and experience which can provide it reliable expertise.

- 8. Describe how one or more high needs students with disabilities might affect the budget and your plan to meet student needs that might be more than anticipated.**

RISE Academy governing board recognizes that one or more high needs students with disabilities can have a substantial budget impact on a charter school. The governing board further recognizes students' rights to attend the charter school and the legal requirements to provide services. The governing board plans to be fully prepared to meet the needs of all students by recognizing when and how to apply for resources needed to meet the needs of its students, such as PRC 029 funds or PRC 118 for autistic student support. The school will also be prepared to seek reimbursements from Medicare, Medicaid, and Private Insurance for reimbursable services to high needs students. The governing board recognizes the need to plan ahead and to fully understand the operating

environment and resources which may be available. RISE Academy will remain full prepared to address the needs of all students which are accepted thru the lottery and to provide FAPE.

9. **If there is a plan to outsource any or all financial management areas such as payroll, benefits, audits, fundraising, accounting, etc., provide a statement on how the vendors will be selected and how the board will oversee their activities to ensure fidelity and compliance.**

RISE Academy has entered into a management contract with Torchlight Academy Schools, LLC which will provide financial management services for the school including payroll, benefits administration, and accounting services. The board will separately contract a Local Government Commission approved Independent Certified Public Accountant to conduct the annual single audit. In all case, the school will identify and investigate at least three vendors and will select the best candidate which can meet the needs of the school. The board will consider price, quality, and experience in the matrix use to select vendors. The governing board will adopt procurement policies and procedures.

10. **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.**

RISE Academy will adopt and publish procurement policies and procedures which govern selection of vendors with appropriate threshold amounts for informal purchasing, obtaining three quotes, and a formal bid process.

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

RISE Academy budget is designed to assure the school can meet its mission statement. The budget provides sufficient funding to meet the school's curricular offerings, its transportation plan, and provide for the school's facility needs. The budget is aligned to the stated elements by providing sufficient resources to assure that said items can be carried out.

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

RISE Academy governing board's general fund balance goals is 3 to 8 percent of revenue. The school anticipates that general fund balance goals will be tied to student enrollment and the marginal cost of the school's operations.

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

RISE Academy governing board will enter a financing lease for its facilities, furnishing, and equipment (including student computers). The school will also maintain a line of credit to assure the school meets its cash flow needs. The contracted management company is committed to providing the school with \$50,000.00 in start-up capital.

14. **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.

RISE Academy governing board has entered a management contract with Torchlight Academy Schools, LLC. The management company has committed \$50,000.00 for start-up capital.

5.3 Financial Compliance

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

RISE Academy governing board will adopt Internal Control Policies and Procedures which comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP).

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

None

3. **Provide the name of the firm approved by the NC Local Government Commission (LGC) that will conduct the audit. Include the complete mailing address, telephone number and fax number. If a firm has yet to be identified, please list the firms the board has investigated.**

Darrell L. Keller, CPA, PA, 105 S. city Street, Kings Mountain, NC 28086. Phone: (704) 739-0771; Fax: (704) 739-6122

Certify

This subsection is entirely original and has not been copied, pasted, or otherwise reproduced from any other application. Yes No

Explanation (optional): RISE ACADEMY board of directors has approved the language used in this section of the application. Part of the language may contain standard language used by our contracted management services provider and their technical writer which help prepare this section of the application.

Application Fee

Pursuant to G.S. 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 **July 29, 2019 at 5:00 pm EST** for Fast Track and Accelerated applications, and **August 26, 2019 at 5:00 pm EST** for traditional timeline applications. 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 the Application Fee Payment Form before or on the due date of July 29, 2019 at 5:00 pm EST for Fast Track and Accelerated applicants, and August 26, 2019 at 5:00 pm EST for traditional timeline applicants.** 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

6307 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699-6307

Signature Page

The foregoing application is submitted on behalf of the Board of Directors of RISE Academy. 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 "Planning Year for New and Preliminary Charter Schools – CHTR 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: Renorda Pryor

Board Position: Chair

Signature: 

Date: 8/26/19

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 26 day of August, 20 19.

Notary Public: Joseph Costanzo

Official Seal:

My commission expires: 7-15, 20 23.

Joseph Costanzo
NOTARY PUBLIC
WAKE COUNTY, N.C.
My Commission Expires 07-15-2023

Appendix A4.1 – Executed EMO Contract

TORCHLIGHT ACADEMY SCHOOLS, LLC.

