



Application for a Public Charter School for  
Tennessee Nature Academy  
Respectfully Submitted to Metropolitan Nashville  
Public Schools  
May 24, 2022

For questions about this application, please contact:

Tennessee Nature Academy  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cover Letter		Pg. 4
General Information		Pg. 10
Assurances		Pg. 11
Executive Summary		Pg. 12
<b>SECTION 1: ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY</b>		
1.1	School Mission and Vision	Pg. 15
1.2	Enrollment Summary	Pg. 23
1.3	Academic Focus and Plan	Pg. 32
1.4	Academic Performance Standards	Pg. 48
1.5	Phase-In / Turnaround Planning	Pg. 59
1.6	High School Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness	Pg. 60
1.7	Assessments	Pg. 72
1.8	School Calendar and Schedule	Pg. 80
1.9	Special Populations	Pg. 90
1.10	School Culture and Discipline	Pg. 110
1.11	Recruitment and Enrollment	Pg. 122
1.12	Parent and Community Engagement and Support	Pg. 126
<b>SECTION 2: OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY</b>		
2.1	Governance	Pg. 131
2.2	Start-Up Plan	Pg. 138
2.3	Facilities	Pg. 144
2.4	Personnel/Human Capital	Pg. 150
2.5	Professional Development	Pg. 168
2.6	Insurance	Pg. 176
2.7	Transportation	Pg. 177
2.8	Food Service	Pg. 179
2.9	Additional Operations	Pg. 181
2.10	Charter Management Organization (If Applicable)	Pg. 184
2.11	Waivers	Pg. 185
<b>SECTION 3: FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY</b>		
3.1	Planning and Budget Worksheet	Please see Attachment N
3.2	Budget Narrative	Please see Attachment O
<b>SECTION 4: ATTACHMENTS</b>		
Attachment A	Annual Academic Calendar	Pg. 188
Attachment B	School Handbook / School Forms	Pg. 190
Attachment C	Student Discipline Policy	Pg. 204
Attachment D	Enrollment Policy	Pg. 218
Attachment E	Letters of Support / MOUs / Contracts from the Community	Pg. 222

Attachment F	Governance Documents	Pg. 244
F1	Articles of Incorporation	Pg. 245
F2	Proof of Non-Profit and Tax-Exempt Status	Pg. 248
F3	By-Laws	Pg. 249
F4	Code of Conduct	Pg. 249
F5	Conflict of Interest Policy	Pg. 249
F6	Board Member Resumes or Biographies	Pg. 249
F7	Board Policies	Pg. 249
Attachment G	School Organization Chart	Pg. 267
Attachment H	School Achievement Data (If Available)	Pg. 269
Attachment I	Employee Manual / Personnel Policies	Pg. 270
Attachment J	Insurance Coverage	Pg. 280
Attachment K	CMO Agreement (If Applicable)	Pg. 281
Attachment N	Planning and Budget Worksheet	Pg. 282
Attachment O	Budget Narrative	Pg. 306

**To the Reviewers,**

**In our amended application, pages 4-9 discuss the changes made from the initial to the amended application, including how each change was informed by feedback from the review committee. Because the TN Charter Commission asked for a clean version without any tracked changes, the content on these pages have been deleted in this document. The pages were intentionally left blank so that page numbering is consistent with the Amended Application we submitted. For tracked changes and our cover letter detailing each change, please see our amended application.**

**Yours,  
Tennessee Nature Academy**

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**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Name of proposed school: **Tennessee Nature Academy**

Projected year of school opening with the identified authorizer: **2023-2024 school year**

Charter authorizer for proposed school: **Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools**

Sponsor/Sponsoring entity: **Tennessee Nature Academy**

The sponsor is a not-for-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status: Yes (Effective 5/10/2022)

Model or focus of proposed school: **Nature-based, project-based with an emphasis on career and college readiness**

City of geographic community for proposed school: **Southeast Nashville, TN (Cane Ridge and Antioch clusters)**

Name of primary contact person (this person should serve as the contact for follow-up, interviews, and notices regarding this application): **Roy (Jay) Renfro**

Primary Contact mailingaddress: **5844 Pettus Road**

**Antioch, TN 37013**

Primary Contact work telephone: **(629) 259-2429** Primary Contact mobile telephone: **(615) 587-4379**

Primary Contact email address: **rrenfro@tennesseenatureacademy.org**

Names, current employment, and roles of all people on school design team, including school leader (add lines as needed):

Full name	Current Employer and Job Title	Position with Proposed School
Roy (Jay) Renfro	Tennessee Nature Academy; Executive Director	Executive Director
Sarah Savage	Tennessee Nature Academy; Chief Academic Officer	Chief Academic Officer

Does the proposed school intend to contract or partner with a charter management organization? **No**

Does this applicant have charter school applications under consideration by any other authorizer? **No**

Indicate Applicant Type:

**New-Start Applicant (Category 1)**

## ASSURANCES

As the authorized representative of the sponsor, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for Tennessee Nature Academy is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award; and if awarded a charter, the school:

1. Will operate as a public, nonsectarian, non-religious public school, with control of instruction vested in the governing body of the school under the general supervision of the authorizer and in compliance with the charter agreement and the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act;
2. Will follow all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the operation of a public school, unless waived according to T.C.A. § 49-13-111(p);
3. Will provide special education services for students as provided in Tennessee Code Annotated Title 49, Chapter 10, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
4. Will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, that are applicable to it;
5. Will follow all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services;
6. Will utilize this application as a contract with the authorizer, if no other agreement is signed, pursuant to Tennessee Attorney General Opinion No. 10-45;
7. Will comply with all provisions of the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act, including, but not limited to
  - a. employing individuals to teach who hold a license to teach in a public school in Tennessee;
  - b. complying with Open Meetings and Open Records laws (T.C.A. §§ 8-44-101 *et seq.*; 10-7-503, 504) (guidance is available from the Office of Open Records Counsel);
  - c. not charging tuition, except for students transferring from another district to the school pursuant to the local board's out-of-district enrollment policy and T.C.A. § 49-6-3003;
  - d. following state financial (budgeting and audit) procedures and reporting requirements according to T.C.A. § 49-13-111, 120, and 127;
  - e. requiring any member of the governing body, employee, officer, or other authorized person who receives funds, has access to funds, or has authority to make expenditures from funds, to give a surety bond in the form prescribed by T.C.A. § 8-19-101; and
8. Will, at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.

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

Printed Name of Authorized Representative: **Roy (Jay) Renfro**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Executive Director**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In three pages or less, provide an executive summary about your proposed charter school. The executive summary should provide a concise overview of the following:

- The plan for the proposed 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.

### Plan for the Proposed School

Tennessee Nature Academy (TNA) has been developed as a single-site, public charter school serving students and families in grades 5-12 in Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS). TNA's mission is to cultivate happy and healthy young adults who are knowledgeable about the world, passionate about the outdoors, and committed to doing good work. TNA's design emphasizes college and career readiness and is informed by research on the effects of nature on students' wellbeing and success. Our academic and school culture plans are designed with four key principles in mind:

1. Learning through Challenges - Effective learning occurs when students solve authentic problems by mastering and applying disciplinary knowledge and skills. TNA follows a nature-based, project-based academic program that aligns with the Tennessee Academic Standards and, in later grades, with the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards. Our academic model prepares students for college and career success beginning in middle school: students at TNA complete programs of study in the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources field, participate in experiences like work-based learning and Advanced Placement courses, and earn industry credentials related to Environmental and Natural Resource Management and Veterinary and Animal Science.
2. Building Connectedness - Effective learning helps students better understand themselves and build connections to others, their community, and the world. TNA's advisory system places students in small groups with two staff advisors, and students spend time each day building community and engaging in social and emotional learning activities based on curriculum from the Penn Resilience Program. TNA's academic model engages students in projects connected to the needs and interests of the surrounding community and builds partnerships with families and community groups.
3. Sustaining Health and Happiness - The best practices are sustainable practices. TNA recognizes the need for sustainability to exist in our relationships with others and with the environment. TNA uses systems that help students learn to care for their physical and emotional well-being and support our community's culture using restorative, relationship-based ethics and practices. TNA pursues sustainability in our financial and operational practices and employs sustainable systems throughout our campus to limit our impact on the environment.
4. Impacting the Community - Students at TNA use what they learn to make a positive impact in their community. TNA engages with our community using initiatives like conservation projects, nature camps, and a schoolyard farm. TNA's focus on college and career readiness prepares students to expand their impact in the community through achieving Ready Graduate status and securing college acceptance or employment offers upon graduation from high school.

### Geographic and Population Considerations

TNA is open to all students in MNPS. We aim to locate our campus in the Cane Ridge community and will focus our recruitment efforts on families living in the Cane Ridge, Antioch, and Overton school

clusters. Our zip code (37013) is home to a growing population and, as a diverse-by-design school, TNA aims for our enrollment to reflect our community's diversity.

TNA addresses multiple needs in Southeast Nashville. First, many of the middle and high schools in Southeast Nashville are approaching or have exceeded 100% building capacity. TNA will help to alleviate overcrowding by adding additional classroom seats to accommodate 684 students at full scale. Second, many schools in the Southeast quadrant historically achieve lower-than-expected academic performance on key assessments like state exams and the ACT when compared with city-wide and state-wide success rates. TNA's nature-based, project-based learning program supports students in mastering academic content and closing achievement gaps, and promotes differentiated learning using a co-teaching model and regular intervention and workshop blocks. Finally, there are currently no public, nature-based school options available for Nashville families despite the research suggesting that increased time learning and socializing outdoors is beneficial for students. TNA builds on the outdoor learning work that our Executive Director has piloted to introduce an innovative school environment to families in our area.

### **Anticipated Challenges**

Based on enrollment trends in middle and high schools in Southeast Nashville, TNA anticipates that 45% of our students will identify as English language learners, 12% will identify as students with disabilities, and 42% will identify as economically disadvantaged. Accordingly, multiple elements of TNA's model are designed to meet the needs of our diverse student population. TNA's academic program targets achievement gaps and uses project-based, culturally-relevant and proven pedagogies to highlight the experiences and interests of all learners. TNA's staffing model and scheduling allows for targeted student support to take place throughout the school day, and TNA's culture of Resilience and Wellbeing uses a strengths-based approach to support social and emotional learning and restorative practices to support classroom management and school discipline. Leveraging our diverse community partnerships, we will attract a diverse student and staff population to reflect the strong diversity of our community.

As the first open-enrollment program of its kind in Nashville, TNA will both introduce an innovative school model and develop resources to support schools who hope to adopt nature-based programs of their own. TNA's nature-based emphasis draws on research literature (described later) and the success of previous outdoor learning program pilots to support students academically, behaviorally, and socially. As TNA grows, our goal is to expand our impact by curating an open-source curriculum that is aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards and integrates the best practices of nature-based instruction.

### **Leadership Capacity**

TNA's founders have a combined 21 years of experience in teaching and leading in educational environments. TNA's founding Executive Director has piloted a successful outdoor learning program in the Southeast Nashville community since 2016. This program impacted over 1,000 students and received recognition from multiple local and national organizations including Urban Green Lab, Teach for America, the MacArthur Foundation, The National Writing Project, Shell Corporation, and the Templeton Honors College. The innovative program design was also a winner of John Legend's Show Me Campaign and a National Finalist in the Arthur and Tony Rembe Rock Social Innovation Award. TNA's founding Chief Academic Officer has served as a teacher, instructional coach, administrator, and network-level academic leader for more than 10 years and is currently pursuing an Ed.D.

TNA is currently supported by a board of eight directors with experience in governance, finance, community engagement, and nonprofit management. All Board members live in Nashville and understand the need for high-quality public schools in our community. Many Board members have previous experience in education as teachers and leaders and have provided invaluable feedback.



## SECTION 1.1 - SCHOOL MISSION AND VISION

- (a) Provide a mission statement for the proposed charter school. Note: the mission statement should indicate in measurable terms what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree. A school's mission statement provides the foundation for the entire application.
- (b) Describe the vision of the proposed school and how it will help achieve the school's mission.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Tennessee Nature Academy (TNA) is to cultivate happy and healthy young adults who are knowledgeable about the world, passionate about the outdoors, and motivated to do good work.

### **Vision for Achieving the Mission**

Tennessee Nature Academy is a nature-based, public charter school for students in grades 5-12 and is committed to preparing students for a sustainable life. Our students belong to a diverse, affirming community and engage in adventurous, project-based learning to impact the world around them. Students graduate from TNA prepared for future college and career success. The vision for achieving our mission is built around four key principles of our school model:

1. Learning through Challenges - TNA believes that effective learning occurs when students solve authentic problems or answer relevant questions by mastering and applying disciplinary knowledge and skills. Academic challenges are framed to create a sense of adventure and build students' confidence in their abilities to think critically and work collaboratively. Learning takes place within and beyond traditional classroom spaces and challenges range in scale from answering an essential question in English class to designing and implementing a soil remediation plan for degraded soil in the area. Our emphasis on nature-based play and learning serves the dual purpose of encouraging healthy lifestyles while allowing students the opportunity to be curious, creative, and explorative. Our goal is to create knowledgeable citizens who are competent to do good work in their chosen industry. Our academic program promotes individual growth, closes achievement gaps, and uses college preparatory and industry certification pathways to create opportunities for future success.
2. Building Connectedness - TNA serves a community that is historically disconnected from nature, equal academic and employment opportunities, and communities that elevate and celebrate diverse identities. Our diverse-by design model helps students better understand themselves and build connections to others, to their community, and to the world. Our school values diverse voices and perspectives and honors the uniqueness of each student. Our school celebrates cultural diversity and explores the connections between cultures, which leads to greater understanding of our communities, our peers, and ourselves. We intentionally connect students and families to the networks they need to thrive.
3. Sustaining Health and Happiness -TNA believes that the best practices are sustainable practices. We know that sustainable activities positively influence the environment and we develop systems that prioritize the sustainable use of resources. We also recognize the need for sustainability to exist in our work with others. TNA uses systems that help students learn to care for their emotional and physical well-being and support our community's culture using restorative, relationship-based ethics and practices. Our emphasis on nature taps into the well-researched curative effect of spending time learning, playing, and simply being outdoors.
4. Impacting the Community - The best learning reveals an insight, provides a service, or yields enduring habits or practices that can be applied to future challenges. For this reason, TNA's students use what they learn to make a positive impact in their community and in the environment. This provides a greater importance to day-to-day classroom learning while also providing a service to the

community. Student experiences progress to allow for frequent service learning that develops into work-based learning opportunities that create future employment opportunities.

(c) Describe how the mission and vision of this school will meet the prescribed purposes for charter schools found in T.C.A. § 49-13-102.

T.C.A. § 49-13-102 identifies six purposes for charter schools which are directly addressed by the mission and vision of TNA:

1. Improve learning for all students and close the achievement gap between high and low students. Nature-based learning is learning that takes place in or is applied to an outdoor setting. The positive effects of nature-based learning on academics are well-documented and have been leveraged in hundreds of schools, many in European countries with high achievement on international tests.<sup>1</sup> TNA assesses students on required content knowledge *and* on high-level cognitive skills which support higher-order thinking and are shown to dramatically improve students' achievement and academic success in secondary and post-secondary schools.<sup>2,3</sup> Our nature-based, project-based curriculum, instructional strategies, regular assessments, and intervention systems assist in closing achievement gaps and introduce students to diverse learning experiences both within and beyond the traditional classroom setting.
2. Provide options for parents to meet educational needs of students. Currently, no schools in MNPS offer free, nature-based middle school or high school programs. Our research-based approach provides students with daily learning opportunities in and about nature. This approach is particularly effective for students diagnosed with ADHD, ADD, or depression,<sup>4</sup> three diagnoses that can often translate into behavior infractions if not properly accommodated. Furthermore, project-based approaches provide for input and celebrations of all cultures as we lean on local funds of knowledge. Our project-based learning approach naturally differentiates for various learning styles our diverse study body will possess.
3. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods, and provide greater decision making authority to schools and teachers in exchange for greater responsibility for student performance. Nature and place-based learning practices have a growing body of research, but there is much more to be done. The teachers and staff at TNA adopt best practices in the field while developing our own practices and contributing to the growing body of research. Our teachers and staff will be recognized as professionals and experts with the drive to generate a localized curriculum to be shared open-source to MNPS and Tennessee schools. As the only nature-based public school in Middle Tennessee, our PBL model provides an approach proven to particularly benefit students with certain cognitive and physical diagnoses.<sup>5</sup>
4. Measure performance of pupils and faculty, and ensure that children have the opportunity to reach proficiency on state academic assessments. As indicated by the Tennessee Response to Instruction and Intervention Framework, we use data from a variety of sources - including benchmark data,

<sup>1</sup> Miller, N. C., Kumar, S., Pearce, K. L., Baldock, K. L., (2021). The outcomes of nature-based learning for primary school aged children: A systematic review of quantitative research. *Environmental Education Research*, 27(8), 1115-1140.

<sup>2</sup> Summit Learning. (2021). *Summit Learning cognitive skills rubric*.

<https://cdn.summitlearning.org/assets/marketing/Cognitive-Skills-Document-Suite.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> J. W. & Hilton, M. L. (Eds). (2012). *Skills in the 21st Century*. Pellegrino, Education for Life and Work: Developing Transferable Knowledge and Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press. National Research Council.

<sup>4</sup> Di Carmine, F., Berto, R., (2020). Contact with Nature can help ADHD children to cope with their symptoms. The state of the evidence and future directions for research. *Visions for Sustainability*.

<sup>5</sup> Szczytko, R., Carrier, S.J., Stevenson, K.T., (2018). Impacts of outdoor environmental education on teacher reports of attention, behavior, and learning outcomes for students with emotional, cognitive, and behavioral disabilities. *Frontiers in Education*, 3(46), 1-10.

diagnostic data, and progress monitoring data - to appropriately challenge or provide supportive interventions to ensure that all students meet learning targets. TNA's use of data helps teachers personalize instruction and support students by closing achievement gaps when they emerge.

5. Create new professional opportunities for teachers. TNA provides a much-needed opportunity for professionals to work in an active, nature-based setting while developing skill sets connected to projects beyond the scope of standard curriculum. The establishment of TNA creates a unique opportunity for educators to grow in their professional capabilities to develop project-based and nature-based pedagogical practices.
6. Afford parents substantial meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children. We recognize that our parents are the primary teachers for their children. As a community-based school, our partnerships with our students' parents/guardians is an integral part of our school's operations. We recognize that the traditional educational environment may have been a source of stress or disconnection for some of our parents; our school's outdoor campus creates a welcoming atmosphere that allows for parents to connect on different levels.

(d) Describe how the mission and vision of this school addresses any priorities set by the chartering authority.

