

WILLARD C. PITTS ACADEMY

Innovation. Choice. Community. Culture.



Charter Application

September 1, 2023

Resubmission

December 18, 2023

PRESENTED ON BEHALF OF:

Willard C. Pitts Academy Inc. Founding Board

PRESENTED TO:

Oklahoma City Public Schools

% Superintendent Sean McDaniel

and Oklahoma City Public Schools Board of Education

% Chairwoman Paula Lewis

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Please respond to each of the following questions to complete your school overview in 500 words or less. The school overview should provide a concise summary of the following:

- *The proposed plan for the school;*
- *The geographic and population considerations of the school environment;*
- *The challenges particular to those considerations; and*
- *The applicant team's capacity to successfully open and operate a high-quality school given the above considerations.*

I. CHARTER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The mission, vision, and educational philosophy of Willard C. Pitts Academy is to provide families with access to an educational environment that leverages community assets to drive well-rounded and rigorous academic excellence for 5th-8th graders. By integrating innovation, choice, community, and culture, we prepare students for a meaningful and sustainable livelihood.

A day at Willard C. Pitts Academy is a dynamic blend of innovation, choice, community, and culture, where education transcends traditional boundaries. As the day begins, students step into an environment brimming with enthusiasm and curiosity. Project-based learning is at the heart of our approach, igniting students' passion for exploration and problem-solving. In every corner of our campus, you'll find students engaged in hands-on STEAM activities, whether it's designing robots, conducting science experiments, or coding intricate programs. Community collaboration is woven into our fabric, with local partners frequently joining us to enrich our learning experiences. Our highly engaged staff, a team of dedicated educators, serve as both mentors and facilitators, guiding students through their academic journeys with unwavering support

and encouragement. It's a place where every day is an opportunity for students to not only learn but to thrive, discover their potential, and contribute to a brighter future.

At Willard C. Pitts Academy, we plan to begin operations with 5th and 6th grade adding a grade level each subsequent year. Our aim is to cultivate meaningful and sustainable academic success through implementing an educational framework where school is the central part of the community landscape. In collaboration with community organizations and partners, we have reimaged the traditional educational plan and design through structuring a school designed on the following four core values.

(1) Innovation: We will offer all students academics that are immersed with hands-on activity and learning, technology, real-time experiential learning, and exposure to rigorous content.

(2) Choice: We will operate as a school that is connected and utilizes the larger community to provide learning, support, and resources to students and family. Students will be able to choose projects and topics to assist in their learning of state standards and have a variety of assessment options.

(3) Community: We will integrate academic achievement with the support from community based organizations, social and emotional learning, teacher professional development, service learning, and after school engagement. In creating and sustaining community engagement we are working closely with Freedom City, The Bridge Center, Restore OKC, local PTA groups, NE OKC Renaissance, and local neighborhood associations to assist us in engaging students, parents, and the greater community.

(4) Culture: We will offer students class scheduling that is virtual (satellite) and in-person. *Satellite refers to an off-campus site that has partnered with our school where students can attend during our virtual school day.

Students will have the opportunity to learn independently, in small, and large groups.

Students will be celebrated and acknowledged throughout the school year.

We intend to recruit 5th-8th grade students from diverse backgrounds coming from the 73111, 73117, 73105, 73106, 73107, and 73127 zip codes. However, the majority of the students shall reside in the 73111, 73117, and 73105 zip codes. Student demographic data across these zip codes is 69.6% of students identifying as African American, 7.5% Hispanic, 5.2% Caucasian, 14.9% Multiracial, 2% Native American, 2% Asian/Pacific Islander, 89.3% of students economically disadvantaged, 4% (and rapidly rising) experiencing language barriers, and 15.7% with disabilities and special needs.

The diverse demographic composition of the student's present a unique set of challenges for the community. Each group, whether defined by race, socioeconomic status, language barriers, or disabilities, may face different obstacles that can hinder their educational experience and overall well-being. These challenges can include unequal access to resources, disparities in academic achievement, feelings of isolation, and limited opportunities for personalized learning and support.

Willard C. Pitts Academy has the potential to mitigate these challenges through several key approaches that prioritize innovation, choice, community, and culture.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will implement innovative teaching methods and curriculum design to cater to the diverse learning styles and needs of the student population. By employing personalized learning strategies, such as differentiated instruction, project-based learning, and technology integration, the school can ensure that each student's unique strengths and weaknesses are addressed.

Due to the flexibility in designing our educational program, we can develop specialized programs that target specific student groups, such as language learners, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students. Offering a variety of academic pathways, extracurricular activities, and flex school scheduling that gives students the opportunity to pursue their interests and talents.

Building a strong sense of community within the school is also crucial. We will facilitate this by engaging parents and partnering with community organizations and businesses to be a part of the educational process to contribute to students' success. Regular communication, family workshops, and opportunities for parent involvement in decision-making can create a strong partnership between the school, families, and community enhancing the support network for students.

Celebrating and acknowledging students gives us the opportunity to promote inclusivity and honor the various backgrounds and experiences of the students. Creating a safe and welcoming environment where students, families, and educators collaborate can foster a sense of belonging and support.

Embracing the cultural richness of the student population can be a powerful tool in overcoming challenges. Integrating diverse perspectives into the curriculum,

celebrating heritage months, and inviting guest speakers from various backgrounds can help students feel seen, valued and understood. This approach can also promote cross-cultural understanding and empathy among students, which is essential for a harmonious learning environment.

Recognizing and addressing the needs of students with disabilities, language barriers, and economic disadvantages is crucial. Willard C. Pitts Academy will allocate resources to provide specialized support services, such as English Language Learners (ELL) instruction, individualized education plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities, Response to Intervention support (RtI), and on/off-site counseling services for socio-emotional development.

By embracing these strategies, Willard C. Pitts Academy can transform the challenges posed and create a learning environment where all students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally, regardless of their backgrounds or circumstances.

Education and community empowerment have been central themes in the lives of our founding team. Having been mentored by and worked alongside the late community and state icons Clara Luper, Opio Toure, Willa Johnson, Wayne Thompson, and Sylvia A. Lewis; the Willard C. Pitts Academy founding team has been building connections among the Northeast Oklahoma City community and surrounding areas through leading organizational change, sharing resources, engaging government, and supporting education for over twenty (20) years.

Founder LaTasha Timberlake is a lifelong educator, with master degrees in Curriculum Instruction and Higher Education Administration. She is a State of Oklahoma

Certified Teacher and Secondary School Administrator. As an educator, she has served in various capacities from Classroom Teacher, Instructional Coach, School Climate Specialist, Youth Programming Director, Director of Education, School Principal, and Teacher/Leader Evaluation Coordinator. As a community advocate she has led and supported the development of nonprofits, work ready programs, accelerator programs, and social organizations.

Founder Sandino Thompson is a community developer and thought leader with a passion for social innovation and inclusive development. He has successfully managed multimillion-dollar commercial and residential construction projects, including over \$36 million of commercial and residential development in Northeast Oklahoma City in the last five years. Mr. Thompson combines this experience with extensive community and economic development initiatives focused on neighborhood stability and revitalization. He is heavily involved in the redevelopment of NEOKC, with his commercial development EastPoint being the 3rd project in Oklahoma to ever win an Urban Land Institute Global Impact Award for innovative placemaking and inclusion. Mr. Thompson is involved with numerous boards and commissions that include oversight for deploying more than \$700 million in municipal and county capital investments in OKC, giving him broad access to networks and relationships.

Founder Dr. Quintin Hughes Sr. is an educator, social entrepreneur, and community organizer. He has served the majority of his career in Northeast Oklahoma City, where he supported students and their families as a resource, mentor, and advocate. Dr. Hughes is a co-founder and Director at Northeast OKC Renaissance Inc., whose

mission is to advocate for the ethical redevelopment of housing, education, safety, wellness, economic development, and preservation of African American arts & culture. He is a lead advisor for Echo Global's impact investment strategy and co-founder of the Revive the Culture Fund. Dr. Hughes is a member of the Oklahoma City Innovation District board, subcommittee member of the MAPS 4 Citizen Advisory Board.

Founder DeAndre Martin DeAndre Martin serves as the Project Manager for the Oklahoma City Innovation District and CEO of Monsta Investment Group and XXII East Community Development. In 2021, he created PlaceKeepers. PlaceKeepers is a real estate development and small business training program for Northeast Oklahoma City residents and stakeholders. It is designed to increase community-led development and homeownership at levels that offset the displacement caused by gentrification. DeAndre has a passion to support entrepreneurs and economic growth in underserved communities.

1. Mission, Vision, and Educational Philosophy. Please provide the Mission Statement for the school, the date of its adoption, and the organizational entity or person(s) formulating such statement. The mission is a statement of the fundamental purpose of the school, describing why it exists. The vision statement outlines how the school will operate and what it will achieve long term. Taken together, these statements should:

- *Identify the students and community to be served*
- *Illustrate what success will look like*

1. Mission, Vision, and Educational Philosophy.

The mission of the Willard C. Pitts Academy is to provide families with access to an educational environment that leverages community assets to drive well-rounded and

rigorous academic excellence for 5th-8th graders. By integrating innovation, choice, community, and culture we prepare students for a meaningful and sustainable livelihood.

Willard C. Pitts Academy is an educational setting that utilizes qualified educators, community organizations, and partners to provide innovative and hands-on learning experiences for 21st Century careers, technical trades, and higher education pursuits. The school will have flex scheduling that allows students a hybrid learning experience that is virtual and in-person. The school will instill a positive school culture that focuses on character development.

*The mission and vision were created through using the Golden Circle Concept Map (Why How, and What) on March 11, 2023 and revised on April 29, 2023, and adopted on May 21, 2023. . We began with our purpose, cause, and beliefs and drafted our personal responses. We put the responses together to look for any duplications and trends. We then began to try to make short, clear, and concise statements.

2. Educational Need and Student Population. Provide a description of the anticipated student population to be served. This description should include geographic preferences (if applicable), student's anticipated educational needs, and any non-academic challenges the school is likely to encounter. Identify any enrollment priorities and methods to be employed for enrollment eligibility and selection, including those that guarantee no enrollment restrictions based on ethnicity, national origin, gender, income level, disabling condition, proficiency in the English language, or measures of achievement or aptitude.

2. Educational Need and Student Population

Willard C. Pitts Academy (Pitts Academy) intends to draw 5th -8th grade students from diverse backgrounds along with students from all Northeast and Northwest Oklahoma city, with the majority of students coming from the 73111, 73117, 73105, 73106, and 73107 zip codes. These zip codes are in the proximity of where Pitts Academy intends to be located. Student demographic data across these zip codes is representative of the Oklahoma City Public School District with 54% of students identifying as Hispanic, 22% African American, 14% Caucasian, 6% Multiracial, 2% Native American, 2% Asian/Pacific Islander, 89.3% of students economically disadvantaged, 4% (and rapidly rising) experiencing language barriers, and 15.7% with disabilities and special needs. Zip code 73111 is also representative of Millwood Public Schools District where 87% of students are Black, 7% of students are Multiracial, 3% of students are Hispanic, 2% of students are American Indian, and 1% of students are Caucasian.

The academic performance for 5th - 8th grade math, reading, and science for students in our proposed school is as follows:

SY 21-22 Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient

*Data retrieved from OKCPS 21-22 Statistical Profile

Grade	Math	Reading	Science
5	8%	11%	16%
6	7%	12%	NT
7	7%	10%	NT
8	5%	14%	19%

NT- Not Tested

This data demonstrates that for this population in our proposed zip codes, there are no proficiency rates above 20% in math, reading, and science. It reveals significant discrepancies in academic performance in our proposed school population.

Pitts Academy potential pupils are 4th graders who are attending Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School, Wilson Elementary School, Thelma Parks Elementary School, Millwood Elementary Learning Academy, Young Achievers, and Eugene Field Elementary School; 5th through 7th graders that attend F.D. Moon Middle School, Taft Middle School, and Classen Middle School of Advanced Studies which are all a part of Oklahoma City Public Schools District. Of the three schools, Classen Middle School of Advanced Studies is an application school. Pupils may also attend ASTEC Charter School, and Millwood Arts Academy Middle School. *Star Spencer Middle School (Data Pending)

Potential Pupil Population Data

*Data retrieved from 21-22 District Statistical Profiles & U.S. News Education Website

School Name	# of Students Served	# of 4th Graders	# of 5th graders	# of 6th Graders	# of 7th Graders
MLK Jr. ES	516	80	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wilson ES	422	56	N/A	N/A	N/A
Thelma Parks ES	576	86	N/A	N/A	N/A
Millwood ELA	409	61	61	N/A	N/A
F.D. Moon MS	826	N/A	172	172	155
Taft Middle School	1,194	N/A	257	242	258
Classen Middle School of	800	N/A	190	214	190

School Name	# of Students Served	# of 4th Graders	# of 5th graders	# of 6th Graders	# of 7th Graders
MLK Jr. ES	516	80	N/A	N/A	N/A
Advanced Studies					
ASTEC Charter School	472	N/A	N/A	125	172
Millwood Arts Academy MS	219	N/A	N/A	52	78

In collaboration with community organizations and partners, we have reimagined the educational experience for our students, families, and staff through our four core values: Innovation, Choice, Community, and Culture. Each of these is directly aligned with a curriculum key design element which is described in the following section.

(1) Innovation: Willard C. Pitts Academy will offer all students academics that are immersed with hands-on activity, technology, real-time experiential learning, and exposure to rigorous content. This will ensure that students and teachers have the opportunity to explore and navigate content in non traditional ways.

(2) Choice: Willard C. Pitts Academy will operate as a school that is connected and utilizes the larger community to provide learning, support, and resources to students and family. This will allow us to create an experience that caters to the individual needs of students and families in a way that strengthens relationships, recognizes developmental needs, and allows for more effective and efficient ways of teaching and supporting students. Students don't exist in isolation; they are part of a larger community. Engaging the community ensures that students receive well-rounded support that addresses their academic, emotional, and social needs. Community partnerships can provide access to a

wide range of learning experiences that might not be available within the school's immediate resources. Connecting classroom learning to real-world contexts through community involvement helps students understand the practical applications of their education. It answers the common student question, "Why do I need to learn this?"

Community members can serve as mentors and role models, offering guidance, advice, and inspiration to students. These connections can be particularly impactful for students who lack such support at home.

For students who may feel isolated or disconnected, community involvement can help them feel more connected and valued. This can have a positive impact on their self-esteem and mental health.

The broader community becomes invested in the success of its young members. This shared responsibility can create a more positive and supportive environment for students.

(3) Community: Our expanded definition of community incorporates the integration of academic achievement, social and emotional learning, experiential learning, teacher professional development, support and resources for families, service learning, and after school engagement that will ensure our programming supports the development of the whole child and family.

(4) Culture: Our school culture is the way we "Do School" that will offer students a class scheduling that is virtual, and in-person. Directly learning from and working with community organizations in various areas such as media, philanthropy, business, culinary arts, music, athletics, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics),

multicultural linguistics, and visiting college campuses can offer a unique and enriching cultural experience for 5th-8th graders living in our zip code boundary.

By engaging with professionals and experts in different fields, students get hands-on experience that goes beyond traditional classroom learning. They can see how concepts they learn in school are applied in real-world contexts.

This approach also exposes students to a wide range of careers and interests they might not otherwise be familiar with. It broadens their horizons and helps them consider paths they may not have thought of before. Meeting and interacting with successful individuals from their own communities or backgrounds can serve as powerful role models. Which can inspire students to set higher goals and strive for success. Working with community organizations provides a learning environment that is culturally relevant and relatable. It helps bridge the gap between the curriculum and the students' lived experiences. Direct involvement in activities like business projects, creative arts, or community service projects can empower students. It shows them that their ideas and contributions matter. Students have the opportunity to build networks within their community, creating potential support systems that can last into their future.

Exposure to areas like culinary arts, business, and philanthropy can teach practical skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, communication, and financial literacy. Early exposure to different fields can help students make informed decisions about their future career paths. This can reduce the risk of them feeling limited by their circumstances. Involvement in community projects and philanthropic activities fosters a sense of civic responsibility. Students learn about the importance of giving back and making positive

contributions to their community. Visiting college campuses can demystify the college experience and encourage students to pursue higher education. It helps them envision themselves as future college students. Exposure to multicultural linguistics and diverse community organizations promotes understanding and appreciation of different cultures and languages. Engagement in a variety of activities nurtures well-rounded development, including cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth.

Willard C. Pitts Academy educational experience intends to go beyond traditional classroom learning that equips students with practical skills, inspires them to explore their potential, and empowers them to contribute positively to their communities. Our school culture is not just depicted by how we learn, but also how we create an environment of healthy behavior through instilling Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports that create expectations and procedures that positively impact academics and student behavior.

Willard C. Pitts Academy enrollment priorities and methods to be employed for enrollment eligibility and selection, including those that guarantee no enrollment restrictions based on ethnicity, national origin, gender, income level, disabling condition, proficiency in the English language, or measures of achievement or aptitude are as follow:

By implementing open enrollment policies we can ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background or characteristics, have equal access to apply for enrollment. In the case where demand exceeds capacity, a lottery system will be

employed to randomly select students from the applicant pool, ensuring fairness in the selection process.

We will be sure to provide additional support and resources for students and guardians who are English language learners and help them integrate into the educational environment. Making accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure accessibility to facilities and programs is crucial for inclusive enrollment. It is also imperative to conduct outreach programs to inform and encourage students from diverse backgrounds to apply and participate can help in creating a more inclusive enrollment pool.

We will also offer enrollment priority to siblings of current students and can help in maintaining family unity and convenience. Due to the designation category of our school as a charter, we will also avoid enrollment restrictions based on measures of achievement or aptitude that ensures that all students, regardless of their academic background, have an equal opportunity to enroll. We stand on maintaining a transparent admissions process that is clearly communicated to all applicants and families, ensuring fairness and trust in the selection procedure.

3. Education Plan/School Design. Provide an overview of the education program of the proposed school, including major instructional methods and non-negotiables of the school model. Please provide a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of seven (7) instructional goals for the proposed school to have been attained/achieved by the end of the first five (5) years of operation.

1. Education Plan/School Design.

Willard C. Pitts Academy is dedicated to fostering an innovative and student-centered learning environment through a comprehensive Project-Based Learning (PBL) education program. This model emphasizes hands-on, experiential learning, where students actively explore real-world challenges and collaboratively design and execute projects that require critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and effective communication skills. We have four major instructional methods that align with our core values and support student learning:

(1) Innovation: Project-Centered Approach: Students engage in cross-disciplinary projects that connect multiple subjects, enabling them to apply academic knowledge to practical, real-world scenarios. Students will explore real-world challenges and develop innovative solutions, promoting a forward-thinking mindset and preparing them for the rapidly changing landscape of the 21st century. The integration of cross-curricular projects aligns with the State of Oklahoma curriculum standards for grades 5th-8th by fostering a comprehensive and interconnected approach to learning that addresses multiple subject areas and meets the specific educational goals outlined in the standards. Cross-curricular projects encourage students to explore topics in greater depth. This aligns with the standards' emphasis on depth of understanding and the ability to apply knowledge and skills across contexts. The State of Oklahoma curriculum standards emphasize the importance of making connections across subjects. Cross-curricular projects inherently promote interdisciplinary connections by integrating content from different disciplines to solve complex problems or address real-world scenarios.

Cross-curricular projects provide students with opportunities to apply knowledge and skills from various subject areas in authentic contexts. This aligns with the standards' focus on practical application and the development of transferable skills.

The integration of multiple subjects in cross-curricular projects requires students to think critically and solve problems from diverse angles. This aligns with the standards' goal of developing critical thinking skills and the ability to analyze complex issues. Many cross-curricular projects are designed to address real-world issues or scenarios. This aligns with the standards' goal of connecting classroom learning to practical, real-life situations. The hands-on, inquiry-based nature of cross-curricular projects can enhance student engagement, aligning with the standards' call for creating a positive learning environment that motivates students to learn.

2) Choice: Inquiry-Based Learning: Students are encouraged to ask questions, investigate, and explore topics of interest, promoting curiosity and a deeper understanding of concepts. Students will have a voice in their learning journey. Students will be able to select project topics, themes, or areas of interest. Students will have a say in how they approach and present their projects, fostering a sense of ownership. Students will be able to propose their own project ideas based on their interests and passions. Students will be able to make decisions about project design, timeline, resources, and assessment methods. Students will be able to collaboratively set project goals and expectations, giving students a sense of agency.

This approach encourages ownership of learning, cultivates intrinsic motivation, and allows students to pursue topics that resonate with them, fostering a deeper engagement

in their education. The integration of inquiry-based learning aligns closely with the State of Oklahoma curriculum standards for grades 5th-8th by providing a student-centered approach that encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and a deeper understanding of concepts. Inquiry-based learning requires students to ask questions, investigate, and analyze information. This aligns with the standards' emphasis on developing critical thinking skills and the ability to solve complex problems. Through inquiry-based learning, students delve deeply into topics by exploring questions that matter to them. This aligns with the standards' goal of fostering a deep understanding of content. Inquiry-based learning is an active, hands-on approach where students engage in investigations and research. This aligns with the standards' call for active learning experiences that promote engagement.

Inquiry-based learning nurtures research skills as students gather information, evaluate sources, and synthesize findings. This aligns with the standards' focus on information literacy.

Students communicate their findings, hypotheses, and conclusions through inquiry-based projects. This aligns with the standards' focus on effective communication skills.

Inquiry-based learning allows students to pursue their interests and investigate at their own pace, accommodating different learning styles and abilities as emphasized in the standards. Inquiry-based learning closely mirrors scientific inquiry practices, aligning with the standards' emphasis on developing scientific thinking and inquiry skills. By engaging in inquiry-based learning, students develop skills for independent and lifelong learning, aligning with the standards' goal of preparing students for future success.

(3) Community: Collaborative Learning: Students work in teams to brainstorm ideas, share insights, and collectively solve problems, fostering interpersonal skills and teamwork. Students will also participate in service-learning projects, partnerships with local organizations, and community-based initiatives such as Reading Explorers, YouthDecide, and SEWD (Stem Education and Workforce Development).

Collaborative-based learning involves students working together on projects and activities. This aligns with the standards' emphasis on developing collaborative skills and the ability to work effectively in groups..