SERVICES AGREEMENT

This Services Agreement (“Agreement”) by and between Torchlight Academy Schools, LLC., a North Carolina corporation (“T.A.S.”), and RISE Academy, a North Carolina non-profit corporation (the “School”) is effective this 15th day of July 2019 (the “Effective Date”). For purposes of this Agreement, “T.A.S.” and the School shall be referred to collectively as the Parties.”

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the School was issued a Charter Contract by the North Carolina State Board of Education (the “Authorizer”) to operate a public charter school pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. 115C-238.29 et seq. (the “Authorizing Law”); and
WHEREAS, the Parties desire to work together to promote educational excellence and innovation based on T.A.S.’s school design, comprehensive educational program and management principles; and
WHEREAS, the Parties desire to set forth the terms and conditions of such a relationship in this Agreement;
NOW, THEREFORE, for good and valuable consideration, including the mutual promise and benefits contained in this Agreement, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the Parties agree as follows:

ARTICLE I

CONTRACTING RELATIONSHIP

- A. Services. Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, and as permitted by applicable law, the School hereby contracts with T.A.S. for the provision of certain educational, business administration, facility, and management services, including without limitation, all labor, equipment, and materials necessary for the provision of the same, as set forth herein (collectively, the “Services”).
- B. Charter. This Agreement shall: (i) be subject to and comply with the terms and conditions of the Charter Contract and the School’s Charter Application (collectively, the “**Charter**”); and (ii) not be construed to interfere with the constitutional, statutory, or fiduciary duties of the School’s Board of Directors (the “**Board**”). In the event of a conflict between any term or condition of this Agreement and any term or condition of the Charter, the term or condition of the Charter shall govern.
- C. Independent Contractor. T.A.S. shall provide the Services as an independent contractor, and not as an employee, partner, agent, or associate of the School. This independent contractor relationship shall extend to the officers, directors, employees, and representatives of T.A.S. Consistent with the status of an independent contractor, T.A.S. reserves to itself the right to designate the means and methods of accomplishing the objectives and purposes of this Agreement consistent with Authorizing Law and the Charter. The relationship between the Parties is based solely on the terms and conditions of this Agreement, and the terms and conditions of any other written agreement between the Parties.
- D. Designations and Appointments.
1. T.A.S., including its directors, officers, and employees are hereby designated as “other School Officials having a legitimate educational interest in education records” for purposes of the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g et seq. (FERPA).
 2. T.A.S., its directors, officers, and employees may be designated by the School for other purposes by a written resolution of the Board.

ARTICLE II TERM & TERMINATION

A. Term.

This Agreement shall commence on the Effective Date, and unless terminated as set forth herein, shall continue until the termination or expiration of the Charter currently in effect, inclusive of any Charter re-authorization or renewal periods thereof (the “**Term**”). The parties acknowledge that the Authorizer, as part of any reauthorization or renewal, may require that the School and T.A.S. submit an amended or restated Agreement for review by the Authorizer. The first school year of this Agreement shall commence July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, and each school year thereafter shall commence on July 1 and end on June 30 of the following year.

B. Termination

1. By the School. The School may terminate this Agreement prior to the end of the Term if T.A.S. fails to remedy a material breach of this Agreement within (60) days after receiving notice from the School of such breach. For purposes of this Subsection, a material breach includes, but is not limited to: (i) T.A.S.’s failure to account for expenditures or pay operating costs pursuant to the Budget (as defined below); (ii) T.A.S.’s failure to follow policies, procedures, rules, regulations or curriculum adopted by the Board, provided they do not violate the Charter, applicable law, or this Agreement; (iii) a receipt by the Board of an unsatisfactory report from an independent education consultant retained by the Board regarding the Services or the School’s performance, provided the unsatisfactory performance cannot be adequately corrected or explained; (iv) a determination that this Agreement or its implementation would serve as grounds for suspension, revocation, or non-renewal of the Charter; (v) a determination that this Agreement or its implementation would jeopardize material tax exemptions of the School or its non-profit status; or (vi) any action or inaction by T.A.S. that places the Charter in jeopardy of termination, suspension or revocation.