The mission and vision of TNA directly addresses five priorities outlined by MNPS for new charter school applications:

1. Advance academic achievement for students currently enrolled in schools that underperform. The proposed enrollment zone for TNA will be detailed in Section 1.2. For the purposes of this indicator, we note that the ideal location for the school is in Southeast Nashville, specifically the Cane Ridge cluster and the southern portions of the Antioch and Overton clusters. While there is variation in achievement across schools in this area, schools in Southeast Nashville demonstrate low proficiency overall and the majority underperform district and/or state average proficiency rates. These proficiency trends were also observed in the year preceding school closures due to the global Covid-19 pandemic. We aim to leverage our nature-based, project-based academic program, purposeful instructional strategies, data from regular assessments, and comprehensive intervention systems to eliminate achievement gaps between student subgroups and support all students in outperforming local and statewide comparison groups on key outcome measures, including measures of proficiency in math and English.
2. Add to the number of schools with student enrollment diversity in Nashville. TNA's school model is diverse-by-design. With help from the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition, every system and practice of the school is designed to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. As a diverse-by-design school, enrollment diversity is an important metric to measure our success in being an appealing school option for all demographics. Socioeconomic, racial, and linguistic diversity are achieved through the strategic location of the school in Southeast Nashville in the most diverse zip code in Tennessee. Our target enrollment goals are reflective of the diversity of schools in Southeast Nashville as demonstrated in Section 1.2.
3. Improve academic achievement in literacy. TNA emphasizes disciplinary literacy throughout the curriculum. Disciplinary literacy allows students to practice and master interpreting and expressing ideas using the language and communication skills specific to the particular disciplines they study (i.e. students practice reading and writing strategies specific to science, reading and writing strategies specific to social studies, reading and writing strategies specific to math, etc.). TNA's project-based learning modules are assessed on rigorous cognitive skills, most of which require the application of

literacy-based skills across all disciplines.<sup>6</sup> Finally, TNA builds personalized independent reading time into our daily schedule at the middle school level, which provides time for students to read independently or in small guided reading or reading intervention groups depending on students' needs. This comprehensive focus on literacy and literacy interventions helps close achievement gaps between student subgroups and supports academic achievement in literacy.

4. Improve academic achievement for English language learners. TNA's project-based learning approach provides all students with the opportunity to build connections between the content, their community, and their own interests, experiences, and identities. Project-based learning provides an opportunity for English language learners (ELLs) to explore academic content and demonstrate their understanding in diverse, personalized ways. In addition, TNA's comprehensive, inclusive education model supports language development throughout the school day. Please see Sections 1.3 and 1.9 for more detail about TNA's approach to supporting language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse learners.
5. Improve academic achievement for students with disabilities. While nature-based learning is beneficial to all students, students with disabilities in particular benefit from the behavioral, environmental, and instructional accommodations found in nature. Unfortunately, there are several barriers for children with disabilities in accessing an environment where nature-based play and learning is possible. As a result, these students often do not receive these benefits.<sup>7</sup> TNA merges best practices in special education with best practices in nature-based learning to provide compounded benefits to our most vulnerable students so that all students can graduate as happy and healthy young adults. A detailed, research-based plan delineated by the thirteen disabilities covered under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is found in Section 1.9.

(e) Describe what the school will look like when it is achieving its mission.

### **Vision for Year 1**

In Year 1, the doors are open to 5th and 6th graders. The year begins with a kick-off project that gives students a positive introduction to naturalism. Teachers lead units of instruction that engage students with mastering disciplinary knowledge and skills and address real-world challenges. The team of teachers have successfully implemented developmentally-appropriate systems that consider the needs of diverse learners and off-task behaviors are almost negligible. Students have fallen into the routine of reading and writing every day while also working towards projects that better themselves, the school, and the community. Students have shown distinct growth in reading and math proficiency and, by the end of the year, students' academic gains on TNReady assessments place TNA in the top 10% of schools statewide. Our diverse body of students are beginning to develop healthy habits related to exercise and diet. With the crucial help of parent and community volunteers, we have begun to cultivate a schoolyard farm that is being used in many of the classroom activities. It is clear that students and teachers are happy, as seen in their interactions with each other and the joy with which they engage in their work. Parents are happy with their decision to choose this school.

### **Vision for Year 5**

The school has expanded to serve grades 5-9 and, with that, the campus has developed to become a safe place for learning and socializing. By the end of their middle school experience, students have adopted healthy habits and are confident when engaging in the academic and social challenges of adolescence;

<sup>6</sup> Lash, D, Belfiore, G. & Calkins, A. (2017). The MyWays Success Framework: Student competencies for learning, work, and life. Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC). Retrieved from: <https://myways.nextgenlearning.org>

<sup>7</sup> Sterman, J., Naughton, G., Froude, E., Villeneuve, M., Beetham, K., Wyver, S., Bund, A., (2016). Outdoor play decisions by caregivers of children with disabilities: A systematic review of qualitative studies. *Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities*, 28(6), 931–957.

they don't do this alone, but with frequent support and guidance from their teachers and advisors. The addition of the first high school cohort has enriched the lives of their middle school peers. The 9th grade Agriscience class develops and maintains the schoolyard farm used to cultivate crops enjoyed by the student body and sold to the community. TNA has partnered with MNPS to offer professional development to middle school teachers whose schools are interested in adopting nature-based learning into their curriculum. Our diverse families are comfortable expressing their needs and the school connects with community partners and other families for resources. TNA has received positive press multiple times for its contributions to the community and is known for its happy students and teachers. TNA annually celebrates achievement in the top 10% of schools statewide.

### **Vision for Year 10**

Our first two graduating classes are already demonstrating the power behind the model: young adults who are living happy, healthy lives aimed at doing good work. The cultivated MS curriculum has become open-source to all teachers who attend our annual training sessions, further expanding the impact of the model. The middle school has established an exciting tradition of projects, trips, and experiences that continues to generate a waitlist. The high school has solidified a set of pathways that allow for differentiated electives in programs of study including Veterinary and Animal Science and Environmental and Natural Resource Management. All juniors and seniors are allowed the opportunity for a work study, giving our young adults a huge head start developing savings for college or contributing towards their family's expenses. The diverse student body across the middle and high schools participate in outdoor learning experiences. The high school provides many valuable services to the community and has been recognized for its environmental monitoring and advocacy in a quickly-developing quadrant of the city.

### **A Day at Tennessee Nature Academy - Middle School**

The following vignette illustrates what a day at TNA could look like when achieving our mission and vision. The story follows the experience of three different 5th grade students: Ernesto (a Level 4 English language learner), Trinity (a student who entered 5th grade two years below grade level for literacy), and Peter (a student from high socio-economic status with a 504 for ADHD).

The day begins as students arrive. The stream of students emerging from cars and buses diverges in two directions. Ernesto heads to the cafeteria to get breakfast, while Trinity and Peter opt to hang out with friends in the common space outside. The 5 minute bell sounds and students are seen heading to their respective grade-level advisory blocks. Today the students meet in their Advisory block-- groups of students that navigate a Social Emotional Learning curriculum together. Peter and Ernesto have become friends through this practice and are putting together a birthday party for another student. Today is an A Day, and Ernesto, Peter, and Trinity all have math during the first block. At the beginning of class, the math teacher and language specialist co-teach a tutorial on multiplying fractions. The language specialist checks in with Ernesto and shows him a vocabulary bank and sentence frames he can use to support his answers. The students transition outside to apply their lesson on fractions to work to be done in the raised garden beds. The teachers explain the necessary compost to soil ratios for each plant, and small groups of students work together to solve how that would be multiplied on a larger scale. The students are seen moving around and writing out equations in their notebooks as they tackle the challenge. Students apply what they've learned in previous lessons on finding the area and volume of right rectangular prisms to this challenge. This hands-on practice helps Peter learn math in a way that accommodates his ADHD diagnosis. The students then take a 15 minute morning break outside: some play in the nature playground and some socialize. Trinity talks to the science teacher who supervises the morning break about her ideas for plants that the students could grow in the school garden.

Next, the students rotate to their English Language Arts (ELA) class. In today's class, students continue to write their opinion essays about the class novel, *Esperanza Rising*, which tells the story of a girl and her mother who travel from Mexico to California and find work during the Great Depression. The ELA

teacher and the learning specialist lead the mini-lesson about writing background sentences before introducing textual evidence. As the students draft their paragraphs, the learning specialist checks in with Trinity and asks her to verbalize her idea for a background sentence before adding it to her graphic organizer. Peter raises his hand and asks the language specialist to check his work while Ernesto and a small group of students work with the ELA teacher to reread portions of the text and draft their background sentences. By the end of the period, the students are proud to share their work with one another and have received feedback to revise their drafts the following day. The 55-minute morning blocks feel like they end as soon as they begin.

After ELA, 5th graders enjoy a 30 minute recess. This is a favorite time for unstructured games and socialization. After recess, students head to lunch. At lunch, students have the option between two different healthy meals. Ernesto notices a picture of him and his friends near the salad bar with a caption explaining which ingredients were from the school garden. Today the temperature is perfect and the windows in the cafeteria are open into the greenspace. Students know how to separate food waste into compost, recycling, and trash so that the school's impact on the environment is minimized. After students finish their food and clean their tables, they are dismissed to their independent reading block. Here, Peter and Ernesto read books based on their instructional reading levels. Peter is halfway through his book and looks forward to discussing Chapter 6 during the daily reading conference with his teacher. Ernesto has finished his book and raises his hand to visit the classroom library. Meanwhile, Trinity attends guided reading class with four other students. The learning specialist models the day's reading strategy - making inferences - and students practice it independently as they read the shared text. Trinity demonstrates the reading strategy to the learning specialist, who shares feedback with Trinity and encourages her to use the strategy on the next page, too.

After independent reading block, the students transition to the afternoon portion of the day. They practice nature photography in visual arts class, which begins with an in-class tutorial followed by real-world practice outside. Trinity is excited to share her "bugs-eye-view" photographs with her family during the student showcase at the end of the month. After the 15-minute afternoon break, Ernesto, Trinity, and Peter attend science class. Today, they are beginning a new task and follow the "Engage" and "Explore" steps of the 5E Model as they investigate fossils found in the Southeastern United States. The ocean is miles from here - why do so many of these fossils look like they came from the water?

After science class, the students attend their workshop block. During this block, students can attend an extracurricular or study hall based on their interests. Peter and his friends meet at Garden Club. They are curious about a funny-looking insect that is popping up on their cucumbers, and their teacher has challenged them to find a safe way for pest-control. Trinity has cross-country practice. Because TNA has structured athletics during the school day, this allows for Trinity to participate and take the bus home. Ernesto attends study hall on his own volition; he has been struggling in social studies, and he knows that a few minutes reviewing last week's concepts will help him continue to keep up his academic progress. He knows that as soon as he is back on track, he can continue with his first choice: Business Club. Their recent project has been to take inventory and break down the budget for the school store. Ernesto wants to run a business and enjoys feeling like he can contribute ideas and raise money for future field trips. Students are working in small groups and caught up in their academics. When the dismissal bell rings, it catches them by surprise. A steady stream of students is seen dispersing to cars, buses, and down the street to their homes.

(f) Describe the innovative or unique features of the proposed school or education model. How do these unique features align with the mission and vision of the school? How will these unique features foster student achievement and success?

The following features of our model are innovative and unique to TNA, align with the mission and vision of the school, and foster student achievement and success:

1. Nature-Based Learning. Youth engagement with nature has dropped drastically in the past 20 years,<sup>8</sup> despite the numerous documented social, emotional, physical, and cognitive benefits to increased play and learning in nature. Students who learn in nature demonstrate decreased anger, inattentiveness, and problem behaviors in addition to decreased incidences of ADHD and depression, leading to stronger academic achievement.<sup>9</sup> Our nature-oriented campus and school model provide daily opportunities for learning and playing in and about nature. As a nature-based secondary school, our students have daily structured learning and unstructured play that takes place in an outdoor setting. As a result, our students gain self-confidence and comfort in nature, which allows it to serve as the backdrop for authentic learning experiences. This has a compounded positive benefit in social and emotional development across genders and ethnicities.<sup>10</sup>
2. A Career and Technical Education Aimed at Real-World Challenges. Our learning is oriented towards making the world better on a personal, local, and global scale. Student learning takes place through a blend of inquiry-based structures and work time. Learning culminates in periodic projects, all aimed at making positive contributions to the school or community. Through this work-based learning process, students develop cognitive skills while integrating core elements of sustainability and naturalism. Each year, student learning and work contributes to the operations of a schoolyard farm and environmental restoration program anchored on the campus. Students earn industry certifications in our high school Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resource Management pathways, which are aligned with the demands of high-needs jobs across Tennessee.
3. A Connected Diverse-by-Design Community. In response to schools becoming increasingly segregated, our diverse-by-design model is situated in the most diverse zip code in Tennessee and is committed to diversity, inclusion, and equity in all metrics (racial, socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic, etc.). We honor the hard work of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in schools while acknowledging that this work requires system-level disruption. We set ambitious goals to dismantle racism, oppression, and marginalization in our academic, behavioral, and professional systems. The nature-based setting of TNA is challenging and nurturing for all students, but especially for student groups who have been traditionally left behind or underserved. We maintain a sense of humility and curiosity. We listen to and learn from each other while centering on the people directly affected by the challenges of creating school integration, equitable achievement, and inclusive school environments. Students and their families contribute to the community in a unifying, nature-based setting that honors the funds of knowledge of all demographics.
4. A Research-Based School with Professionals who Build on the Research. Nature and place-based learning practices have a growing body of research, but there is much more to be done. Much of the research involves elementary and preschool-aged students, resulting in a wider availability of programming for younger students. TNA is providing a model of play and learning that is not typically an option for secondary students, especially students from diverse backgrounds. The teachers and staff at TNA adopt best practices in the field, while developing their own and contributing to the growing body of research. Our teachers and staff will be recognized as

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<sup>8</sup> Larson, L.R., Szczytko, R., Bowers, E.P., Stephens, L.E., Stevenson, K.T., Floyd, M.F., (2019). Outdoor time, screen time, and connection to nature: Troubling trends among rural youth? *Environment and Behavior*, 51(8), 966-991.

<sup>9</sup> Chawla, L., Keena, K., Pevec, I., & Stanley, E. (2014). Green schoolyards as havens from stress and resources for resilience in childhood and adolescence. *Health & Place International Journal*, 28, 1-13.

<sup>10</sup> Barton, J., Bragg, R., Pretty, J., Roberts, J., & Wood, C. (2016). The wilderness expedition: An effective life course intervention to improve young people's well-being and connectedness to nature. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 29(1). 59-72.

professionals and experts with the drive to generate a localized curriculum to be shared open-source to MNPS and Tennessee schools, further multiplying TNA's impact.

## SECTION 1.2 - ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

(a) Describe the community from which the proposed school intends to draw students, including the demographic profile and the school zones of the schools currently in operation within the proposed community.

As a public charter school, TNA is open to any MNPS students in grades 5-12. TNA's campus will be located in Southeast Nashville's Cane Ridge community, and we will focus recruitment efforts toward families living in the Cane Ridge, Antioch, and Overton clusters. As a diverse-by-design school, TNA aspires to serve students from a range of backgrounds. We expect that TNA's enrollment will mirror that of Southeast Nashville overall. Figure 1.2a uses data published in the Tennessee Department of Education 2021 Report Card to show the current demographic profiles of middle schools in Southeast Nashville; TNA's anticipated enrollment draws from the averages across these profiles.

*Figure 1.2a - Current and Anticipated Student Demographics*

	Cane Ridge Cluster		Antioch Cluster			Overton Cluster			SE Nashville Average*
	Antioch MS	Thurgood Marshall MS	Apollo MS	John F. Kennedy MS	Margaret Allen MS	Croft MS	McMurray MS	William Henry Oliver MS	TNA
American Indian / Alaska Native	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%	Not Enough Students	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%
Asian	7.5%	7.8%	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%	10.7%	8.1%	6.8%
Black / African American	35%	39.2%	27.7%	40.2%	37.9%	18.7%	14.6%	30.8%	31%
Hispanic	44.3%	34.7%	51.2%	39%	41.9%	52%	66.2%	17.2%	43.3%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	< 5%	Not Enough Students	Not Enough Students	< 5%	Not Enough Students	< 5%	Not Enough Students	< 5%	< 5%
White	12.6%	18.2%	16.2%	17.3%	18.1%	25.8%	8.4%	43.5%	20%
Students with Disabilities	12.6%	12.6%	11.9%	10.3%	13.0%	11.1%	11.0%	12.2%	11.8%*
English Learners	44.4%	41.6%	47.5%	39.5%	49.3%	42.8%	70.1%	24.7%	45%
Economically Disadvantaged	50%	40.1%	45.8%	42.2%	49.5%	33.2%	45.8%	29.5%	42%

*For "SE Nashville Average," "5%" is substituted for "<5%" and "1%" is substituted for "Not Enough Students."*

- |   |
|---|
| (b) Provide a rationale for selecting the community where the proposed school will locate.        |
| (c) Discuss the academic performance and enrollment trends of existing schools in that community. |
| (d) Describe the specific population of students the proposed school intends to serve.            |

TNA aims to create a school which reflects the diversity of our proposed community through our diverse-by-design school model. In accordance with the Tennessee Public Charter School Act,<sup>11</sup> TNA strives to provide an educational environment which leverages innovative teaching and learning practices, supports students to achieve proficiency on state assessments, and closes achievement gaps between student subgroups. We believe that TNA can deliver on this commitment by addressing three areas of need in Southeast Nashville.

- First, TNA will help alleviate crowded school communities by adding additional classroom seats.
- Second, TNA will offer an academic program that improves student performance outcomes, addresses existing achievement gaps, and prepares students for postsecondary success.
- Finally, TNA introduces a nature-based, project-based school model which is currently unavailable in public middle and high schools in Davidson County.

### Area of Need: Student Enrollment

Additional public schools are needed to serve Nashville's growing student population. MNPS currently serves more than 78,000 students, 12.4% of whom are students with disabilities and 26.2% of whom are English language learners.<sup>12</sup> Southeast Nashville's zip code, 37013, has also grown over the last decade from 78,406 residents in 2010 to an estimated 99,007 residents in 2019.<sup>13</sup> Thirty-seven percent of households in this zip code have children.<sup>14</sup> Publications from the Scarlett Foundation point to the impact of this growth on public schools in the Antioch, Cane Ridge, and Overton clusters. According to the Scarlett Foundation's MNPS Zoned Feeder Pattern Profiles from 2018-2019, some schools in Southeast Nashville have experienced three-year enrollment growth in the double-digits and many are nearing building capacity. (See Figure 1.2b.) A 2020 MNPS School Enrollment and Utilization report suggests that some middle and high schools in the Antioch, Cane Ridge, and Overton clusters have exceeded their capacity limits for students. These include William Henry Oliver Middle School at 100.8% capacity, John Overton High School at 101.5%, and Cane Ridge High School at 104.2%.