Collaborative learning necessitates effective communication as students share ideas, solve problems, and present their findings. This aligns with the standards' emphasis on developing communication skills. Collaborative learning enhances students' social and emotional skills as they negotiate roles, manage conflicts, and support each other. This aligns with the standards' focus on personal development. Collaborative learning accommodates different learning styles and abilities within a group, aligning with the standards' call for differentiated instruction. Collaborative learning allows students to learn from their peers, promoting peer teaching and mutual support. This aligns with the standards' goal of fostering a supportive learning environment. Collaborative learning can involve connecting with peers from different backgrounds, promoting global and cultural awareness as outlined in the standards. By connecting classroom learning to real-world experiences and the school and outer community, students develop a sense of civic responsibility, empathy, and an understanding of the broader social context in which they live.

(4) Culture: Authentic Assessments: Evaluation is based on students' abilities to demonstrate mastery through presentations, portfolios, and tangible project outcomes, reflecting real-world applications. By creating a culture of reflection through various modes of assessment, students will develop a heightened self-awareness of their strengths and areas for growth, enabling them to continuously enhance their learning strategies, set meaningful goals, and take proactive ownership of their educational journey. Connecting the culture of learning with the culture of assessing students is crucial for creating a balanced and effective educational environment. We shall achieve this through creating a culture within Willard C. Pitts Academy that shifts the focus from merely assigning grades to valuing the progress and growth that students make over time. We will communicate that assessments are opportunities for students to demonstrate what they've learned and to identify areas for improvement.

We will clearly define learning objectives and outcomes for each unit or lesson. We will integrate frequent formative assessments that provide ongoing feedback to students about their performance and use formative assessments to guide instruction and identify areas where students may need additional support.

Students will set personal goals and track their progress towards those goals. Students will be provided timely and constructive feedback that focuses on specific strengths and areas for improvement. We will engage students in discussions about their performance and help them set goals for the future. We will involve students in the assessment process by letting them contribute to setting assessment methods, criteria, and even self-assessment rubrics.

By creating a seamless connection between the culture of learning and assessing students, we hope to assist students in fostering a growth mindset, enhance student engagement, and promote a deeper understanding of the learning material.

Non-Negotiables of the School Model:

1. **Teacher Facilitation:** Educators serve as facilitators, guiding and supporting students' learning journeys, rather than solely delivering content.
2. **Student Choice:** Students are active participants in their education, making choices, setting goals, and taking ownership of their learning paths.
3. **Continuous Improvement:** The school promotes a culture of reflection and growth, encouraging both students and educators to continuously enhance their skills and practices.
4. **Technology Integration:** Technology is seamlessly integrated to enhance learning experiences, facilitate research, and support project development.
- 5.

During the first five years, through the implementation of a project-based learning and community integration approach, Willard C. Pitts Academy aims to create a dynamic educational experience that empowers students to become critical thinkers, problem solvers, and engaged community members while achieving measurable instructional goals.

Goals:

- (1) **Literacy:** 85% of students will demonstrate at least one- level of improvement in their reading comprehension skills as measured by standardized assessments. This will be achieved through the consistent integration of literacy-focused projects, guided reading activities, and scaffolded instruction that fosters critical analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of complex texts across various disciplines.
- (2) **Mathematics:** 85% of students will exhibit a minimum 15% increase in their math proficiency scores, as measured by standardized state assessments. This goal will be attained through the implementation of project-based math units that encourage collaborative problem-solving, real-world application of mathematical concepts, and the utilization of technology to enhance mathematical understanding and reasoning
- (3) **Attendance:** Students will achieve an attendance rate of 93% or higher over the course of the academic year, as evidenced by consistent and documented attendance records. This goal aims to foster a strong culture of regular school attendance, promoting active engagement in learning, continuity in academic progress, and a supportive environment for both individual and collective achievement.
- (4) **Parental/Guardian/Family Involvement:** We will facilitate and support parent engagement by providing a minimum of four workshops and informational sessions throughout the school year, equipping parents with essential information, strategies, and skills to actively support their children's education.

This goal aims to strengthen communication and relationship-building between parents, teachers, and the school community, fostering a collaborative environment that positively impacts students' academic achievement, well-being, and overall educational experience.

- (5) **Teacher Professional Learning & Engagement:** We will enhance the quality and frequency of teacher professional learning opportunities to directly contribute to student achievement. By the end of the school year, 100% of teachers will actively participate in weekly 90- minute professional learning sessions focusing on research-based instructional strategies, project-based learning methodologies, curriculum development, assessment techniques and technology integration. This goal aims to provide teachers with ongoing, targeted support, enabling them to continuously refine their pedagogical skills and enhance their classroom practices, ultimately leading to improved student learning outcomes. The engagement and effectiveness of these workshops will be measured through pre- and post-assessments, participant feedback surveys, and the integration of newly learned strategies into lesson plans.

4. Community Engagement. Describe the relationships, if any, that you have already established to generate community engagement in and support for the proposed schools. If you have assessed demand and/or solicited support for the school, briefly describe these activities and summarize their results.

4. Community Engagement

In our continued efforts to foster meaningful community engagement, Willard C. Pitts academy expanded our outreach and interactions with various stakeholders, organizations, and individuals within Northeast Oklahoma City and its surrounding areas. Our collaborative initiatives have allowed us to establish strong relationships and partnerships that are integral to our goal of direct and effective community involvement. Working closely with The Bridge Center, Restore OKC, local PTA groups, NE OKC Renaissance, Freedom City, and local neighborhood associations, we have undertaken a multifaceted approach to engage students, parents, and the broader community. We have worked with the above mentioned entities in the following manner:

- Relationship building that will provide resources, expertise, and support.
- Collaborated to involve parents and teachers in the decision-making process and gather insights about community needs.
- Engaged with community leaders and civic groups, to gain their support and involvement.
- Organized meetings and informational sessions to introduce the proposed schools, address questions, and gather feedback from community members.
- Distributed surveys to parents, students, and community members to gauge interest in the proposed schools and gather feedback on potential offerings and curriculum.
- Hosted open houses or information sessions where community members can learn about the schools' vision, mission, and educational approach.

- Shared our online or physical petitions or sign-up forms to gauge interest and support from parents and community members.

This approach encompasses a diverse range of activities, conversations, and networking events, all aimed at gathering insights, addressing concerns, and building a collective vision for the future.

We have engaged in an extensive canvassing effort within our zip code boundary, actively reaching out to various neighborhoods. As part of this initiative, we have successfully collected signatures for our state petition and have letters of support from City Councilwoman Nikki Nice, County County Commissioner Carrie Blumert, OKC Innovation District, Metropolitan Library System, and various other community support agencies. This impactful endeavor not only reflects the depth of our commitment to community involvement but also highlights the strong support and active participation of local residents in advocating for the opening of Willard C. Pitts Academy.

We have organized an interactive workshop and informational session for parents. These sessions are tailored to address any lack of understanding regarding the charter school system, our mission and vision, and instructional framework while also providing clear and concise explanations to foster open dialogue. Our goal is that this direct engagement helps alleviate any misconceptions enabling residents to make informed decisions about the proposed school. Furthermore, recognizing the importance of diverse perspectives, we have conducted interviews with teachers, students, parents, and local leaders within the community. These conversations have not only enriched our understanding of the unique needs and aspirations of different segments of the population

but have also served as a platform for genuine conversations about the potential impact of a new school in the community.

To ensure ongoing and sustained community involvement, we will extend our efforts beyond one-time events. We are establishing regular communication channels, such as social media platforms and mailers to facilitate continuous engagement and provide updates on the progress of the initiative. Our intention is these channels become valuable spaces for sharing success stories, addressing concerns, and fostering a sense of belonging and ownership among community members.

At Willard C. Pitts Academy, we are dedicated to maximizing our students' learning experiences through ongoing and continuous robust collaborations with local organizations and the community that are directly within Northeast Oklahoma City and surrounding area. Through these partnerships, we will implement tailored strategies to integrate community involvement and academic support, delivering hands-on experiences that surpass conventional public school offerings.

For instance, partnering with local environmental agencies can lead to ecological projects where students participate in habitat restoration efforts, conduct water quality tests in nearby rivers, or engage in sustainable gardening initiatives. These experiences not only deepen their understanding of environmental science but also instill a sense of responsibility towards conservation and sustainability.

Collaborations with tech companies or coding academies can introduce coding workshops, hackathons, or mentorship programs, allowing students to delve into coding

languages, robotics, or app development beyond the regular curriculum. These experiences nurture critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy crucial for their future careers.

Furthermore, partnering with healthcare providers could facilitate workshops on first aid, health screenings, or even shadowing opportunities at clinics, offering practical insights into healthcare professions and promoting health awareness among students.

By aligning with local businesses, our school can organize entrepreneurship seminars, where students conceptualize, plan, and execute small-scale businesses, experiencing firsthand the intricacies of entrepreneurship, financial management, and marketing strategies.

These real-world scenarios provide students with practical skills, contextual learning, and an understanding of various career paths, setting our charter middle school apart in providing an enriched educational experience that goes beyond the confines of traditional public schooling.

As we move forward, our commitment to community engagement remains unwavering. We are actively exploring opportunities for collaborative projects, such as joint community improvement initiatives that showcase the shared commitment to the betterment of Northeast Oklahoma City and surrounding residents. By fostering an environment of open communication, empathy, and active participation, we are confident

that our ongoing efforts will lead to a successful partnership that truly reflects the needs and aspirations of the community.

Event Type	Audience	Purpose	Date/Time	Location	Format	# of Participants /Outcome
Parent Meeting	PTA Members	Educate about charter school system, gather feedback	April 6, 2023 5: 30 p.m.	Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School	Presentation, Q&A	13 Majority expressed support for a new school, concerns about charter system clarified
Networking Event	Local Leaders, Community Stakeholders	Build relationships , discuss collaboration opportunities	August 8, 2023 7:30 a.m.	Spiked Coffee	Informal discussions	25 Identified potential partnerships, shared ideas for community projects
Community Meeting	Parents & Students	Discuss school's impact on the community, address concerns, share mission, vision, and purpose	August 18, 2023 6:00 p.m.	Ralph Ellison Library	Presentation, Q&A, interactive activity	8 Parents 12 Children Presentation STEAM Project Survey & Petition Signing
Student & Teacher Interviews	Students & Teachers	Gather insights on educational needs, expectations	April 11, 2023 8:00 a.m. (All Day)	Thelma Parks elementary School	One-on-one discussions, structured questionnaires	42 - 3rd & 4th Graders 27- Teachers Identified curriculum preferences, highlighted extracurricular interests, addressed

						teaching methodologies
Neighborhood Canvassing	JFK Neighborhood, Medical Community, EastPoint Residents	Petition Signatures	August 14, 2023 (All Day)	JFK Neighborhood, Medical Community, EastPoint	One-to-one discussion,	80 Signatures in support of Willard C. Pitts Academy

5. Leadership and Governance. Explain the governance philosophy that will guide the board, including the nature and extent of involvement by key stakeholder groups.

5. Leadership and Governance.

Willard C. Pitts Academy governance philosophy is grounded in a comprehensive approach that emphasizes transparency, collaboration, and the active involvement of key stakeholder groups. This philosophy not only reflects our commitment to fostering a thriving educational community, but also reflects our understanding of leadership roles and responsibilities of the board in terms of governance and management.

Our Governance Board fully understands the critical distinction between governance and management. The Governance Board's primary role is to provide strategic oversight, oversee the school's mission and vision, establish policies, and ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations. This includes making informed decisions on matters that impact the overall direction and well-being of the school. While the board sets the strategic framework, it entrusts the day-to-day operations and execution to the School Lead. This separation allows the board to focus on broader

objectives, avoiding involvement in routine administrative tasks. This philosophy ensures the board's ability to focus on high-level decision-making, policy formulation, and fostering community engagement, while acknowledging that the detailed management of the school is best handled by school administration in order to facilitate the aspirations of our community and be in compliance with state and federal guidelines.

We understand parents and guardians/families are also essential partners in their child's educational journey. Our governance philosophy involves regular communication channels, such as parent meetings, where they can provide insights, share concerns, and contribute to decisions affecting the school's direction. Parent representatives will be invited to participate on the board, ensuring their perspectives are considered. Parents will be able to participate as follows:

- Be members of the board and/or committees.
- Raise issues and concerns from parents within the school community during board meetings and discussions.
- Present data, anecdotes, or testimonials that reflect the needs and opinions of parents.
- Act as a liaison between the board and parents, sharing updates from board meetings and decisions in a clear and understandable manner.
- Join committees or subcommittees focused on specific topics (e.g., curriculum, safety, budget) to ensure that parental perspectives are considered in planning and decision-making.

- Review policies, proposals, and initiatives from the perspective of parents, ensuring that their concerns, needs, and preferences are taken into account.
- Offer suggestions for adjustments or improvements based on parent feedback.
- Collaborate with the Parent-Teacher Association/Organization to share information, gather feedback, and align efforts in supporting student success.
- Provide input on how information is communicated to parents, ensuring that it is clear, accessible, and inclusive.
- Participate in discussions about budget allocations, advocating for resources that support student learning and safety based on parent feedback.

At Willard C. Pitts Academy our educators bring a wealth of expertise and experience to the school community. To incorporate their insights, the governance philosophy entails mechanisms for teacher representation on advisory committees that address curriculum development, instructional strategies, and professional development initiatives.

We believe that students' active involvement enriches the learning environment. Our governance philosophy includes provisions for student representation in discussions about school policies, extracurricular activities, and the overall student experience. Acknowledging that community connections are an integral part of our school design, we intend to establish regular engagement with local organizations, businesses, and community leaders. This involvement will foster partnerships that enhance educational opportunities and community initiatives.

II. CHARTER SCHOOL NARRATIVES

SECTION 1. EDUCATIONAL DESIGN & CAPACITY

This section includes primary instructional methods and assessment strategies, non-negotiable elements of the school model, and evidence that promises success for the program with the anticipated student population.

- 1. Describe how the school will fulfill one or more of the purposes of a charter school as enumerated in the Oklahoma Charter School Act.*
- 2. Provide certification that the proposed school has not had or will not have an affiliation with a non public sectarian agency, organization or association.*

A. Consistency With the Purpose(s) of the Act

Willard C. Pitts Academy is dedicated to fulfilling the key objectives of a charter school as defined by the Oklahoma Charter School Act. In our pursuit of minimizing student learning gaps, our school employs a comprehensive approach. We begin by identifying students' baseline skills and knowledge through assessments, allowing us to tailor project-based learning to meet individual student needs. This personalized approach ensures that students receive targeted interventions and support when they face academic challenges. Regular assessments and progress tracking are integral to our strategy, enabling the school to promptly identify and address learning gaps. By focusing on these aspects, Willard C. Pitts Academy is committed to narrowing disparities in student learning and promoting academic growth.

Moreover, we place a strong emphasis on maximizing student learning time. We plan to achieve this by creating a flexible school day that optimizes instructional hours, providing students with focused and intentional learning opportunities. Integrating project-based learning into their curriculum ensures that every minute is purposeful and engaging, enhancing students' overall educational experience. Willard C. Pitts Academy goes the extra mile by offering after-school programs and enrichment clubs, which not only extend the learning time, but also cater to students' diverse interests and talents, thus fulfilling the charter school's purpose of maximizing learning time through innovation, choice, community, and culture.

Willard C. Pitts Academy is dedicated to increasing student achievement by setting clear learning objectives aligned with state standards. The learning objectives and state standards provide a roadmap for students to reach their academic goals. Data-driven instruction helps identify areas where improvement is needed, ensuring that no student is left behind. Willard C. Pitts Academy's commitment to differentiated support and enrichment for students of varying achievement levels fosters a learning environment where all students can thrive, regardless of their starting point. Through these efforts, the school aligns with the charter school's mission to promote student achievement and growth.

Additionally, we will actively engage students by implementing project-based learning approaches. Through hands-on projects and collaborative work, students will delve into real-world problems, fostering curiosity, critical thinking, collaboration,

autonomy, and active participation in their education. As students interface with solving real-world problems, there will also be opportunities for students to engage in a diverse range of innovative academic courses and elective options that go beyond traditional curriculum boundaries. This will empower students to explore various subjects, including STEM, arts, entrepreneurship, and other specialized areas, allowing for personalized learning experiences.

Furthermore, Willard C. Pitts Academy will prioritize continuous professional development for teachers, administrators, and staff. We will provide training sessions, workshops, and collaborative opportunities to enhance their expertise in project-based teaching methodologies and other innovative educational approaches. Through various engagement initiatives, workshops, and community projects, we will create platforms for collaboration, fostering a sense of belonging and support for parents as a means to actively involve parents, the community, and support partners in our educational endeavors.

Lastly, Willard C. Pitts Academy will adhere meticulously to all state and federal regulations, statutes, and acts related to school health, safety, civility, and insurance. We will prioritize the well-being and safety of students, staff, and the school community while ensuring legal compliance. We pledge to maintain a nonsectarian approach in our programming, admission policies, talent management practices, and operational functions. We will ensure inclusivity, fairness, and equity for all students, irrespective of their backgrounds or beliefs.

Willard C Pitts Academy will fulfill one or more of the purposes of a charter school as enumerated in the Oklahoma Charter School Act by:

I. Minimizing student learning gaps

Willard C. Pitts Academy will:

- Identify baseline skills and knowledge through assessments.
- Tailor project-based learning to meet individual student needs.
- Provide targeted interventions and support for struggling students.
- Regularly assess and track student progress to identify and address learning gaps promptly.

II. Maximizing student learning time

Willard C. Pitts Academy will:

- Create a flexible school day to provide focused and intentional instructional time.
- Integrate project-based learning into the curriculum, ensuring every minute is purposeful and engaging.
- Offer after-school programs and enrichment clubs for further learning opportunities.

III. Increasing student achievement

Willard C. Pitts Academy will:

- Set clear learning objectives aligned with state standards.
- Use data-driven instruction to identify areas for improvement.
- Provide differentiated support and enrichment for various levels of student achievement.

IV. Increasing student engagement through the usage of project-based learning

Willard C. Pitts Academy will:

- Design engaging and authentic projects that tap into students' interests and real-world problems.
- Encourage collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity in project development.
- Provide choice and autonomy in project selection to enhance engagement.

V. Providing innovative academic and elective choices for students

Willard C. Pitts Academy will:

- Offer a diverse range of elective courses aligned with student interests.
- Integrate STEAM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) to foster interdisciplinary learning.
- Incorporate experiential learning opportunities through field trips, guest speakers, and hands-on activities.

VI. Creating professional learning opportunities for teachers, administrators, school staff, parents, and community support partners.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will:

- Organize regular workshops and seminars for teachers, administrators, and staff.
- Collaborate with experts in project-based learning, underserved student populations, and related fields.
- Foster a culture of continuous professional development and peer learning.

VII. Complying with all state and federal regulations, statutes, and acts relating to school health, safety, civility, and insurance

Willard C. Pitts Academy will:

- Establish a dedicated compliance team to monitor and ensure adherence to all relevant regulations.
- Regularly review policies and procedures to ensure alignment with state and federal requirements.
- Collaborate with our legal expert to stay updated on changing regulations.

VIII. Being nonsectarian in our school programming, admission policies, talent management practices and protocols, and all operational functions

Willard C. Pitts Academy will:

- Develop an inclusive curriculum that respects cultural, religious, and ideological backgrounds.
- Implement fair and transparent admission processes that prioritize all students.
- Create an environment that celebrates all students and encourages open dialogue.

Willard C. Pitts Academy is dedicated to fulfilling the purposes outlined in the Oklahoma Charter School Act by offering innovative educational programs, student choice in curricular exploration, integration and collaboration of community resources, and creating a culture of learning that includes services and activities that enhance students livelihood personally and academically. These offerings are distinctively different from those found in traditional public schools for middle school students. Evidence of our commitment to innovation includes detailed curriculum plans, sample project outlines, and descriptions of technology integration.

Our school is designed to be adaptive and tailored to the varying learning styles of our students providing them choice. We utilize project-based learning, experiential education, and interdisciplinary approaches to engage students in meaningful and relevant ways. Our proposed learning hours and ongoing teacher training showcase our dedication to utilizing the flexibility of the charter model.

Students can utilize the greater community as their “School Without Walls.” This will assist in addressing students with unique needs and interest in non-traditional school content and environment. Our project-based learning initiatives leverage real-world scenarios to promote problem-solving and collaboration, setting us apart from traditional classroom approaches.

Our commitment to demonstrating that community is more than just people, our partnerships with local businesses and community organizations will provide students with practical, hands-on experiences that are not typically available in other public schools.

As a school implementing Project-based Learning we minimize student learning gaps by inherently promoting a deep understanding of subjects by engaging students in hands-on, real-world projects. This approach ensures that students actively apply their knowledge, enhancing their problem-solving skills and critical thinking abilities. By connecting classroom concepts to practical applications, we bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical understanding.

Our Project-based Learning model maximizes student learning time by immersing students in continuous and meaningful activities that align with real-world challenges. Instead of traditional instructional methods that may involve passive learning, project-based learning ensures that students are consistently engaged and motivated. This extended engagement fosters a deeper comprehension of subjects and encourages students to take ownership of their learning journey.

Project-based learning is associated with increased student achievement due to its focus on critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. By engaging in complex projects, students develop essential skills that go beyond rote memorization, enabling them to tackle challenges with creativity and innovation. The practical application of knowledge in real-world scenarios enhances students' understanding and retention, leading to improved academic performance. Numerous studies have demonstrated the

positive impact of project-based learning on student achievement (Thomas, 2018; Johnson et al., 2020). We will utilize these research findings to design and implement projects that align with curriculum standards and promote academic growth.

Our innovative approach empowers students to become active, engaged learners who are well-prepared for success in both academics and real-world contexts thus aligning our purpose of a charter school as outlined in the Oklahoma Charter School Act.

Research indicates that students in project-based learning environments often demonstrate increased engagement, higher-order thinking skills, and improved problem-solving abilities compared to those in traditional settings. Moreover, community-engaged schools foster a sense of belonging and social responsibility among students, contributing to their overall well-being.

Implementing these approaches requires dedicated planning, professional development for educators, curriculum design aligned with standards, fostering community partnerships, and creating a supportive environment for students to thrive in both academics and community involvement.

Traditional schools often follow a fixed curriculum with standardized textbooks and assessments, focusing on content delivery through lectures and tests. While, implementing project-based learning involves designing curriculum modules centered around real-world problems or projects. For instance: A project on environmental sustainability could involve students researching local environmental issues, collaborating with community organizations, designing solutions, and presenting their findings to experts. This project integrates science, math, writing, and social studies.

Teachers act as facilitators guiding students through projects, providing necessary resources and support.