2. By T.A.S. T.A.S. may terminate this Agreement prior to the end of the Term if the Board fails to remedy a material breach of this Agreement within thirty (30) days after receiving a notice from T.A.S. of such breach. For purposes of this Subsection, a material breach (which for the sake of the clarity is a default hereunder) includes but is not limited to: (i) T.A.S.’s failure to timely receive any compensation or reimbursement required by this Agreement; or (ii) a suspension, revocation, or non-renewal of the Charter.

3. By Either Party. Either party may terminate this Agreement prior to the end of the Term, with just cause, by providing the other party with at least one hundred twenty (120) days prior written notice.

4. If this Agreement is terminated prior to the end of the Term, and unless otherwise agreed by the Parties, such termination will not become effective until the end of the then-current school year.

A. Effect of Termination. Upon the effective date of termination or expiration of this Agreement:

1. T.A.S. shall have the right to remove from the School any equipment or other assets owned or leased by T.A.S.;
2. The School shall pay or reimburse T.A.S. through the Fee (as defined below) for the prepaid portion of any expenses or liabilities incurred by T.A.S. pursuant to the Budget as of the date of such termination or expiration, provided T.A.S. supplies the School with documentation of all such expenses and liabilities;
3. T.A.S. may agree, in its sole discretion, to assist the School for a reasonable amount of time, not to exceed ninety (90) days, and for a reasonable fee, with the School’s transition to another administrative, managerial, or services arrangement;
4. T.A.S. shall, if applicable, reasonably assist the School in the execution of a closure and dissolution plan and cooperate in the closure and dissolution process, including without limitation, in any audits and court or other proceedings related thereto; and

5. The party to whom Confidential Information (as defined below) has been disclosed shall, upon request and at the direction of the disclosing party: (i) return such Confidential Information within thirty (30) days, including any copies thereof, and cease its use; or (ii) destroy such Confidential Information and certify such destruction to the disclosing party, except for a single copy thereof which may be retained for the sole purpose of determining the scope of any obligations incurred under this Agreement, and except where disclosure or retention is required by applicable law.

ARTICLE III OBLIGATIONS OF T.A.S.

A. Manager at Risk. T.A.S. shall be responsible and accountable to the Board for providing the Services. During the Term, T.A.S. shall provide services to the level of funding appropriated by the board. Notwithstanding the foregoing, T.A.S. shall not be required to expend funds on Services in excess of the amount set forth in the Budget but may do so at its discretion.

B. STEAM Educational Program. The School has determined to adopt the a STEAM curriculum as stated in the charter school application. Subject to the oversight of the Board, T.A.S. shall implement and administer the stated STEAM Educational Program. In the event that T.A.S. reasonably determines that it is necessary or advisable to make material changes to the Educational Program, T.A.S. shall inform the Board of the proposed changes and obtain the Board's approval before making such changes, as well as the Authorizer's approval if required by the Charter or applicable law. The Parties acknowledge and agree that an essential part of the Education Program is its capacity to change in the interest of continuous improvement and efficiency. Not less than annually, or as reasonably requested by the Board, T.A.S. shall provide the Board with a report detailing progress made on each of the educational goals set forth in the Educational Program. The school year calendar and the school day schedule shall be approved by the Board as required under the Charter.

C. All Children Welcome. T.A.S. shall ensure that all students are welcome regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender and economic backgrounds.

D. Services to Students with Disabilities. T.A.S. welcomes students with disabilities at the School. T.A.S. shall provide special education and related services, in conformity with the requirements of applicable law, to students who attend the School.

E. Educational and Administrative Services. Subject to the oversight of the Board, T.A.S. shall implement operational practices and procedures that are consistent with Board policy, the Charter and applicable law. Such practices and procedures shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Student recruitment and student admissions.
2. Student assessments, including testing, promotion, and retention.
3. The acquisition of instructional materials, equipment and supplies, and the administration of any and all extra-curricular and co-curricular activities and programs included in the Budget.
4. Employment of personnel working at the School and management of all personnel functions, as set forth herein.
5. All aspects of the School's business administration.
6. All aspects of the School's accounting operation, including general ledger management, financial and audit reporting, employee benefits, payroll, and tax compliance.
7. All aspects of food services.
8. All aspects of facilities acquisition, administration and maintenance.

9. Student behavior management and discipline.

F. Location of Services. Other than instruction, and unless prohibited by the Charter or applicable law, T.A.S. may provide the Services, including but not limited to, purchasing, professional development and administrative services, off-site.