*Figure 1.2b - Three Year Enrollment Trends and Building Capacity Utilization in Southeast Nashville*

	Schools in the Antioch Cluster <sup>15</sup>	Schools in the Cane Ridge Cluster <sup>16</sup>	Schools in the Overton Cluster <sup>17</sup>
Middle School Student Enrollment - Average	686 avg students (171 per grade)	852 avg students (213 per grade)	837 avg students (209 per grade)
High School Student Enrollment	1,934 total students (483 per grade)	1,727 total students (432 per grade)	1,945 total students (486 per grade)

<sup>11</sup> 010 Tennessee Code Title 49 - Education Chapter 13 - Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002 49-13-102 - Purpose.

<sup>12</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). *Metro Nashville Public Schools*. <https://reportcard.tnedu.gov/districts/190/information>

<sup>13</sup> City-Data.com. (2021). *37013 zip code (Nashville-Davidson, TN) detailed profile*. <https://www.city-data.com/zips/37013.html>

<sup>14</sup> UnitedStatesZipCodes.org. (2021). *Zip code 37013*. <https://www.unitedstateszipcodes.org/37013/>

<sup>15</sup> Scarlett Family Foundation. (2021). *MNPS zoned feeder pattern profiles (2018-2019): Antioch cluster*. <https://www.scarlettfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/scarlett-feeder-antioch-1-1.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Scarlett Family Foundation. (2021). *MNPS zoned feeder pattern profiles (2018-2019): Cane Ridge cluster*. <https://www.scarlettfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/scarlett-feeder-cane-ridge.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Scarlett Family Foundation. (2021). *MNPS zoned feeder pattern profiles (2018-2019): Overton cluster*. <https://www.scarlettfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Overton.pdf>

Three Year Enrollment Trend <sup>18</sup>	-2%	+13%	+10%
Building Capacity Utilization <sup>19</sup>	88.8%	92.9%	89.7%

As buildings near or exceed capacity, some schools have taken to assigning students and teachers to portable classrooms. In November 2021, there were an estimated 30 portable classrooms in use in the Cane Ridge cluster alone.<sup>20</sup> Steadily increasing enrollment amid high building capacity utilization highlights the need for more public school seats to serve the needs of students and families in our proposed community.

### Area of Need: Academic Outcomes

TNA supports MNPS's priorities to (1) advance academic achievement for students currently enrolled in schools that underperform, (3) improve academic achievement in literacy, (4) improve academic achievement for English language learners, and (5) improve academic achievement for students with disabilities. Schools across Southeast Nashville achieve lower-than-expected academic performance outcomes compared with city-wide and state-wide averages. Southeast Nashville's low academic performance outcomes have been observed over time and appear to have been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 1.2c compares academic performance on the 2019 and 2021 TCAP exams for middle schools across the Antioch, Cane Ridge, and Overton clusters to MNPS and state-wide averages. The "Success Rate" column represents the proportion of students in all grades and across all subjects who achieved proficient results (by scoring either "on track" or "mastered") on these exams, while the "Achievement" columns show the proportion of students who achieved proficiency in each subject area. Figure 1.2c uses the results published in the Tennessee Department of Education 2021 Report Card to draw these comparisons.

Figure 1.2c - 2019 and 2021 TCAP Results for Tennessee, MNPS, and Southeast Nashville

TCAP Proficiency 2019					
	Success Rate	ELA Achievement	Math Achievement	Science Achievement	Social Studies Achievement
TN Average Overall <sup>21</sup>	36.4%	34.9%	37.0%	Not Available	38.7%
MNPS Average Overall	26.4%	26.1%	26.1%	Not Available	24.9%
SE Nashville MS Avg	16.5%	16.5%	16.5%	Not Available	17.6%
Antioch MS	11.4%	12.2%	9.6%	Not Available	11.8%
Apollo MS	10.1%	11.6%	8.9%	Not Available	11.4%
Croft MS	22.3%	23.8%	20.1%	Not Available	21.9%
John F. Kennedy MS	13.2%	11.2%	15.9%	Not Available	12.2%

<sup>18</sup> Scarlett Family Foundation. (2021). *Nashville education facts: By cluster*. <https://www.scarlettfoundation.org/friends-followers/nashville-education-facts/by-cluster/>

<sup>19</sup> MNPS School Enrollment and Utilization Report. (2020, October 14).

<sup>20</sup> Friends of Southeast Nashville. (2021, November 17). *The case for responsible development Antioch, Cane Ridge, and Priest Lake* [PowerPoint presentation]. Virtual Community Meeting, Nashville, TN, United States. [https://www.dropbox.com/s/9qq8hhojat2xn3i/The%20Case%20for%20Responsible%20Development%20FOSN%2020211117.mp4?dl=0&fbclid=IwAR3pPDa0v9EqtNC9EJA\\_Lc3tR7HfYuObcWx6jePzC\\_VANtHp4KbqfwlFXc](https://www.dropbox.com/s/9qq8hhojat2xn3i/The%20Case%20for%20Responsible%20Development%20FOSN%2020211117.mp4?dl=0&fbclid=IwAR3pPDa0v9EqtNC9EJA_Lc3tR7HfYuObcWx6jePzC_VANtHp4KbqfwlFXc)

<sup>21</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). *2019 report card data*. <https://www.tn.gov/education/data/data-downloads.html>

Margaret Allen MS	12.6%	13.0%	13.3%	Not Available	14.4%
McMurray MS	14.2%	12.5%	16.3%	Not Available	13.3%
Thurgood Marshall MS	14.9%	12.1%	16.9%	Not Available	11.8%
William Henry Oliver MS	33.3%	35.5%	31.1%	Not Available	43.7%

TCAP Proficiency 2021 <sup>22</sup>					
	Success Rate	ELA Achievement	Math Achievement	Science Achievement	Social Studies Achievement
TN Average Overall	27.8%	29.8%	25.9%	38.3%	36.7%
MNPS Average Overall	15.9%	19.9%	12%	21.4%	19.4%
SE Nashville MS Avg*	8%	10%	6%	12.3%	14.7%
Antioch MS	< 5%	7%	< 5%	8.1%	12.2%
Apollo MS	< 5%	5%	< 5%	5.2%	5.5%
Croft MS	11%	14.1%	8%	19.8%	21.6%
John F. Kennedy MS	6.9%	8.5%	5%	12.4%	8.5%
Margaret Allen MS	7.3%	10%	< 5%	10.6%	8.8%
McMurray MS	5.7%	7%	< 5%	8.5%	10.6%
Thurgood Marshall MS	5.7%	6.9%	< 5%	11.4%	13.7%
William Henry Oliver MS	15.5%	21.9%	12.6%	22.3%	36.8%

\*"TN Average Overall" and "MNPS Average Overall" include all grades, all subjects assessed in K-12. When estimating averages in Southeast Nashville, "5%" is substituted for "<5%." This means that the "SE Nashville MS Avg" is likely lower than that represented here.

These trends extend to the high school setting. High schools in the Antioch, Cane Ridge, and Overton clusters underperform the district and state averages on key metrics including four year high school graduation rates, ACT scores, and Ready Graduate achievement. (See Figure 1.2d.) Southeast Nashville's college completion rate mirrors that of the district, with between 27% and 31% of high school graduates from the class of 2014 earning an associate or bachelor's degree in six years.<sup>23</sup>

Figure 1.2d - 2021 High School Outcomes for Students in Tennessee, MNPS, and Southeast Nashville

<sup>22</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). *Metro Nashville Public Schools: Academic achievement*. <https://reportcard.tnedu.gov/districts/190/achievement>

<sup>23</sup> Tennessee College Access and Success Network. (2021). *Bridge to completion 2021*. Nashville Public Education Foundation. <https://nashvillepef.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Bridge-to-Completion-2021.pdf>

	2021 Four Year HS Graduation Rate	2021 ACT Scores	2021 Ready Graduate	College Completion Rate <sup>24</sup>
State Average <sup>25</sup>	89.6%	19.9	40.5%	Not Available
District Average	82.3%	18.5	30%	27%
Antioch HS	81.1%	16.5	16.8%	31%
Cane Ridge HS	83.5%	16.7	24.1%	27%
John Overton HS	80.1%	17.5	24.6%	30%

The Tennessee Department of Education 2021 Report Card also reveals inequitable outcomes for students who identify as economically disadvantaged, English language learners, and students with disabilities. These achievement gaps appear across indicators in grades 5-12 and are evident in students' TCAP results as well as in outcomes like ACT and Ready Graduate results. Figure 1.2e reports the overall success rates for students in middle and high schools in the Antioch, Cane Ridge, and Overton clusters and compares proficient results for economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, and students with disabilities across each school. Figure 1.2f provides similar comparisons according to metrics associated with college and career readiness.

*Figure 1.2e - 2020-2021 TNReady Achievement across Student Subgroups*

	2021 Success Rate <sup>26</sup>	Economically Disadvantaged Students	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
SE Nashville MS Avg*	8%	5%	5%	5%
Antioch MS	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%
Apollo MS	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%	7.8%
Croft MS	11%	< 5%	< 5%	8.1%
John F. Kennedy MS	6.9%	5.7%	< 5%	< 5%
Margaret Allen MS	7.3%	5.6%	< 5%	6.5%
McMurray MS	5.7%	< 5%	< 5%	8.1%
Thurgood Marshall MS	5.7%	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%
William H. Oliver MS	15.5%	6.2%	7.4%	11.4%

<sup>24</sup> Tennessee College Access and Success Network. (2021). *Bridge to completion 2021*. Nashville Public Education Foundation. <https://nashvillepef.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Bridge-to-Completion-2021.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). *State of Tennessee: Ready Graduate*. <https://reportcard.tnedu.gov/state/0/ready-graduate>

<sup>26</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). *Metro Nashville Public Schools: Academic achievement*. <https://reportcard.tnedu.gov/districts/190/achievement>

Antioch HS	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%	6.4%
Cane Ridge HS	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%
John Overton HS	11.2%	5.4%	< 5%	< 5%

When estimating averages in Southeast Nashville, “5%” is substituted for “<5%.” This means that the “SE Nashville MS Avg” is likely lower than that represented here.

Figure 1.2f - 2021 ACT Scores and Ready Graduate Achievement Across Subgroups

	Antioch HS	Cane Ridge HS	John Overton HS
2021 ACT Scores - All Students	16.5	16.7	17.5
Economically Disadvantaged	16.2	16.4	16.2
English Language Learners	13.9	14.3	14.5
Students with Disabilities	13.9	14.8	14.3
2021 Ready Graduate Achievement - All Students	16.8%	24.1%	24.6%
Economically Disadvantaged	12%	19.7%	15.1%
English Language Learners	< 5%	8%	5.3%
Students with Disabilities	< 5%	20%	< 5%

Lower-than-expected academic performance outcomes demonstrate the achievement gaps that affect students across our proposed community. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, “achievement gaps occur when one group of students (e.g., students grouped by race/ethnicity, gender) outperforms another group and the difference in average scores for the two groups is statistically significant.”<sup>27</sup> Achievement gaps have been observed to affect students across various subgroups on a national scale, and the performance data shared here (e.g. TNReady achievement, ACT scores, Ready Graduate achievement, etc.) suggest that inequitable performance disparities exist within and across student subgroups in our proposed community as well. These disparities impact students from grades 5-12 and appear to be even wider for students who identify as economically disadvantaged, English language learners, and students with disabilities. TNA’s academic program, social-emotional learning program, and culture of resilience and well-being are uniquely designed to support students to overcome these performance disparities.

### Area of Need: Innovative School Model

Studies show that increased access to the outdoors provides several benefits that affect students’ academic performance and well-being. One study on the impacts of “screen time” and “green time” in children and adolescents found nature exposure to be associated with better psychological outcomes, improved cognitive functioning, and higher performance in language arts and math.<sup>28</sup> TNA draws on this research to provide an innovative public school model that does not currently exist in our area. While some

<sup>27</sup> National Center for Education Statistics. (2021, October 14). *Achievement gaps*. <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/studies/gaps/>

<sup>28</sup> Oswald, T.K., Rumbold, A.R., Kedzior, S.G.E., & Moore, V.M. (2020). Psychological impacts of screen time and green time for children and adolescents: A systematic scoping review. *PLOS ONE*, 15(9), 1-52.

independent schools and some MNPS elementary schools provide access to nature-based education,<sup>29</sup> no schools have extended this philosophy to affect the day-to-day educational experience of students in grades 5-12. Aside from offering an additional school choice to families in Davidson County, TNA will offer our community access to a unique model that improves academic outcomes while supporting students' health and happiness. We have selected the Cane Ridge community due to the remaining green spaces and the community's values to protect the biodiversity and local ecosystems in the area. (See Section 1.10 for engagement with the Cane Ridge community.)

(e) Describe what the proposed school would do more effectively than the schools that are now serving the targeted population. What different educational options will the proposed school offer?

### **Project-Based Learning (PBL)**

In addition to our nature-based educational focus, TNA leverages a project-based academic model that supports equitable learning opportunities for all students. Numerous studies have explored the effects of project-based learning on students' motivation, development of social skills, and academic success. Findings from some of these studies include:

- PBL promotes long-term knowledge retention and higher student and staff satisfaction.<sup>30</sup>
- PBL leads to “significantly better” academic achievement when compared to traditional instructional approaches, especially in the social sciences.<sup>31</sup> One study with 7th and 8th grade students found that students who had engaged in project-based learning at school outperformed students who had not used project-based learning approaches in school on state-standardized tests in both reading and math.<sup>32</sup>
- PBL has been shown to reduce achievement gaps across a variety of subject areas. One study with elementary-aged students from low-socioeconomic status school districts showed that project-based learning contributed to higher growth in social studies and literacy achievement (especially in informational reading).<sup>33</sup> Another study indicated that 7th and 8th grade students in an urban school district who participated in project-based inquiry science units showed increased science understanding and achieved “significantly higher pass rates” on state-standardized tests in science than other students in their district.<sup>34</sup> A PBL approach was also found to contribute to higher pass-rates on Advanced Placement exams, leading to an 8% increase in students who earned a score of 3 or higher on AP US Government and Politics or AP Environmental Science across five predominantly urban school districts.<sup>35</sup>

TNA's nature-based, PBL approach supports students to develop cognitive skills and master the disciplinary knowledge and skills necessary to achieve proficiency on state assessments. Project-based learning also allows for flexible and intuitive personalization that meets the needs of all students including students with disabilities, gifted students, and English language learners.

### **Diverse-By-Design Model**

<sup>29</sup> Westmeade Elementary School and University School of Nashville have adopted part-time Young Naturalist programs.

<sup>30</sup> Strobel, J. & van Barneveld, A. (2009). When is PBL more effective? A meta-synthesis of meta-analyses comparing PBL to conventional classrooms. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning*, 3(1), 44-58.

<sup>31</sup> Chen, C.H. & Yang, Y.C. (2019). Revisiting the effects of project-based learning on students' academic achievement: A meta-analysis investigating moderators. *Educational Research Review* 26, 71-81.

<sup>32</sup> Cervantes, B., Hemmer, L., & Kouzekanani, K. (2015). The impact of project-based learning on minority student achievement: Implications for school redesign. *NCPEA Educational Leadership Review of Doctoral Research*, 2(2), 50-66.

<sup>33</sup> Duke, N.K., Halvorsen, A-L., Strachan, S.L., Kim, J., & Konstantopoulos, S. (February 2022). Putting PjBL to the test: The impact of project-based learning on second graders' social studies and literacy learning and motivation in low-SES school settings. *American Educational Research Journal*, 58(1), 160-200.

<sup>34</sup> Geier, R., Blumenfeld, P.C., Marx, R.W., Krajcik, J.S., Fishman, B., Soloway, E., & Clay-Chambers, J. (2007). Standardized test outcomes for students engaged in inquiry-based science curricula in the context of urban reform. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 45(8), 922-939.

<sup>35</sup> Lucas Education Research. (2021). *Project-based learning boosts student achievement in AP courses*. George Lucas Educational Foundation. <https://www.lucasedresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/KIA-Research-Brief.pdf>

TNA's diverse-by-design model aims to reflect the racial, socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of Southeast Nashville. Building and maintaining an inclusive, welcoming community is essential to our mission to cultivate healthy and happy young adults. The Century Foundation reported that students who belong to socioeconomically and racially diverse school communities benefit from outcomes including higher standardized test scores (including 30% more growth in high school test scores) and higher enrollment in college.<sup>36</sup> One study found that students in high schools with high socioeconomic compositions were 68% more likely to enroll in a four-year college than students in schools with low socioeconomic compositions.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, socioeconomically and racially integrated schools have also been shown to reduce racial bias, decrease high school dropout rates, and narrow achievement gaps as measured by indicators like NAEP and SAT performance.<sup>38</sup> Accordingly, TNA's diverse-by-design model advances continuing school integration efforts and contributes to equitable, inclusive school environments that support all learners. In doing so, TNA supports MNPS's priority to (2) add to the number of schools with student enrollment diversity in Nashville.

### **Vertically-Aligned College and Career Focus**

TNA cultivates student experiences across grades 5-12 to ensure that our graduates are knowledgeable about the world, passionate about the outdoors, and committed to doing good work. TNA aligns academic programming to the Tennessee Academic Standards as well as the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, introduces opportunities for students to earn industry credentials beginning in 9th grade, and offers a range of Advanced Placement options for students in grades 11 and 12. Students begin their career exploration in the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources program of study by taking Introduction to Agriculture Sciences in 8th grade. Then, students have the opportunity to participate in work-based learning opportunities in high school and may qualify for onsite employment as part of TNA's Student Job Corps. These structures allow TNA staff to individually support all learners according to their interests and ensure that all students are prepared to meet key metrics for college and career readiness. Through providing ACT-aligned curricula, courses which lead to industry credentials, and Advanced Placement opportunities, TNA can proactively reduce existing achievement gaps associated with ACT scores and Ready Graduate Achievement that currently affect students in our community.

(f) If you are the sponsor of an existing school, describe

- Any enrollment practices, processes, and policies of the proposed school that will differ from your existing school(s); and
- How the community for the proposed school is similar and/or different from the community that you currently serve.

TNA does not have an existing school.

(g) Complete the enrollment summary and anticipated demographics charts below.

<sup>36</sup> The Century Foundation. (2019, April 29). *The benefits of socioeconomically and racially integrated schools and classrooms*. <https://tcf.org/content/facts/the-benefits-of-socioeconomically-and-racially-integrated-schools-and-classrooms/?session=1>

<sup>37</sup> Palardy, G.J. (2013). High school socioeconomic segregation and student attainment. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50(4), 714-754.