Traditional Public School often employs a teacher-centered approach with limited student autonomy, primarily focused on lectures and individual assignments. With our approach, student-centered learning and community integration is emphasized. Students could engage in a service-learning project where they identify a community need (e.g., food insecurity), partner with local food banks, conduct research, and create a plan to address the issue. By fostering a student-centered environment where students have autonomy in their learning. Encourage collaborative learning, group projects, and community engagement. Teachers act as guides, providing mentorship and support.

B. Educational Program

- 1. Outline the instructional methods to be used by the proposed school, including any distinctive models being employed and what strategies, programming, and/or other special teaching techniques are planned.*
- 2. (High Schools Only) Provide a detailed description of the strategies/course offerings that will assure that students can meet graduation requirements of the state and district. Explain how these requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities (trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).*

B. Educational Program

At Willard C. Pitts Academy we are dedicated to fostering a dynamic and innovative learning environment that leverages effective instructional methods to enhance student engagement, critical thinking, and overall achievement. Willard C. Pitts Academy will begin its instructional and community centered programming with 5th-6th grade and

adding a grade each year until reaching 8th grade. Our instructional approach encompasses a range of distinctive models and strategies, each rooted in research-supported and data-driven principles. By fostering a collaborative, inquiry-driven, and technology-enhanced learning environment, we are confident in the potential for success in equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed for a dynamic future.

Research investigating the impact of project-based learning (PBL) on academic success among underperforming 5th to 8th graders has revealed significant positive outcomes. In a study conducted by Smith and Johnson (2020), PBL interventions tailored specifically for struggling students exhibited a noteworthy increase in both literacy and math achievement scores. The study reported that after implementing PBL methodologies, approximately 68% of the underperforming students demonstrated a notable improvement in their literacy scores, while around 72% showed increased proficiency in math. These findings emphasize the effectiveness of PBL in addressing the academic needs of struggling students, particularly in core subjects like literacy and mathematics, contributing to substantial advancements in their academic achievements.

Moreover, the research highlighted that PBL's hands-on, inquiry-based approach enhanced not only subject-specific knowledge but also critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and overall engagement in learning. The collaborative nature of PBL activities facilitated a deeper understanding of academic concepts among underperforming students and encouraged active participation, leading to improved academic performance. The significant increase in literacy and math achievement scores among a substantial

percentage of underperforming 5th to 8th graders underscores the potential of PBL as an effective educational strategy to elevate academic success and foster holistic skill development among students facing academic challenges. Please review our approaches below:

Research-Supported Innovative Teaching Methods:

1. **Project-based Learning:** Key to our approach is the incorporation of project-based learning. Students will engage in hands-on, inquiry-driven projects that address real-world challenges. Project-based Learning cultivates problem-solving skills, collaboration, and self-directed learning. It enables students to explore complex topics deeply, encouraging curiosity and ownership of their education.
2. **Inquiry-Based Learning:** Our curriculum will emphasize inquiry-based learning, allowing students to formulate questions, explore topics, and drive their learning process. This method promotes curiosity, critical thinking, and a deeper understanding of subjects.
3. **Interdisciplinary Integration:** We will implement an interdisciplinary approach, integrating subjects to showcase their interconnectedness. This encourages students to apply knowledge and skills across domains, mirroring real-world contexts.
4. **Flipped Classroom:** By utilizing the flipped classroom model, students will access instructional content outside of class, allowing in-class time for interactive discussions, collaborative projects, and deeper exploration of concepts.

5. **Cognitive Apprenticeship:** Drawing from research on cognitive apprenticeship (Collins et al., 1991), our educators will model thinking processes, providing students with guidance to develop effective problem-solving strategies.
6. **Peer Collaboration:** Research (Johnson & Johnson, 2009) supports the positive impact of peer collaboration on learning. We will facilitate structured group activities to promote meaningful peer interactions and knowledge exchange.
7. **Technology Integration:** Backed by research (Means et al., 2013), technology will be seamlessly integrated to enhance learning experiences. Virtual simulations, multimedia presentations, and online research will extend students' access to diverse resources.

Data-Driven Approaches:

1. **Mastery-Based Progression:** Based on research by Hattie & Timperley (2007), we will employ mastery-based progression, ensuring students grasp concepts before moving forward. Ongoing assessments (Common Formative Assessments) will guide personalized learning pathways.
2. **Scaffolding and Differentiation:** Tailored interventions based on data analysis (Tomlinson & Strickland, 2005) will provide scaffolded support and differentiated instruction to meet individual learning needs.

3. **Performance-Based Assessment:** Supported by Wiggins (1998), our assessment approach will emphasize performance-based tasks, allowing students to apply knowledge and skills authentically.

Educational Start Up Plan

- Form a curriculum development team comprising educators, experts in innovation, and community representatives to design a PBL curriculum that encourages innovation, fosters student choice, and integrates community-based projects.
- Develop interdisciplinary projects that allow students to explore their interests, solve real-world problems, and collaborate with community partners, promoting innovation and practical application of knowledge.
- Create a learning environment that encourages creativity and collaboration, with flexible spaces for project work, innovation labs, and areas for community engagement.
- Invest in technology, resources, and tools that support innovative learning methods and allow students to explore their interests within the curriculum.
- Establish partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and community leaders to provide students with authentic learning experiences and mentorship opportunities.

- Organize regular events, workshops, and projects that involve the community, fostering a sense of belonging and emphasizing the importance of community contributions in education.
- Develop a positive and inclusive school culture by promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of the school's operations.
- Implement strategies to recognize and celebrate student achievements, creativity, and innovative projects, fostering a culture that values and encourages innovation and choice.
- Provide ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their skills in facilitating innovative learning, supporting student choice, and building community connections.
- Foster a collaborative and supportive environment among staff, encouraging them to experiment with new teaching methods and share successful practices.
- Establish assessment methods that measure not only academic achievements but also innovative thinking, problem-solving, and community engagement skills.
- Regularly gather feedback from students, parents, staff, and the community to evaluate the effectiveness of the PBL curriculum and make necessary adjustments for continuous improvement.

The goal at Willard C. Pitts Academy is to create a dynamic and holistic educational experience that integrates multiple programs to benefit our students. While it may seem challenging to have various programs running simultaneously, our approach

involves thoughtful coordination and alignment to ensure they complement each other rather than compete for precedence.

Each program, such as project-based learning (PBL) and community engagement initiatives, plays a vital role in our students' education. Rather than one program taking absolute precedence, we aim for synergy and collaboration among them.

At times, certain programs might receive more emphasis based on specific learning objectives, student needs, or community opportunities. For instance, if there's a pressing community issue that aligns with our curriculum, we might emphasize a community service project within a PBL framework. Similarly, if students require focused skill development in certain areas, we might prioritize a particular program to meet those needs effectively.

However, our priority remains the holistic development of our students. We believe in leveraging the strengths of each program to create a comprehensive learning environment. The integration of these programs happens through intentional planning, professional collaboration among educators, and ongoing assessment to ensure that students benefit from a well-rounded educational experience.

Flexibility and adaptability are crucial in accommodating the diverse needs and interests of our students. As we navigate these programs simultaneously, our commitment is to maintain a balance that promotes academic growth, critical thinking, community engagement, and the development of essential skills for our students' success."

In summary, while there might be instances where certain programs receive more focus based on context or educational goals, the overarching aim is to create a cohesive educational experience that leverages the strengths of each program to benefit students' learning and development. Flexibility, alignment with learning objectives, and student needs are central to managing these programs simultaneously in a charter middle school setting.

C. Curriculum Instruction and Design

- 1. Provide a detailed description of the planned curriculum (grade by grade and/or subject by subject), including identified course outcomes and demonstrated alignment with current state standards.***
- 2. Describe any curriculum emphasis planned for the school that targets a specific learning philosophy or style, or has certain/selected subject areas as school themes.***
- 3. Describe the overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to English Language Learners, students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans, students identified as academically gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out.***
- 4. List the curriculum materials (textbooks, workbooks, etc.) contemplated for use in support of the proposed curriculum and describe the anticipated availability.***

C. Curriculum Instruction and Design

Willard C. Pitts Academy is committed to fostering a student-centered learning environment where students are encouraged to explore, inquire, and create through project-based learning (PBL). Our curriculum not only aligns with Oklahoma Academic Standards, but also nurtures an immersive experience of learning through hands-on projects, collaborative activities, and real-world applications. Students will develop critical thinking skills, creativity, and a deep understanding of the subjects they study. Willard C. Pitts Academy embraces diverse learning styles and aims to engage every student in a meaningful and challenging educational experience.

Core Subjects and Course Outcomes:

English Language Arts:

- Course Outcome: Develop proficient reading, writing, and speaking skills with a focus on critical analysis and interpretation of diverse texts.
- Alignment with Oklahoma Standards: Align the curriculum with the Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts, emphasizing the mastery of reading comprehension, writing, and speaking and listening skills.

Mathematics:

- Course Outcome: Cultivate a deep understanding of mathematical concepts, problem-solving skills, and the ability to apply mathematics to real-world situations.
- Alignment with Oklahoma Standards: Follow the Oklahoma Academic Standards for Mathematics, focusing on number sense, algebraic reasoning, geometry, and mathematical modeling.

Science:

- Course Outcome: Foster scientific inquiry, problem-solving, and a passion for exploring the natural world.
- Alignment with Oklahoma Standards: Align the curriculum with the Oklahoma Academic Standards for Science, emphasizing hands-on experiments, data analysis, and scientific reasoning.

Social Studies:

- Course Outcome: Encourage critical thinking about historical events, geography, and societal issues, and promote active civic engagement.
- Alignment with Oklahoma Standards: Cover the topics outlined in the Oklahoma Academic Standards for Social Studies, focusing on history, geography, economics, and civics.

Enrichment and Specialized Programs:

Arts and Humanities:

- Offer diverse programs in visual arts, music, drama, and creative writing, encouraging self-expression and artistic exploration.

Physical Education and Health:

- Promote physical activity, healthy lifestyles, and teamwork through structured physical education programs.

Technology and Digital Literacy:

- Integrate technology into the curriculum, teaching students digital literacy skills, coding, and problem-solving through technology.

Foreign Language

- Introduction to a foreign language.
- Basic communication skills.

Project-Based Learning (PBL):

- Curriculum Emphasis: Integrate PBL across subjects to enhance critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and creativity.
- The school will collaborate with local businesses and community organizations to provide students with authentic, hands-on learning experiences.
- PBL projects will incorporate technology, research, and presentations, preparing students for the demands of the 21st century workforce.
- Alignment with Oklahoma Standards: Develop projects that align with specific standards in each subject area, enabling students to apply academic knowledge to real-world problems. Emphasize the development of research, communication, and presentation skills through project-based assessments.

Strategies and Methods for Project-Based Learning:

Project Design: Teachers and students will design projects that are authentic, relevant, and open-ended. Projects will be scaffolded to accommodate various levels of difficulty, allowing students to choose the level that suits their abilities and interests.

Student Choice: Within the parameters of each project, students will have opportunities to select topics, research questions, and project formats. This approach accommodates different learning styles and allows students to take ownership of their learning.

Collaboration: Encourage collaboration among students, enabling them to work in diverse teams. Group work will help students with different learning styles leverage each other's strengths and learn from their peers.

Multiple Assessments: Assessment will not be limited to traditional exams but will also include presentations, portfolios, and project evaluations. These assessments cater to varied learning styles and offer opportunities for students to showcase their strengths.

Reflection and Self-Assessment: Students will be encouraged to reflect on their learning processes and assess their progress. This self-awareness promotes metacognition and individualized learning strategies.

Real-World Connection: Projects will be designed to address real-world issues, making learning relevant and appealing to a diverse range of student interests and learning styles.

Collaboration and Teamwork:

- Encourage collaborative work through group projects, where students with different strengths can contribute meaningfully.
- Foster teamwork skills, ensuring all students have opportunities to lead, contribute ideas, and collaborate effectively.

Inquiry and Research:

- Develop inquiry-based projects that encourage students to ask questions, research extensively, and apply their findings creatively.
- Provide guidance on research methods and information literacy to support diverse learning styles.

Presentation and Reflection:

- Include opportunities for students to present their projects to peers, teachers, and even the community.
- Encourage reflective practices, where students assess their own learning process, strengths, and areas for improvement.

Addressing Diverse Learning Styles:

- Visual Learners: Use visual aids, diagrams, and mind maps to represent concepts and information visually.
- Auditory Learners: Incorporate discussions, debates, and presentations, allowing students to articulate their ideas verbally.
- Kinesthetic Learners: Organize hands-on activities, experiments, and interactive simulations that involve physical movement and touch.
- Reading/Writing Learners: Provide reading materials, writing assignments, and research projects to cater to students who learn best through reading and writing.

Student Outcome:

Upon completion of each course, students will have not only met the Oklahoma Academic Standards but also developed a deep understanding of the subject matter through project-based learning. They will possess strong analytical, communication, and

problem-solving skills, empowering them to excel academically and thrive in diverse real-world scenarios. Additionally, students will have cultivated a passion for learning, a sense of curiosity, and the ability to collaborate effectively, preparing them for success in high school and beyond.

Professional Development:

- Provide ongoing professional development for teachers, focusing on PBL methodologies, individualized instruction, and strategies for accommodating diverse learning styles.
- Encourage a collaborative environment where teachers share best practices and adapt their teaching to meet the needs of their unique students.

Project-Based Learning Model vs. Traditional Learning Model

Aspect	Project-Based Learning	Traditional Learning
Learning Approach	Emphasizes hands-on, experiential learning where students engage in real-world projects.	Focuses on textbook-based instruction, lectures, and assessments.
Student Engagement	Encourages active participation, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.	Often involves passive learning with limited interaction, leading to rote memorization.
Curriculum Structure	Integrated curriculum across subjects, interdisciplinary connections are highlighted.	Subjects taught separately with minimal integration, leading to compartmentalized knowledge.

Teacher Role	Acts as a facilitator, guiding students through projects, providing resources, and support.	Acts as the primary source of information, delivering content and assessing students' understanding.
Assessment	Assessments are multifaceted, including project completion, presentations, peer evaluations, and reflections.	Primarily relies on tests, quizzes, and exams to evaluate knowledge retention.
Real-World Application	Emphasizes application of knowledge in solving authentic problems, making learning more meaningful.	Often lacks direct real-world application, focusing more on theoretical concepts.
Student Autonomy	Fosters autonomy and independence as students make decisions, set goals, and manage their projects.	Relies on structured assignments and predetermined curriculum, limiting student autonomy.

At Willard C. Pitts Academy every student and classroom will be provided instructional and technological resources that allow for project-based learning, encourage student-centered learning, collaboration, differentiation, and independent learning.

Teachers will be given the support to be able to design thematic integrated units of study that align with Oklahoma Academic Standards. Willard C. Pitts Academy will offer workshops and training sessions on designing thematic integrated units. Provide sessions on understanding the Oklahoma Academic Standards and how to align them with thematic units. Invite experienced educators or instructional coaches to lead these

sessions. Allocate regular time for grade-level or subject-area teams to collaborate on unit planning. Create interdisciplinary teams that consist of teachers from different subjects who collaborate on designing integrated units. Create a culture of peer review where teachers share their unit plans and receive constructive feedback from colleagues and celebrate successful integration and innovative teaching practices.

Utilizing cross-curricular planning and integration, we aim to provide rigorous and relevant content. Students in grades 5th-8th will be able to explore educational content as described below:

5th Grade STEM: Students apply Engineering , Robotics, and the Design process through hands-on activities. Students design, manufacture, test, and improve solutions to real-world problems. Lab and tool safety are taught throughout the content. As this curriculum progresses through middle school, the design problems, testing, documentation, math, and science applications build in complexity.

6th Grade STEM: Students apply Engineering , Robotics, and the Design process through hands-on activities. Students design, manufacture, test, and improve solutions to real-world problems. A variety of high-tech tools and equipment are used. Lab and tool safety are taught throughout the content. As this curriculum progresses through middle school, the design problems, testing, documentation, math, and science applications build in complexity.

7th Grade STEM: Students apply Engineering , Robotics, and the Design process through hands-on activities. Students design, manufacture, test, and improve solutions to real-world problems. A variety of high-tech tools and equipment are used. Lab and tool

safety are taught throughout the content. As this curriculum progresses through middle school, the design problems, testing, documentation, math, and science applications build in complexity.

8th Grade STEM: Students apply Engineering , Robotics, and the Design process through hands-on activities. Students design, manufacture, test, and improve solutions to real-world problems. A variety of high-tech tools and equipment are used. Lab and tool safety are taught throughout the content. As this curriculum progresses through middle school, the design problems, testing, documentation, math, and science applications build in complexity.

5th Grade Mathematics: Students focus on mathematical and real-world problems that involve dividing multi-digit numbers, comparing and converting fractions and decimals to find equivalencies or solve problems with like and unlike denominators and mixed numbers. Students also explore coordinate graphing, identifying patterns, and analyzing data. Students will be able to build upon the use of mathematical computation from the integration of other content taught from other courses and study 2D and 3D figures, volume, and surface area.

6th Grade Mathematics: Students focus on ratio reasoning, recognizing integer properties, evaluating and simplifying algebraic expressions, solving one-step equations, exploring rational numbers, and builds upon prior knowledge of decimal and fraction operations. Students are introduced to statistical variability and probability as well as investigate real-world mathematics problems involving geometric shapes.

7th Grade Mathematics: Students focus on analyzing proportional relationships, using operations of rational numbers, solving two-step equations and one-step inequalities, constructing and describing relationships among geometric figures, and simplifying algebraic expressions containing integers and exponents. Students use random sampling to draw inferences about populations as well as solve real-life mathematics problems.

8th Grade Mathematics: Students focus on Pre-Algebra by formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling with a linear equations and inequalities grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships, calculating surface area and volume of three-dimensional figure, applying the Pythagorean Theorem, calculating probabilities, and interpreting data.

5th Grade English Language Arts: Students engage with nonfiction and fiction texts through comprehension, interpretation, analysis, and evaluation. Students learn to express their ideas effectively through narratives, explanatory, and argumentative essays that demonstrate a command of Standard English including sentence building, paragraph development, vocabulary, and word choice. Students will also research real-world topics through an inquiry-based process to report findings.

6th Grade English Language Arts: Students engage with nonfiction and fiction texts through comprehension, interpretation, analysis, and evaluation. Students learn to express their ideas effectively through narratives, explanatory, and argumentative essays that demonstrate a command of Standard English including sentence building, paragraph

development, vocabulary, and word choice. Students will also research real-world topics through an inquiry-based process to report findings.

7th Grade English Language Arts: Students engage with nonfiction and fiction texts through comprehension, interpretation, analysis, and evaluation. Students will make comparisons to distinguish genres in literary texts and continue to develop the skills of expressing their ideas effectively in writing through a variety of purposes that build on and deepen skills. Students will introduce a claim with reasons and provide evidence to support their reasoning, as well as counterarguments that can be expressed verbally and in writing. Students will research real-world topics through an inquiry-based process to report findings.

8th Grade English Language Arts: Students engage with nonfiction and fiction texts through comprehension, interpretation, analysis, and evaluation. Students will make comparisons to distinguish genres in literary texts and continue to develop the skills of expressing their ideas effectively in writing through a variety of purposes that build on and deepen skills. Students will present a claim with reasons and provide evidence to support their reasoning, as well as counterarguments that can be expressed verbally and in writing. Students will research real-world topics through an inquiry-based process to report findings.

*** 5th-8th grade Reading strategies to be implemented to address literacy and comprehension gaps:**

Scaffolded Reading Instruction:

- Summary: Provide structured support gradually reducing as students gain proficiency.
- PBL Integration: Introduce PBL projects with scaffolded reading materials suited to various reading levels within the same topic. Offer supports like graphic organizers, vocabulary lists, and guided reading activities to aid comprehension.

Reciprocal Teaching:

- Summary: Encourage students to predict, question, clarify, and summarize while reading.
- PBL Integration: Incorporate PBL projects that require students to predict outcomes, generate questions about project elements, clarify concepts through research, and summarize findings or project progress. Use these strategies during group discussions related to the project.

Close Reading Strategies:

- Summary: Focus on analyzing the text deeply, paying attention to details, and making inferences.
- PBL Integration: Design projects that involve close analysis of relevant texts or sources related to the project theme or subject. Encourage students to extract key information, make connections, and infer meanings within the context of the project.

Graphic Organizers and Visual Aids:

- Summary: Use visual tools to organize information and enhance understanding.
- PBL Integration: Incorporate graphic organizers or visual aids within the PBL framework to help students map out project ideas, outline research findings, or structure project presentations. Visual representations can aid comprehension and organization of project-related content.

Literature Circles or Book Clubs:

- Summary: Encourage small group discussions on selected readings to deepen understanding.
- PBL Integration: Introduce literature circles or book clubs as part of the project where students read texts or articles related to the project's theme. Encourage discussions, debates, and reflections on how these readings connect to the project objectives.

Technology Integration for Literacy:

- Summary: Use digital tools and multimedia to enhance reading experiences.
- PBL Integration: Utilize technology within PBL projects by incorporating multimedia resources, online research tools, digital storytelling, or collaborative platforms for students to access, analyze, and present information related to the project.

Authentic Assessment of Reading Skills:

- Summary: Evaluate comprehension through real-world applications rather than solely relying on standardized tests.
- PBL Integration: Assess students' reading comprehension within the context of PBL projects through presentations, written reflections, project reports, or multimedia demonstrations that showcase their understanding and application of literacy skills in real-world scenarios.

* **Reading, grammar, and writing Academic Achievement** will be offered to all grade levels for students that may need enrichment and support with reading and grammar. Students will engage in content and classroom structure that allows additional time to improve basic reading skills in word analysis, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and written literary response using a variety of materials differentiated to meet individual student needs.

***English Language Learners** of all grade levels will be able to engage in English Language Development courses that develop basic listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in **English for level I & II newcomer English Learners:** Students focus on development of social language with a push toward beginning-level academic language. Fiction and non-fiction texts are used to build vocabulary, syntax, and pragmatics. Students will also attend a Curriculum Lab that provides additional support for level I & II newcomer English learners as they work towards mastery of level I skills and sustain level II skills.

5th Grade Science: Students engage in science and engineering practices to develop conceptual understanding of physical science core ideas about matter and its interactions, motion and forces, and energy. Students study Earth and life science core ideas related to energy flow in organisms, ecosystems, Earth's systems and impact of human activities, and Earth's place in the universe.