G. Subcontracts. T.A.S. reserves the right to subcontract any and all aspects of the Services. T.A.S. shall not subcontract the oversight of the Educational Program, except as specifically permitted in this Agreement or with prior written approval of the Board. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Board specifically acknowledges and agrees that from time to time T.A.S. may use third parties or independent contractors to assist in the creation and development of Educational Materials (as defined below) that may be used as a part of the T.A.S. Educational Program.

H. Pupil Performance Standards and Evaluation. T.A.S. shall implement pupil performance evaluations that permit evaluation of the academic progress of each student. T.A.S. shall utilize assessment strategies required by the Charter and applicable law. The Board and T.A.S. shall cooperate in good faith to identify academic goals and methods to assess such academic performance. T.A.S. shall provide the Board with timely reports regarding student performance.

I. Unusual Events. T.A.S. shall timely notify the Board and the Administrator (as defined below) of any anticipated or known material: (i) health or safety issues, including all mandatory reporting required by applicable law; (ii) labor, employee or funding issues; or (iii) other issues that may reasonably and adversely impact the School's ability to comply with the Charter, applicable law or this Agreement.

J. School Records. The financial and education records pertaining to the School (collectively, the "**School Records**"), are property of the School. Except as may be prohibited or limited by the Charter or applicable law, the School Records shall be available to the Board and the Authorizer for their review, and are subject to inspection and copying to the same extent that records of public schools are subject to inspection and copying pursuant to applicable law. All School Records shall be physically or electronically available upon request at the School's physical facility. T.A.S. agrees to comply with the terms pursuant to the Charter regarding information to be made available to the School.

K. Facility. T.A.S. shall use reasonable efforts to secure a facility to be leased or otherwise provided to the School on terms mutually agreeable to T.A.S. and the Board. Obligations of the Board created under the terms of such lease are to be fulfilled by T.A.S. unless otherwise agreed to in writing by T.A.S. and the Board. The facility shall comply with the requirements of the Charter and applicable law. T.A.S. shall also use reasonable efforts to cause the facility to be furnished with equipment and technology as is reasonably necessary to implement the Educational Program.

L. Legal Compliance. T.A.S. will implement and enforce rules, regulations and procedures applicable to the School that are consistent with adopted Board policy, if any, and the T.A.S. Educational Program in accordance with the Charter and applicable law, including without limitation, rules, regulations, and policies regarding non-discrimination, discipline, special education, confidentiality and access to records.

M. Rules and Procedures. T.A.S. will recommend to the Board reasonable rules, regulations, policies and/or procedures applicable to the School. The Board hereby authorizes and directs T.A.S. to enforce such rules, regulations and procedures consistent with Board policy.

N. Assistance to the Board. T.A.S. shall cooperate with the Board and, to the extent consistent with applicable law, timely furnish the Board with all documents and information necessary for the Board to properly perform its responsibilities under this Agreement, the Charter and all applicable laws.

**ARTICLE IV
OBLIGATIONS OF THE BOARD**

- A. Board Policies. The Board shall be responsible for the fiscal and academic policies of the School. The Board shall exercise good faith in considering the recommendations of T.A.S., including but not limited to, T.A.S.'s recommendations regarding policies, rules, regulations and the Budget (as defined below).
- B. Assistance to T.A.S.. The Board shall cooperate with T.A.S. and, to the extent consistent with applicable law, timely furnish T.A.S. all documents and information necessary for T.A.S. to properly perform its responsibilities under this Agreement.
- C. Unusual Events. The Board shall timely notify T.A.S. of any anticipated or known material: (i) health or safety issues; (ii) labor, employee or funding issues; or (iii) other issues that may reasonably and adversely impact T.A.S.'s ability to comply with the Charter, applicable law, or this Agreement.
- D. Retained Authority. The Board shall retain the authority to adopt reasonable policies in accordance with applicable law relative to anything necessary for the proper establishment, maintenance, management, and operation of the School.
- E. Ex Officio Member. To permit one ex-officio member appointed by T.A.S. on the Board of Directors. This member will be entitled to meeting notice.
- F. School Policies. The Board agrees the school will:
1. Select and implement school uniforms.
 2. Send board representation to all board trainings required by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
 3. Operate the school based on hours.
 4. Select and agree to a school budget by July 15th preceding each school year.
 5. To implement the healthcare plan utilized by T.A.S.