<sup>38</sup> The Century Foundation. (2019, April 29). *The benefits of socioeconomically and racially integrated schools and classrooms*. <https://tcf.org/content/facts/the-benefits-of-socioeconomically-and-racially-integrated-schools-and-classrooms/?session=1>

TNA will open in Fall 2023 to 81 5th grade students and 81 6th grade students. TNA will add one grade level per year until the middle school reaches a full enrollment of 324 students in SY 2025-26. TNA will enroll 90 students in each grade level in grades 9-12, and TNA will reach full enrollment in SY 2029-2030. At full capacity, TNA will serve 684 students in grades 5-12.

Figure 1.2g - TNA's Student Enrollment Over Time

Grade Level	Year 1 Fall 2023	Year 2 Fall 2024	Year 3 Fall 2025	Year 4 Fall 2026	Year 5 Fall 2027	At Capacity Fall 2029
K-4	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	81	81	81	81	81	81
6	81	81	81	81	81	81
7		81	81	81	81	81
8			81	81	81	81
9				90	90	90
10					90	90
11						90
12						90
Totals	162	243	324	414	504	684

Anticipated Demographics	% of Economically Disadvantaged Students	% of Students with Disabilities	% of English Learners
	42%	12%	45%

## SECTION 1.3 - ACADEMIC FOCUS AND PLAN

(a) Describe the academic focus of the proposed school.

TNA follows a distinctive nature-based, project-based thematic program in grades 5-12 which supports academic success and emphasizes college and career readiness. In alignment with TNA's mission, this academic focus supports students to:

- Master content, skills, and understandings to build their **knowledge about the world**.
- Engage across the curriculum with units of instruction, performance tasks, and other experiences that inspire a **passion for the outdoors**.
- Connect and apply their learning to serve the community and the environment; authentic learning experiences with tangible results **motivates students to do good work**.

We outline the components of the academic focus below. Our academic focus is dedicated to supporting students' academic growth and performance and eliminating inequitable achievement gaps between student subgroups should they arise. Later, we detail how the components support our educational philosophy, inform our curriculum development, and guide our instructional methods and approach.

College and Career Readiness - TNA emphasizes college and career readiness throughout grades 5-12 using data-driven instructional practices and vertically-aligned curricula focused on disciplinary knowledge and skills. TNA's academic program identifies, addresses, and resolves achievement gaps so that students are well-prepared to pursue post-secondary opportunities, both through mastering the disciplinary content to seamlessly transition from high school to college courses and through gaining skills and experience to prepare for career opportunities after graduation. Students at TNA complete programs of study in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources, which begins with an Introduction to Agriculture Science course in 8th grade and continues through high school. Students participate in work-based learning experiences, earn industry credentials, take Advanced Placement courses, and graduate prepared for future opportunities in a variety of fields.

Project-Based Learning - Project-based learning (PBL) allows students to drive their own learning with developmentally-appropriate structure and support. At TNA, student projects align to Tennessee Academic Standards and ACT College and Career Readiness Standards and allow students to practice academic habits and cognitive skills.<sup>39</sup> PBL leads to deeper understanding by giving students the opportunity to develop disciplinary knowledge and skills, engage in authentic inquiry, explore concepts in depth, and transfer their learning to new scenarios. PBL occurs across academic subjects and culminates in opportunities for students to produce meaningful work that impacts the community. Students share their work with one another and with the community during periodic showcase events.

Nature-Based Learning - Nature-based learning allows for student learning to take place within and alongside natural environments. Students at TNA engage with nature by participating in outdoor learning activities, attending class in outdoor classrooms, and exploring issues that affect the environment around them. Students interact with nature across the curriculum and school day during core academic subjects and enrichment activities.

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<sup>39</sup> Summit Learning. (2021). *Summit Learning cognitive skills rubric*.  
<https://cdn.summitlearning.org/assets/marketing/Cognitive-Skills-Document-Suite.pdf>

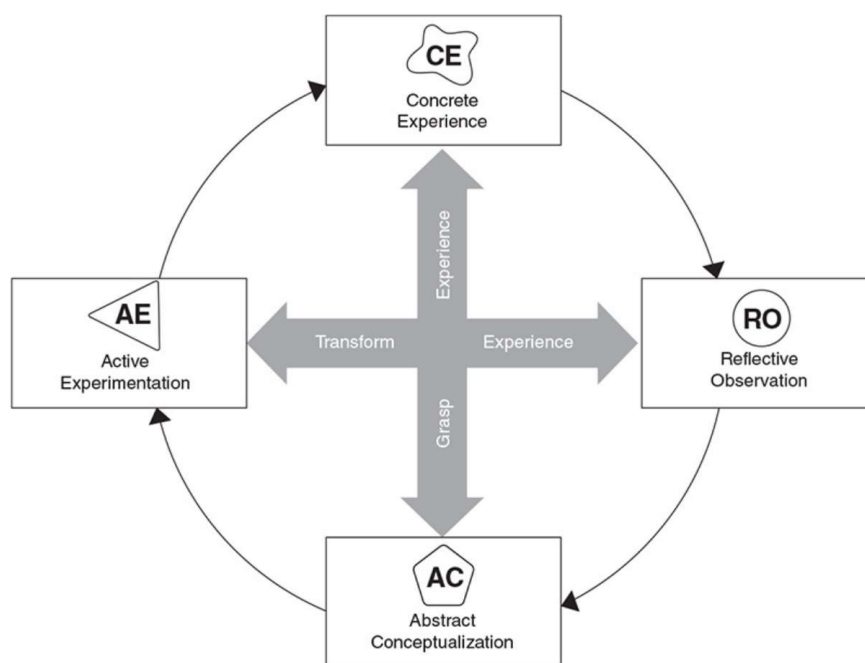
- (b) Outline the academic plan of the proposed school. Include specific academic benchmarks.
- (c) Describe the most important characteristics of the academic plan, including any specific educational philosophy, instructional methods, or innovations.
- (d) Describe current research supporting the academic plan and how the plan will drive academic improvement for all students and help close achievement gaps.
- (e) Describe the curriculum and basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure for all divisions (elementary, middle, high school) to be served, and explain any differences among the divisions.
- (f) Explain why the instructional methods and proposed curriculum are well-suited for the targeted student population. How does the curriculum honor and/or reflect the diverse identities of your students?
- (g) Explain how the academic plan aligns with Tennessee's academic standards.

### Educational Philosophy

TNA believes that meaningful learning is student-directed and connected to the greater community. TNA's academic plan is guided by experiential learning theory and constructivism, which assert that learning is a personalized, participatory process which builds on students' prior knowledge and leads to lasting changes in the learner.

Experiential learning theory suggests that learning is a continuous process which is informed and refined by learners' individual experiences. The experiential learning cycle (shown in Figure 1.3a) describes how learners experience events (beginning with concrete experiences), reflect on their experiences (through reflective observation), and adapt their behaviors based on this reflection (through abstract conceptualization and active experimentation). Each time learners engage with the experiential learning cycle, they add new details and layers of depth to their existing knowledge. This repeated process allows learners to transform their understandings and gain a more comprehensive understanding of the content and of themselves.

Figure 1.3a - Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle<sup>40</sup>



<sup>40</sup> Kolb, D. A. (2015). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development, 2nd edition*. Pearson FT Press.

Similarly, constructivists maintain that effective learning takes place when students are personally engaged in the learning process. The ultimate goal of effective learning involves students' ability to transfer their skills, understanding, and knowledge from one setting to another: between units in the same course, from one course to another, from one year to another, and from one community to another.<sup>41,42</sup> For transfer to take place, students must demonstrate deep understanding of disciplinary content and "actively choose and evaluate strategies, consider resources, and receive feedback"<sup>43</sup> throughout the course of their learning.

From a constructivist viewpoint, classroom teachers serve as the facilitators of learning by helping students build knowledge, link new ideas to existing ones, and establish interactive relationships with the content, one another, and the community.<sup>44,45</sup> In *Teaching for Deep Understanding* (2006), Leithwood et al. provide four "requirements" associated with teaching for deep understanding:

1. Learning engages students' previous and current experiences and ideas.
2. Learning allows students to make connections between their own knowledge and values and the knowledge and values of others.
3. Learning experiences give students the opportunity to collaborate.
4. Learning involves exploring topics using different intellectual, aesthetic, and relational perspectives.<sup>46</sup>

For transfer to occur, students must first master the knowledge and skills necessary to engage with higher-order thinking tasks like analysis, evaluation, and creation. Units of instruction at TNA are scaffolded to support student learning across all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. Such scaffolding helps to effectively introduce new material, proactively identify and address student skill gaps, and support students to engage with performance tasks that support deep understanding.

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<sup>41</sup> Bransford, J., Brown, A. L., Cocking, R. R., & National Research Council (U.S.). (1999). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*. National Academy Press.

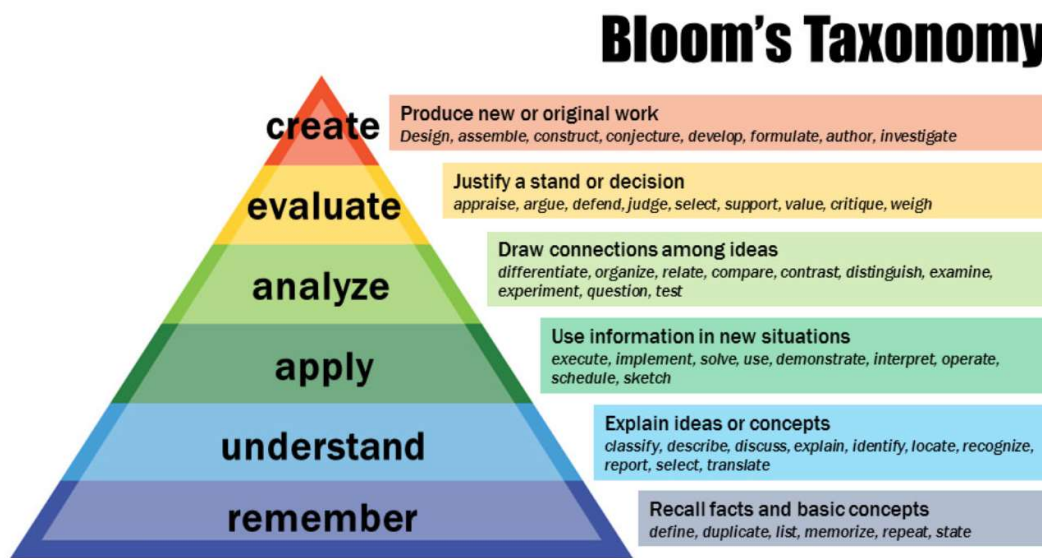
<sup>42</sup> Wiggins, G. P., McTighe, J., Kieran, L. J., Frost, F., & Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (1998). *Understanding by design*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

<sup>43</sup> Bransford, J., Brown, A. L., Cocking, R. R., & National Research Council (U.S.). (1999). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*. National Academy Press.

<sup>44</sup> Nuthall, G. (2002). Social constructivist teaching and the shaping of students' knowledge and thinking. In J. Brophy (Ed.), *Social constructivist teaching: Affordances and constraints* (pp. 43-79). JAI/Elsevier Science.

<sup>45</sup> Leithwood, K., McAdie, P., Bascia, N., & Rodrigue, A. (Eds.). (2006). *Teaching for deep understanding: What every educator should know. 1st edition*. Corwin.

<sup>46</sup> Leithwood, K., McAdie, P., Bascia, N., & Rodrigue, A. (Eds.). (2006). *Teaching for deep understanding: What every educator should know. 1st edition*. Corwin.

Figure 1.3b - Bloom's Taxonomy<sup>47</sup>

TNA believes that effective learning takes place within learners' zones of proximal development, which considers both the learner's developmental level and the learner's ability to explore topics with adult and peer support.<sup>48</sup> Aiming for the zone of proximal development helps students access academic content and builds self-efficacy,<sup>49</sup> which prepares learners to participate in increasingly-complex tasks.

### Curriculum Development and Selection

In alignment with experiential learning theory and constructivist principles, TNA designs curricula with the primary objective to support comprehensive student understanding and mastery of disciplinary content. TNA follows the backwards design process for instructional planning outlined in *Understanding by Design*,<sup>50</sup> which consists of three steps:

- **Stage 1: Identify Desired Results.** In this stage, designers determine the goals for the unit, identify targeted standards, and create key essential questions for students to explore. Designers also consider what students should understand and be able to do by the end of the unit (through identifying "acquisition" and "meaning" goals) and choose long-term "transfer" goals that students will apply to new situations in the future.
- **Stage 2: Determine Acceptable Evidence.** Once the long-term goals and standards are identified, designers determine how students will show mastery of the knowledge and skills introduced in the unit. In this stage, designers create culminating projects and performance tasks that allow students to demonstrate their proficiency.
- **Stage 3: Plan Learning Experiences and Instruction.** In the final stage of the design process, designers decide upon the daily experiences that students will engage with to master the content and skills covered in the unit. Designers select the learning activities, materials, and resources appropriate to support this mastery and prepare for opportunities to measure and address achievement gaps between student sub-groups.

<sup>47</sup> Vanderbilt University. (2021). *Bloom's Taxonomy*. Center for Teaching.

<https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/>

<sup>48</sup> Sahlberg, P., & Doyle, W. (2019). *Let the children play: How more play will save our schools and help children thrive*. Oxford University Press.

<sup>49</sup> Leithwood, K., McAdie, P., Bascia, N., & Rodrigue, A. (Eds.). (2006). *Teaching for deep understanding: What every educator should know. 1st edition*. Corwin.

<sup>50</sup> Wiggins, G. P., McTighe, J., Kiernan, L. J., Frost, F., & Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (1998). *Understanding by design*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Similar to Bloom’s Taxonomy, Stage 1 challenges the instructional designer to support the transfer of students’ understanding by planning the unit according to increasingly-complex cognitive skills. In this process, the designer considers the unit’s long-term goals, identifies the key understandings that will support students in achieving long-term goals, creates Essential Questions to guide exploration, and defines the knowledge and skills that students will master during the unit. (Figure 1.3c.<sup>51</sup>)

*Figure 1.3c - Stage 1 Design Template, Adapted from Understanding by Design*

Established Goals	
What relevant goals (e.g. content standards, course or program objectives, learning outcomes) will this design address?	
Understandings	Essential Questions
Students will understand that... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the big ideas?</li> <li>• What specific understandings about them are desired?</li> <li>• What misunderstandings are predictable?</li> </ul>	What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?
Knowledge	Skills
Students will know... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What key knowledge and skills will students acquire as a result of this unit?</li> <li>• What should they eventually be able to do as a result of such knowledge and skills?</li> </ul>	Students will be able to...

In Stage 3, TNA considers how learning activities facilitate student exploration across multiple levels of inquiry,<sup>52</sup> ranging from confirmation inquiry (in which the expected results of an activity are already known) to open inquiry (in which students develop their own questions and design their own processes for exploring a topic in greater depth). Throughout the unit design process, TNA avoids what Wiggins & McTighe call “activity-focused teaching” and “coverage-focused teaching,” which lead students to develop an incomplete, superficial understanding of classroom content (2005, p. 16). Instead, learning activities address real-world challenges, relate to students’ interests and experiences, and allow students to explore and enhance their understanding through repeated practice, frequent feedback, and collaboration with others.

TNA uses a variety of approaches to support curricular development:

1. When no existing curriculum proves to be a strong fit to meet TNA’s academic focus, TNA develops the curriculum entirely through the backwards-design process.
2. When an existing curriculum is found to somewhat meet TNA’s academic focus, TNA adopts existing materials and uses the backwards-design process to adapt them to support for greater discovery, collaboration, and transfer.

<sup>51</sup> Wiggins, G. and McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design - Expanded 2nd edition*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and Merrill/Prentice Hall.

<sup>52</sup> University of Wisconsin Extended Campus. (2019). *Inquiry-based learning*. Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. <https://ce.uwex.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Inquiry-basedlearning.pdf>

3. In some cases, it may be most appropriate to use an existing curriculum “as is,” particularly in cases where students may benefit from a more direct-instruction approach to expedite the acquisition of knowledge and skills among students who are below grade level.
4. In all cases, TNA accommodates and modifies curriculum as necessary to support students with disabilities, gifted students, and English language learners.

TNA aligns curriculum to the standards listed below. TNA aligns curricula to Tennessee Academic Standards, to standards associated with key outcome assessments including the ACT and Advanced Placement exams, and to standards that support students’ social and emotional development.

- Tennessee Academic Standards (TAS) - Students master Tennessee Academic Standards in all classes and in all grade levels.
- ACT College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) - Students practice ACT-aligned standards in English language arts, science, math, and social studies beginning in 7th grade.
- Advanced Placement Standards and Frameworks (AP) - Advanced Placement (AP) standards and frameworks vary by subject area. AP courses at TNA introduce academic content following the guidance from the College Board provided for each course. At the high school level, TNA’s academic courses will require that students practice disciplinary performance tasks similar to those which students might expect to see on AP exams.
- Penn Resilience Skill Set<sup>53</sup> - Units of instruction at TNA provide students the opportunity to master the six resilience competencies outlined in the Penn Resilience Skill Set: self-awareness, self-regulation, mental agility, strengths of character, connection, and optimism. Students practice these competencies throughout learning activities like collaborative work, class discussions, class projects, and performance tasks. Advisory block curricula also support student development according to each competency. The Penn Resilience Skill Set will be discussed in Section 1.10.
- Learning for Justice - Social Justice Standards (SJS)<sup>54</sup> - Social justice standards appear across curricula in academic classes and in advisory block from grades 5-12. Standards in this framework are divided into four domains - identity, diversity, justice, and action - and are designed to reduce bias and affirm students’ diverse identities and experiences.

Figure 1.3d outlines TNA’s proposed base curricula and rationale for selection. TNA is currently in the process of reviewing these curricula and will continually evaluate our curriculum to meet the needs of our students and community.