6th Grade Science: Students engage in science and engineering practices to develop a conceptual understanding of physical science core ideas about energy and waves and their applications. Students study Earth and life science core ideas related to cells, body systems, Earth's place in the universe, Earth's systems and its dynamic nature, ecosystem interactions, and human impact.

7th Grade Science: Students engage in science and engineering practices to develop a conceptual understanding of physical science core ideas of structure and properties of matter, chemical reactions, and the conservation and transfer of energy. Students examine the Earth's geological time scale, materials and systems, weather and climate, natural hazards, and human impact on the Earth's systems.

8th Grade Science: Students engage in science and engineering practices to develop conceptual understanding of earth science core ideas such as the fossil record and geological time scale, the cycling of Earth's materials, and processes that change the Earth's surface. Students also further examine forces, motion, and study waves and their applications in technology.

5th Grade Social Studies: Students focus on United States history from early colonization through the writing of the Constitution. Students learn about the founding of the British Colonies and how the French and Indian War led to the American Revolution.

6th Grade Social Studies: Students use geographic knowledge as a tool for understanding the concepts of economics and the impact of recent history on contemporary events. Students focus on spatial patterns of human and physical characteristics of North America, South America, and the Caribbean.

7th Grade Social Studies: Students use geographic knowledge as a tool for understanding the concepts of economics and the impact of recent history on contemporary events. Students focus on spatial patterns of human and physical characteristics of the world and its people. Students explore how these patterns form, change over time, and relate to one another in the Eastern hemisphere.

8th Grade Social Studies: Students examine the factors, events, documents, significant individuals, and political ideas that led to the formation of the United States of America and its transformation following the Civil War. Students focus on Citizenship skills and the historic development and understanding of constitutional government in the United States.

5th- 8th Grade World Languages: Students will focus on learning **American Sign Language** in order to participate in a visual-gestural environment that introduces ASL grammar and vocabulary without presenting English equivalents. Students will engage in interactive activities, cultural awareness education, and individual feedback with an emphasis on appropriate language use in common communication settings.

Spanish enables students to communicate on very familiar topics in Spanish, starting with memorized single words and phrases and moving towards an increased variety of words and phrases. Students will study the formal structure of the target language in order to support communication skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing). Students will also learn and engage in the cultural products and practices where the target language is spoken in order to develop an understanding of the perspectives of those cultures.

Vietnamese enables students to communicate on very familiar topics in Vietnamese, starting with memorized single words and phrases and moving towards an increased variety of words and phrases. Students will study the formal structure of the target language in order to support communication skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing). Students will also learn and engage in the cultural products and practices where the target language is spoken in order to develop an understanding of the perspectives of those cultures.

These languages have been chosen due to the demographics of the growing surrounding community. As a part of our innovative approach to the learning and bridging community, it is beneficial to the community to be able to be communicative and have culture exchanges that are representative of all cultures, not just the dominant.

5th- 8th Grade Visual & Performing Arts:

Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Dance will allow students to experience a variety of dance forms. Students learn multiple styles of dance and dance techniques including dance exercises, fundamental locomotor activities, and movement exploration exercises.

Theatre engages students in the exploration of acting, voice and diction research, history of theatre, acting terminology, stage movement, singing, dancing, reading, memorization, blocking, stage production and design. Students will work with the Allied Arts Community Partner.

Music & Choir introduces students to musicianship, theory, music materials and procedures. Students develop basic skills through the study of music theory and composition. Learning will be placed on musicianship skills such as diction, listening skills, sight singing, key signatures, major and minor key, and intervals.

Visual Arts engage students with a broad scope of visual art production. Students complete projects in a 2D and 3D design, using a variety of media such as drawing, painting, and sculpture. Art gives students a broad scope of visual art production and basic skills necessary to produce pottery or ceramic sculptures.

5th-8th Grade Physical Education: Students engage in physical activity and content that promotes their health and well-being and guides them toward becoming physically active for life. Students will use movement to enhance motor skills and learn a healthful lifestyle through sporting activities, games, and exercises.

5th-8th Grade Community Electives:

Local and Global Citizenship: Students are provided the opportunity to explore their role in their local communities as well as their role in the global community. Students will research problems within their local community and work collaboratively to develop a solution. Students will examine how active citizens can positively impact their

communities locally and globally. Students and teachers will have the opportunity to work with Generation Citizen which is a nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming how civics is taught by providing equity-rooted, real-world civic education, which helps students understand exactly how governments function and how they can make a difference in the system and their communities.

Other Community Partners & Organizations (Electives)

Health & Wellness: Will Power Wellness- Community Organization Partner

Financial Literacy: Donelle Cole- Community Organization Partner

Poetry & Chill Kids- Gregory II- Community Organization Partner

Film & Production- Urban Bridge

Gardening & Landscape Design- Lillian Timber Farms/Restore OKC

Culinary Arts- Eastside Eatery

Swimming & Water Safety- YWCA

Speech & Debate- OCU School of Law

All City Band

Bike Club

STEAM- Urban League

Mathnasium

Athletics- YMCA & Partner Schools

Tutoring- Freedom City

Swahili- Language & Culture Acquisition

Limited English Proficient Students, Special Education Students, and Gifted Students.

Willard C. Pitts Academy comprehensive curriculum and instructional design plan for our school also demonstrates a deep commitment to meeting the diverse needs of all students. We recognize that a tailored and inclusive approach is essential to fostering all learning environments. Our design consists of differentiation, personalized support, and strategic interventions, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to excel.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will implement a scaffolded approach that gradually builds language proficiency for English Language Learners. Our curriculum will integrate language development across all subjects, utilizing visual aids, bilingual resources, and peer collaboration to support language acquisition. Dedicated language support classes and culturally responsive materials will be provided to ensure English Language Learner students thrive academically and socially. As required by the Oklahoma State Department of Education, we will administer the World-Class Instructional Design Assessment (WIDA) to all English language learners within 30 calendar days of the beginning of the year.

We are dedicated to fully implementing IEPs and Section 504 plans, offering tailored accommodations, modifications, and related services. Collaborative planning involving special education teachers, general education teachers, and support staff will ensure seamless integration of individualized goals and support strategies into the

curriculum. Ongoing assessment and progress tracking will guide adjustments to meet students' evolving needs. Willard C. Pitts Academy commits to providing identification, services, and accommodations to students with disabilities in compliance with all provision of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act, The American with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 , and al applicable regulations under such federal laws, as well as state laws, including the Oklahoma State Department of Education's Policies and Procedures for Special Education.

To serve academically gifted students, our curriculum will incorporate enrichment activities, advanced content, and opportunities for independent exploration. We will establish specialized projects that challenge and stimulate gifted students, allowing them to delve deeper into subject matter and pursue their intellectual passions.

For students at risk of academic failure or dropping out, we will implement a multi-tiered system of support. This includes targeted interventions, additional tutoring, and mentorship programs to address academic challenges. A comprehensive counseling and guidance approach will provide social-emotional support, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose to prevent disengagement.

Willard C. Pitts Academy curriculum and instructional design plan reflects a holistic commitment to meeting the unique needs of each student. By implementing the following learning strategies our goal is ensure that all students have a chance to participate fully in the learning process.

1. **Project-Based Learning:** Students will engage in hands-on, inquiry-driven projects that address real-world challenges and be provided multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to accommodate their learning styles and abilities.
2. **Collaboration:** General education and special education teachers will collaborate to provide inclusive instruction within the regular classroom, ensuring that all students benefit from diverse perspectives and approaches.
3. **Flexible Grouping:** Grouping strategies, such as peer mentoring and cooperative learning, will facilitate interactions among students with different abilities and backgrounds.
4. **Professional Development:** Ongoing professional development for our staff will focus on research-based high effect-size teaching practices, differentiation techniques, and effective strategies for supporting diverse learners.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will utilize state approved curriculum and text that score “Exemplifies Quality” as defined on the state evaluation rubric. Currently we have identified to adopt IXL which is directly aligned to the Oklahoma Academic Standards and OSTP as well as recommended for skill building and progress monitoring.

By utilizing a combination of traditional textbooks, digital resources, hands-on materials, and community partnerships, we aim to create a dynamic and enriching learning environment that empowers students to excel in their academic pursuits and develop essential skills for their future. Textbooks and core subject materials will be distributed at the beginning of the school year and available throughout. Students will also have access to online resources through the school's learning management system at

any time. Project specific materials will be provided in alignment with project timelines, ensuring students have what they need to complete their projects.

In addition to project materials, we will provide students and teachers with research-based resources that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and active exploration. A list of materials is below:

- "Project-Based Learning Handbook" by Thom Markham: A comprehensive guide for teachers and students on implementing effective project-based learning.
- PBL Works is a research-informed model for improving, calibrating, and assessing your practice. Student learning goals for projects include standards-based content as well as skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, self management, project management, and collaboration.
- SmartLab is a creative learning system product where students explore STEM and media arts through applied technology and project-based learning.
- Online platforms for project management and collaboration, such as Google Classroom and Canvas
- Textbooks and workbooks aligned with state standards for mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies i.e Eureka Math, and TCI for Science & Social Studies.
- Digital resources and e-books for easy access and interactive learning experiences. (NoRed Ink, LexiaCore5, for example)

- "Interdisciplinary Explorations" series: A collection of books and resources that encourage students to explore connections between different subjects.
- "Cultures Around the World" series: Books, videos, and online resources that showcase diverse cultures and perspectives.
- Fiction and non-fiction books from various authors and backgrounds that reflect the experiences of different communities.
- Subscriptions to educational websites, interactive simulations, and virtual field trips that enhance students' understanding and engagement.
- Science kits, manipulatives, and supplies for hands-on experiments and exploration.
- Art supplies, craft materials, and tools for creating visual and multimedia projects.
- Collaboration with local museums, businesses, and experts to provide real-world resources and opportunities for students' projects.

WCPA: Curriculum Selections

Subject Area	Curriculum	Details + Rationale
5 – 8 Interdisciplinary	Smart Lab	Smart Lab curriculum is an innovative, hands-on, project-based learning approach that integrates technology, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), and creativity. It provides a range of modules and activities covering various subjects, including robotics, coding, multimedia production, engineering challenges, and more. Smart Lab curriculum is designed to capture students' interest by incorporating interactive and technology-driven activities. It aligns with the digital age, making learning more relevant and engaging for students. Project-based learning in Smart Lab encourages interdisciplinary exploration. Students can apply concepts learned in science, math, language arts, and social studies to real-world projects, fostering a holistic understanding of

		<p>various subjects. The project-based nature of Smart Lab allows for personalized learning experiences. Students can pursue projects aligned with their interests, fostering a sense of ownership and autonomy in their education. Projects in Smart Lab often mirror real-world challenges, enabling students to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, preparing them for life beyond the classroom.</p>
5-8 ELA	Core Knowledge Language Arts	<p>Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) is an educational program designed for students in grades 5 to 8, aiming to cultivate strong literacy skills, critical thinking, and content knowledge across various disciplines. The curriculum integrates language arts with other subjects, promoting a comprehensive understanding of history, science, literature, and the arts.</p> <p>Emphasizes comprehension strategies, such as summarization, inference, and analysis. Students learn to critically evaluate texts, enhancing their ability to extract meaning and information. Provides structured writing instruction, focusing on various forms of writing, including narratives, essays, persuasive writing, and research-based compositions. It encourages students to develop their voice and effectively communicate ideas. Systematic vocabulary instruction to expand students' word knowledge and comprehension. This involves teaching word roots, prefixes, suffixes, and context clues to aid in understanding unfamiliar words. Instruction on grammar rules, syntax, and language mechanics to strengthen students' writing and communication skills. It also emphasizes proper usage and conventions in written and spoken language.</p> <p>By immersing students in rich literature and diverse topics, CKLA aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build a strong foundation in literacy skills necessary for academic success. ● Develop critical thinking abilities through analysis and interpretation of various texts and content areas. ● Foster a deeper understanding of subjects beyond language arts by connecting them with reading and writing activities.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate a lifelong appreciation for literature and learning across multiple disciplines. • Prepare students to effectively communicate and comprehend complex information in various contexts.
5 – 8 Math	Eureka Math	<p>Eureka Math, also known as EngageNY Math, is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum developed by the non-profit organization Great Minds. It follows a coherent and rigorous approach to teaching mathematics, emphasizing conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and application of mathematical skills. The curriculum is divided into modules that cover various mathematical concepts, including arithmetic, algebra, geometry, statistics, and more. Eureka Math offers a carefully sequenced and logically structured curriculum that builds upon previously learned concepts. It ensures continuity and progression of mathematical ideas, fostering a deeper understanding of math principles. The curriculum emphasizes conceptual understanding before procedural fluency, ensuring that students comprehend the "why" behind mathematical concepts rather than mere memorization of procedures. This approach leads to long-term retention and application of knowledge. The curriculum is developed based on extensive research and incorporates proven pedagogical strategies, including the use of manipulatives, visual models, and collaborative learning activities. Eureka Math offers flexibility for teachers to differentiate instruction based on students' needs, allowing for both remediation and enrichment opportunities within the same classroom. Eureka Math aligns with state and national math standards, ensuring that students meet and exceed grade-level expectations. It prepares them for standardized assessments and future math courses.</p>
5 – 8 Social Studies	TCI	<p>TCI (Teachers' Curriculum Institute) Social Studies curriculum is a widely recognized educational publishing company that offers a student-centered, inquiry-based approach to teaching social studies. The curriculum includes various programs tailored for different grade levels, covering subjects such as history, geography, civics, economics, and culture. TCI emphasizes interactive and hands-on learning experiences through its textbooks, online resources, primary source materials, and engaging activities. TCI Social Studies employs an inquiry-based approach, encouraging students to ask questions,</p>

		<p>investigate historical events, and analyze primary sources. This method fosters critical thinking, curiosity, and a deeper understanding of social concepts. The curriculum incorporates multimedia resources, interactive activities, simulations, and primary source analysis, making the study of social studies more engaging and relatable for students. TCI provides materials and resources to support differentiated instruction, allowing teachers to meet the diverse learning needs of students within the same classroom. The curriculum focuses on developing students' historical thinking skills, including analyzing primary sources, making connections between past and present events, understanding cause-and-effect relationships, and evaluating historical perspectives. The curriculum aligns with state and national social studies standards, ensuring that students meet educational requirements while fostering a deeper comprehension of social science concepts.</p>
5-8 Science	TCI	<p>TCI (Teachers' Curriculum Institute) Science curriculum offers a student-centered, inquiry-based approach to teaching science. The curriculum covers various scientific disciplines, including life sciences, physical sciences, earth and space sciences, and engineering practices. It integrates hands-on investigations, interactive activities, multimedia resources, and collaborative learning experiences. TCI Science promotes inquiry-based learning, encouraging students to ask questions, design experiments, gather data, and draw conclusions. This approach fosters curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. The curriculum emphasizes hands-on experiments and investigations, allowing students to engage directly with scientific concepts, phenomena, and laboratory equipment. This hands-on experience enhances comprehension and retention of scientific principles. TCI Science aligns with Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), providing a framework that integrates science content with scientific and engineering practices, crosscutting concepts, and disciplinary core ideas. The curriculum incorporates interactive digital resources, simulations, models, and multimedia materials to make scientific concepts more accessible and engaging for students. TCI offers resources and support for differentiated instruction, allowing teachers to cater to the diverse learning needs of students, including those requiring additional support or seeking enrichment opportunities. TCI Science connects scientific concepts to real-world applications, helping students</p>

		<p>understand the relevance and impact of science in their daily lives and the world around them.</p>
5 – 8	PBL Works	<p>PBL Works is a renowned curriculum designed around Project-Based Learning (PBL) methodologies, offering numerous advantages for a 5th-8th grade charter school.</p> <p>PBL Works focuses on student-centered, inquiry-based learning through extended, interdisciplinary projects. The curriculum provides authentic, real-world projects that encourage critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and communication skills. PBL Works curriculum is aligned with state standards, ensuring coverage of essential learning objectives across subjects.</p> <p>It offers professional development, resources, and coaching to aid teachers in implementing effective PBL practices. PBL provides various assessment tools and strategies that evaluate both content mastery and essential skills developed through project work.</p> <p>PBL engages students by connecting learning to real-world problems, fostering curiosity, and promoting active participation in their education. The curriculum emphasizes the development of critical skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication, preparing students for future success. PBL encourages interdisciplinary learning, enabling students to see connections between different subjects and apply knowledge in practical scenarios.</p> <p>It accommodates various learning styles, allowing students to explore. By focusing on problem-solving and project-based skills, PBL prepares students for the challenges they may face in higher education and future careers that demand innovation and adaptability.</p>
5 – 8 ELA RTI	AMPLIFY	<p>Amplify utilizes adaptive learning technology that tailors instruction to individual student needs. It can assess student abilities and adjust content delivery accordingly. The curriculum offers diverse instructional materials and</p>

		<p>strategies to address varying learning styles and abilities within a classroom.</p> <p>Amplify's RTI programs incorporate data analysis tools to track student progress, identify areas of difficulty, and implement targeted interventions. The curriculum is generally aligned with educational standards, ensuring that interventions and learning objectives are in line with grade-level expectations. Amplify might provide professional development and resources for educators to effectively implement the RTI program in the classroom.</p> <p>Amplify's adaptive technology can cater to the specific needs of each student, allowing for personalized learning experiences that support RTI goals. The program provides targeted interventions for struggling students by identifying gaps in learning and offering appropriate resources and activities for improvement.</p> <p>Amplify's data-driven approach enables teachers to monitor student progress effectively, adjusting interventions as needed to ensure academic growth. The differentiated instruction accommodates diverse learning styles and abilities, supporting the inclusivity of all students in the RTI process.</p> <p>Amplify's curriculum integrates research-based practices and strategies endorsed for effective RTI implementation, enhancing its credibility</p>
5 – 8 Math RTI	Eureka Math: Engage NY Modules	<p>The Eureka Math Engage NY modules are well aligned to the conceptual focus of our state standards and Math curriculum. We will use modules as supplementary practice and teaching materials in our Math RTI program. Eureka Math modules will be utilized as RTI support due to its PBL alignment.</p>

D. Admission Standards/Procedures

- 1. Explain the plan for student recruitment and marketing that will provide equal access to interested students and families.***
- 2. Describe the school's enrollment policy, which should include the following:***
 - a. Non-discriminatory, open enrollment, and freedom of choice parameters;***
 - b. A timeline for admission, including a deadline for receipt of applications, timetable for admission consideration, and timeline for registering students after admission;***
 - c. Evidence that the school will require legal residence within the boundaries of Oklahoma City Public Schools for any and all applicants;***
 - d. A description of the approach the school will use to seek to achieve racial and ethnic balance among its student population; and***
 - e. A plan for an admission lottery if the number of eligible and qualified applicants exceeds the program capacity.***
- 3. Designate, if applicable, a specific geographic area as an academic enterprise zone limiting admissions to students who reside within that area. (An academic enterprise zone must have a minimum of 60% of its students qualify for free or reduced lunch).***
- 4. Provide an example of an application packet for parents and students describing eligibility criteria and qualifications for admission.***

D. Admission Standards/Procedures

The Willard C. Pitts Academy's main objective for student recruitment and marketing is to recruit students and families to our newly founded school who are wanting educational autonomy and flexibility through innovation, choice, community, and culture. We will put forth our best efforts to mirror the communities we serve. We articulate to families that we are a free, open-enrollment school. The nature of our school

is vested in our community partnerships and collaborations. The robust resources provided from our school partners for our students and families also serves as a recruitment tool.

Our extensive outreach plan is founded on building positive relationships with the greater Northeast and Northwest Oklahoma City community by identifying and focusing our recruitment efforts towards families with school-aged children currently living within the community or wanting to return due to the recent increase in housing developments, families with students who may need individualized academic supports, have special needs or for whom English may not be the primary language spoken at home. We strive to develop a reputation that we welcome and support diverse learners. We will publish school advertisements in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. We will create a website that can also be translated in the same languages.

We will host open house events that are open to the public where parents and prospective students can learn more about the school and the process for applying. We will host outreach events at local facilities and businesses within our targeted area codes identified as 73111, 73117, 73105, 73106, and 73107. These facilities include, but are not limited to the local YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, Urban Bridge Impact Center, and local community centers.

We will also engage in neighborhood canvassing to include sharing flyers, handbills, information packets and applications with local businesses, community organizations, and places of worship serving our targeted population; encouraging parents

of 5th-8th grade students to enroll their children at our school and spread the word amongst their friends.

The Willard C. Pitts Academy Student Recruitment Plan Outline:

Timeline:

Willard C. Pitts Academy student recruitment is an ongoing process that is embedded into the operational structure of the school. We will implement “mini experiences” of our school programming and other offerings throughout the year in the community and surrounding area to recruit students.

Target Audience:

Willard C. Pitts Academy (Pitts Academy) intends to draw 5th -8th grade students from diverse backgrounds along with students from all Northeast and Northwest Oklahoma city, with the majority of students coming from the 73111, 73117, 73105, 73106, and 73107 zip codes. These zip codes are in the proximity of where Pitts Academy intends to be located. However, the majority of the students shall reside in the 73111, 73117, and 73105 zip codes. Student demographic data across these zip codes is 69.6% of students identifying as African American , 7.5% Hispanic, 5.2% Caucasian, 14.9% Multiracial, 2% Native American, 2% Asian/Pacific Islander, 89.3% of students economically disadvantaged, 4% (and rapidly rising) experiencing language barriers, and 15.7% with disabilities and special needs.

Willard C.Pitts Academy potential pupils are 4th graders who are attending Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School, Wilson Elementary School, Thelma Parks Elementary School, Millwood Elementary Learning Academy, Young Achievers, and

Eugene Field Elementary School; 5th through 7th graders that attend F.D. Moon Middle School, Taft Middle School, and Classen Middle School of Advanced Studies which are all a part of Oklahoma City Public Schools District. Of the three schools, Classen Middle School of Advanced Studies is an application school. Pupils may also attend ASTEC Charter School, and Millwood Arts Academy Middle School.

Demographic Group Strategies:

A. Special Education Students

During the recruitment and admission process, we will inform families that all students, regardless of ability, are encouraged to apply, including students who have IEPs, 504 plans, or are currently being evaluated. Our school tours, flyer, and website will explain the systems we have in place to guarantee students receive the full services required to meet their educational need(s). This includes, but is not limited to, learning specialists, outside providers for occupational therapy, in house counselors for therapy, and small group instruction.