**Article V
Intellectual Property**

- A. Definitions.
1. **“Educational Materials”** means all curriculum, print and electronic textbooks, instructional materials, lesson plans, teacher guides, workbooks, tests, and other curriculum-related materials licensed, developed or otherwise owned by the School or T.A.S.
 2. **“Confidential Information”** means any confidential and non-public trade, technical or business knowledge, information and materials regarding the School or T.A.S. (or their respective affiliates), which is given by one party to the other, or any of their respective representatives, in any form, whether printed, written, oral, visual, electronic or in any other media or manner. Confidential Information includes, but is not limited to, research, operations and procedures, financial projections, pricing, sales, expansion plans and strategies, services, data, trade secrets and other intellectual property, or the results of any mediation or private adjudication, as well as information with respect to each party's or its affiliates' plan for market expansion, except for information which a party can show by contemporaneous written records was developed or formulated independently of work or services performed for, or in connection with performance of, this Agreement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the disclosure of the other party's Confidential Information as required to be disclosed by law, rule or regulation or by reason of subpoena, court order or government action shall not constitute a breach of this Agreement; however, in such event the

party required to disclose such information will reasonably cooperate with the party whose information is required to be disclosed in order to obtain a protective order applicable to such disclosure. All Confidential Information will remain the sole property of the party disclosing such information or data.

- A. Assignment. Each party shall, and hereby does assign to the other, with full title guarantee and without additional compensation, such right, title and interest in and to any intellectual property as is necessary to fully affect the ownership provisions set out herein, and any accrued rights of action in respect thereof. Each party shall, if so requested by the other, execute all such documents and do all such other acts and things as may be reasonably required to comply with this Agreement to vest in the appropriate party all rights in the relevant intellectual property and shall procure execution by any named inventor of all such documents as may reasonably be required by the other party in connection with any related patent application.

ARTICLE VI

SOLICITATION AND USE OF PRIVATE FUNDS

- A. T.A.S. shall seek the Board's approval prior to soliciting any non-governmental grants, donations or contributions on behalf of the School. Any such funds received shall be used solely in accordance with the purpose for which they were solicited, applicable donor restrictions, or as otherwise approved by the Board. Subject to applicable donor restrictions, the Board shall determine the allocation of any such funds subject to this Article that remain unexpended following completion of the project or purpose for which they were originally designated.

ARTICLE VII

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- A. Revenues. Except as provided herein, all monies received by the School shall be deposited in the School's depository account within three (3) business days with a financial institution acceptable to the Board; provided, however, that upon receipt of a notice from T.A.S., the School shall pay all such funds owed under this Agreement directly to the account or party specified in such notice. The signatories on the School depository account shall solely be Board members or properly designated Board agents (if any). Interest income earned on the School's depository account shall accrue to the School. Except as specifically excluded by this Agreement, the term "Revenues" shall include all funds received by or on behalf of the School including but not limited to:
1. Funding for public school students enrolled at the School.
 2. Special education funding provided by the federal and/or state government that is directly allocable to special education students enrolled at the School.
 3. Gifted and talented funding provided by the federal and/or state government that is directly allocable to gifted and talented students enrolled at the School.
 4. At-risk funding provided by the federal and/or state government that is directly allocable to at-risk students enrolled at the School.
 5. Funding provided by the federal and/or state government that is directly allocable to students enrolled at the School with limited English proficiency.
 6. All other federal and/or state grant sources, including, but not limited to, Title I and any start-up funding allocable to the School.
 7. All other grants and donations received by the School to support or carry programs at the School (except to the extent T.A.S. is not required or involved in soliciting, administering or managing the contribution and/or donation, in which case such funds

shall be deposited in the Board Spending Account (as defined below)).

8. Fees charged to students as permitted by law for extra services provided by T.A.S. as approved by the Board.

The expenditure of any Revenues received from governmental entities shall be consistent with all applicable regulations and policies. The expenditure of any Revenue received from non-governmental grants, contributions and donations shall be made consistent with provisions of Article VI.