*Figure 1.3d - TNA’s Proposed Base Curricula, Alignment, and Rationale*

Content Area	Proposed Base Curricula	Academic Standards and Frameworks	Rationale
English Language Arts <sup>55</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● LearnZillion</li> <li>● EL Education (5-8)</li> <li>● McGraw-Hill StudySync (9-12)</li> <li>● PBL Works</li> <li>● Reading A-Z</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TAS (5-12)</li> <li>● ACT CCRS (7-12)</li> <li>● AP (9-12)</li> <li>● Penn Resilience Skill Set (5-12)</li> <li>● SJS (5-12)</li> </ul>	EL Education’s Language Arts curriculum includes backwards-designed modules of instruction. Many units are aligned to TNA’s emphasis on nature-based education and building inclusive communities (i.e. “Researching to Build Knowledge and Teach Others: Biodiversity in the Rainforest” in 5th grade, etc.) TNA uses McGraw-Hill’s

<sup>53</sup> University of Pennsylvania School of Arts and Sciences. (2021). *Resilience skill set*. Positive Psychology Center. <https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/resilience-programs/resilience-skill-set>

<sup>54</sup> Teaching Tolerance. (2018). *Social justice standards: The Teaching Tolerance anti-bias framework*. Southern Poverty Law Center. <https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/TT-Social-Justice-Standards-Anti-bias-framework-2020.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2020, January 30). *Section E adoption list*. Textbook Reviews. <https://www.tn.gov/education/textbook-services/textbook-reviews.html>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words their Way</li> </ul>		StudySync curriculum to support disciplinary learning in high school. TNA supplements units and reinforces project-based learning opportunities using curriculum resources from PBLWorks. To support students in need of additional practice, TNA uses resources from Reading A-Z (which provides leveled texts for guided reading groups) and Words their Way (which provides materials for reading interventions like phonics and grammar instruction).
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - Go Math (5-8)</li> <li>Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II</li> <li>Cengage Learning Inc. (Pre-calculus and Calculus)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TAS (5-12)</li> <li>ACT CCRS (7-12)</li> <li>Penn Resilience Skill Set (5-12)</li> <li>SJS (5-12)</li> </ul>	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s curriculum in math aligns to Tennessee Academic Standards and introduces concepts using the 5E Model of Instruction, an inquiry-based learning method (described further in the “Instructional Methods” section below). The Tennessee State Review Committee found these resources to be accessible and appropriate for English language learners, advanced students, and students performing below grade level. <sup>56</sup> Students in advanced math courses use curricular resources from Cengage Learning Inc.
Science <sup>57</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (5-12)</li> <li>PBLWorks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TAS (5-12)</li> <li>ACT CCRS (7-12)</li> <li>AP (9-12)</li> <li>Penn Resilience Skill Set (5-12)</li> <li>SJS (5-12)</li> </ul>	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s curricular resources align to Tennessee State Standards in science and introduces students to science content using disciplinary core ideas and inquiry-based labs and learning activities. TNA supplements these materials with resources from PBLWorks.
Social Studies <sup>58</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gallopade (5)</li> <li>McGraw-Hill (6-12)</li> <li>Learning for Justice</li> <li>PBLWorks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TAS (5-12)</li> <li>ACT CCRS (7-12)</li> <li>AP (9-12)</li> <li>Penn Resilience Skill Set (5-12)</li> <li>SJS (5-12)</li> </ul>	Gallopade and McGraw-Hill’s curricular resources in social studies align to the Tennessee State Standards. TNA supplements and adapts these materials to follow a project-based emphasis using resources from PBLWorks and Learning for Justice.

## Instructional Methods

<sup>56</sup> Reviews of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s math curriculum for Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, and Grades 9-12 are downloadable from the Tennessee Department of Education under “Section I (Mathematics) - Local Adoption Year 2015” at <https://www.tn.gov/education/textbook-services/textbook-reviews.html>.

<sup>57</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2018). *Section C approved adoption list*. Textbook Reviews. <https://www.tn.gov/education/textbook-services/textbook-reviews.html>

<sup>58</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2022). *Adoption list titles*. (Under the heading *Section D (Social Studies, World Languages, & CTE) - Local Adoption Year 2019*). Textbook Reviews. <https://www.tn.gov/education/textbook-services/textbook-reviews.html>

TNA follows a project-based learning model in core academic classes. Studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of project-based learning in improving students' performance on assessments in science, math, and English while supporting student motivation and helping students to develop social and emotional skills.<sup>59</sup> Project-based learning aligns to experiential learning theory and constructivist learning and teaching principles and includes seven essential elements:<sup>60</sup>

1. Student exploration is guided by a meaningful essential question.
2. Students engage with authentic problems.
3. Students exercise choice about how to engage in the project.
4. Students practice sustained inquiry over time.
5. Students use ongoing feedback as an opportunity to revise their thinking and products.
6. Students reflect on their learning and growth.
7. Students demonstrate their learning through a culminating performance task.

Teachers exercise flexibility in deciding how to best structure and guide students through a project-based task. Project-based learning cycles at TNA typically follow the 5E Model of Instruction<sup>61</sup> (engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate), though teachers might adapt or extend this model based on the level of inquiry most appropriate for the task. Each core academic class maintains its own PBL cycle. Teachers will occasionally collaborate to offer an interdisciplinary project which takes place across multiple core academic classes (e.g. English language arts might pair with science, social studies might pair with visual arts, etc.). A project-based learning cycle might be accomplished in one class period or might take place over several days or weeks based on the complexity of the task.

### Instructional Strategies

TNA uses a variety of instructional strategies to support students as they master the acquisition, meaning, and transfer goals of units. Figure 1.3e outlines TNA's key instructional strategies.

Figure 1.3e - Instructional Strategies at TNA

Instructional Strategies for All Content Areas	
Data-Driven Instruction	Data-driven instruction uses student results to inform decision-making in the classroom. TNA staff use formative and summative assessments to measure what students know and can do, analyze the results of these assessments, and plan an appropriate response based on trends revealed during the analysis process. Data-driven instruction positively impacts learning by providing frequent opportunities for students to receive feedback and revise their thinking to master academic standards and meet learning goals. The data-driven instruction cycle allows for students to hear and respond to feedback from a variety of sources in class, between classes, and between units. Regularly grounding student feedback in current data expedites student growth and closes achievement gaps by clearly defining students' current performance and naming concrete next steps for improvement.
Disciplinary Literacy	Disciplinary literacy "involves the use of reading, reasoning, investigating, speaking, and writing required to learn and form complex content knowledge appropriate to a

<sup>59</sup> Lucas Educational Research. (2021). *Rigorous project-based learning is a powerful lever for improving equity*. George Lucas Educational Foundation. <https://www.lucasedresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Equity-Research-Brief.pdf>

<sup>60</sup> PBLWorks. (2021). *Gold standard PBL: Essential project design elements*. Buck Institute for Education. <https://www.pblworks.org/what-is-pbl/gold-standard-project-design>

<sup>61</sup> San Diego County Office of Education. (2021). 5E model of instruction. <https://ngss.sdcoe.net/Evidence-Based-Practices/5E-Model-of-Instruction>

	particular discipline.” <sup>62</sup> TNA’s courses vertically align so that each course prepares students to demonstrate increasingly complex communication and interpretation skills appropriate to advanced study in that discipline. Teachers in each content area select instructional strategies that support students to master discipline-specific literacy including reading, writing, and speaking, which prepares students to engage with college-level coursework in each field.
Inquiry-Based Teaching	Inquiry-based teaching allows teachers to facilitate student exploration with varying degrees of structure and support. Inquiry-based teaching allows students to investigate and answer essential questions as they apply their learning to authentic challenges. Teachers select additional instructional strategies to support inquiry-based teaching including direct instruction, cooperative learning, classroom discussion, and others.
Explicit Instruction	Explicit instruction helps teachers provide students with knowledge or skills needed to complete a task. Explicit instruction allows teachers to name goals, model problem-solving processes, and provide opportunities for students to practice these processes to mastery with appropriate support and feedback. Explicit instruction can be beneficial in supporting achievement among English language learners in particular, <sup>63</sup> and functions of explicit instruction like daily reviews/prerequisite skill checks, the teaching of new content, guided practice, independent practice, and weekly and monthly reviews have been found to support growth and academic performance among students who are at-risk for emotional and behavioral disorders. <sup>64</sup>
Inclusive Teaching Strategies	TNA uses inclusive teaching strategies to support the needs of all learners. Inclusive teaching strategies help develop welcoming classroom climates <sup>65</sup> by affirming students’ identities, following norms for equitable participation, introducing multiple perspectives, and ensuring that materials represent diverse voices. Teachers also use inclusive strategies like co-teaching, small group instruction, Universal Design for Learning, and Sheltered English Instruction to support students in accessing and mastering the curriculum. Inclusive teaching strategies allow for learning to be personalized to fit students’ zones of proximal development, address the needs of diverse student populations, and support all students in accessing and connecting to the curriculum.
<b>Instructional Strategies for English Language Arts</b> <i>Used in addition to instructional strategies for all content areas described above.</i>	
Writing Workshop	Regular writing workshops guide students through the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) as they develop a piece of written work. A typical writing workshop begins with a mini-lesson, during which the teacher introduces a specific skill or technique to enhance students’ writing. Students then engage with extended work time and share their progress with their peers. Writing workshops allow for students to receive in-the-moment, individualized feedback from

<sup>62</sup> McConachie, S. M., & Petrosk, A.R. (Eds.). (2010). *Content matters: A disciplinary literacy approach to improving student learning*. Jossey-Bass.

<sup>63</sup> Rivera, M.O., Moughamian, A.C., Lesaux, N.K., & Francis, D.J. (2008). *Language and reading interventions for English language learners and English language learners with disabilities*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.

<sup>64</sup> Benner, G.J., Kutash, K., Nelson, J.R., & Fisher, M.B. (2013). Closing the achievement gap of youth with emotional and behavioral disorders through multi-tiered systems of support. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 36(3), 15-29.

<sup>65</sup> Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning. (2021). *Inclusive classroom climate*. Yale University. <https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/ClassClimates>

	<p>their teachers and from their peers that is clearly aligned to academic standards and performance rubrics. Writing workshops support the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE)’s essential principles for teaching writing, which include the following:<sup>66</sup></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Writers grow in a context / culture / community of feedback.</li> <li>2. Writers grow when they broaden their repertoire, and when they refine their judgment in making choices with their repertoire.</li> <li>3. Assessment should be transparent and contextual, and it should provide opportunities for writers to take risks and grow.</li> <li>4. Writers grow when they have a range of writing experiences and in-depth writing experiences.</li> </ol>
Independent Reading	<p>The NCTE recommends independent reading as an effective practice to build students’ literacy success.<sup>67</sup> In grades 5-8, students participate in independent reading for 30 minutes each day. During the independent reading block, students select texts of their choice to read (preferably a text at the student’s instructional reading level) and practice fluency, comprehension, and stamina. Students also conference with the staff member to build community and share their emerging understandings of the topic, writer, or genre they have selected.</p>
Guided Reading	<p>Guided reading serves as an academic intervention to promote students’ literacy development according to their zones of proximal development. Guided reading expedites reading growth by providing time for students to engage with texts at their instructional levels. Instructional levels are determined using regular universal screener and benchmark assessments. Students are assigned to guided reading groups based on the results of these assessments and they meet regularly with a teacher to improve reading fluency, decoding, comprehension, and vocabulary instruction. Teachers will use explicit, direct instructional methods to reach students based on deficits and help close specific gaps in their reading skills. Guided reading groups meet during independent reading blocks at the middle school and during personalized learning time at the high school.</p>
<p><b>Instructional Strategies for Math</b>  <i>Used in addition to instructional strategies for all content areas described above.</i></p>	
Computational Fluency	<p>Students practice computational fluency throughout each math unit in grades 5-12. Computational fluency connects “conceptual understanding and computational proficiency”<sup>68</sup> and is evidenced when students select an appropriate procedure to solve a problem, explain their reasoning for selecting the procedure, and efficiently use the procedure to generate an accurate response. Computational fluency supports students in demonstrating conceptual understanding and solving problems.</p>
Problem Solving	<p>The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics asserts that “students require frequent opportunities to formulate, grapple with, and solve complex problems that</p>

<sup>66</sup> National Council for Teachers of English. (2018, November 14). *Understanding and teaching writing: Guiding principles*. <https://ncte.org/statement/teachingcomposition/>

<sup>67</sup> National Council for Teachers of English. (2019, November 7). *The NCTE position statement on independent reading*. <https://ncte.org/statement/independent-reading/>

<sup>68</sup> National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. (2000). *Principles and standards for school mathematics*. NCTM Ed.

	involve a significant amount of effort” (2000, p. 4). <sup>69</sup> At TNA, inquiry-based learning in math promotes problem solving using projects that connect to nature.
Conceptual Understanding	Students with strong conceptual understanding are able to draw connections between ideas, represent situations in different ways, and understand how to use context to solve a problem. <sup>70</sup> Students practice conceptual understanding using manipulatives, generating images, and discussing their ideas with the teacher and with one another.
Concrete Representational Abstract (CRA)	Concrete Representational Abstract (CRA) uses manipulatives and drawings or pictures to support students’ understanding of abstract math concepts. CRA supports students’ comprehension by using a three-step process that engages students in physically manipulating objects (concrete), using images to represent these objects (representational), and finally assigning symbols to represent the same objects (abstract). One study found CRA to be an effective, evidence-based practice that supports students with disabilities in learning to add, subtract, and multiply accurately, <sup>71</sup> and another found that CRA helps students with disabilities link procedural and conceptual knowledge when engaging with math concepts. <sup>72</sup> Math teachers at TNA use CRA to model concepts in the general education setting and use CRA in intervention classes to help students master the skills and understandings needed to engage with more abstract math concepts.
Schema-Based Instruction	Schema-based instruction is used to help students identify word problem types (including additive and multiplicative schemas) and determine an effective method for solving them. <sup>73</sup> One study found that schema-based instruction equips students with disabilities with the conceptual understanding needed to solve word problems in math, <sup>74</sup> and another determined that representation of mathematical problems is an evidence-based practice that supports the math performance of students with disabilities. <sup>75</sup> TNA uses schema-based instruction to support students in interpreting and responding correctly to word problems in mathematics, especially students participating in Tier II and Tier III learning environments.

### Basic Learning Environment

TNA enrolls 81 students at each grade level in the middle school. Students are assigned to one of three advisory cohorts (with two teachers and 27 students in each) and students attend core academic classes together with their advisory cohorts for the majority of the school day. Classroom assignments differ for independent reading block (which serves as intervention time), workshop block (which serves as enrichment or intervention time), and for math and arts classes in 8th grade.

<sup>69</sup> National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. (2000). *Executive summary: Principles and standards for school mathematics*.  
[https://www.nctm.org/uploadedFiles/Standards\\_and\\_Positions/PSSM\\_ExecutiveSummary.pdf](https://www.nctm.org/uploadedFiles/Standards_and_Positions/PSSM_ExecutiveSummary.pdf)

<sup>70</sup> National Research Council. 2001. *Adding It up: Helping children learn mathematics*. The National Academies Press. Washington, DC:  
<https://doi.org/10.17226/9822>.

<sup>71</sup> Bouck, E.C., Satsangi, R., & Park, J. (2018). The concrete-representational-abstract approach for students with learning disabilities: An evidence-based practice synthesis. *Remedial and Special Education, 39*(4), 211-228.

<sup>72</sup> Agrawal, J. & Morin, L.L. (2016) Evidence-based practices: Applications of concrete representational abstract framework across math concepts for students with mathematics disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 31*(1), 34-44.

<sup>73</sup> Vanderbilt University. (2022). *What evidence-based mathematics practices can teachers employ?* The IRIS Center at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University. <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/math/cresource/q2/p06/>

<sup>74</sup> Cook, S.C., Collins, L.W., Morin, L.L., & Riccomini, P.J. (2020) Schema-based instruction for mathematical word problem solving: An evidence-based review for students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 43*(2), 75-87.

<sup>75</sup> Jitendra, A.K., Nelson, G., Pulles, S.M., Kiss, A.J., & Houseworth, J. (2016). Is mathematical representation of problems an evidence-based strategy for students with mathematics difficulties? *Exceptional Children, 83*(1), 8-25.

TNA enrolls 90 students at each grade level in the high school. Class sizes in the high school average to about 18 students per period and students are assigned to class periods based on graduation requirements and course preferences. High school students may enroll in different content area courses in math, arts, world language, and elective programs of study. Students may also enroll in Advanced Placement courses to satisfy graduation requirements or to earn elective credit beginning in 11th grade. Please see Section 1.6 for more information about TNA’s high school course progression and Section 1.8 for sample schedules for both middle and high school students.

Core Academic Classes - Core academic classes are classroom-based and take place in traditional or nature-based classroom settings. In grades 5-8, core academic classes include English language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Students participate in visual and performing arts classes<sup>76</sup> each year and take physical education in 5th and 6th grade, keyboarding<sup>77</sup> in 7th grade, and Introduction to Agriculture Sciences in 8th grade. In 7th grade, students who perform in the top 25% (“above average” or “well above average”) in math on the winter administration of aimswebPlus will have the option to enroll in Algebra I in 8th grade. To ensure that students who progress directly from Grade 7 Math to Algebra I are appropriately supported, students who enroll in Algebra I in 8th grade will also participate in an 8th Grade Math Workshop block. The 8th Grade Math Workshop block will help students master concepts and content that is otherwise covered in 8th grade math and not in Algebra I. Students in 8th grade choose between enrolling in visual arts or media arts as well. Figure 1.3f outlines the course progression between grades 5-8.

Figure 1.3f - Course Progression Grades 5-8

5th Grade Courses	6th Grade Courses	7th Grade Courses	8th Grade Courses
English Language Arts (G01500)	English Language Arts (G01600)	English Language Arts (G01700)	English Language Arts (G01800)
Mathematics (G02500)	Mathematics (G02600)	Mathematics (G02700)	Mathematics (G02800) <i>or</i> Algebra 1 (G02X02)
Science (G03500)	Science (G03600)	Science (G03700)	Science (G03800)
Social Studies (G04500)	Social Studies (G04600)	Social Studies (G04700)	Social Studies (G04800)
Visual Arts (G05505) <sup>78</sup> - Fall Semester <i>and</i> Vocal Music (Chorus/Choir/Vocal Ensemble) Grade 5 (G05501) - Spring Semester	Visual Arts (G05605) - Fall Semester <i>and</i> Vocal Music (Chorus/Choir/Vocal Ensemble) Grade 6 (G05601) - Spring Semester	Vocal Music (Chorus/Choir/Vocal Ensemble) Grade 7 (G05701) - Fall Semester <i>and</i> Visual Arts (G05705) - Spring Semester	Vocal Music (Chorus/Choir/Vocal Ensemble) Grade 8 (G05801) - Fall Semester <i>and</i> Visual Arts (G05805) - Spring Semester <i>or</i> Media Arts (G05804) - Spring

<sup>76</sup> Justia. (2021). 2016 Tennessee Code Title 49 - Education Chapter 6 - Elementary and Secondary Education Part 10 - Curriculum Generally 49-6-1025. *Art and music education*. <https://law.justia.com/codes/tennessee/2016/title-49/chapter-6/part-10/section-49-6-1025/>

<sup>77</sup> Justia. (2021). 2014 Tennessee Code Title 49 0 Education Chapter 6 - Elementary and Secondary Education Part 10 - Curriculum Generally 49-6-1010 - *Computer education*. <https://law.justia.com/codes/tennessee/2014/title-49/chapter-6/part-10/section-49-6-1010/>

<sup>78</sup> The TDOE Course Catalog 2021-2022 notes that Visual Arts courses in Grades 5-8 involve “drawing, painting, sculpture, crafts, and the like” and “may also include other forms of art (for example, dance, music, and theater).” Please see <https://ccms-search.tneducation.net>.