B. English Language Learners

We will make our recruitment and admission materials available in English and Spanish. We will continue to identify organizations and community partners who can assist us in events such as open houses by providing translation for prospective families. We will continue to identify community centers and cultural organizations that are able to disseminate information about our school

and that serve communities that are predominantly made up of families for whom English is not the home language.

C. Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Meals/Economically Disadvantaged

We will strive to recruit and admit low income students at Willard C. Pitts Academy by reaching out to community centers, cultural organizations, health centers, and after school programs neighborhoods where the schools serve students eligible for free or reduced meals.

D. Students Who are Sub Proficient

We will identify organizations that offer tutoring services and provide them with recruitment and admission materials. We will advertise our flex/extended hours and increased learning time as well as directed strategies and programs such as small group learning and tutoring blocks. We will also advertise our summer learning program.

E. Students Who Exceed Proficiency

We will adopt universal screening early and at all grade levels; screening, identification, and placement will be ongoing. We will adopt talent development models and opportunities. We will examine the efficacy of referrals and nominations by teachers and families/caregivers for underrepresented groups. We will be proactive and aggressive in outreach to parents/caregivers from under-represented groups so they can support and advocate for their children. We will train school personnel in gifted education and culturally responsive education.

F. Students at Risk of Dropping Out of School

We will identify organizations that offer tutoring services and provide them with recruitment and admission materials. We will advertise our flex/extended hours and increased learning time as well as directed strategies and programs such as small group learning and tutoring blocks. We will also advertise our summer learning program.

Marketing:

All school communication for recruitment and admissions will be incorporated and implemented through the following six modes of communication. Willard C. Pitts Academy will use these modes to ensure news and information is communicated to families and the community.

- A. School Branding
- B. School Website
- C. Social Media
- D. Local Media
- E. Public & Private Events
- F. Community Outreach

According to 70 OK Stat § 70-3-140 (2014), Willard C. Pitts Academy will abide to the following statute that outlines the enrollment criteria and preferences for students in charter schools, emphasizing fair and inclusive practices:

A. Charter schools must enroll students residing within the school district boundaries where the charter school is located. Students can apply, and transfers may be accepted if the school has space. If applications exceed capacity, a lottery may be used for student selection. Preference is given to students residing within the district and, in some cases, attending schools identified for improvement. State-sponsored charter schools for the Office of Juvenile Affairs serve youth in custody. **B.** Charter schools generally admit students from areas under desegregation court orders or agreements, but resident school districts can object if admitting a student violates these orders or agreement **C.** Charter schools can establish academic enterprise zones, focusing on students in specific geographic areas with high percentages of children eligible for free or reduced school lunch programs. **D.** Charter schools must not discriminate based on factors such as ethnicity, national origin, gender, income, disability, language proficiency, achievement, aptitude, or athletic ability, except for specific cases mentioned in the statute.

The boundaries of the school are proposed to be an academic enterprise zone as set forth by Oklahoma City Public Schools as indicated by *Appendix A* . Willard C. Pitts Academy will provide a sample student application packet for parents and students describing the requirements and expectations for admission and enrollment. See **Appendix B.**

Timeline and Priorities:

Level I: Willard C. Pitts Academy proposes a zip code boundary as indicated in **Appendix A**, and any child residing within the zip code boundaries will attend the

school. This level also includes that in the future, students currently attending receive priority, siblings of students currently attending, children of employees directly providing educational services for the benefit of the school and as allowed by law will be Level I.

Level II: Willard C. Pitts Academy proposes that any student who resides outside of the zip code boundary, as indicated in **Appendix A**, but within the OKCPS district's boundaries, be designated as Level II. Priority will be given to students as required by law.

Lottery: If capacity is insufficient to enroll all eligible students who apply for admission, Willard C. Pitts Academy will conduct a public lottery. The purpose of the lottery is to ensure an equal probability that any student may be selected. When the number of applications exceeds capacity of a level, grade level, or class, a lottery will be conducted for that aspect in which capacity is over.

Racial and Ethnic Balance:

Willard C. Pitts Academy is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all students, irrespective of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, language proficiency, or socio-economic status. Our enrollment policy ensures fair and equitable access to our educational programs and services.

To achieve racial and ethnic balance among our student population, we will employ a comprehensive approach that embraces proactive strategies and culturally responsive practices. We will actively engage with diverse communities within our school district to promote awareness of our school's mission and educational approach. Informational sessions and workshops will be conducted in neighborhoods with diverse

racial and ethnic backgrounds to ensure equitable access to information. Partnerships will be established with community organizations and leaders to facilitate open dialogues and promote our commitment to diversity.

Admissions policies will be transparent, ensuring that all prospective students have equal opportunities to enroll. Enrollment data will be regularly monitored to identify disparities, and targeted recruitment strategies will be implemented as needed to achieve a balanced student population.

Proposed Process Overview:

- Applications will be received by March 1st prior to the Fall Semester in which you are applying. During the inaugural year, the application period may be extended approximately 60 days. However, this delay in accepting applications will not affect other deadlines or preparations for the Fall 2025 school opening.
- The School Leader will notify parents/guardians and applicants via email and by phone of approval and via email for denial within 45 days of receipt of the completed application for admission.
- Once admitted, the parent/guardian must complete all appropriate documentation in accordance with the law and district policy.
- If an applicant is put on the waitlist, parents/guardians will be notified via email as spaces become available.
- In the event a lottery is necessary, it will be conducted during the 45-day period indicated above.

Comprehensive Admission Process Willard C. Pitts Academy

1. Information Dissemination:

- **Information Sessions:** Host informational sessions or open houses to familiarize prospective students and their families with the school's ethos, academic programs, extracurricular activities, and overall educational approach.
- **Website and Information Materials:** Maintain a comprehensive website and distribute informative brochures or materials outlining admission criteria, deadlines, curriculum highlights, and contact details.

2. Application Period:

- **Application Window:** Open a defined application period, typically several months before the school year commences, allowing interested students to apply.
- **Application Accessibility:** Provide easily accessible application forms online through the school's website or offer physical copies at the school office.

3. Application Submission:

- Request essential documentation such as completed application form
- Allow submission through various means—online uploads, mail, or in-person delivery—to accommodate diverse applicant preferences.

Application Review:

- Establish a designated staff to meticulously review and assess each application for application completeness.

Lottery Process (if applicable):

- **Lottery System:** If the number of applicants exceeds the available spots, conduct a fair lottery system to randomly select students, ensuring an equitable chance for all applicants..

Acceptance and Notification:

- **Acceptance Notifications:** Notify accepted students and their families via email, mail, or phone calls.

- Confirmation of Acceptance: Require accepted students to confirm their enrollment within a specified timeframe, acknowledging their commitment to attend the school.

Enrollment and Orientation:

- Enrollment Requirements: Collect necessary enrollment forms, health records, and any additional documentation required for enrollment.
- Orientation Programs: Organize orientation sessions or events for enrolled students and their families to introduce them to the school's policies, facilities, and support services.

Waitlist Management (if applicable):

- Waitlist Notifications: Notify waitlisted students about their status and keep them informed if spots become available based on the order of the waitlist.

Post-Enrollment Support and Continuous Communication:

- Support Services: Offer resources and assistance to enrolled students for a smooth transition, including mentorship programs, counseling, or academic support.
- Ongoing Communication: Maintain consistent communication with enrolled families to address queries, provide updates, and ensure a positive experience for students.

E. Student Discipline

1. ***Describe the planned approach to student discipline. This plan should include:***
 - a. ***Practices the school will use to promote good discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior.***
 - b. ***A preliminary list and definitions of the offenses for which students in the school must (where non-discretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended, respectively.***
 - c. ***Methods to communicate discipline policies to students and families.***
 - d. ***Procedures for due process when a student is suspended as a result of a code of conduct violation, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing both short-term and long-term suspension.***

E. Student Discipline

Willard C. Pitts Academy believes that every student, family, and staff is to be provided a safe, equitable, and restorative learning environment for all school community members.

Students are expected to have a desired behavior that consists of academic and personal integrity, promotes school safety, and supports positive learning environments. Students, staff, and parents are expected to respect the rights and choices of others, not engage in threatening, intimidating, or harassing behavior that may be harmful to the school environment, themselves, or others, and use Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports to foster a school culture and climate that increases social emotional competence and academic success. Students will be acknowledged for meeting school expectations.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will adopt school expectations that relate in a manner that is respectful, responsible, and safe while supporting our four foundational pillars: Innovation, Choice, Community, and Culture. These expectations will be taught, modeled, and monitored for all stakeholders that results in a positive environment for teaching, learning, leading, and building community.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will adhere to the newly revised **OKCPS Student Code of Conduct** that demonstrates to students that situations which threaten safety and learning will be addressed according to a plan which treats every student fairly and equitably. The primary goal of this response to discipline is that faculty and staff members are committed to modeling, teaching, and re-teaching school-wide expectations.

For most inappropriate choices students make, this process of modeling, teaching, and re-teaching or a conference between teacher and student will eliminate most issues. We must also recognize that certain behaviors must have consequences that allow an opportunity to understand and learn from their choices, therefore collaboration among all stakeholders is essential to maintaining a safe learning environment for all students and restoring relationships within and outside of the school community.

It is important to note that this preliminary list of student Offenses for Suspension is subject to revision and adaptation based on the specific context and policies of Willard C. Pitts Academy. It is always our intention to find alternatives to suspension, however when a suspension is warranted, we will ensure that the suspension is within the statute of the law, applied fairly, consistently, and in the best interest of students' well-being and educational progress.

Non-Discretionary Suspensions:

Non-discretionary suspensions are imposed automatically when a student is found to have committed certain offenses. These offenses are typically serious and require immediate intervention to maintain a safe and conducive learning environment.

Physical Violence: Any act of physical aggression causing harm to another student, staff member, or individual within the school premises or during school-related activities.

Possession of Weapons: Carrying or bringing weapons, including firearms, knives, explosives, or any other dangerous objects, onto school property.

Drug or Substance Possession/Distribution: Possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs, controlled substances, or substances that could pose a danger to health and safety.

Assault or Threat of Harm: Threatening or attempting to harm another student, staff member, or individual, whether verbally or physically.

Significant Property Damage or Vandalism: Willful and extensive damage to school property or the property of others.

Bullying and Harassment: Repeated acts of verbal, physical, or online harassment or bullying that create a hostile or unsafe environment for others.

Excessive Disruption of School Activities: Behavior that substantially disrupts the normal operation of the school, such as inciting violence, engaging in riotous activities, or causing large-scale disturbances.

Discretionary Suspensions:

Discretionary suspensions allows the School Lead to assess the circumstances and context of the offense before deciding whether suspension is warranted. These offenses may not be as severe as non-discretionary offenses, but still warrant disciplinary action.

Repeated Minor Infractions: Consistent violations of school rules or policies that disrupt the learning environment or compromise the safety of others.

Repeated Academic Misconduct: Repeated instances of cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty.

Destruction of Property: Deliberate destruction or damage to school property or personal belongings.

Unauthorized Use of Technology: Misuse of school technology, including hacking, accessing inappropriate content, or engaging in cyberbullying.

Defiance of Authority: Disobeying reasonable instructions from school staff, showing disrespect, or refusing to comply with school rules.

Unauthorized Leaving or Absence from School: Leaving school premises without permission or repeatedly skipping classes without a valid reason.

Willard C. Pitts Academy is committed to creating a school culture of high expectations, accountability, and rich in motivation and promise. We shall adhere to any and all laws relating to student discipline, special education students, and students with disabilities. We shall fully comply with the students suspensions and support requirements provided for in the State of Oklahoma law.

Policies and procedures relating to students discipline and school removal will be included in the Parent/Student Handbook that every family will receive during the grade level orientation/enrollment process every spring. Parents will be advised to review the document and share its contents with their child. The parent/guardian of each student will be required to provide a signature acknowledging their receipt and understanding of the Student Code of Conduct.

The Willard C. Pitts Governance Board anticipates adopting and adhering to discipline policies similar and of likeness to those utilized and outlined by OKCPS. Willard C. Pitts Academy will follow a Nondiscrimination and Harassment policy, a Section 504 policy, a Student Expectation and Discipline policy, Disciplinary Procedures policy (in-school and out of school suspensions to be included) , an Administrative Hearing policy, and implement an educational plan for students suspended more than three (3) days. The suspension of special education students and students on 504

accommodation plans will be handled within the parameters of the state statute, local laws, and district policy.

School leads, administrative team members, and teachers will follow a progressive and restorative discipline process. Ongoing professional learning will be provided for all school staff. Parents and Students will be provided a handbook detailing all expectations, procedures, and policies.

We will strive to prevent bullying by educating students about bullying through our social emotional learning curriculum. We will fully comply with the State of Oklahoma's School Bullying Prevention Act and adopt the policies within OKCPS' Student Code of Conduct regarding bullying.

We strive to take every measure to keep students in school, however when a student is not meeting school expectations and has challenges with adhering to policies and procedures and the behavior leads to suspension, The following procedures shall be followed:

1. Conference

Suspension will be preceded by a conference conducted by the School Leader or the School Leader's Designee with the student and his/her or their parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the School Leader or Designee. The conference may be omitted if the School Leader determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall

be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference. This conference shall be held within two (2) school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil is contingent upon attendance by the pupil's parent or guardian prior to returning to school.

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians

At the time of the suspension, an administrator or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by email, telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school.

3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension. Upon a recommendation of expulsion a conference will be held to determine if any further action is necessary. If the pupil or the pupil's parents fail to attend the conference:

This determination will be made by the School Leader or Designee upon either of the following: 1) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to themselves or others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be upheld pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil.

The notice shall include:

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
2. A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of the Charter School's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the Charter School to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
5. The opportunity for the student and/or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

*When a behavior problem that leads to suspension and involves a student receiving special education services; we will refer to the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) and consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis to determine the most appropriate and awful action to be administered.

F. Student Assessment

1. *Describe the plan for assessing student performance in the core academic areas.*

2. *Describe the strategy to be employed to collect and report the baseline data against which student achievement growth will be measured.*
3. *Describe how student progress toward enhanced academic performance will be evaluated and compared with the progress of other closely comparable student populations.*
4. *Detail the instruments to be used and/or the methods of measurement planned relative to student performance. Include a calendar for assessing and reporting results.*
5. *Describe the methods to be used to identify, document and monitor academic strengths and needs of students.*
6. *Describe plans for student participation in the Oklahoma School Testing Program.*
7. *(High Schools Only) Describe the method to be used to track that students are meeting or have met state and local graduation requirements.*

F. Student Assessment

Willard C. Pitts Academy is founded on principles that support systems to ensure our students are on track for pre and postsecondary success. Researchers are finding that project-based learning students do as well as traditional learning students, if not better, during testing. By incorporating project-based learning and traditional testing, our aim is to ensure students meet outcomes warranted by federal policies, state policies, and our school academic smart goals. To do this, we will instill a comprehensive approach that includes various assessment methods, regular feedback, and data analysis. Approximately 25% of the school day will be allocated to accessing/monitoring feedback, ensuring continual assessment and adjustment in core academic areas.

It is required by federal law that Oklahoma students in grades 3rd-8th and 11th participate in annual state testing in the areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. These tests serve as a snapshot to help school districts and schools evaluate their academic programs and student readiness.

Willard C. Pitts Academy is founded on principles that support systems to ensure our students are on track for pre and postsecondary success. Researchers are finding that project-based learning students do as well as traditional learning students, if not better, during testing. By incorporating project-based learning and traditional testing, our aim is to ensure students meet outcomes warranted by federal policies, state policies, and our school academic smart goals.

To do this we will instill a comprehensive approach that includes various assessment methods, regular feedback, and data analysis. Below is a plan for assessing student performance in the core academic areas:

Formative Assessments:

- Regular quizzes, quick checks, and exit tickets to gauge understanding during lessons.
- Peer and self-assessments that promote reflection and metacognition.
- Observations and discussions to assess participation and engagement.

Summative Assessments:

- Unit tests that cover a range of topics and skills.
- Cumulative projects that showcase students' ability to apply knowledge and skills.
- End-of-semester or end-of-year exams that assess overall comprehension.

Performance-Based Assessments:

- Presentations, debates, and speeches to evaluate communication and public speaking skills.
- Science experiments, engineering projects, and model-building to assess application of concepts.

- Creative writing assignments and artistic projects that showcase critical thinking and creativity.

Project-Based Learning Evaluation:

- Rubrics that assess the quality of project outcomes, collaboration, research, and problem-solving.
- Peer evaluations that provide constructive feedback on teamwork and contribution.

Portfolios:

- Collect student work over time to demonstrate growth and progress.
- Include a variety of assignments, projects, and assessments that showcase different skills.

Online Assessments and Technology Integration:

- Utilize digital platforms for online quizzes, assignments, and interactive activities.
- Monitor student progress and engagement through learning management systems.

Data Analysis and Reflection:

- Analyze assessment data to identify trends and areas of improvement.
- Use data to adjust instruction, provide targeted interventions, and offer enrichment.

Differentiated Assessment:

- Offer varied assessment options to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities.
- Provide accommodations for students with individualized needs.

Feedback and Goal Setting:

- Provide timely and specific feedback on assessments, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

- Encourage students to set learning goals based on assessment results.

Parent-Teacher Communication:

- Regularly communicate assessment results with parents to keep them informed about their child's progress.

- Offer parent-teacher conferences to discuss performance and strategies for improvement.

By implementing this comprehensive assessment plan, we can ensure that student performance in core academic areas is effectively evaluated, leading to data-driven instructional decisions, student growth, and ongoing improvement in teaching practices.

Evaluating student progress toward enhanced academic performance and comparing it with the progress of other closely comparable student populations is a multifaceted process that involves data collection, rigorous analysis, and benchmarking. This comprehensive approach is instrumental in providing a comprehensive understanding of student growth and achievement.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will utilize an array of assessments, including both formative and summative evaluations, standardized tests, as well as engaging projects and assignments, to obtain a holistic picture of student performance.

To draw a personalized trajectory of each student's journey, an individual student analysis is conducted. By contrasting their present achievements with their past performance, the evolution of their academic prowess comes into focus. Student benchmarks and goals

will be made to be implemented at a pace and rhythm of each student's progress ensuring that the goals are attainable yet challenging. We will compare the data of the current student population with historical data over the years that paints a vivid picture of progress. Additionally, this analysis will extend to specific subgroups like students with different socioeconomic backgrounds or English language learners.

We will also compare data on selected comparable student populations based on criteria such as grade level, demographics, socioeconomic status, and educational background. This judicious selection enables meaningful comparisons that enrich the evaluation process. Participating in state standardized testing provides a platform for gauging academic performance on a national or state level. This will assist us in comparing the school's outcomes against broader averages, a comprehensive perspective is achieved. By including teachers, administrators, and students collectively delving into the data process we will strive to ensure that instructional methodologies evolve in alignment with the knowledge gained from the data analysis.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will use Northwest Education Association assessment tool (NWEA) to map students' growth throughout the year. Teachers will be able to retrieve baseline data and assess any gaps and create intentional instructional plans for individuals and groups of students. Teachers will also receive professional learning to support and maximize the usage of the resource.

Teachers will continuously provide assessment feedback and support through the following instruments:

- Benchmark curriculum materials

- Online student intervention plans
- Supplemental remediation
- Enrichment curriculum
- Common Formative Assessments (CFA)
- WIDA (as appropriate)
- Student work portfolios
- Student Learning Plans (SLPs)
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Parent Teacher Meetings

It is our responsibility to ensure that all curriculum is aligned to the new OAS assessments and administer tests on the dates established by The State of Oklahoma Board of Education. We will also provide informational meetings and at-home resources for students and parents.

Assessment Overview:

Name of Assessment	Season Administered	Rationale
NWEA (Measures of Academic Progress)	Fall, Winter, Spring	Baseline data collection assessment for individual student achievement in fall. Winter assessment to measure longitudinal growth and areas of need. Spring assessment to measure longitudinal growth and create learning goals for the upcoming school year.

OSTP	Spring	State mandated assessment for school accountability, measuring percent of students scoring below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced in mathematics, English Language Arts,, and science. *Writing included for 5th & 8th grade
Willard C. Pitts Academy Assessments	On-going	Writing, reading, math, English Language Arts across the curriculum,common formative assessments, project based rubric grading, pre and post self-assessment, benchmarks, portfolios, and peer critique
WIDA	Flexible	English Language Development in four domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing
Parent-Teacher Conferences	Ongoing	Retrieve specific feedback to gauge parent, student and teacher satisfaction with program design, environment, and learning outcomes.

G. School Accountability

- 1. Outline the criteria to be used to measure the effectiveness of the charter school.***
- 2. Describe how the school will meet the reporting requirements of the Oklahoma School Testing Program and the State Department of Education.***

3. *Describe how the school will respond to requests for data that may be received from and/or required by the State Office of Accountability.*
4. *Describe plans, if any, for periodic instructional programs and curriculum audits for the school.*

G. School Accountability

Willard C. Pitts Academy will implement a comprehensive pupil performance assessment program that consists of the following to measure and report student progress:

1. **Academic Achievement:** Regular assessment of student performance using standardized tests, formative and summative assessments, and other measures to evaluate academic growth and achievement across subjects and grade levels.
2. **Student Progress:** Tracking individual student progress over time to ensure continuous improvement and identify areas needing additional support or enrichment.
3. **Promotion:** Monitoring graduation rates and student promotion from grade to grade to ensure successful transitions and timely progression.
4. **Parent/Guardian and Student Satisfaction Surveys:** Conducting surveys to gather feedback from parents and students on their satisfaction with the school's programs, services, and overall experience.
5. **Attendance:** Monitoring attendance rates and addressing any concerns related to student engagement and dropout prevention.
6. **Teacher Performance:** Evaluating teacher effectiveness through classroom observations, peer reviews, and student feedback.
7. **Timely:** Responding promptly to data requests from the State Office of Accountability, providing accurate and complete information as required.

8. **Data Integrity:** Ensuring data accuracy, consistency, and security in accordance with established protocols.
9. **Transparency:** Maintaining open and transparent communication with the State Office of Accountability and addressing any inquiries or concerns.
10. **Testing Administration:** Ensuring full compliance with testing schedules, protocols, and procedures set by the Oklahoma School Testing Program.
11. **Data Submission:** Accurately and promptly submitting student assessment data, attendance records, and other required information to the State Department of Education.
12. **Data Analysis:** Analyzing assessment results to identify strengths, weaknesses, and trends, and using this information to inform instructional decisions.
13. **External Audits:** Engaging external educational experts to conduct periodic audits of the school's instructional program and curriculum to ensure alignment with state standards, best practices, and educational goals.
14. **Evaluation of Teaching Methods:** Assessing the effectiveness of instructional methods and strategies through classroom observations, student outcomes, and teacher feedback.
15. **Curriculum Review:** Regularly reviewing curriculum materials, resources, and instructional approaches to ensure they remain relevant and effective.
16. **Continuous Improvement:** Using audit findings to make informed adjustments and improvements to the instructional program and curriculum to enhance student learning outcomes.