- B. Budget. T.A.S. shall provide the Board with an annual proposed Budget prepared and maintained in accordance with the Charter and applicable law (the “**Budget**”). The Budget shall be submitted to the Board prior to June 1 for the next school year.
- C. Review and Approval of Budget. The Board shall be responsible for reviewing and approving the Budget in accordance with the Charter and applicable law. At the direction of either T.A.S. or the Board, with the approval of the Board, the Budget shall be amended from time to time as necessary.
- D. Board Spending Account. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement to the contrary, each school year during the Term, T.A.S. shall allocate to an account controlled by the Board an amount equal to the lesser of (i) 2% of state per pupil aid reflected in the Budget for that respective year, or (ii) \$25,000 (the “**Board Spending Account**”). The aforesaid amount shall be deposited by T.A.S. into the Board Spending Account pro-rata during the course of the School’s school year as Revenues are received. All funds in the Board Spending Account are the property of the School and may be used by the School at the discretion of the Board. Funds in the Board Spending Account that are not spent by the School during the school year shall carryover annually.
- E. Fee. T.A.S. shall receive all Revenues as its services fee (the “**Fee**”), from which it shall pay all operating costs of the School as detailed in the Budget. T.A.S. and the Board acknowledge that operating costs may include an administrative fee payable to the Authorizer as set forth in the Charter. Payment of the Fee shall be made on the same frequency that the School receives its Revenues. T.A.S. shall be entitled to retain as compensation for the Services the difference, if any, between the Fee and the amount actually expended by T.A.S. in operation and/or management of the School during the School’s fiscal year. The minimum service fee each year shall be 10% of Revenues.
- F. Other Schools. The School acknowledges that T.A.S. may enter into similar services agreements with other schools. T.A.S. shall maintain separate accounts for expenses incurred in the operation of the School and other schools assisted by T.A.S., and shall reflect in the School’s financial records only those expenses incurred in the operation of the School.
- G. Financial Reporting. T.A.S. shall provide the Board with:
 1. At least annually, the Budget as required by this Agreement.
 2. Monthly financial statement. These financial statements will include a Balance Sheet, Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance at object level detail with a comparison of budget to actual revenue and expenditures and explanations of variances.
 3. Quarterly, or as reasonably requested by the Board, a report on School operations and student performance.
 4. As reasonably requested, other information to enable the Board to: (i) evaluate the quality of the Services; and (ii) timely provide all reports and information that are required by the Charter and applicable law.
- H. Access to Financial Records. T.A.S. shall keep accurate financial records pertaining to its operation of the School, together with all School financial records prepared by or in possession of T.A.S., and shall retain all of the afore referenced records according to the Charter and applicable law to which

such books, accounts, and records relate. T.A.S. and the Board shall maintain the proper confidentiality of personnel, students, and other records as required by law. All records shall be kept in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements.

I. Accounting Standards: Annual Audit.

1. The School shall at all times comply with generally accepted public sector accounting principles and applicable law.
2. The Board shall select and retain an independent auditor to conduct an annual audit of the School's financial matters in accordance with the Charter and applicable law.
3. Subject to applicable law, all records in the possession or control of T.A.S. that are related to the School, including but not limited to, financial records, shall be made available to the School and the School's independent auditor. The expense of the annual audit shall be included in the Budget.

**ARTICLE VIII
PERSONNEL & TRAINING**

- A. **Qualified Personnel. T.A.S. shall select and hire qualified personnel to perform the Services. T.A.S. shall have the responsibility and authority, subject to this Article, to select, hire, evaluate, assign, discipline, transfer, and terminate personnel consistent with the Budget, the Charter and applicable law. With the exception of teachers, as set forth below, and unless otherwise agreed by the written consent of the Parties, all School personnel shall be employees or independent contractors of T.A.S..** The compensation of all employees or contractors working at the School shall be included in the Budget. Upon Board request, T.A.S. shall disclose to the Board the level of compensation and fringe benefits provided by T.A.S. to T.A.S. employees working at the School. A criminal background check and unprofessional conduct search in compliance with applicable law shall be conditions for the hiring of or services provided by any person who will or may be reasonably expected to have unsupervised access to and the care, custody or control of, any School student(s).
- B. **School Administrator. The School administrator (the "Administrator") shall be an employee of T.A.S. The duties and term of the Administrator's employment shall be determined by T.A.S. The Administrator shall work with T.A.S. in the operation and management of the School.**
- C. Teachers. The Administrator shall recommend to the Board for its consideration and approval, teachers who are qualified in the grade level and subjects required by the School to operate in accordance with the terms of the Charter. All teachers shall be jointly employed by the School and T.A.S. for such purposes as inclusion in the compensation and employee benefit plans of T.A.S., payroll administration and other employment policies and practices; provided however, in all circumstances, the Board shall ultimately control the hiring and discharge decisions with respect to jointly employed teachers at the School in accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. 115C-238.29(f)(E)(1). Teachers assigned to and retained by the School may hold a valid teaching certificate issued by the State Board of Education to the extent required by N.C. Gen. Stat. 115C-238.29(f)(E)(1)..
- D. Support Staff. T.A.S. shall, consistent with this Article, provide the School with qualified support staff as needed to operate the School in an efficient manner. The support staff may, at the discretion of T.A.S., work at the School on a full or part time basis.
- E. Training. T.A.S. shall provide or procure training in its methods, curriculum, program, and technology to all teaching personnel on a regular basis. Instructional personnel shall be required to