			Semester
Physical Education (G08501)	Physical Education (G08601)	Keyboarding (G10700)	Introduction to Agriculture Sciences (C18X00)

Students complete a career interest inventory and a career aptitude assessment<sup>79</sup> in 8th grade to help guide their course selections in high school.<sup>80</sup> In grades 9-12, core academic classes align to graduation requirements. The high school course progression is outlined in detail in Section 1.6.

**Advisory Block** - Students in 5th -12th grades attend advisory block at the beginning of the school day. Advisory block classes are led by two teachers and consist of 26-27 students at the middle school level and 23 students at the high school level. Advisory block programming follows a vertically-aligned scope and sequence that allows students to build cognitive skills, improve academic habits, and participate in activities designed to promote competencies from the Penn Resilience Program and TNA's core values. Advisory blocks take place in traditional classroom or nature-based settings.

**Academic Intervention** - In addition to addressing academic underperformance in core academic classes and elective classes, students participate in interventions during independent reading blocks (at the middle school), personalized learning time (at the high school), and workshop blocks (both levels). Academic interventions are provided by a teacher to a small group of students and use research-based strategies to improve student performance in reading, language, and/or math. Academic interventions are classroom-based. Regular and consistent academic interventions support TNA's students in reaching grade-level performance goals and help to reduce achievement gaps between student subgroups.

### Innovations

TNA's uses an innovative learning environment and learning activities to support student outcomes.

**Nature-Based Learning** - Research shows that physical and mental health are positively impacted by regular exposure to nature. Nature exposure improves concentration, increases self-esteem, lowers anxiety and stress, and is associated with increased physical activity and a higher quality of life.<sup>81,82</sup> Studies have pointed to the impact that activities like recess and physical activity breaks can have on students' cognitive skills and academic behavior and achievement.<sup>83</sup> TNA uses a variety of strategies to support nature exposure and nature-based learning, including:

- Connecting learning to the natural world through field experiences, service learning projects, and projects which intersect with TNA's onsite garden and farm.
- Holding classes in outdoor classroom spaces.
- Offering daily, 30 minute recess breaks to students in grades 5-8.
- Offering 15 minute outdoor breaks twice daily to students in grades 5-12.
- Offering core outdoor student experiences focusing on outdoor exploration and recreation.

<sup>79</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021, April 27). *Approved career assessments for TCA 49-6-412*.

[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/ccte/PC108CareerAssessmentMatrixUpdated4.27.21.pdf?mc\\_cid=40f16353ee&mc\\_eid=2deec9bf19](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/ccte/PC108CareerAssessmentMatrixUpdated4.27.21.pdf?mc_cid=40f16353ee&mc_eid=2deec9bf19)

<sup>80</sup> Tennessee State Board of Education. (2019, November 15). *High school policy*.

[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/policies/2000/20200409\\_2.103%20High%20School%20Policy.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/policies/2000/20200409_2.103%20High%20School%20Policy.pdf)

<sup>81</sup> Jiang, X., Larsen, L., & Sullivan, W. (2020). Connections between daily greenness exposure and health outcomes. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(11), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17113965>

<sup>82</sup> Preuß, M., Nieuwenhuijsen, M., Marquez, S., Dadvand, M.P., Triguero-Mas, M., Gidlow, C., Grazuleviciene, R., Kruize, H., & Zijlema, W. (2019). Low childhood nature exposure is associated with worse mental health in adulthood. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(10), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16101809>

<sup>83</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2010). *The association between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

[https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health\\_and\\_academics/pdf/pa-pe\\_paper.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/pa-pe_paper.pdf)

*Figure 1.3g - Sample Core Outdoor Student Experiences*

Grade	Core Outdoor Student Experience	Tennessee Academic Standards
5	Animal Observations at Long Hunter State Park	TN History (Social Studies Standards 5.26-5.30), Biological Change (5.LS3.1-2; 5.LS4.1-2)
6	Nashville Parks: Hiking at Percy Warner Park and Visiting the Parthenon	Ancient Greece (Social Studies Standards 6.39-6.50); Ecosystems (6.LS2.1-7; 6.LS4.1-2)
7	Canoeing in Duck River and Mill Creek	Indigenous Civilizations in North America (Social Studies Standards 7.53-57); Earth and Human Activity (7.ESS3.1-2; 7.LS2.1)
8	Community Science Expedition at Great Smoky Mountains National Park	Sectionalism and Reform (Social Studies Standards 8.34-43); Earth's Systems (8.ESS2.1-5; 8.ESS3.1-2).

**Workshop Block** - Students in grades 5-12 participate in workshop blocks, which allow for intervention, enrichment, and extracurricular activities to take place during the school day. Workshop blocks occur four times per week at the middle school and twice per week at the high school. Workshop blocks are led by teachers, administrators, and external providers. Workshop offerings change quarterly and are informed by staff capacity, student interest, and intervention needs. In addition to supporting students' personalized learning needs, workshop teaching assignments allow for innovative staff scheduling to occur. Figure 1.3h shows a sample workshop rotation at the high school level.

*Figure 1.3h - Sample Schedule for 9th Grade Workshop Block*

Staff	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Algebra I Teacher	Study Hall	Free	Yearbook	Tennis Club
English I Teacher	Free	Study Hall	Speech and Drama League	Speech and Drama League
World History Teacher	Environmental Action Club	Yearbook	Free	Study Hall
Spanish Teacher	Business Club	Business Club	Study Hall	Free
French Teacher	Free	Study Hall	Basketball	Urban Gardening
Media and Visual Arts Teacher	Watercolor Arts	Ephemeral Arts	Study Hall	Free
Agriscience Teacher	Study Hall	Free	Future Farmers of America	Future Farmers of America
Lifetime Wellness Teacher	Cross Country	Trail Running	Free	Study Hall

Learning Specialist	RTI <sup>2</sup>	RTI <sup>2</sup>	RTI <sup>2</sup>	RTI <sup>2</sup>
Language Specialist	RTI <sup>2</sup>	RTI <sup>2</sup>	RTI <sup>2</sup>	RTI <sup>2</sup>

Learning and language specialists lead RTI<sup>2</sup> interventions during workshop block. RTI<sup>2</sup> interventions during workshop block amount to 220 minutes per week at the middle school and 160 minutes per week at the high school. Interventions offered during workshop block take place in addition to interventions available during TNA's independent reading block or personalized learning time (150 minutes at the middle school and 120 minutes at the high school). TNA uses a co-teaching model to provide students with daily, in-class support from learning and language specialists. (See Section 1.9.)

Finally, study hall is used to provide additional academic support and prevent course failures before they occur. Study hall provides a protected time during the school day for students to complete homework, recover missing assignments, prepare for upcoming classroom tasks, and receive tutoring from the teacher leading study hall. Students participate in study hall at a variety of levels:

- Students in good academic standing may choose to take an elective study hall during the workshop block. An elective study hall may be a good option for students in Advanced Placement courses and students with additional after-school commitments.
- Students who need time to complete work due to an absence will attend mandatory study hall on the day they return to school and will continue to attend study hall until all missing work has been completed and submitted to the student's teachers.
- Students who are failing two or more courses as a result of missing or incomplete work will be enrolled in mandatory study hall until their academic standing improves. Students with failing grades are enrolled in and exited from study hall every three weeks. Figure 1.3i shows the enrollment and exit points throughout the year.

*Figure 1.3i - Mandatory Study Hall Enrollment and Exit Calendar*

Quarter 1			Quarter 2		
Weeks 1-3	Weeks 4-6	Weeks 7-10	Weeks 11-13	Weeks 14-16	Weeks 17-20
Elective study hall begins.	Mandatory study hall begins.	Students enter or exit mandatory study hall.	Students enter or exit mandatory study hall.	Students enter or exit mandatory study hall.	Students enter or exit mandatory study hall.
Quarter 3			Quarter 4		
Weeks 21-23	Weeks 24-26	Weeks 27-30	Weeks 31-33	Weeks 34-36	Weeks 37-40
	Mandatory study hall begins.	Students enter or exit mandatory study hall.	Students enter or exit mandatory study hall.	Students enter or exit mandatory study hall.	Elective study hall ends. Students enter or exit mandatory study hall.

TNA staff lead workshops in either the fall or spring semester (with the exception of learning specialists and language specialists, who lead RTI<sup>2</sup> interventions throughout the year). During the unassigned

semester, TNA staff manage study hall interventions for one quarter and have the remaining quarter free for additional planning time.

(h) If your academic plan includes blended learning, describe (x) which blended learning model the proposed school will use (i.e., online content in various lessons only, a single course, or an entire curriculum), (y) the role of teachers within the blended learning environment, and (z) how this approach will drive academic gains and close the achievement gap with the targeted population of students, using the latest data analyses and research.

TNA will not use a blended learning model.

(i) For sponsors of existing schools only: describe any key academic plan features for the proposed school that will differ from the existing school's original application, the rationale for implementing these different features and any new resources they would require. If no key academic plan features will differ, please respond with N/A to this section.

N/A: TNA is not a sponsor of an existing school.

## SECTION 1.4 - ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

(a) Describe the proposed school's annual and long-term academic achievement goals.

TNA measures program effectiveness according to our four guiding principles: learning through challenges, building connectedness, sustaining health and happiness, and impacting the community. Long-term goals operationalize each principle and key performance indicators describe how the organization will measure progress toward each goal annually. In pursuit of our mission, TNA maintains goals dedicated to academic achievement, organizational sustainability, the well-being of various shared interest partners, and long-term outcomes. Figure 1.4a describes the goals and key performance indicators associated with each guiding principle. Goals will remain stable over time and key performance indicators may change based on relevant data and input from our community.

Figure 1.4a - TNAs Long-Term Goals and Annual Key Performance Indicators

Guiding Principle 1: Learning through Challenges	
Goals	Key Performance Indicators
<p><b>Goal 1:</b> Students at TNA achieve academic growth and proficiency in all content areas.</p>	<p>Proficiency Overall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of students achieve Approaching, On Track, or Mastered proficiency results on TNReady and End-of-Course (EOC) exams in English language arts, math, science, and social studies.</li> <li>At least 80% of students achieve On Track or Mastered proficiency results on TNReady and EOC exams in English language arts, math, science, and social studies.</li> <li>At least 95% of students earn promotion to the next grade level each year.</li> </ul> <p>Reading Growth and Proficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of students reach reading growth goals as measured by aimswebPlus.</li> <li>At least 75% of students achieve Average (26th - 74th percentile), Above Average (75th - 89th percentile) or Well Above Average (90th - 99th percentile) reading performance as measured by aimswebPlus.</li> <li>At least 50% of students achieve Above Average (75th - 89th percentile) or Well Above Average (90th - 99th percentile) reading performance as measured by aimswebPlus.</li> </ul> <p>Math Growth and Proficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of students reach math growth goals as measured by aimswebPlus.</li> <li>At least 75% of students achieve Average (26th - 74th percentile), Above Average (75th - 89th percentile) or Well Above Average (90th - 99th percentile) math performance as measured by aimswebPlus.</li> <li>At least 50% of students achieve Above Average (75th - 89th percentile) or Well Above Average (90th - 99th percentile) math performance as measured by aimswebPlus.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal 2:</b> Students at TNA engage in meaningful learning opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 80% of students demonstrate mastery on performance task rubrics.</li> <li>100% of students participate in community-based field-work and student showcase events to share performance tasks.</li> <li>At least 95% of students participate in core outdoor learning experiences.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal 3:</b> TNA meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce gaps in student achievement across subgroups to 0%.</li> </ul>

the needs of diverse learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of students achieve IEP goals.</li> <li>• 100% of students achieve ILP goals.</li> <li>• 100% of English language learners will achieve their growth goals on WIDA ACCESS for ELs 2.0.</li> </ul>
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Guiding Principle 2: Building Connectedness	
Goals	Key Performance Indicators
<b>Goal 4:</b> TNA supports student health and happiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 95% of students attend school each day.</li> <li>• At least 90% of students remain enrolled in TNA each year.</li> <li>• At least 90% of students re-enroll in TNA each year.</li> <li>• 100% of students are effectively served through the Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports Framework (MTSS).<sup>84</sup></li> <li>• 100% of students in engage in social-emotional learning opportunities aligned to the Penn Resilience Skill Set<sup>85</sup> as measured by participation in the advisory block.</li> <li>• 100% of students show growth against self-identified goals on beginning of year, mid-year, and end of year fitness challenges.</li> <li>• Resilience and Wellbeing culture plan results in ≤5% suspension rates and 0% expulsion rates (excluding zero tolerance offenses).</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 5:</b> Students, families, and staff at TNA experience positive connections with the TNA community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 80% of students “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that they feel safe, valued, engaged, and connected to the learning community according to the TNA community survey.<sup>86</sup></li> <li>• At least 80% of families “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that they feel safe, valued, engaged, and connected to the learning community according to the TNA community survey.</li> <li>• At least 80% of staff “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that they feel safe, valued, engaged, and connected to the learning community according to the TNA staff survey.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 6:</b> TNA engages the community in student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 90% of families attend academic conferences each quarter.</li> <li>• 100% of families attend at least one community event or student showcase event during the year.</li> <li>• TNA builds partnerships with at least two new organizations each year through Year 7 (SY 2029-2030).</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 7:</b> TNA’s community represents the membership of Southeast Nashville.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TNA’s student demographics reflect the membership of Southeast Nashville.</li> <li>• TNA’s staff demographics reflect the membership of Southeast Nashville.</li> </ul>

### Guiding Principle 3: Sustaining Health and Happiness

<sup>84</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2018). *Overview of student supports in Tennessee*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/reports/student\\_supports\\_overview.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/reports/student_supports_overview.pdf)

<sup>85</sup> University of Pennsylvania School of Arts and Sciences. (2021). *Resilience skill set*. Positive Psychology Center. <https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/resilience-programs/resilience-skill-set>

<sup>86</sup> Survey to be modeled on the MNPS School Climate Survey.

Goals	Key Performance Indicators
<p><b>Goal 8:</b> TNA follows sustainable financial practices.</p>	<p>Meet or exceed the financial management standards specified in the Tennessee Charter School Performance Framework, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Near Term Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Maintain a current ratio of &gt;1.1.</li> <li>○ Maintain at least 30 days of unrestricted cash in the first two years, and at least 60 days thereafter.</li> <li>○ Maintain ADM enrollment at &gt;95% of the board-approved budget.</li> <li>○ Remain in compliance with all contracts and any debt agreements.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Sustainability Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Maintain a positive cumulative total margin.</li> <li>○ Maintain a debt to asset ratio of &lt;0.9.</li> <li>○ Maintain positive multi-year cash flow.</li> <li>○ Maintain a debt service coverage ratio of &gt;1.1.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● TNA conducts an annual independent audit which yields no significant findings.</li> <li>● TNA maintains a 3% reserve on the end-of-year fund balance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal 9:</b> TNA follows sustainable operational practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TNA maintains a Board of Directors composed of 5-15 members with a range of backgrounds and expertise, at least of whom is a parent of a TNA student.</li> <li>● TNA devotes at least 4 hours annually to development for returning members of the Board of Directors and at least 6 hours annually for development for new members.</li> <li>● TNA devotes at least 100 hours annually to professional development for teachers and school leaders.</li> <li>● 90% of TNA staff achieve a TEAM rubric score of between At Expectations (3) and Above Expectations (5) each year.</li> <li>● 80% of TNA staff remain at TNA for three or more years.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal 10:</b> TNA follows environmentally sustainable practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TNA recycles or composts over 50% of the waste it produces.</li> <li>● TNA's campus will maintain arboretum designation from the Nashville Tree Foundation.</li> <li>● TNA staff and students will conduct energy audits to determine TNA facility energy usage.</li> </ul>

#### Guiding Principle 4: Impacting the Community

Goals	Key Performance Indicators
<p><b>Goal 11:</b> Students at TNA are prepared for college and career success after graduation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 98% of TNA students graduate within four years.</li> <li>● 100% of TNA students with disabilities earn one of four diplomas by the end of grade 12.</li> <li>● 100% of TNA students are accepted to at least one college or university or have secured employment in their preferred field before graduation.</li> <li>● At least 75% of students achieve Ready Graduate status by earning <math>\geq 21</math> on the ACT, completing four EPSOs, or completing two EPSOs and an industry certification.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of AP courses achieve proficiency rates (i.e. the percentage of students scoring a 3 or above) that meet or exceed the national average proficiency rates for each course.</li> <li>• 0% gaps in Ready Graduate achievement across subgroups.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 12:</b> Upon graduation, students at TNA are prepared to make a positive impact in their community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of students in Grade 8 and Grade 12 will develop a transition plan to prepare for high school and college or career opportunities.<sup>87</sup></li> </ul>

(b) Describe the process for setting, monitoring, and revising academic achievement goals.  
(c) Describe corrective action plans if the school falls below state, district and/or its own academic achievement goals.

Key performance indicators (KPI) are evaluated and revised annually. Adjustments to KPI are informed by relevant, recent data from sources like TNReady/EOC exams, aimswebPlus, the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems, the Math Concepts and Applications test, WIDA ACCESS for ELs 2.0, and other organization-specific records related to academic performance, attendance, and student behavior. These data are particularly important for assessing TNA's effectiveness in identifying, addressing, and closing achievement gaps between student subgroups. TNA conducts a formal review of student data twice per year, in January and in June, to measure progress toward long-term goals. Annual KPI are revised and set by the network team in collaboration with the Board of Directors, principals, and other shared interest partners as appropriate following the June data review.

Figure 1.4b provides a calendar of the KPI review timeline and lists the notable data which are considered for each review. This figure does not include all data which inform KPIs: data related to student supports, student behavior, talent and recruitment, etc. are collected on an ongoing basis and some assessments, especially outcome assessments like the ACT and TNReady/EOC exams, may not report student results until weeks or months following administration.