By systematically implementing these measures, we will maintain a robust framework for evaluating effectiveness, meeting reporting requirements, responding to data requests, and continuously enhancing our instructional programs to ensure the success and growth of our students.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will use research-based strategies and practices in order to continually improve student engagement and achievement. We will comply with all assessment protocols established and required by the State of Oklahoma Department of Education, maintain confidentiality, secure testing environments, and implement a process of test administering that is professional and ethical.

Academic effectiveness at Willard C. Pitts Academy will be measured in accordance with the State of Oklahoma and established OSDE laws regarding student performance in all content areas, and specifically growth in English Language Arts, Math, and Science , as well as the whole school performance indicators. Student performance will be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively due to the integration of project-based learning and traditional testing . Assessments will include standardized tests as well as embedded assessments, and qualitative measures such as student work example portfolios, capstone projects, and written self-assessments. Knowledge, performance, skills, and attributes will be evaluated, and the data derived will be analyzed in order to improve both instruction and student achievement.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will use a Student Information System (SIS) that collects and stores pertinent student data. We will also use a data warehouse that can

access the SIS information as well as the assessment data (NWEA and curriculum-based tests) for analysis of multiple indicators. The SIS software will effectively manage achievement data at our school. It will have the capability to provide disaggregated data in typical categories, but also allow for us to create custom groupings to be developed to meet the specific needs of the school and teachers. This will allow us to incorporate a value-added analysis of all achievement data that will provide a foundation to evaluate the effectiveness of current programs and to assist in goal setting, decision-making and planning. We will also participate in quarterly school culture and climate walkthroughs to elicit student, parent/guardian, and teacher feedback regarding facilities, instruction, and school expectations.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will submit timely and accurate financial information as required by the law and any federal funding expenditures we receive, we will fully comply with all financial guidelines whether they be local or federally administered. We will measure our effectiveness as determined by an annual, external, independent audit system with equitable and best business practices. We will have policies and procedures in place to promote sound business and academic practices.

Willard C. Pitts academy will measure our organizational effectiveness by maintaining a safe and secure school environment through implementing admission policies and procedures that are compliant and applicable with state and federal laws. Willard C. Pitts Academy assures that our governance structure and all discipline procedures, talent management, health, and building policies and procedures will comply with state legislation, and comply with the Open Meeting and Open Records Act.

SECTION 2. OPERATIONS PLAN & CAPACITY

This section includes details about school governance, administrative leadership, personnel, and information regarding general operations of the proposed charter school.

A. Founding Group(s)/Individual(s)/Incorporator(s) & Legal Counsel

- 1. Provide the names, addresses, background and experience, and references for those persons who composed the founding group and/or the initial incorporators (to include disclosure statements regarding criminal activities and any pending legal actions).*
- 2. Provide the name, address, e-mail, and telephone number of the proposed schools' legal counsel, if any.*

A. Founding Group(s)/Individual(s)/Incorporator(s) & Legal Counsel

The Willard C. Pitts Academy founding members are:

LaTasha Timberlake- Gateway Fellow and Educator
(405) 673-9736 709 N.E. 20th Street Oklahoma City, OK 73105
misstimberlake02@gmail.com

Sandino Thompson- Vice President, Public Strategies
(405) 923-2410 805 N.E. 42nd Oklahoma City, OK 73105
sandino.thompson@gmail.com

Dr. Quintin Hughes Sr.- President, Northeast OKC Renaissance
(405) 598-7743 1105 N.E. 13th Street Oklahoma City, OK 73117
info@neokcr.org

DeAndre Martin- Director of Partner Engagement and Special Projects, Innovation District
(405) 637-8816 300 N.E. 9th Street Oklahoma City, OK 73104
deandremartin16@gmail.com

See Board member resumes for references and criminal disclosure forms in **Appendix C**

Legal Counsel

The legal counsel for Willard C. Pitts Academy is:

Camel Pennington, JD

(405) 250-0901 801 N.E. 18th Street Oklahoma City, OK 73105

camalpennington@gmail.com

B. Governing Board

- 1. Describe how/when the governing board will be/was chosen.*
- 2. List current board members' names, addresses, telephone numbers, and provide resumes.*
- 3. Describe the steps taken, if any, to assure a governing board that represents a well-balanced group bringing together people with a range of professional skills capable of the organizational, financial, pedagogical, legal, and other tasks required to open and operate a functioning public school.*
- 4. Describe how the board's composition reflects local representation.*
- 5. Describe what steps will be/have been taken to maintain continuity between the founder's vision and that of the permanently established governing board.*
- 6. Provide verification of fingerprinting and other background checks completed or planned for all governing board members and confirm that any exceptions noted will be disclosed to the Board of Education.*

B. Governing Board

Willard C. Pitts Academy Governance Board ("School Board") is the governing body of the school. Each member has been chosen based on their professional area of expertise that aligns with the school's four pillars: Innovation, Choice, Community, and Culture. Each proposed member was contacted and shared with the school executive summary and community needs report. See **Appendix D** for Board By-Laws and Resumes.

The current Governance Board members for Willard C. Pitts Academy are:

Janet Vernon- Retired School District Leader
32230 N.W. 63rd Street Oklahoma City, OK 73116
(918) 810-7276

Cheryl Pennington- Retired Teacher/Community Advocate
709 N.E. 20th Street Oklahoma City, OK 73105
(405) 557-0741

Sarah Park, Teach For America
309 NW 13th ST., OKC 73103
(405) 202-5651

James Harris- Media Mogul/Entrepreneur
4302 Ross Avenue #1060 Dallas, TX 75204
(214) 708-3898

Arif Smith- Executive Director
1101 N.E. 19th Street OKC, OK 73111
(918) 304-9604

Please see **Appendix D Exhibit C** for resumes.

When assuring the governing board was a representation of the range of skills needed to operate a functioning public school, the founding team recruited potential candidates that had experience in the related fields. Each potential candidate was given the school's Executive Summary and Community Need Profile to ensure they were aligned and committed to our mission and vision.

Willard C. Pitts Academy Governance Board consists of professionals that demonstrate an understanding of the essential areas of expertise on a charter school board. Our members have professional expertise in strategic planning, governance,

leadership, risk management, financial reporting, fundraising, educational pedagogy, education law, contract management, and community engagement. Governance members are able to assist in the development of the school's mission, vision, and long-term strategic goals. Understand and adhere to the governance structure of a charter school, including bylaws and policies. Demonstrate effective leadership skills in decision-making, conflict resolution, and foster a positive organizational culture. Understand and analyze the school's budget, ensure alignment with the school's goals and priorities and ensure financial responsibility and transparency. Contribute to fundraising efforts to supplement school funding and enhance resources. Staying informed about current educational trends and best practices to guide the school's curriculum and instructional strategies. Have familiarity with education laws and regulations, including charter school legislation and compliance requirements. Understand contracts related to teachers, vendors, and other stakeholders, while ensuring legal compliance. Lastly, but not least building relationships with parents, students, staff, and the broader community to enhance school support and involvement

Follow up phone calls were made and the following series of questions were asked:

- What do you know about our organization and the impact we are wanting to make in the community?
- Why is joining our board important to you?
- What role do you hope to play on the board?
- How do your qualifications add value to the mission and vision of the school?

We also utilized a Board Matrix Template provided by Commonfund to ensure we were being intentional with identifying as many diverse demographics as possible while meeting the needs of the community. A board matrix is a tool that makes it easy to chart the skills, demographics, characteristics, and talents that each individual has. A matrix is effective for helping boards build a well-rounded, functional team. See **APPENDIX E**

A December 2020 study released by the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP), detailing the efforts of foundations to address the crises of 2020 (a global pandemic and racial reckoning), reported that 57 percent of responding foundations indicated that fewer than a quarter of their board members were people of color. Center for Effective Philanthropy, Foundations Respond to Crisis: Toward Equity? Retrieved Summer, 2023, from <https://cep.org/portfolio/foundations-respond-to-crisis2/>

Qualitative feedback from one of our community engagement initiatives participants felt it was important that our board have some representation of members that live within our service zip codes. We have composed a board that professionally, racially, and culturally represents the mission and vision of the school, but also the needs within the neighboring communities as well.

Willard C. Pitts Academy intends to draw students from diverse backgrounds, with the majority of students residing in the 73111, 73117, and 73105 zip codes. We aim that our Governance board too is representative of these zip codes. Student demographic data across these zip codes is representative of the Oklahoma City Public School District with Student demographic data across these zip codes is 69.6% of students identifying as African American , 7.5% Hispanic, 5.2% Caucasian, 14.9% Multiracial, 2% Native

American, 2% Asian/Pacific Islander, 89.3% of students economically disadvantaged, 4% (and rapidly rising) experiencing language barriers, and 15.7% with disabilities and special needs. As we continue to strengthen our board we hope to be able to have representation of all demographics.

Willard C. Pitts Academy founding team is dedicated to bringing the right group of directors together, first. The structure of the board is also vital to being able to know each member's role and responsibilities and having the necessary support and tools to fulfill said roles and responsibilities. We will ensure enough meeting time to carry on the work needed and create a healthy environment in which the work is to be conducted.

We plan to host a board of directors retreat where we review and plan for the upcoming year by reviewing our strategic plan and evaluating our work ensuring we are staying true to the vision of the school. We will offer professional learning opportunities aligned to the work of charter schools and specific to their role on the board. We hope to be able to build capacity within the inaugural board, so if a seat is vacant the former board members are able to provide support and leadership to their successor.

It is written in the bylaws that each board member must sign a criminal disclosure form and provide a background check. Documents to be provided upon school approval.

C. Duties and Responsibilities of the Governing Board

- 1. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the governing board, including its relationship to teachers and administrators and whether any employee of the school is eligible to serve on the governing board.*
- 2. Describe any business arrangements, partnerships or other affiliations of the governing board with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, or non-profit organizations.*

3. *Describe the governing board's responsibilities for the creation and monitoring of policies and for the operational decisions of the school.*
4. *Describe the planned meeting schedule of the governing board and how it will be communicated to stakeholders and constituents.*
5. *Describe the governing board's understanding of the conflict of interest requirements for board members under Oklahoma law.*
6. *Describe the steps taken to provide for the assumption of liability, to include tort liability, and the governing board's understanding of its status relative to entering into contracts, its ability to sue and be sued, and the prohibition against levying taxes or issuing bonds.*
7. *Discuss the proposed method for resolving conflicts between the governing board of the charter school and the Board of Education.*
8. *Submit copies of the school's articles of incorporations, by laws, contracts and other legal documents as may have been executed to date or planned to be executed upon approval of the charter (contract).*

C. Duties and Responsibilities of the Governing Board

Willard C. Pitts Academy shall be governed by a Board of Directors , which shall have all the rights, powers, privileges and limitations of liability of directors of a non-profit corporation organized under the Non-Profit Corporation Act of Oklahoma.

Board of Directors shall be of the age of at least 21 years. No Board members may be employed by or benefit from the Willard C. Pitts Academy. Membership shall consist only of the members of the Board of Directors. New members of the Board of Directors shall be elected by the existing Board of Directors and will require a vote of two-thirds majority of the directors then in office. Any newly elected member shall be elected for a two year term from the point of election.

Every decision made by a majority of the Directors present at a meeting duly held at which a quorum is present is the act of the Board of Directors, unless the Articles of

Incorporation, these bylaws, or provisions of law require a greater percentage or different voting rules for approval of a matter by the Board.

Each Board Member is entitled to one vote to the matter that is submitted to a vote of the board. No director is allowed to vote by proxy, however in the event of a national disaster or statewide declared emergency preventing the directors to meet in person or virtually and a teleconference must be held.

Proposed Board President Janet Vernon is an education consultant for Shawnee Public Schools. Cheryl Pennington also reside on the Lynn Institute board who is highly engaged in our zip code area providing health and wellness research and programming. Sara Park works with Teach For America who is a statewide provider for teacher and leader professional development and teacher placement.

The board of Directors shall establish policies and directives governing business and programs of Willard C. Pitts Academy and shall delegate to the Executive Director or School Lead and Willard C. Pitts Academy employees and staff, subject to the provisions of these bylaws, authority and responsibility to see that the policies and directives are appropriately followed.

It shall be the duty of the Directors to:

- a) Perform any and all duties imposed on them collectively or individually by laws, by the Articles of Incorporation or by these Bylaws;
- b) Appoint and remove, employ and discharge, and, except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws, prescribe the duties and fix the compensation, if any, of all officers, agents and employees of the corporation;

- c) Supervise all officers of the corporation to assure that their duties are performed properly;
- d) Meet at such time and places as required by these Bylaws;
- e) Register their USPS and E-Mail addresses with the Secretary of the corporation, and notices of meetings mailed or emailed to them at such addresses shall be valid notices thereof.
- f) Each Director shall serve a minimum of five (5) volunteer hours in the direct service of Willard C. Pitts Academy business operation on an annual basis.

Meetings shall be held at the principal office of the corporation or virtual unless otherwise provided by the board or at such other place as may be designated from time to time by resolution of the Board of Directors.

Regular meetings of directors shall be held monthly and begin at 6:00 CST and conclude at the finish of business. Meetings will be filed at the Oklahoma County Clerk to inform the public. If the day fixed for the meeting shall be a legal holiday, such meeting shall be held on the next succeeding business day.

An elected Board of Directors Member who is absent from 2 consecutive regular meetings of the Board of Directors during a fiscal year shall be encouraged to reevaluate their commitment to the Corporation/Organization. The Board of Directors may deem a member who has missed 2 consecutive meetings without such a reevaluation have resigned from the Board of Directors.

Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, or by the persons specifically authorized under the laws of

Oklahoma to call special meetings of the board. Special meetings may be called by the President.

The following provisions shall govern the giving of notice for meetings of the Board of Directors:

- a) Regular Meetings: Notice of each meeting shall be held at times and places that are convenient for the majority of the directors. Notice of each meeting shall be given to each voting member, by mail, email, or telephone at least five days prior to the time of the meeting.
- b) Special Meetings: At least one week prior, notice shall be given by the Secretary of the board to each Director of each special meeting of the board. Such notice may be oral or written, may be given personally, by first class mail, email, or by telephone and shall state the place, date and time of the meeting and the matters proposed to be acted upon at the meeting.
- c) Waiver of Notice: Whenever any notice of a meeting is required to be given to any board director under provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, or the law of Oklahoma a waiver of notice in writing signed by the director, whether before or after the time of the meeting, shall be equivalent to the giving of such notice.

A quorum shall consist of 50% of the members of the Board of Directors.

Please See **APPENDIX D EXHIBIT A** for Conflict of Interest Policy.

The Directors shall not be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or other obligations of Willard C. Pitts Academy. The Board of Directors may by resolution authorize any officer or agent of the Corporation to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorized, no officer, agent, or employee shall have any power or authority to bind the Corporation by any contract or engagement or to pledge its credit or to render it liable monetarily for any purpose or in any amount

The proposed method for resolving conflict is first having each member agree to and sign the Code of Conduct. If members are unwilling or are not able to resolve such conflicts a legal mediator will be provided.

Please See **APPENDIX D** for bylaws. The federal 501c3 status for Willard C. Pitts Academy is still pending.

D. Parent and Community Involvement

- 1. Discuss the anticipated nature and extent of parental involvement in the decision-making responsibilities of the governing board.***
- 2. Explain the process that the school will follow should a parent or student have an objection to a governing board policy or decision, administrative procedure, or practice at the school.***
- 3. Discuss how the governing board will comply with both the Open Meetings Act and the Oklahoma Open Records Act.***

D. Parent and Community Involvement

At Willard C. Pitts Academy we believe a parent's/guardian's participation as a decision-maker in the education of their child is vital to the child's educational experience and success. With parents as active participants in their children's educational journey, bridges between parents and teachers are formed that create a shared responsibility and message that education is a collaborative venture between families and the school.

The vibrancy of the school culture is elevated by the presence of engaged parents and a sense of belonging is created for students, parents and educators alike.

As one of our founding principles, culture is embedded into our school's philosophy. One of the characteristics of culture is creating an environment where parents/guardians have an active role and responsibility within the school. Not just for their child, but also the school community. Therefore, we will provide the opportunity for parents/guardians to have participation in the governance of the school by participating as a board/committee member, participating in school meetings, and participating in educational and learning opportunities that support student learning. Parent organizations will be highly encouraged.

Communication

We will strive to maintain an open line of communication with our parents/guardians/families through bi-weekly progress reports, teacher phone calls, monthly newsletters, quarterly report cards, and home visits when necessary.

Progress Reports: progress reports will be accessible on a quarterly basis. However, each week parents will be informed of a student's progress through weekly calls from the

teacher. This academic and behavior “snapshot” ensures that parents are transparently informed of their student’s progress and development while encouraging student’s self management and advocacy.

Teacher Phone Calls: Teacher phone class will focus on student achievement and warrant parent feedback. It is a personalized form of communication to build strong relationships with parents.guardians/families.

Monthly Newsletters: A monthly newsletter will be accessible on the school’s website. This is an additional line of communication to openly inform parents/guardians/families and students about Willard C. Pitts Academy school news, successes, opportunities for involvement, dates to remember, and community resources.

Quarterly Report Cards: Quarterly Report Cards will be provided in conjunction with Parent/Teacher Conferences. Report cards will be provided digitally and printed, however; it is highly recommended to attend the Parent/Teacher Conference. At these conferences parents/guardians/families will have the opportunity to discuss student academic performance, growth, and character development. These conferences also serve as another channel for communication.

Grievances

In the event a parent and/or student has an objection to a Board policy, administrative procedure, or practice at the school, a written communication will be required defining the concern, along with a description of the circumstances surrounding the concern, and the impacts of the identified policy, procedure, or practice. Time at each monthly board meeting will be reserved for public comment to allow an opportunity for

grievances to be discussed publicly. Concerns about a board policy will be directed to the board president; concerns about administrative procedures or practices will be directed to the school lead. Consideration of the concern by the board president and/or school lead will involve, but not be limited to, careful review and investigation of the complaint; discussion among members of the leadership team; communication with the originator of the grievance to seek more information or clarity, as needed; and a decision rendered to the complainant, which will be communicated in writing. The grievance may or may not result in a change of policy, procedure, or practice by the board.

The school lead will plan regular meetings with school parents, including but not limited to Parent teacher Conferences, Open Forums, and Parent Community Nights. During these meeting opportunities, parents, administration, and teachers will have one-on-one, small and whole group discussion to address individual student concerns, grade level concerns, school concerns and any other agenda topics deemed necessary for the success of the school. The school governance will hold open meetings as indicated in the governance bylaws in which public participation affords parents the opportunity to address directors and any other content that is specific to school matters.

E. Administration/Leadership

- 1. Provide a detailed organizational chart describing all paid positions contemplated for the school in a) Year 1; and b) at full expansion.***
- 2. Provide job descriptions for all leadership, management and supervisory personnel.***
- 3. Provide a calendar that ensures the school meets all pre-opening conditions for opening prior to the beginning of the academic year.***

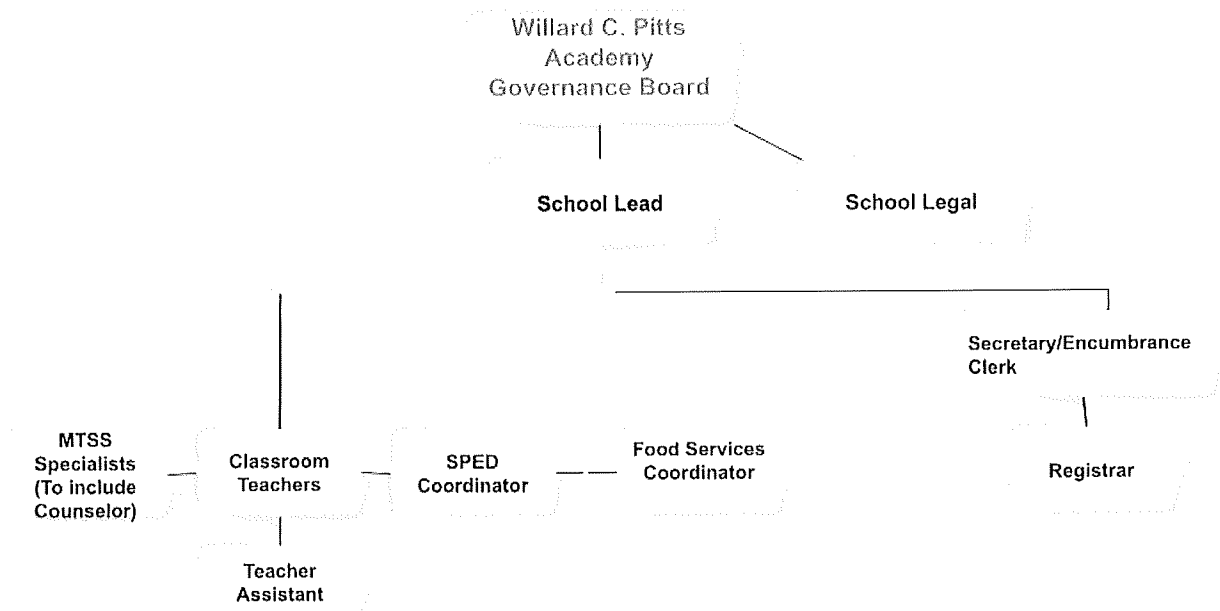
E. Administration/Leadership

Organizational Chart:

Willard C. Pitts Academy is to be organized with the Governance Board of Directors reigning oversight of the school. The board will directly interface with the School Lead. The School Lead is similar in position to a school principal. The School Lead has direct interface with administrative staff, teachers, support staff, others who would naturally report to a school principal. The organizational chart is also inclusive of other roles such as legal, founding board members, and other supporting roles that assist in the operations of a school.