- obtain at least the minimum hours of professional development as required by applicable law.
- F. Background Checks and Qualifications. T.A.S. shall comply with applicable law regarding background checks, unprofessional conduct searches and certification/licensure, as applicable, for all persons working in the School.

ARTICLE IX INDEMNIFICATION

- A. Indemnification of Parties. To the extent not prohibited by the Charter or applicable law, the Parties hereby agree to indemnify, defend, and hold the other (the “**Indemnified Party**”), harmless from and against any and all third-party claims, actions, damages, expenses, losses or awards which arise out of (i) the gross negligence or intentional misconduct of the indemnifying party, (ii) any action taken or not taken by the indemnifying party, or (iii) any noncompliance or breach by the indemnifying party of any of the terms, conditions, warranties, representations, or undertakings contained in or made pursuant to this Agreement. As used herein, Indemnified Party shall include the party’s trustees, directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives and attorneys. The Parties may purchase general liability, property, or other insurance policies. Notwithstanding anything in this Agreement to the contrary, the Board shall not be precluded by the terms of this Agreement from asserting or declining to assert a claim of governmental immunity.

It is understood by Torchlight Academy Schools, LLC. that "no indebtedness of any kind incurred or created by the charter school shall constitute an indebtedness of the State or its political subdivisions, and no indebtedness of the charter school shall involve or be secured by the faith, credit, or taxing power of the State or its political subdivisions."

ARTICLE X INSURANCE

- A. Insurance Coverage. T.A.S. shall maintain such policies of insurance as required by the Charter and applicable law. Each party shall, upon request, present evidence to the other that it maintains the requisite insurance in compliance with the provisions of this Article. Each party shall comply with any information or reporting requirements required by the other party’s insurer(s), to the extent reasonably practicable.
- B. Workers’ Compensation Insurance. T.A.S. shall maintain workers’ compensation insurance as required by law, covering their respective employees.

ARTICLE XI REPRESENTATIONS & WARRANTIES

- A. Board and School. The Board represents and warrants, for itself and on behalf of the School, that: (i) it is legally vested with all power and authority necessary to operate a charter school under the Authorizing Law; (ii) it is legally vested with all power and authority necessary to execute, deliver and perform this Agreement, including without limitation, the power and authority to contract with a private entity for the provision of educational, business administration and management services; (iii) its actions have been duly and validly authorized and it has adopted any and all resolutions or expenditure approvals required for the execution of this Agreement; and (iv) there are no pending actions, claims, suits or proceedings, or, to its knowledge, threatened or reasonably anticipated against or affecting either the Board or the School, which if adversely determined, would have a material adverse effect on its ability to perform under this Agreement.
- B. T.A.S. T.A.S. represents and warrants that: (i) it is a corporation in good standing and is authorized to conduct business in the State of North Carolina; (ii) it is legally vested with all power and authority necessary to execute, deliver and perform this Agreement; (iii) there are no pending actions, claims, suites or proceedings, or, to its knowledge threatened or reasonably anticipated

against or affecting T.A.S., which if adversely determined, would have a material adverse effect on its ability to perform its obligations under this Agreement; and (iv) it will comply with all registration and licensing requirements relating to conducting business under this Agreement, which the Board agrees to assist T.A.S. in applying for such licenses and permits and in obtaining such approvals and consents.