*Figure 1.4b - KPI Review Timeline*

<i>TNA collects multiple data points related to Goal 1 (G.1), Goal 2 (G.2), Goal 3 (G.3), Goal 4 (G.4), Goal 5 (G.5), Goal 6 (G.6), Goal 7 (G.7), Goal 8 (G.8), Goal 9 (G.9), Goal 10 (G.10), Goal 11 (G.11), and Goal 12 (G.12) on an ongoing basis.</i>			
Month	Persons Responsible	Action	Notable Data Sources
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors</li> <li>• Network leadership team</li> <li>• School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	<p>Annual KPI review (academics, student supports, attendance, student behavior, talent, finances, community engagement, and college access).</p> <p>Annual goals and KPI are set or adjusted for the upcoming school</p>	<p><i>Use data from previous May as available.</i></p> <p><i>New Student Testing Data:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswebPlus (G.1)</li> <li>• Fountas &amp; Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems</li> </ul>

<sup>87</sup> Metro Nashville Public Schools. (2021). Curriculum & instruction. <https://mnps.org/learn/academics/curriculum-and-instruction>

		year.	(F&P BAS) (G.1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Math Concepts and Applications test (MCAP) (G.1)</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network leadership team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	Network and school-based leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	<i>New Student Testing Data:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aimswebPlus (G.1)</li> <li>F&amp;P BAS (G.1)</li> <li>MCAP (G.1)</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network leadership team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	Network and school-based leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aimswebPlus (G.1)</li> <li>F&amp;P BAS (G.1)</li> <li>MCAP (G.1)</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network leadership team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	Network and school-based leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice ACT (G.11)</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network leadership team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	Network and school-based leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q1 Report Card (G.1, G.2, G.3)</li> <li>ACT (G.11)</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network leadership team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	Network and school-based leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TNA Community Survey (G.5)</li> <li>TNA Staff Survey (G.5)</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network leadership team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	Network and school-based leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Exams (G.1)</li> <li>aimswebPlus (G.1)</li> <li>Q2 Report Card (G.1, G.2, G.3)</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board of Directors</li> <li>Network leadership team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	Midyear KPI review (academics, student supports, attendance, student behavior, talent, finances, community engagement, and college access). Network and school-based leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>F&amp;P BAS (G.1)</li> <li>MCAP (G.1)</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network leadership team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	Network and school-based leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network leadership</li> </ul>	Network and school-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q3 Report Card (G.1,</li> </ul>

March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>G.2, G.3)</li> <li>WIDA ACCESS (G.3)</li> <li>ACT (G.11)</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network leadership team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	Network and school-based leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TNA Community Survey (G.5)</li> <li>TNA Staff Survey (G.5)</li> <li>College Acceptance (G.11)</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network leadership team</li> <li>School-based leadership teams</li> </ul>	Network and school-based leadership teams monitor data and manage interventions as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TNReady/EOC (G.1)</li> <li>Final Exams (G.1)</li> <li>aimswebPlus (G.1)</li> <li>Student Promotion (G.1)</li> <li>Q4 Report Card (G.1, G.2, G.3)</li> <li>AP Exams (G.11)</li> <li>Student Graduation (G.11)</li> <li>Ready Graduate indicators (G.11)</li> <li>College Acceptance (G.11)</li> </ul>

Data are frequently assessed outside of biannual formal data reviews by the network team, school-based leadership team, and grade-level teams. TNA makes use of an instructional coaching and professional development model to respond to student data; these practices are described in more detail in Section 2.5. When appropriate, TNA introduces interventions at the school-level (under the management of the network team or school-based leadership team), at the grade-level (under the management of the grade-level team and supporting school administrators), or at the individual staff level using differentiated instructional coaching and professional development.

TNA considers data reviews when considering hiring decisions for the following academic year. TNA staff who are highly consistent in meeting data goals will be considered for additional leadership development opportunities on their grade-level teams, content-area teams, and in school-based or network leadership teams at large. Some school-based leadership team roles at TNA, including the Director of Learning and the Director of Language at each campus, include hybrid teaching and leading opportunities so that highly effective teachers can continue to model and co-teach in their area of endorsement, while providing leadership and coaching to other teachers. Teaching staff with consistently low academic results may follow an improvement plan under the direction of the staff member's direct supervisor. Inadequate progress on an improvement plan may result in termination or nonrenewal of the employee's contract. Data from these reviews are also considered during the Executive Director's annual performance review with the Board of Directors.

(d) Describe the proposed school's approach to helping remediate students' academic underperformance and learning loss, including plans for Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>) that aligns with Tennessee guidelines.

TNA follows Tennessee’s Response to Instruction and Intervention Framework (RTI<sup>2</sup>) to support student mastery of academic content.<sup>88</sup> TNA uses multiple structures to support students’ diverse learning needs, address achievement gaps, and expedite academic growth. TNA monitors students who may require differentiated instruction or intervention to determine whether they might benefit from research-based instructional strategies in the general education setting, personalized instruction in a small-group setting, or additional learning or language services to address specific needs. Our Chief Academic Officer manages RTI<sup>2</sup> in collaboration with all TNA teachers.

RTI<sup>2</sup> operates according to three tiers:

- **Tier 1** - Students engage in high-quality, standards-aligned, grade-level instructional activities during core academic classes in the general education setting. Instruction is delivered to the whole group or to smaller breakout groups and follows appropriate accommodations or modifications related to students’ learning and language needs. Students in Tier 1 also benefit from TNA’s inclusion model, which places language and learning specialists in the general education classroom as co-teachers. Student progress in Tier 1 is monitored through daily assignments and assessments. The majority of TNA students (80-85%) are able to master academic content through engagement in the Tier 1 setting.
- **Tier 2** - 10-15% of students will require instructional support beyond the Tier 1 setting. These students will be identified through TNA’s universal screener and diagnostic assessments. Students in Tier 2 interventions may receive additional support through regular interventions in reading, math, or language and participate in progress monitoring every two weeks to gauge progress.
- **Tier 3** - In addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 academic support, a small percentage of students (3-5%) who are significantly below grade-level in reading or math will participate in intensive interventions to target specific skill gaps.

TNA’s RTI<sup>2</sup> systems are guided by TNA’s assessment system, which uses norm-referenced universal screeners like aimswebPlus to determine students’ initial performance in relation to their grade-level peers. Students who perform below the 25th percentile according to universal screeners in reading and math participate in additional diagnostic testing using the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems (for reading) and the Math Concepts and Applications test (for math). Students are assigned to Tier 2 or Tier 3 academic supports based on assessment data and other classroom data sources. Students in need of Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions engage in small group instruction during core academic classes and may participate in pull-out groups throughout the day. Blocks of time designated specifically for student interventions are described below.

*Table 1.4c - Intervention Blocks and Intervention Details*

Block	Frequency and Duration	Intervention Strategies
Independent Reading Blocks (Middle School)	30 minutes daily, totaling 150 minutes weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pre-Reading</li> <li>● Guided Reading</li> <li>● Small Group Literacy Instruction (Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension)<sup>89</sup></li> <li>● Progress Monitoring</li> </ul>

<sup>88</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2016, February). *Implementation guide: Response to instruction & intervention framework*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/rti/rti2\\_implementation\\_guide.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/rti/rti2_implementation_guide.pdf)

<sup>89</sup> Learning Point Associates. (2004). *A closer look at the five essential components of effective reading instruction: A review of scientifically based reading research for teachers*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED512569.pdf>

Personalized Learning Time (High School)	30 minutes per day, four days per week, totaling 120 minutes per week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pre-Reading</li> <li>● Guided Reading</li> <li>● Small Group Literacy Instruction</li> <li>● Small Group Math Instruction (Math Computation and Math Reasoning)<sup>90</sup></li> <li>● Progress Monitoring</li> <li>● Learning Loss Intervention</li> </ul>
Workshop Block (Middle School and High School)	Middle School: 55 minutes, four days per week, totaling 220 minutes per week. High School: 80 minutes, twice per week, totaling 160 minutes per week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Content Preview</li> <li>● Content Reteaching</li> <li>● Small Group Literacy Instruction</li> <li>● Small Group Math Instruction</li> <li>● Progress Monitoring</li> <li>● Learning Loss Intervention</li> </ul>

Student placement in Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions is coordinated by the RTI2 team, which includes members of TNA's school-based leadership team, learning specialists and language specialists, and content-area teachers. Further information about TNA's RTI<sup>2</sup> systems are in Sections 1.7 and 1.9.

(e) Describe goals for student attendance and explain how the proposed school will ensure high rates of student attendance. Include plans for identifying and addressing chronic absenteeism.

TNA maintains a daily attendance goal of 95%. Studies show that attendance and GPA in middle school predict future success in high school, and middle school students with an attendance rate at or below 90% are more likely to struggle upon enrollment in high school.<sup>91</sup> In alignment with MNPS's attendance policies,<sup>92</sup> the following scenarios may qualify a student for an excused absence:

- Student's personal illness
- Family member's illness that requires the student's temporary help
- Death in the family (up to three days)
- Deployment of a parent or guardian serving in the military (one day for deployment, one day for return, and up to 10 days when the service member is on temporary leave at home)
- Head lice (up to three days)
- Recognized religious holidays regularly observed by persons of the student's faith
- Court appearance or legally mandated meetings
- Documented college visitations (up to three days per year for students in 11th and 12th grades)

Families may also submit written requests to excuse absences for situations like doctor appointments, dentist appointments, unexpected emergencies, etc. Families should submit written documentation regarding the reason for their student's absence within three days of the absence. If written documentation is not supplied, TNA will consider an absence to be unexcused. Excused and unexcused absences will be documented in students' attendance records.

<sup>90</sup> Math interventions are informed by a review of the most effective practices identified by the What Works Clearinghouse. We find these strategies to be appropriate for students in high school as well as in middle school. Please see: Gersten, R., Beckmann, S., Clarke, B., Foegen, A., Marsh, L., Star, J. R., & Witzel, B. (2009). *Assisting students struggling with mathematics: Response to Intervention (RTI) for elementary and middle schools* (NCEE 2009-4060). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides/>.

<sup>91</sup> Allensworth, E.M., Gwynne, J.A., Moore, P., and de la Torre, M. (2014). *Looking forward to high school and college: Middle grade indicators of readiness in Chicago Public Schools*. University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.

<sup>92</sup> Metro Nashville Public Schools. (2021). Attendance matters - For all students, in every school. <https://mnps.org/students-families/student-resources/handbook/handbook-policies-and-procedures/attendance>

TNA will support daily, on-time school attendance using school-wide systems, engaging in frequent family communication, and working directly to support students and families with unique needs. Staff at TNA will take attendance within 15 minutes of the beginning of each school day and submit this attendance to the front office. Front office staff will make daily attendance calls to families of absent students who did not provide the school with prior notification of an expected absence. Front office staff will also document late arrivals or early dismissals throughout the day. The school-based leadership team will review attendance data weekly and will work with students' advisory teachers and grade-level teams to communicate with families of students who demonstrate a pattern of regular absences (including frequent late arrivals or early dismissals from school). Network and school-level leaders will work to support families who face extenuating circumstances (unstable housing, unreliable transportation, etc.) which may prevent students from attending school regularly.

TNA provides incentives for regular school attendance. When a student has been absent, the student must report to the study hall instead of their selected activity during the workshop block until all missing work is complete and turned in. Additional incentives are provided to individuals and home rooms with high attendance rates. Students are considered chronically absent when they have missed 10% or more school days in a year, whether due to excused or unexcused absences. TNA will use the interventions below to reduce the number of students who are at risk of chronic absenteeism. TNA will provide translation or interpretation services when needed to facilitate communication with families surrounding interventions that address students' chronic absenteeism.<sup>93</sup>

Figure 1.4d - Interventions to Prevent Chronic Absenteeism

Student Absences	
<p><u>0-2 Absences</u> - Front office contacts the family each day that the student is absent. Students who do not share documentation from a family member for an excused absence will be marked as unexcused.</p> <p><u>3 Absences</u> - The family receives an attendance notification by mail.<sup>94</sup></p>	
Unexcused Absences	Excused Absences
<p><u>5 Unexcused Absences</u> - A student is considered truant if they have more than four unexcused absences in one school year. At this time, the family receives a truancy letter and participates in an attendance meeting. The attendance meeting is facilitated by a school representative (principal, assistant principal, etc.), and the school and family develop an attendance improvement plan. If the absent student has an IEP, TNA will conduct a Manifestation Determination Review to determine whether the student's repeated absences are a manifestation of their disability.</p> <p><u>7 Unexcused Absences</u> - The family attends a second attendance meeting and works with school representatives to make adjustments to the attendance improvement plan. Per TCA § 49-6-3009, these adjustments will include an individualized assessment and referrals to counseling support, community-based services, or other attendance support services as appropriate. The family is informed that at 10</p>	<p><u>5 Excused Absences</u> - The family participates in an attendance conference by phone or by virtual platform.</p> <p><u>7 Excused Absences</u> - The family attends an attendance meeting. Attendance meetings continue for every two absences a student accumulates after the seven day mark (e.g. at nine days, at eleven days, etc.). During these meetings, TNA and the family work together to develop a support plan for the</p>

<sup>93</sup> When possible, TNA staff will provide translation and interpretation services during conversations with families. TNA has also budgeted for translation and interpretation services under "Parent and Staff Meetings" on Tab 6, Line 174 of our budget. Tab 8, Line 176 shows how this allotment grows between Year 2 and Year 5.

<sup>94</sup> Justia. (2021). 2010 Tennessee Code Title 49 - Education Chapter 6 - Elementary and Secondary Education Part 30 - Attendance. § 49-6-3007 - Attendance and truancy reports. <https://law.justia.com/codes/tennessee/2010/title-49/chapter-6/part-30/49-6-3007/>

<p>unexcused absences, TNA will report truancy concerns to the juvenile court system.</p> <p><u>10 Unexcused Absences</u> - TNA reports student truancy to the juvenile court system.</p>	<p>student and take steps to avoid reaching chronic absenteeism.</p>
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(f) Explain how students will matriculate through the proposed school (i.e., promotion/retention policies).  
 (g) Provide the proposed school's exit standards for students, including graduation requirements. These should clearly set forth what students in the last grade served will know and be able to do.

In grades 5-8, students are eligible for promotion to the next grade level if they maintain satisfactory attendance records (are not chronically absent) and demonstrate a grade average of 70% or above in all core academic subjects. Students not meeting the grade threshold in 1-2 classes will be eligible to attend summer school. In grades 9-12, students are eligible for promotion to the next grade level if they maintain satisfactory attendance records and earn a sufficient number of credits to reach on-time graduation. These credit numbers include:

- For promotion to 10th grade, students must have earned 4.0 or more credits in grade 9.
- For promotion to 11th grade, students must have earned 8.0 or more credits in grades 9-10.
- For promotion to 12th grade, students must have earned 15.0 credits or more in grades 9-11.

Each November, TNA will notify families of students who are at early risk of retention based on performance in core academic subjects or unsatisfactory attendance. TNA will partner with students and families to improve attendance and academic performance before the fall semester ends. Families of students who continue to be identified as off-track for promotion in the spring semester will be notified by February 1 of each year;<sup>95</sup> students will continue to be identified throughout the spring semester. Off-track students will follow individualized promotion plans which outline evidence-based strategies to regain eligibility for promotion. In alignment with the Tennessee State Board of Education's Promotion and Retention Policy (3.300), these strategies may include participation in RTI<sup>2</sup> interventions, individual or small group tutoring, completing personalized or recovery-based learning opportunities during workshop blocks, etc. Students who are still off-track for promotion will participate in TNA's summer school program to recover lost academic credit. At the conclusion of the summer school program, TNA network and school-based leadership staff will determine whether there is sufficient evidence of student mastery to promote the student to the next grade level: these decisions will take additional factors into consideration including the student's performance on key outcome assessments, demonstrated math and reading growth according to benchmark assessments, satisfactory progress towards meeting IEP and ILP goals, etc. Retention is only considered when it is in the best interest of the student.

Students exit from TNA upon graduation. Students in 12th grade are eligible for graduation with one of four state-recognized diplomas if they meet the criteria outlined in the Tennessee State Board of Education High School Policy 2.103. More information about TNA's plan to ensure high school graduation and post-secondary readiness is available in Section 1.6.

<sup>95</sup> Tennessee State Board of Education. (2019, May 31). *Promotion and retention, grading, and assessment*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducationschools/documents/policies/4000/4603\\_Promotion%20Retention%20Assessment%20and%20Grading\\_Current\\_Accessible.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducationschools/documents/policies/4000/4603_Promotion%20Retention%20Assessment%20and%20Grading_Current_Accessible.pdf)



## SECTION 1.5 - PHASE-IN / TURNAROUND PLANNING

- (a) Describe your organization's prior experience in turning around or converting an underperforming school. Include student outcomes and results. Describe how your organization achieved these results and address the challenges you faced in turning around that school. If your organization does not have such experience, please provide a comprehensive rationale that explains the suitability of your organization to successfully transform a struggling school.
- (b) Describe how your organization will engage with the local neighborhood, community, and student population prior to the conversion. Explain your strategies and plan for recruiting an underperforming zoned student population.
- (c) Describe specific ways that you will transform the existing school culture. How will you determine what parts of the existing school culture you will keep, modify, or add? How will you create a new identity while simultaneously respecting and reinforcing the building history and role in the community?
- (d) If proposing a phase-in approach:
- Describe how you will transition to a shared campus. Include your approach to sharing space, resources, and services, and collaborating with others on the campus. Be sure to outline any essential elements for co-location.
  - In the event that the LEA chooses to transition students out of the school sooner than originally planned, how will you minimize disruptions to your model?
- (e) If proposing a full school take-over approach:
- Describe your transition plan, including communications with existing staff.
  - Identify the additional teaching and non-teaching personnel needed to ensure student success beginning in year 1 of your conversion.

This section is Not Applicable, as TNA is not proposing a school conversion.

## SECTION 1.6 - HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND POST-SECONDARY READINESS

(a) Explain how the proposed school will meet Tennessee graduation requirements in accordance with State Board policy 2.103. Describe how students will earn credits, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements will exceed those required by the State, explain the additional requirements.

TNA will operate a high school program that satisfies all requirements for graduation in the state of Tennessee.<sup>96</sup> The high school program prepares students for postsecondary success by:

- Supporting students to maintain satisfactory academic, behavioral, and attendance records in order to ensure on-time graduation from high school.
- Offering a course of study which exceeds the 22.0 credit requirement for graduation.
- Aligning curriculum to Tennessee Academic Standards and ACT College and Career Readiness Standards such that students are well-prepared for key outcome assessments.
- Ensuring that students are prepared for future college and career success by participating in Early Post-Secondary Opportunities, earning industry credentials and work-based learning credits, preparing for the ACT, and completing the project-based civics assessment and US civics exam.

### Course Progression Grades 9-12

Students in grades 9-12 enroll in seven classes each semester. In 9th and 10th grade, students complete many of the courses required for graduation. Students have some choice in deciding how to meet these graduation requirements. TNA offers students a choice between fine arts courses, world language courses, and programs of study within the Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources (AFNR) career cluster. Students have more flexibility to design their schedules beginning in 11th grade when they register for elective courses. Electives allow students to pursue their academic and career interests beyond the courses required for graduation and include Advanced Placement courses, upper-level language and arts courses, and upper-level elective courses in students' programs of study.