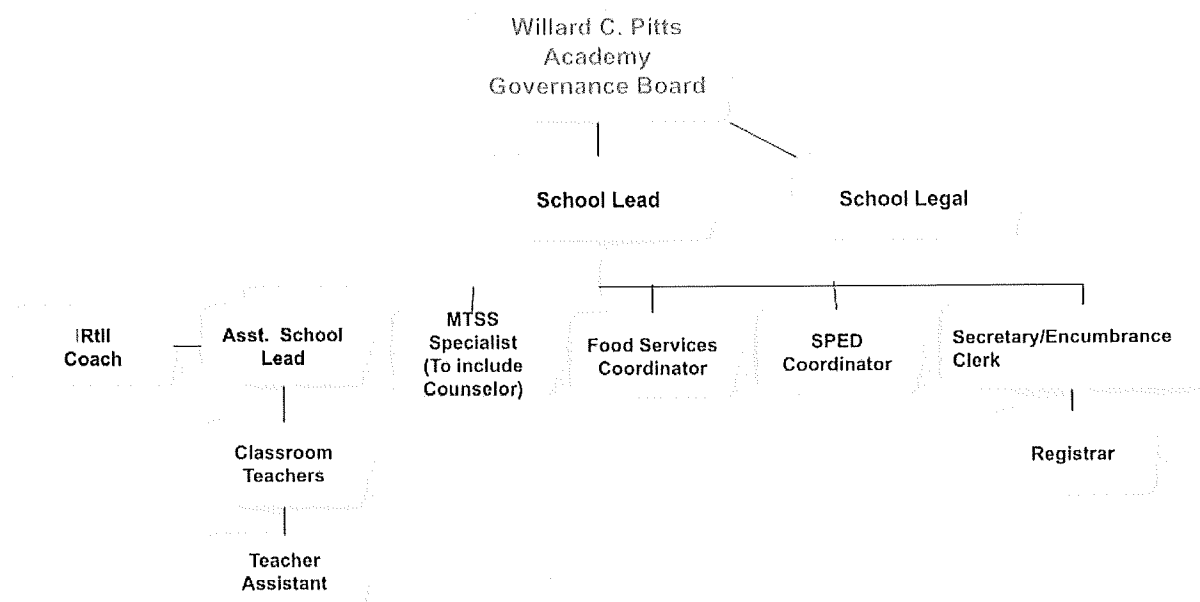
a) Year I

Willard C. Pitts Academy Organization Chart (Y1)



b) Full Expansion

Willard C. Pitts Academy Organization Chart (Full Expansion)



For the Willard C. Pitts Academy job descriptions for all leadership, management, and supervisory personnel, please see **Appendix F**.

Willard C. Pitts Academy understands that there are a significant number of steps to be taken before a school is ready to open its doors to students, families, teachers, and the community. Please see **Appendix G**. This will serve as our guiding document to fulfill all of the requirements to ensure that the school opens with the tools in place to succeed as a high-quality school.

F. Employment Policy for Personnel

1. ***Detailed descriptions of policies related to: a) employment contracts; b) certification issues; c) professional development provisions; d) personnel evaluation plans and procedures; e) suspension, dismissal and non-reemployment rules; f) sick leave, personal business leave, emergency leave, and family and medical leave provisions; and g) fingerprinting and background check requirements and expectations.***

2. *Specification of the set of salary, hours, fringe benefits, and working conditions for all employees by class of employment.*
3. *Plans for use of employer-employee bargaining, if any.*
4. *Plans for the disclosure of employment rights of employees in the event the charter school closes or the charter is not renewed*
5. *Anticipated participation in the Oklahoma Teacher Retirement System, if any.*
6. *Anticipated participation in the health and related insurance programs available to the employees of Oklahoma City Public Schools.*
7. *Plans for providing required employee' right to know training and documentation.*

F. Employment Policy for Personnel

Willard C. Pitts Academy will hire staff that meet qualifications aligned to our program needs and support our organizational four pillars: Innovation, Choice, Community, and Culture. Willard C. Pitts Academy is committed to employing the most qualified candidate for each position. Qualification standards include:

- Conferred Degree
- Highly Qualified Status
- State Certification Status
- Years of Experience
- Reference Check
- Background Check/Fingerprinting

While we will not establish an employer-employee collective bargaining agreement, we are committed to providing a structured framework for addressing key aspects of employee engagement. At Willard C. Pitts Academy, we prioritize open communication, transparency, and fairness in our interactions with our faculty and staff. Our approach emphasizes due process, professional learning, grievance resolution, and

financial reimbursements to enhance student programming. This ensures a collaborative and supportive environment for our dedicated team.

At Willard C. Pitts Academy, we are dedicated to fostering a transparent and supportive work environment for our valued employees. As part of this commitment, we have established a comprehensive plan for the disclosure of employment rights in the unfortunate event that the charter school closes or the charter is not renewed. We recognize the importance of providing clear information and guidance to our faculty and staff during such circumstances. We will ensure all employees have access to relevant information about their rights, responsibilities, and potential hazards in the workplace, and maintain an up-to-date and comprehensive employee handbook.

Please see employee policies in Willard C. Pitts Academy Employee Handbook- *Appendix H* for all employee policies and procedures.

G. Hiring Process/Procedure

- 1. Provide a copy of the school's staffing plan, if any.***
- 2. Describe the standards to be used in the hiring process of teachers, administrators, and other school staff.***
- 3. Describe how the qualifications of teachers will be described to parents considering the charter school for their children.***
- 4. Define the target staff size, by category of employment, for the school.***
- 5. Specify the projected student-to-teacher ratios by grade and/or subject.***

G. Hiring Process/Procedure

Staffing Plan

Willard C. Pitts Academy will work with the leadership and the governance board to formulate the projected membership of the school for the upcoming year accounting for any changes. Willard C. Pitts Academy instructional allocations will be based on the maximum number of students per class size and the projected student count of the site.

Instructional Staffing Per Student

Grade	Student Count (Range)	Allocation	Class Size Minimum	Class Size Maximum
5th	< 33	1		25
	30-60	2	15	25
	60-90	3	20	25
	90-100	4	25	25

Grade	Ratio
6th-8th	25/1

Y1: Willard C. Pitts Academy has a target staff size of 13.5 .

Position	Allocation	Length of Contract
School Lead	1.0	240 Days
Secretary/Encumbrance Clerk	1.0	240 Days
Registrar	1.0	181 Days
MTSS Specialist/Counselor	1.0	191 Days
Teacher	6	177 Days
Teacher Aide	1.5	177 Days
Special Education Teacher	1.0	177 Days
Food Services Coordinator	1.0	177 Days

Y2: Willard C. Pitts Academy has a target staff size of 20.5.

Position	Allocation	Length of Contract
School Lead	1.0	240 Days
Assistant School Lead	1.0	240 Days
Secretary/Encumbrance Clerk	1.0	240 Days
Registrar	1.0	181 Days
MTSS Specialist/Counselor	2.0	191 Days
Teacher	9	177 Days
Teacher Aide	3.0	177 Days
Special Education Teacher	1.5	177 Days
Food Services Coordinator	1.0	177 Days

Y3, Y4, & Y5: Willard C. Pitts Academy has a target staff size of 28.

Position	Allocation	Length of Contract
School Lead	1.0	240 Days
Assistant School Lead	1.0	240 Days
Secretary/Encumbrance Clerk	1.0	240 Days
Registrar	1.0	181 Days
MTSS Specialist/Counselor	2.0	191 Days
Teacher	14	177 Days
Teacher Aide	4.0	177 Days

RtI Coach	1.5	177 Days
Special Education Teacher	2.0	177 Days
Food Services Coordinator	1.5	177 Days

Hiring Process

Willard C. Pitts Academy seeks to hire the best-qualified candidate. The School Lead will have the authority to make hiring decisions. The School Lead will find the best personnel for Willard C. Pitts Academy based on the job description, school needs, and candidate experience. The board will approve all hires based on the recommendation of the School Lead as appropriate.

School Lead:

A. Willard C. Pitts Academy will use all methods that are practical to advertise the job vacancy. Willard C. Pitts Academy will use online job boards, our own company website, social media, employee referrals, networking events, professional organizations, recruitment agencies, and community bulletin boards.

B. Resumes and applications will be reviewed by the Governance Board to ensure the applicants meet all employment requirements of the position.

C. Interviews will be conducted by the Governance Board and appropriate staff.

D. The Governance Board will recommend one or more applicants for its consideration.

The applicant(s) will be invited to visit the school. The Governance Board will host the applicant(s) during the visit(s).

E. The results of each recommended applicant's interview process shall be evaluated in executive session at the following regularly scheduled governance board meeting or, if the need arises, at a special meeting. The board will vote on a motion to hire the candidate. The applicant will be notified of the board's decision and shall offer the applicant the position. If the applicant accepts the position, they shall submit to a background check conducted by the school, with the cost of the check borne by the district. If the candidate accepts the position and passes the background check, then a contract of employment will be formed and signed. The candidate will assume the duties of the principal by a date designated by the Governance Board.

Assistant School Lead, Full-Time Faculty, and Regular Part-Time Faculty and Staff

A. Willard C. Pitts Academy will use all methods that are practical to advertise the job vacancy. Willard C. Pitts Academy will use online job boards, our own company website, social media, employee referrals, networking events, professional organizations, recruitment agencies, and community bulletin boards.

B. Resumes and applications, and a demonstration lesson or demonstration of related field will be reviewed by the School Lead to ensure the applicants meet all employment requirements of the position.

C. Interviews will be conducted by the School Lead and appropriate staff .

D. The school lead will recommend one or more applicants for consideration. The applicant(s) may be invited to attend and observe the school when in session. The School Lead – or his/her designee -- will host the applicant(s) during the visit.

E. The School Lead will make an approval for hire. The applicant will be notified of the decision. If the applicant accepts the position, they will submit to a background check conducted by the school, with the cost of the check borne by the school. If the candidate accepts the position and passes the background check, then a contract of employment will be formed and signed. The candidate will assume the duties as assigned by a date designated by the school lead.

Teacher Qualifications

Building relationships, transparency, and trust with parents is core to the founding principles of the Willard C. Pitta Academy. Federal law requires that parents be notified of their right to know the professional qualifications of their child's teacher (s) in core academic subject areas.

Parents/Guardians/Families, will be provided this information upon enrollment and during parent orientation. At the minimum all teachers will have bachelor's degrees and all administrators will have master degrees. Due to the nature of the school most staff will have a specialty degree and years of service or certification that supports their traditional degree.

Teachers who work with students from underserved communities often face unique challenges and responsibilities. To effectively meet the needs of their students, align with Willard C. Pitts Academy's mission and vision, while making a positive impact on the community, we will also look for the following qualifications and attributes that can be particularly valuable for our students and families:

Cultural Competence: Understanding and respecting the various backgrounds, cultures, and languages of the students and their families is crucial. Teachers should be culturally sensitive, open-minded, and willing to learn about and adapt to the unique characteristics of the community they serve.

Adaptability: Students in our community may have limited resources and varying levels of support. Teachers need to be adaptable and resourceful, finding creative solutions to challenges and adjusting their teaching strategies to suit the needs of their students.

Strong Pedagogical Skills: Effective teaching methods are essential for engaging students and promoting learning. Teachers should have a strong foundation in pedagogy, be able to differentiate instruction, and employ evidence-based teaching techniques.

Empathy and Patience: Many students in our community face socio-economic hardships that can affect their educational experiences. Teachers should be empathetic, patient, and understanding, creating a safe and supportive environment where students feel valued and understood.

Community Engagement: Teachers communities often play a broader role in the lives of their students and families. Building positive relationships with parents, community members, and local organizations can lead to a more holistic approach to education.

Resilience: Overcoming challenges can be emotionally and mentally taxing. Teachers should possess resilience and the ability to maintain their passion for teaching even in difficult circumstances.

Language Skills: In communities with diverse linguistic backgrounds, being proficient in multiple languages can facilitate communication and engagement with students and families.

Advocacy Skills: Teachers can advocate for their students by addressing issues such as lack of resources, inadequate infrastructure, and policy changes that can positively impact the community's educational outcomes.

Collaboration and Teamwork: Working in our community often requires collaboration with colleagues, administrators, and community partners. Strong teamwork skills can enhance the overall impact of a teacher's efforts.

Professional Development: Continuous learning is important for all teachers, but especially in our community where there may be unique challenges. Teachers should actively have a growth mindset and seek out professional development opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge.

H. Facilities

- 1. Identify any possible facilities and provide the locations for the proposed school.*
- 2. Describe the basic facilities requirements for accommodating your school plan, including number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, common areas, overall square footage, and amenities. If not a OKCPS facility, please provide a detailed site plan*
- 3. If applicable, discuss any progress, partnership developments, or other future steps toward acquisition of a school facility. Describe any financial plans for the acquisition of the facility, if applicable.*
- 4. Provide evidence that the proposed site(s) will be suitable, including evidence that the facility is properly zoned to house an operating common school program.*

5. *Demonstrate the safety and structural soundness of the school and compliance with applicable state/local building codes and fire protection codes, including written documentation of any inspections, or provide details of any plans to renovate and/or otherwise bring the proposed facility into compliance.*

H. Facilities

Willard C. Pitts Academy's founding team is scotting two properties at the moment. 1900 N.E. 36th street and 1215 N.E. 34th street. We are also extensively working with Level Field, an organization that has expertise in providing possible real estate , finance, and programmatic outcomes for charter schools. All of their team has experience as former charter school operators. Specifically, we are working together to identify and assess single site properties to meet short and long term needs, preliminary project costs for market conditions, acquisition costs, and financing. We are evaluating multiple structures and timelines relative to affordability and capacity.

1900 N.E. 36th street is privately owned and would be occupied by Willard C. Pitts Academy and one of our community organizations. At the time of the school opening we are to occupy the renovated portion of the building totaling 14, 334 sq. feet. At this time we are working diligently to acquire a letter of interest from the owner. 1215 N.E. 34th street will be visited on Tuesday, December 19, 2023. Along with housing Willard C. Pitts Academy at 1900 N.E. 36th street, there is a plan to house educational, housing, and job cooperative services for families. These services will be separate from the school, but will be resources to be utilized by the students and parents, if needed. The size and configurations of the building has more than enough space for students who may need alternative learning accommodations and physical needs met. There is an existing

tornado shelter as well as on-site parking. We aim to secure a school site, provided funding that will serve about 6,000 households in an area that is home to one of the state's largest percentages of African Americans. Willard C. Pitts Academy has been working with a local philanthropist to arrange financing for any renovations needed for the construction of the school facilities as well as utilizing financing provided by the Charter School Programs Grant and in year two Redbud funds..

The safety and security of each student, parent, faculty, and staff member is important to the design of the school. The school's location resides in close proximity to the Springlake Division Fire and Police Department. Visitors will be required to check in and check out at the auxiliary building prior to being escorted to the school learning campus. Visitors must show a valid state I.D. or Driver's License upon entry.

Access to the school building and grounds outside of regular school hours shall be limited to personnel whose work requires it. The school lead shall determine exactly what areas of the building to which each employee needs access and issue only the necessary keys. Employees of Willard C. Pitts Academy are prohibited from having their keys copied or giving their keys to an unauthorized person. Willard C. Pitts Academy will follow proper protocol and procedures to assure that the facility is safe and secure for all occupants.

The facility will be equipped with emergency lighting, portable fire extinguishers, fire direction and alarms systems, exit signs, AED devices, as required by law. Willard C. Pitts Academy and Governance Board agree to include in our charter contract a final

documentation provision that meets pre opening requirements and conditions to ensure the school facility meets all building, health, safety, insurance, and other legal requirements for the opening of the school.

We will provide in no less than ninety (90) days before the start of the 2025-2026 school year written documentation as to this facility requirement such as certificates, license, and permits evidencing the facility is authorized for occupancy. See **Appendix I** for Facility Plan details.

I. Transportation

- 1. Provide the school's decisions and rationale relative to the provision of transportation in accordance with Sections 9-101 through 9-118 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.***
- 2. Provide a description of the transportation plans, if any, for workable, fair, non-discriminatory and cost-effective processes and procedures to safely transport students to and from school. How will the school assure that transportation is not a barrier to equal access for all eligible and interested students?***
- 3. Describe any planned arrangements that will be made with private providers or Oklahoma City Public Schools relative to transportation services.***
- 4. Describe the provisions for providing to parents/guardians the necessary information regarding transportation, if any, at the time the student enrolls.***

I. Transportation

Willard C. Pitts Academy will not directly provide transportation for students. It will be the responsibility of the parent to ensure that transportation for their child(ren) is being provided in a safe and responsible manner in their private vehicle. Willard C. Pitts Academy will provide specialized transportation for students as required by law for

non-resident homeless students, non-residents students in foster care, and any student that must receive transportation services as documented in their IEP.

Willard C. Pitts academy is embedded in a walkable infrastructure to allow children to walk, bike, or ride a scooter to school each day. For those students who do not reside within the walkable boundary, the school will make every effort to collaborate with community partners to assist families with transportation needs through exploring options such as public transportation, local churches, and local transit businesses.

We are excited to address your question about ensuring equal access to education for all eligible and interested students at our anticipated charter middle school opening. Recognizing that transportation can be a potential barrier, we are committed to implementing strategies that prioritize accessibility and inclusivity.

Willard C. Pitts Academy wants to ensure that transportation is not a barrier for attending our school. We will conduct a thorough geographical analysis of our student population to pinpoint areas where transportation challenges might be more prominent. This analysis will help us tailor transportation solutions to specific regions, ensuring that students from all areas have equitable access.

We'll consider implementing staggered school start times and dismissal times to align with public transportation schedules and accommodate students who use various forms of transportation. This approach can reduce travel time and ease transportation concerns.

Transparency and communication is important to us. We will actively engage with parents, guardians, and the community to gather insights and feedback on transportation

needs. This collaborative effort will help us identify potential hurdles and develop solutions that are responsive to any transportation concerns.

We will provide clear information about transportation options, routes, and schedules well in advance. This will empower families to make informed decisions and plan accordingly. Please review our comprehensive transportation plan below.

Willard C. Pitts Academy Transportation Plan

Willard C. Pitts Academy will provide numerous options for student transportation to and from our school.

Walk/Bike- Students will be able to walk and/or bike to and from school that live within the neighborhood boundary. We will provide a secure location for bikes and safety equipment.

Carpool- During registration parents/guardians will have the opportunity to notify the school if they would like to participate in our schools Carpool Program. It will be the parent's/guardian's responsibility to abide by the carpool protocol and procedures. This program will be led by our volunteer parent liaison. Any changes in transportation plans must be communicated to the school office.

Car Riders- Parents/Guardians or an identified/approved designee will be able to transport students to and from school. During registration parent/guardians will be provided a school decal to be displayed upon arrival and dismissal.

Public Transportation- During registration, parents will be provided a public transportation schedule and public transportation subsidy, if needed

Required Transportation- During registration, as required by law, any student that is required transportation due to an IEP or any other state and federal eligibility will be provided special transportation on behalf of the school.

This plan may be subject to changes

J. Child Nutrition Services

- 1. Discuss the school's plans for providing food service for faculty and students.***
- 2. Describe any arrangements that will be made with any private agency for providing food services.***
- 3. Describe the plan for meeting reporting requirements and for documenting annual sanitation certification.***
- 4. Describe procedures to process free/reduced lunch applications for eligible students.***
- 5. Describe the planned cafeteria or other eating facility to include description of equipment, sanitation, and capacity parameters.***

J. Child Nutrition Services

The proposed facility to house Willard C. Pitts Academy is equipped with a standard commercial kitchen to provide onsite meal preparation and distribution. Due to the current conditions of the kitchen, it will be brought up to code for school usage and to comply with all regulations set by the Oklahoma City-County Health Department and the Oklahoma State Department of Education Child Nutrition Services.

At this time we have not chosen a specific provider for services, however we will review vendors and select a vendor that is in compliance with all state and federal regulations such as Sodexo.

Willard C. Pitts Academy plans for providing food service for faculty and students is as follows:

- a. Students and faculty will be provided breakfast prior to arrival to work/school and lunch during the school day, and a snack prior to departure.
- b. It is the intention of Willard C. Pitts Academy to participate in one or more of the following; USDA National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, After-School Snack Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program in cooperation with the OSDE Child Nutrition services.
- c. It is the intention of Willard C. Pitts Academy to work with a state approved local agency to provide food services like Sedexo. At this time no arrangements have been made with any organization or agency.

Willard C. Pitts Academy's plan for meeting reporting requirements and for documenting annual sanitation certification is as follows:

- a. Willard C. Pitts Academy shall comply with all health inspections of Public Law 108-265.
- b. Willard C. Pitts Academy will obtain two health inspections each school year. These inspections will be conducted by the state and county health department. The most recent health inspection will be posted in a publicly visible place. A copy will be provided to any member of the public upon request. Willard C. Pitts

academy will be responsible for providing the OSDE all health inspections reports annually and abide by any reimbursement protocols.

- c. Willard C. Pitts Academy will be responsible to pay the annual license renewal fee of \$1000 to the Oklahoma State Department of Health as in accordance with Oklahoma Law Title 63 O.S. 2011, Statute 1-106 and 1-1118, and Title 75 O.S. 2011, Statute 314 (C) (1).
- d. Willard C. Pitts Academy School Lead and Food Services Coordinator will be trained in the application process for free/reduced lunch applications for eligible students, benefit issuance, verification and meal counting and claiming process annually as required by the USDA and OSDE.

The application shall be approved within 10 days of being received.

The following process will be adhered to:

Read the handbook and contact the Department of Human Services (DHS) for technical assistance and clarification

Implement required policies

Complete the application process by completing forms for participation and submitting them to DHS. You must contact School Nutrition Programs (SNP) to get application forms.

Request an onsite visit for review of policies prior to filing a reimbursement claim

Forms for Participation

School Food Authorities (SFAs) must renew their application and supporting documentation. SFAs must keep these records on file along with annual updates and any revisions made to the procedures and policy statements listed in this section.

For participation, the forms below must be approved by the SNP office.

School Nutrition Programs Agreement.

Application for Participation (renewed annually)

Civil Rights Pre-award

Free and Reduced Price Policy Statement (for pricing schools), or the Non Pricing

Policy Statement (for nonpricing schools and RCCIs)

Meal Counting and Collection Procedures

Nonprofit Statement (501(c)3)

Letter of Accreditation (for private schools), or DHS Residential Child Care

Institution License or license from recognized State Agency(for RCCIs)

Attestation to follow meal patterns

After School Snack Program Application (if applicable)

Special Milk Program Application and policy statement (if applicable)

Willard C. Pitts Academy's plan for cafeteria and other eating facility including equipment description, sanitation, and capacity parameters is as follows:

- a. Willard C. Pitts Academy intends for the kitchen to be equipped to provide and distribute on-site meals. The kitchen and multipurpose space will be pre-approved by the Oklahoma County Health Department and OSD Child Nutrition Services prior to use. We understand that our meal program must follow Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems procedures. It is our intention to implement a meal program that conforms to the guidance of the USDA and to fully implement a food safety program prior to the school opening fall 2025

school year. The purpose of the safety program is to ensure the delivery of safe foods to children participating in the meals program.