**ARTICLE XII
MISCELLANEOUS**

- A. Entire Agreement. This Agreement and any attachments hereto shall constitute the entire agreement of the Parties on the subject matter set forth herein. This Agreement supersedes and replaces any and all prior agreements and understandings regarding the subject matter set forth herein between the School and T.A.S..
- B. Force Majeure. Except for payment obligations, and notwithstanding any other provisions of this Agreement, neither party shall be liable for any delay in performance or inability to perform due to acts of God, war, riot, embargo, fire, explosion, sabotage, flood, accident, labor strike, or other acts beyond its reasonable control; provided either party may terminate this Agreement in accordance with provisions contained herein if sufficient grounds exists as provided in the Article governing termination.
- C. State Governing Law: Waiver of Jury Trial. This Agreement shall be construed, interpreted, governed and enforced pursuant to the laws of the State of North Carolina, without regard to its conflict-of-laws principles. The Parties hereby waive the right to a jury trial in any action, proceeding or counterclaim brought by either T.A.S. or the School against the other.
- D. Notices. All notices and other communications required by this Agreement shall be in writing and sent to the Parties at the facsimile number or address set forth below. Notice may be given by: (i) facsimile with written evidence of confirmed receipt by the receiving party of the entire notice: (ii) certified or registered mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested; or (iii) personal delivery. Notice shall be deemed to have been given on the date of transmittal if given by facsimile, upon the date of postmark if sent by certified or registered mail, or upon the date of delivery if given by personal delivery. For purposes of the foregoing, “**personal delivery**” shall include delivery by nationally recognized overnight courier (such as FedEx), if signed for by the recipient or a delegate thereof. Notices to the School shall be sent to the current address of the then current Board Chair, with a copy to the then current Board attorney. The addresses of the Parties for the purposes aforesaid, including the address of the initial Board Chair, are as follows:

The School:

Board Chair: Renorda Pryor
Address: 130 Commerce Parkway, Suite 103,
Garner, NC 27529
Telephone: (919) 522-9245

T.A.S.:

Chief Executive Officer: Don McQueen Address:
3211 Bramer Drive Raleigh, NC 27604
Telephone: (919) 538-8060

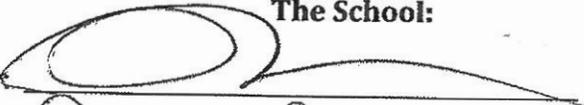
- E. Amendment. This Agreement shall not be altered, amended, modified or supplemented except by memorandum approved by the Board and signed by both an authorized officer of the School and T.A.S. and in manner consistent with the Authorizer's policies.
- F. Waiver. No waiver of any provision of this Agreement shall be deemed or shall constitute a waiver of any other provision. Nor shall such waiver constitute a continuing waiver unless otherwise expressly stated.
- G. Severability. If any term or provision of this Agreement is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, void or unenforceable, the remainder of the terms and provisions set forth herein shall remain in full force and effect and shall in no way be affected, impaired or invalidated, and the Parties shall use their best efforts to find and employ an alternative means to achieve the same or substantially the same results as that contemplated by such term or provision.
- H. Delegation of Authority. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as delegating to T.A.S. powers or authority of the Board which are not subject to delegation by the Board under the Charter or applicable law.
- I. Compliance with Law. Each party will comply with the Charter and laws applicable to the performance of such party's obligations hereunder.
- J. Time of Essence. The Parties understand and agree that time is of the essence in performing their perspective responsibilities under this Agreement.

**ARTICLE XII
MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION**

A. The parties shall attempt in good faith to resolve by mediation any claim, dispute or controversy arising out of or relating to this Agreement. Either party may institute a mediation proceeding by a request in writing to the other party. Thereupon, both parties will be obligated to engage in mediation. The proceeding will be conducted in Raleigh, North Carolina in accordance with the then current Center of Public Resources Model Procedure for Mediation of Business Disputes. In the event that the parties are unsuccessful in resolving the dispute via mediation, the parties agree promptly to resolve any such claims, disputes and/or controversies through binding confidential arbitration conducted in Raleigh, North Carolina in accordance with the then current Commercial Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association (the "AAA"); provided, one neutral arbitrator shall be chosen in accordance with such rules to arbitrate the dispute. The parties irrevocably consent to such jurisdiction for purposes of said arbitration, and judgment may be entered thereon in any state or federal court in the same manner as if the parties were residents of the state or federal district in which said judgment is sought to be entered. All applicable statutes of limitations and defenses based upon the passage of time shall be tolled while the requirements of this Section are being followed.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have executed this Agreement as of the

Effective Date: 7/15/19

The School:
By: 
Print: Renorde Pryor
Board Chair


Torchlight Academy Schools:
By: _____
Print: Don McQueen
Chief Executive Officer