- b. We shall review the food service operations procedures to understand and comply with all SOPs, required equipment, processes for food preparations and disbursement of menu items.
- c. We will create standard operating procedures for sanitation and verify food temperatures prior to food being distributed.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will take the following into consideration for creating standard operating procedures.

- a. General Safety
- b. Personnel
- c. Product Procurement
- d. Receiving
- e. Storing
- f. Transporting
- g. Holding
- h. Preparation
- i. Cleaning
- j. Cooking
- k. Cooling
- l. Reheating

K. School Calendar

- 1. Discuss the annual academic schedule for the school.**
- 2. Provide the school's proposed calendar for the first three (3) years of operation, including start/end times, total minutes of instruction each day, and total number of instructional days each year. Explain how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program.**
- 3. Provide clear intention relative to either conformity to or variances from the published OKCPS school year calendars.**

K. School Calendar

Willard C. Pitts Academy will implement a school calendar closely aligned with that of comparative districts in the state. Willard C. Pitts Academy will provide 1,125 hours of instruction/172 days of instruction. Teachers will also participate in 90 minutes of professional learning every Friday of the school week. Prior to the school year teachers will attend five (5) days of professional learning.

The instructional day will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 3:35 p.m. One day a week (Friday), will be a virtual/satellite day. Students will attend school through asynchronous virtual learning or at one of our participating satellite community partners. Teachers will arrive at school at 7:45 a.m. and be accessible for virtual and academic support from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Teachers will participate in staff professional learning from 2:00 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. Willard C. Pitts will provide after-school enrichment and extracurricular activities that parents/guardians may enroll their child for extended learning/engagement opportunities during that time. This time may also be used for academic recovery.

There will be 350 minutes of instruction per day four (4) days per week, and 360 minutes of satellite/ asynchronous virtual instruction on one (1) day a week (students will be required to log-in our virtual platform to track attendance and hours of instruction). Willard C. Pitts Academy school schedule and calendar are designed to incorporate project-based learning and flex time as a means to engage students in experiential learning and leverage engagement with our community partners. Project-based learning allows students to integrate multiple subjects, learn rigorous content, and create high quality student work. As students navigate their day, they will be able to make connections using mini-lessons that usually take about 30 minutes. With our scheduling there is still time for additional learning, intervention and content modifications, if needed.

Due to the flex scheduling on Fridays, student's have the opportunity to work on projects and other work if needed without interruption. At times Project-based Learning can call for large blocks of time. Our school schedule permits for class time to be broken down into independent work, group work, critique/revision, and discussion. Classes change every 50 minutes allowing students time to move beyond the inquiry stage and due to the content integration, work can be continued in the next class. Please see **Appendix M** for calendar view.

Willard C. Pitts Academy
Class Schedule
Monday- Thursday

5th Grade Class Schedule

Advisory	8:30 a.m. - 8:40 a.m.
Time Block I	8:44 a.m. - 9:34 a.m.
Time Block II	9:38 a.m. - 10:28 a.m.
Time Block III	10:32 a.m. - 11:19 a.m.
Dining	11:21 a.m. -12:03 p.m.
Time Block IV	12:06 p.m. - 12:53 p.m.
Time Block V	12:57 p.m. - 1:48 p.m.
Time Block VI	1:52 p.m. - 2:41 p.m.
Time Block VII	2:45 p.m. - 3:35 p.m.

6th Grade Class Schedule

Advisory	8:30 a.m. - 8:40 a.m.
Time Block I	8:44 a.m. - 9:34 a.m.
Time Block II	9:38 a.m. - 10:28 a.m.
Time Block III	10:32 a.m. - 11:19 a.m.
Time Block IV	11:21 a.m. -12:03 p.m.
Dining	12:06 p.m. - 12:53 p.m.
Time Block V	12:57 p.m. - 1:48 p.m.
Time Block VI	1:52 p.m. - 2:41 p.m.
Time Block VII	2:45 p.m. - 3:35 p.m.

Willard C. Pitts Academy
Virtual (Satellite) Schedule
Friday

5th & 6th Grade Class Schedule

Launch	8:00 a.m. - 8:05 a.m. (Satellite Days Only)
Time Block I	8:06 a.m. - 8:56 a.m.
Time Block II	9:00 a.m. - 9:50 a.m.
Time Block III	9:54 a.m. - 10:44 a.m.
Dining	10:48 a.m. - 11:18 a.m.
Time Block IV	11:22 a.m. - 12:12 a.m.
Time Block V	12:16 p.m. - 1:06 p.m.
Time Block VI	1:10 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Time Block VII	Flex (Satellite Days Only)

Willard C. Pitts Academy
School Calendar
2025-2026
(172 Days of Instruction)

July	1-4: Office Closed- July 4th Holiday 30: New Teachers Report
August	4: Returning Teachers Report 12: Student Orientation/Open House (5th Grade) 14: Student Orientation/Open House (6th Grade) 18: First Day of Class
September	1- Labor Day No School/Offices Closed/ Legal Holiday
October	9-10: Fall Break No School/Offices Closed 17- End of First Quarter 24- Parent Teacher Conference (No Classes) 31- First Quarter Report Cards
November	26-28: Thanksgiving Break- (No Classes) Office Closed 27 & 28
December	4: Second Quarter Progress Report 10-11: First Semester Capstone Due 12: End of Second Quarter & First Semester 22-31: Winter Break (No Classes)/ Legal Holiday 24-31: Winter Break & Legal Holiday Offices Closed

January	1-2: Legal Holiday/Winter Break (No Classes) & Offices Closed 5: Teachers & Staff Report Back 6: Classes Begin 7: First Semester Report Cards 19: MLK Jr. Day (No Classes) & Offices Closed/Legal Holiday
February	13: 3rd Quarter Progress Reports
March	13: End of Third Quarter/Report Cards 16-20: Spring Break No Classes & Offices Closed
April	State Testing Dates TBD
May	8: Second Semester Capstone Due 15: 5th Grade Promotion 21: Scheduled Last Day of Class 22: Record Day (All Employees Report) 25: Memorial Day-Offices Closed/Legal Holiday
June	No Regular Scheduled Classes Summer Internship (TBD- 2 weeks) Office Open 240, 185 Employees

SECTION 3. FINANCIAL PLAN & CAPACITY

A. Financial Plan

- 1. Present a financial plan, including cash flows, for the first three (3) years of operation.*
- 2. Present a budget for start-up expenses covering the planning and capital expenses necessary before school opens.*
- 3. Present a budget including all projected sources of revenue, both public and private, and an outline of planned expenditures for the initial term of the charter.*
- 4. Describe competent financial management and internal accounting procedures for the school.*
- 5. Describe plans to conduct any fundraising efforts to generate capital or to supplement state/local allocations.*

Willard C. Pitts Academy has developed a financial plan, budget, and cash flow projections for the first five (5) years of operation. Willard C. Pitts Academy will, to the extent possible and required by law, comply with the same reporting requirements, financial audits, audit procedures, and student requirements as any public-school district in the State of Oklahoma. Willard C. Pitts Academy Governance Board understands and acknowledges the protocols of The State Department of Education or State Auditor and Inspector conducting financial, program, or compliance audits. Willard C. Pitts Academy will use the Cost accounting System to report financial transactions. No later than September 1st of each year or the first business day in the month of September, the Governance Board of Willard C. Pitts Academy will prepare a statement of actual income and expenditures for the school for the fiscal year that ended the preceding June 30th or last business day in the month of June in a manner compliant with 70 O.S- §5-135. System of accounting. The statement of expenditures shall include code designations for each expenditure as defined in the rules adopted by the Oklahoma State Board of Education to implement the Oklahoma Cost Accounting System pursuant to 70 O.S- §5-135.

This portion of the application includes a budget that reflects the educational and operational expenditures of Willard C. Pitts Academy, a description of the financial management and internal accounting procedures for the school to demonstrate capacity and compliance with the Oklahoma school finance laws, including those related to child nutrition, special education, and federal programs.

The school budget fully explains how the school will remain fiscally solvent, adhere to mandated accounting practices, and address any financial concerns while following the Oklahoma Cost accounting Systems's auditing and reporting procedures. Willard C. Pitts Academy will adhere to all Oklahoma State Department of Education regulations and utilize a state department approved system to track and report all revenue and expenditures. The Governance Board will adopt a standard process for the approval of expenditures which is detailed in the Governance By-Laws.

Until such time that state funding is received and if any fundraising efforts are necessary during any times that the school experiences operating shortfalls during the initial five (5) year term, our aim is to be able to seek funding from the Community Impact Education Corporation (our founding team foundation) to ensure Willard C. Pitts Academy has sufficient funds to meet its financial obligations.

Please see Appendix J for Budget/Financial Plan. *Appendix J* includes a five year budget (realistic assumptions and their basis, cash flow projections of operation, minimum enrollment needed for solvency, adequate staffing that aligns with the application narrative in the educational plan and organizational chart.

The Founding Board will also supplement funding through private donations. Willard C. Pitts Academy intends to seek financial contributions for the benefit of Willard C. Pitts Academy students, families and staff. As an organization we will be applying for grants, which should be received upon the approval of this application. We anticipate being able to conduct fundraisers as well as receiving corporate sponsorship from a community partner. Willard C. Pitts academy is building relationships with

community based organizations with programs and in kind resources that will directly offset some of our operating costs.

In addition, our founding leadership team and Governance Board has familiarity and a track record securing city, state, and federal grants or related supplemental funding such as Community Block Grant Funding, Tax Increment Finance Funding, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Willard C. Pitts Academy also anticipates receiving funding up to \$325,000 from the Walton Foundation upon approval of this application. Other fundraising efforts include school-hosted activities and seeking funding from our relationships with philanthropic donors with an interest in improving access to quality education.

B. Finance Expertise

- 1. Provide a description of the treasurer's qualifications and the qualifications of any other officers or persons who shall have primary responsibility for finances.***
- 2. Provide evidence that the treasurer has demonstrated experience in school finance or the equivalent thereof.***

Willard C. Pitts Academy plans to hire a qualified professional to serve as the school Secretary/Encumbrance Clerk. The Secretary/Encumbrance Clerk shall be an employee of Willard C. Pitts and be responsible for the following:

- Maintain a finance ledger
- Maintain record keeping for account receivables and payables in order to insure there is no excessive appropriations for those charged
- Complete purchase orders
- Transmit warrants to vendors
- Perform other duties as the Governance Board may require

In performing such responsibilities the secretary shall complete the following training requirements in accordance with the provisions of 70 O.S- §5-190: Within nine (9) months after the first day of employment, the secretary shall complete at least twelve (12) hours of approved instruction that meets all of the following requirements:

- Any courses or workshops offered for purpose of meeting the requirements of the Oklahoma State Department of Education Office of financial Services:
- School finance laws of the State of Oklahoma
- Accounting
- Ethics
- Duties and responsibilities of a school district encumbrance clerk

The school Secretary/Encumbrance Clerk shall be required to complete an additional twelve (12) hours of approved education instruction every three (3) years from the initial date of hire with Willard C. Pitts Academy. The school secretary shall provide a certificate of completion to be forwarded to the Governance Board.

Willard C. Pitts Academy plans to contract with a professional services company to provide “Treasurer”, payable, receivable, and audit services for the school. This company will also oversee the implementation of financial systems and collecting and reporting expenditures. This role is independent of the treasurer role outlined in our Governance Board. This company shall have more than five (5) years of experience working in school finance and shall have a deep knowledge of federal and state laws regarding child nutrition, special education, federal programs, payroll processing, revenue receipts, expenditure processing and reporting, as well as the state audit cycle. This company will also monitor the financial roles of the Encumbrance Clerk and the School Lead.

The “Treasurer” shall prepare and submit in writing a monthly report of the school finances and such other reports as may be required by law during the Governance Board Meeting. The “Treasurer” will also work closely with the school Secretary/Encumbrance Clerk in keeping and reviewing the ledger as prescribed by the law.

Willard C. Pitts Academy is intending to seek professional services from the firm below:

Jenkins & Kemper Certified Public Accountants, P.C.

Jack H. Jenkins, CPA, P.C. was established in 1996 by Jack "Jay" Jenkins. After working as an audit manager for one of the largest public school auditing firms in the state and as financial manager of Broken Arrow Public Schools, Jay decided to open his own auditing and accounting firm. Shortly thereafter, Jay's brother Jeff came on board and the firm proceeded to quickly build the business from a few audit clients to over 40 in just a few years.

Specializing in public school audits, the firm became known for honesty, knowledge, and customer service. Based on these attributes, the firm grew mostly on word-of-mouth advertising. In 2004, Michael Kemper joined the firm, eventually becoming a partner in 2015. Steady growth attributed to a commitment to our clients over the years has resulted in Jenkins & Kemper CPAs becoming one of the premier auditing and consulting firms serving public educational institutions in the State of Oklahoma.

Staff

Jack "Jay" Jenkins, CPA - *Partner*

Jay has been involved in public school finance for almost 30 years and founded the company under the former name of Jack H. Jenkins, CPA

Michael Kemper, CPA - *Partner*

Michael has been with the company for 15 years as an Audit Manager and became a partner in 2015.

Jeff Jenkins - *Audit Manager*

Jeff began working with Jay over 20 years ago and has expertise in both audit and school finance consulting.

Chelesea Chadwick - *Office Manager*

Chelesea has been with the firm for several years involved in both auditing and school finance consulting.

Caleb Carlson - *Staff Auditor*

Caleb is a recent addition and brings several years of accounting experience to the firm.

Alejandro Munoz - *Staff Auditor*

Alejandro is also a recent addition to the firm and a recent graduate.

"About Us" - Jenkins-Kemper Insurance Services. Jenkins-Kemper Insurance Services.

Available at: <http://jenkinskemper.com/about-us>. Retrieved August 24, 2023.

C. Audit & Reporting

- 1. Provide a clear understanding of the annual requirement for a financial audit, audit procedures, and financial reporting for local school districts in Oklahoma.***
- 2. Certify that the school shall use the Oklahoma Cost Accounting System to report financial transactions to Oklahoma City Public Schools.***

Willard C. Pitts Academy will be responsible for budgets and expenditures. The Governance Board will be responsible for the oversight of all school finances including operating budgets, fundraising, and grants. Daily financial tasks will be overseen by the School Lead and Secretary/Encumbrance Clerk. The “Treasurer” shall prepare any required financials. The School Lead will assist in the establishment and follow all processes and procedures to insure financial integrity, accountability and transparency. All financial activities will be documented and reported according to the law.

Willard C. Pitts Academy shall comply with all financial reporting requirements set by the Oklahoma law that are applicable to public charter schools. Willard C. Pitts Academy recognizes that the Oklahoma State Department of Education uses a variety of reporting requirements to collect data used in the State Aid Funding Formula, including Gifted Education Report, IDEA Child Count, National School Lunch Program, and the Application for Accreditation. This data is also used to calculate federal funding under Title I, Title II, and IDEA, First Quarter Statistical and Annual Statistical Reports. Willard C. Pitts Academy further understands that the report of revenue and expenditures as well as the Estimate of Needs must be submitted annually.

Willard C. Pitts Academy will implement a standard cost accounting system in compliance with the Oklahoma statutes and the Oklahoma state Department of Education regulations and utilize an Oklahoma State Department of Education approved Oklahoma Cost Accounting System system to track and report revenue and expenditures. The Governance Board will adopt financial policies and standard process for the approval of expenditures as required by law.

Fiscal processes to be utilized:

Bank Accounts- Willard C. Pitts Academy will maintain separate operational and fundraising accounts. All account activity will be tracked according to the law and documented in the school ledger.

Payroll- Willard C. Pitts Academy will outsource payroll to a professional payroll firm to ensure timely payments to staff and compliance with tax and guidelines.

Annual Audit- Willard C. Pitts Academy will receive a financial audit as required in order to ensure that all financial records and procedures are in compliance with applicable law. Willard C. Pitts Academy shall contract with a professional auditor to complete the required annual school audit. The auditor shall be approved as required by law. The audit shall be completed and reported to the Oklahoma Department of Education as required by law.

Willard C .Pitts Academy will produce no less than quarterly financial reports and will distribute them to the Charter Sponsor and Governance Board. The reports will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with the law for adherence ensuring budgeted revenues and expenses are in line with projections.

Willard C. Pitts Academy also intends to adopt financial policies similar in nature to that of the charter authorizer to include, but not limited to Fiscal Management, Reimbursement, Petty Cash, Check Cashing, Fundraising and Grants.

D. Insurance Coverage

1. Explain the manner in which the school will be insured.

2. Present the school's insurance coverage plans, including applicable health, general liability, property insurance and directors and officers liability coverage.

Willard C. Pitts Academy shall purchase all insurance required by federal and state statute. Willard C. Pitts Academy shall participate in Unemployment Insurance and Workers Compensation programs as required by statute. Additionally, Willard C. Pitts Academy shall purchase liability insurance, property insurance, tort coverage and surety bonds on behalf of hired staff that are responsible for the control of finances to the extent required by Oklahoma statute. Willard C. Pitts Academy will also participate in a state approved Employee Group Health Coverage insurance program. All other insurance coverage shall be approved by the Governance board. Once policies are fully executed, copies will be provided to the charter sponsor.

III. CHARTER SCHOOL ADDITIONAL EXHIBITS

A. Demonstration of Support

Provide evidence of support from residents who may include, but not be limited to, surveys or petitions. Document, to the degree possible, support among teachers, parents, students, community members, institutional/community leaders, and other groups or organizations.

The residents and community of Northeast Oklahoma City have demonstrated support for the creation of Willard C. Pitts Academy. This demonstration of support for the school includes residents within the zip code boundary, which are residents and families that would be attending Willard C. Pitts Academy as well as residents located within the geographic boundaries of Oklahoma City Public Schools. The demonstration of support is evidenced by petition signatures and a survey conducted at a parent meeting. The documents are located in **Appendix J**.

B. Evidence of State Department of Education Training

With your Proposal, provide documentation that the Applicant has completed mandatory charter school training provided by the State Department of Education on the process and requirements for establishing a charter school, as specified in Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 3-134(A).

Founder LaTasha Timberlake will be attending and completing the mandatory charter school training by the State Department of Education held on Thursday, August 31, 2023 at 2500 N. Lincoln Boulevard OklaHoma City, Oklahoma 73105 in Suite 215 Meeting Room. Please see Certificate of Charter School Training in **Appendix K**.

C. Final Documentation

No later than two (2) calendar weeks (fourteen days) prior to the first day of school operation, the board of the charter school shall:

1. *Certify that it has complied with all applicable laws, ordinances and codes of federal, state, and local governments. Such certification shall include compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as it may apply.*
2. *Provide all necessary licenses, permits, user approvals, facility certifications, and other approvals as required for use of the planned facility as a public school by the local governmental entities and/or other governmental agencies as may be necessary. If the governing board fails to provide such documentation, the charter contract shall immediately terminate with no compensation due to the school. The charter contract will include this termination condition.*

- i. The governing board shall further agree that all costs for or associated with complying with local ordinances; securing licenses, permits, use approvals, or facility certifications; and/or any costs associated with any other approvals shall be paid by the school and from its resources. Such costs shall include but not be limited to application fees, legal advertising costs, survey costs, plan review fees, permit costs and licensing costs and any other additional charges or surcharges by the local government or any other governmental agencies.

In addition, no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the opening of school, the governing board must certify, in writing, that it:

1. Has followed and/or implemented all federal regulations and state and local rules and statutes relating to health, safety, civil rights and insurance.
2. Has complied with all federal and state laws relating to the education of children with disabilities in the same manner as a school district.
3. Shall not use the charter school as a method of generating revenue for students who are being homeschooled and are not being educated at the charter school site.
4. May not charge tuition or fees for any student.
5. Must comply with the student suspension requirements of the State of Oklahoma.
6. Commits not to allow/encourage student resignation and/or transfer in lieu of suspension/expulsion.
7. Has secured the necessary insurance coverage to properly protect the state's investment in the school.

I certify that I have read the above section entitled "Final Documentation" and understand the requirements for meeting the conditions of this section by no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the official opening of the school.

Signature of Applicant

Title/Office

Date

Signature of Notary Public

Date

The applicant should submit an original and eight copies of the charter application.

The board will accept or reject the application within ninety (90) days of receipt of the application at a lawfully convened meeting of the board of education. Notification of the acceptance or rejection and the reasons therefore, will be provided to the applicant in writing. If the proposal is accepted, the board shall notify the State Board of Education of the sponsorship. If the proposal is rejected, the applicants may resubmit a revised application for reconsideration within thirty (30) days after receiving notification of the rejection. The board will respond to the revised application within thirty (30) days. If rejected again, the applicant may appeal the decision to the State Board of Education in accordance with the Act.

The OKCPS feedback cycle is intended to provide the applicant with the application's strengths, areas of concern and questions, as gathered by members of the Charter School Application Review Team. Feedback is not meant to coach the applicant on how to develop an application. Additional questions and requests for information may be directed to the applicant based on the capacity interview and the application details. During the initial 90-day review process, the applicant will receive an executive summary for their application in advance of board action. The initial feedback is not intended to allow the applicant to submit a revised application.

Appeals Process

Should the application be denied, the applicant should use the executive summary to make changes to the original application. After resubmission, the Charter School Application Review Team will reconvene to assess the areas of concern captured in the executive summary and revised in the second application submission. An additional executive summary will thereafter be generated and shared with the applicant. Feedback during the appeals process will be made in writing in advance of board action in the form of the executive summary. Such feedback is not intended to coach the applicant on the application details.

If the proposal is accepted, the charter school will fall under the district's insurance programs, unless otherwise stated in the charter contract.

Once a charter application has been approved, the District shall contract with the charter school based on the charter's unique mission and/or the student population that the charter serves as indicated in the charter's application.

REFERENCE: 70 O.S. §3-134

OSSBA Policy EGAAA-P

Adoption Date: October 3, 2005

Revision Date(s): 10/15/12, 7/1/16, 8/5/17, 10/16/18

APPENDIX A

Zip Code Boundary