*Figure 1.6a - Student Course Enrollment Per Year*

	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Required Credits	7.0 credits	7.0 credits	5.0 credits	3.0 credits
Elective Credits	0.0 credits	0.0 credits	2.0 credits	4.0 credits
Credits Possible	7.0 credits	7.0 credits	7.0 credits	7.0 credits

Figure 1.6b depicts TNA's course progression for math, English, science, social studies, world language, fine arts, wellness, physical education, personal finance, and electives.

*Figure 1.6b - High School Standard Course Progression and Sequence*

Math Standard Course Progression 4.0 Credits Required for Graduation				
9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	Electives
Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II	Pre-Calculus	Tier II

<sup>96</sup> Tennessee State Board of Education. (2019, November 15). *High school policy*.

[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/policies/2000/20200409\\_2.103%20High%20School%20Policy.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/policies/2000/20200409_2.103%20High%20School%20Policy.pdf)

(G02H00) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	(G02H11) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	(G02H05) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	(G02H23) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	Mathematics Intervention (G02H43) 0.5 credits
Geometry (G02H11) 1.0 credits	Algebra II (G02H05) 1.0 credits	Pre-Calculus (G02H23) 1.0 credits	Calculus (G02H18) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	Tier III Mathematics Intervention (G02H22) 0.5 credits
			Statistics (G02H37) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	
			Bridge Math <sup>97</sup> (G02H41) 1.0 credits	

English Standard Course Progression 4.0 Credits Required for Graduation				
9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	Electives
English I (G01H09) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	English II (G01H10) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	English III (G01H11) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	English IV (G01H13) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	Tier II English Language Arts Intervention (G01H24) 0.5 credits
English Language Development ELA (G22H00) 1.0 credits	English Language Development ELA (G22H01) 1.0 credits	English Language Development ELA (G22H02) 1.0 credits	AP English Language & Composition (G01H17) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	Tier III English Language Arts Intervention (G01H19) 0.5 credits
			English Language Development ELA (G22H03) 1.0 credit	

Science Standard Course Progression 3.0 Credits Required for Graduation				
9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	Electives
	Biology 1 (G03H03) 1.0 credits	Chemistry (G03H12) 1.0 credits	Physics (G03H20) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	AP Biology (G03H10) 1.0 credits
			AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based (G03H27) 1.0 credit	AP Environmental Science (G03H25) 1.0 credits

<sup>97</sup> Bridge Math is required for seniors who score below a 19 on the Math section of the ACT. Please see: Tennessee State Board of Education. (2019, November 15). *High school policy*.  
[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/policies/2000/20200409\\_2.103%20High%20School%20Policy.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/policies/2000/20200409_2.103%20High%20School%20Policy.pdf)

Social Studies Standard Course Progression 3.0 Credits Required for Graduation				
9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	Electives
World History and Geography (G04H10) 1.0 credits	US Government & Civics (G04H12) <sup>98</sup> 0.5 Credits <i>and</i>  Economics (G04H13) 0.5 credits	US History and Geography (G04H11) 1.0 credits		AP Human Geography (G04H30) 1.0 credit  AP Psychology (G04H28) 1.0 credit

World Language Standard Course Progression 2.0 Credits Required for Graduation				
9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	Electives
Spanish Level I (G24H04) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>	Spanish Level II (G24H05) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>			Spanish Level III (G24H06) 1.0 credits
French Level I (G24H21) 1.0 credit	French Level II (G24H22) 1.0 credit			French Level III (G24H23) 1.0 credit

Fine Arts, Wellness, Physical Education, and Personal Finance Standard Course Progression 3.0 Credits Required for Graduation				
9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	Electives
Media Arts High School I (G05H05) 1.0 credits <i>or</i>				Media Arts High School 2 (G05H06) 1.0 credit
Visual Arts: Comprehensive I (G05H08) 1.0 credits				Visual Arts: Comprehensive II (G05H09) 1.0 credit
Lifetime Wellness (G08H02) 1.0 credit				
	Physical Education I (G08H00) 0.5 credits			
	Personal Finance (G04H36) 0.5 credits			

<sup>98</sup> Students complete the United States civics exam and the project-based civics assessment for high school during 10th grade.

Elective Focus Standard Course Progression 3.0 Credits Required for Graduation				
	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	Electives
Environmental and Natural Resource Management	Agriscience (C18H19) 1.0 credits	Applied Environmental Science (C18H25) 1.0 credits	Plant and Soil Science (C18H15) 1.0 credits	Natural Resource Management (C18H28) 1.0 credits  Veterinary Science (C18H21) 1.0 credits  Unmanned Aircraft Systems in Agriculture (C18H40) 1.0 credits  Foundational Supervised Agricultural Experience (C18H58) <sup>99</sup> 0.5 credits
Veterinary and Animal Science	Agriscience (C18H19) 1.0 credits	Small Animal Science (C18H20) 1.0 credits	Large Animal Science (C18H27) 1.0 credits	Capstone Supervised Agricultural Experience (C18H57) <sup>100</sup> 0.5 credits  Work-Based Learning: Career Practicum (C25H16) 1.0 credits

### Grade and Grade Point Average (GPA) Calculations

Students will earn 0.5 credits for completing and passing each semester of a course and earn a total of 1.0 credits for a year-long course. Students in grades 9-12 have the opportunity to earn 3.5 credits each semester and 7.0 credits for the academic year. Students who complete a Supervised Agricultural Experience earn an additional 0.5 credits for the year, which means that eligible students may earn a total of 7.5 possible credits in an academic year.

Students earn credit if their mastery in a course equals or exceeds 70% according to the weightings in Figure 1.6c.<sup>101</sup> A student may recover 0.5 credit for a previously-failed fall semester in a year-long course if the student demonstrates sufficient mastery of the content on the courses' final culminating performance task (e.g. final exam) and if the student's yearly average grade is at or above 70%.

Figure 1.6c - Course Credit Weightings

Earning 1.0 Credit in Year-Long Courses	Earning 0.5 Credit in Semester-Long Courses	Earning 1.0 Credit in Year-Long Courses
No State Assessment	No State Assessment	With State Assessment
Semester 1 - 40% Semester 2 - 40%	Quarter 1 - 40% Quarter 2 - 40%	Quarter 1 - 20% Quarter 2 - 20%

<sup>99</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021, November). *Foundational supervised agricultural experience*. College, Career, and Technical Education.

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/2021-sbe-meetings/july-23%2C-2021-sbe-meeting/7-23-21%20II%20E%20CTE%20Course%20Standards%20-%20Attach%209%20Foundation%20Super%20Agric%20Clean.pdf>

<sup>100</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021, November). *Capstone supervised agricultural experience*. College, Career, and Technical Education.

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/2021-sbe-meetings/july-23%2C-2021-sbe-meeting/7-23-21%20II%20E%20CTE%20Course%20Standards%20-%20Attach%208%20Supervised%20Agricultural%20Clean.pdf>

<sup>101</sup> Metro Nashville Public Schools. (2017, September). *Grading procedure IM 4.144*.

Final Performance Task (Exam) - 20%	Final Performance Task (Exam) - 20%	Midterm Exam - 10% Quarter 3 - 21.25% Quarter 4 - 21.25% End of Course Exam - 15%
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TNA will assign grades and calculate students' GPA using the grading guidelines developed by MNPS:

1. Grades reflect mastery of academic content and are determined using multiple, balanced formative and summative assessments. These assessments may include classwork, homework, quizzes and tests, extended work products like projects, portfolios, and performance tasks, and discipline-specific work products.
2. The lowest quarter grade or final exam grade a student can receive is 50%.<sup>102</sup>
3. Students and families will be kept informed of academic progress through regular updates to the gradebook, report cards, conferences, and direct communication (phone calls, emails home, etc.).

Students' grades and GPA may change after report cards are issued if the student satisfactorily completes credit recovery or if the student is enrolled in a subject with an End of Course exam that has yet to be graded and returned. TNA will issue initial grades for subjects with state assessments and note that these grades will be updated after End of Course exam results are made available. TNA's grading system follows MNPS Grading Procedures and is reflected in Figure 1.6d.

Figure 1.6d - TNA's Grading System<sup>103</sup>

Grading Scale		GPA Calculation			
Letter Grade	Numeric Value	Un-Weighted Regular	Weighted Honors/ Industry Certification	Weighted Statewide Dual Credit	Weighted DE/AP/IB/ Cambridge/ AICE/SSMV
A	93-100	4.0	4.5	4.75	5.0
B	85-92	3.0	3.5	3.75	4.0
C	75-84	2.0	2.5	2.75	3.0
D	70-74	1.0	1.5	1.75	2.0
F	50-69	0.0	0	0	0

TNA will use MNPS's transcript layout. Transcripts will reflect students' course enrollment, grades in each course, GPA, and participation in Advanced Placement courses and courses which carry industry credentials. TNA will also note if and when students' grades and GPA are reflective of participation in credit recovery courses. Transcripts will carry students' ACT stickers and will list industry credentials earned. TNA will not add class rank to student transcripts. TNA will not require that students meet additional requirements beyond those required by the state in order to attain a high school diploma.

<sup>102</sup> Metro Nashville Public Schools. (2017, September). *Grading procedure IM 4.144*.

<sup>103</sup> In the future, should Metro Nashville Public Schools adjust their grading system - for example, from A = 93-100 to A = 90-100, then TNA will adjust our grading system to match.

(b) Describe how graduation requirements will ensure readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities (i.e., trade schools, community colleges, military, or workforce).

TNA ensures student readiness for postsecondary opportunities by offering a course of study which emphasizes college preparation and career exploration.

### College Readiness: Advanced Placement

Advanced Placement (AP) allows students to participate in college-preparatory learning while in high school. Students at TNA may enroll in AP courses beginning in 11th grade. TNA offers some AP courses that satisfy graduation requirements, including:

- AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based<sup>104</sup> - “AP Physics 1: Algebra-based is an algebra-based, introductory college-level physics course. Students cultivate their understanding of physics through classroom study, in-class activity, and hands-on, inquiry-based laboratory work as they explore concepts like systems, fields, force interactions, change, conservation, and waves.”
- AP English Language and Composition<sup>105</sup> - “AP English Language and Composition is an introductory college-level composition course. Students cultivate their understanding of writing and rhetorical arguments through reading, analyzing, and writing texts as they explore topics like rhetorical situation, claims and evidence, reasoning and organization, and style.”

Other Advanced Placement courses extend student learning in areas which relate to TNA’s mission, appeal to student interests, and support future college success. AP elective courses include:

- AP Biology<sup>106</sup> - “AP Biology is an introductory college-level biology course. Students cultivate their understanding of biology through inquiry-based investigations as they explore topics like evolution, energetics, information storage and transfer, and system interactions.”
- AP Environmental Science<sup>107</sup> - “Students cultivate their understanding of the interrelationships of the natural world through inquiry-based lab investigations and field work as they explore concepts like the four Big Ideas; energy transfer, interactions between earth systems, interactions between different species and the environment, and sustainability.”
- AP Human Geography<sup>108</sup> - “AP Human Geography is an introductory college-level human geography course. Students cultivate their understanding of human geography through data and geographic analyses as they explore topics like patterns and spatial organization, human impacts and interactions with their environment, and spatial processes and societal changes.”
- AP Psychology<sup>109</sup> - “AP Psychology is an introductory college-level psychology course. Students cultivate their understanding of the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes through inquiry-based investigations as they explore concepts like the biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, learning and cognition, motivation, developmental psychology, testing and individual differences, treatment of abnormal behavior, and social psychology.”

AP classes are year-long and culminate with national AP exams. Students who earn passing scores on AP exams become eligible to earn college credit at participating colleges and universities. TNA expects that students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses will also complete the AP exam at the end of the year. TNA encourages all students to enroll in at least one AP class during high school.

<sup>104</sup> College Board. (2021). *AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based - The course*.

<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-physics-1/course?course=ap-physics-1-algebra-based>

<sup>105</sup> College Board. (2021). *AP English Language and Composition - The course*.

<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-english-language-and-composition/course?course=ap-english-language-and-composition>

<sup>106</sup> College Board. (2021). *AP Biology - The course*. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-biology/course>

<sup>107</sup> College Board. (2021). *AP Environmental Science - The course*. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-environmental-science/course>

<sup>108</sup> College Board. (2021). *AP Human Geography - The course*. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-human-geography/course>

<sup>109</sup> College Board. (2021). *AP Psychology - The course*. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-psychology/course>

### Career Readiness: Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources

Students at TNA will graduate with an elective focus in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources. The Tennessee Department of Education anticipates this field to experience growth at a rate of between 9% and 21% each year,<sup>110</sup> and students who graduate with experience in supporting agricultural and nature-based industries will be well-positioned to take advantage of employment opportunities in this sector. Students begin their exploration in this cluster through the Introduction to Agriculture Sciences course in 8th grade. In 9th grade, all students enroll in Agriscience, which satisfies the first credit of the Elective Focus graduation requirement. At the end of 9th grade, students select one of two programs of study: Environmental and Natural Resource Management or Veterinary and Animal Science. Students are required to complete a course in their program of study in 10th and 11th grades and have the option to participate in additional elective courses in their preferred program of study in 12th grade. Once TNA is at full scale, we plan to offer additional programs of study like Agribusiness to satisfy student interests. Figure 1.6e below provides further information about each of these programs of study.

Figure 1.6e - Programs of Study at TNA

Environmental and Natural Resource Management	
<p>“Environmental and Natural Resource Management is designed for students interested in learning more about becoming good stewards of our environment and natural resources, as an environmental scientist, conservationist, forester, or wildlife manager. This program of study covers environmental impacts, energy consumption, environmental public policy, and fundamental science and management of ecosystems, with special attention given to current agricultural practices that support the healthy and sustainable cultivation of major crops. Upon completion of this program of study, students will be prepared for a range of careers associated with the science and management of plants, soils, wildlife, and natural resources.”<sup>111</sup></p>	
Course Sequence	Industry Credentials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 9th Grade: Agriscience</li> <li>● 10th Grade: Applied Environmental Science</li> <li>● 11th Grade: Plant and Soil Science</li> <li>● 12th Grade: Natural Resource Management <i>or</i> Unmanned Aircraft Systems in Agriculture <i>or</i> AP Environmental Science</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● OSHA 10 General Industry</li> <li>● OSHA 30 General Industry</li> <li>● FAA Part 107 - Remote Pilot License</li> </ul>

Veterinary and Animal Science
<p>“Veterinary and Animal Science is designed for students interested in learning more about becoming a veterinarian, vet tech, vet assistant, or pursuing a variety of scientific, health, or agriculture professions. In this program of study, course content covers such topics and skills as principles of health and disease, basic animal care and nursing, clinical and laboratory procedures, and the anatomical/ physiological systems of a range of small and large animals. Upon completion of this POS, students will be prepared to pursue further study in the veterinary and animal sciences at the postsecondary level.”<sup>112</sup></p>

<sup>110</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources.

<https://www.tn.gov/education/career-and-technical-education/career-clusters/cte-cluster-agriculture-food-natural-resources.html>

<sup>111</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources.

<https://www.tn.gov/education/career-and-technical-education/career-clusters/cte-cluster-agriculture-food-natural-resources.html>

<sup>112</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources.

<https://www.tn.gov/education/career-and-technical-education/career-clusters/cte-cluster-agriculture-food-natural-resources.html>

Course Sequence	Industry Credentials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 9th Grade: Agriscience</li> <li>● 10th Grade: Small Animal Science</li> <li>● 11th Grade: Large Animal Science</li> <li>● 12th Grade: Veterinary Science <i>or</i> Unmanned Aircraft Systems in Agriculture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● OSHA 10 General Industry</li> <li>● OSHA 30 General Industry</li> <li>● FAA Part 107 - Remote Pilot License</li> <li>● 4ACT (Animal Care Technologies) for Veterinary Assisting</li> <li>● Tennessee Specific Industry Certification Animal Science</li> </ul>

Students also earn credit for satisfactory completion of a Foundational Supervised Agricultural Experience, Capstone Supervised Agricultural Experience, and Work-Based Learning: Career Practicum. TNA's Outdoor Experiences Coordinator (hired in SY 2027-2028) will coordinate Supervised Agricultural Experiences until the Work-Based Learning Coordinator is hired in SY 2028-2029. The Work-Based Learning Coordinator will manage these courses in SY 2028-2029 and afterwards. More information about work-based learning is provided later in this section.

Students who enroll in TNA after 9th grade will follow the same course sequence described above (Agriscience followed by Small Animal Science and Large Animal Science *or* Agriscience followed by Applied Environmental Science and Plant and Soil Science) in order to satisfy the elective focus graduation requirement. If necessary, students will enroll in these classes concurrently in order to remain eligible for on-time graduation.

TNA will offer additional elective courses in Advanced Placement, fine arts, and world language. These elective courses are not intended to satisfy the elective focus for graduation, but instead advance TNA's mission and support college and career readiness.

### Move On When Ready

TNA will consider requests from 9th grade students who wish to participate in the Move on When Ready program<sup>113</sup> once our program approaches full scale in 2028-2029.

(c) Outline systems or structures the proposed school will use to assist students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting graduation requirements.

TNA uses multiple strategies to support students who are not on track toward meeting graduation requirements. In 2005, researchers from the University of Chicago<sup>114</sup> found that students were much more likely to graduate from high school if they had earned five full-year course credits and had failed no more than one semester in any core course (like English, math, science, or social studies) by the end of 9th grade. TNA uses several proactive measures to support students beginning in 9th grade to ensure that they stay on track toward graduation.

### Proactive Student Support

<sup>113</sup> TN Code 49-6-8303 (2016)

<sup>114</sup> Allensworth, E.M., & Easton, J.Q. (2005, June). *The on-track indicator as a predictor of high school graduation*. Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/2018-10/p78.pdf>

Proactive student support measures preempt and prevent course failure. These strategies are designed to respond to student data and help students to improve their course mastery during the academic year so that students remain on track for on-time graduation.

Academic Support in Advisory Block - High school students meet with their advisory for 20 minutes on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Advisory block programming follows a scope and sequence and includes lessons aligned to academic success, college readiness, character development, and student health and happiness. The scope and sequence for the advisory block is created internally based on research-based best practices and is vertically aligned between grades 9-12. Student advisories use at least one meeting per week to promote academic success by supporting student organization, teaching effective study-skills, and helping students set and meet academic goals. Students regularly review their academic performance and, with the help of their advisors, create a plan to catch up on academic coursework if needed.

Grade Level Team Meetings - Members of the grade-level team (GLT) meet for 45 minutes at least once every two weeks. GLT meetings are led by a grade-level team lead or administrator and include representatives from each grade level's teaching staff, learning and language support staff, and administrative staff. GLT meetings are used to plan advisory block lessons, prepare for upcoming events, and address needs for personalized student support. The GLT may note a need to provide additional academic, attendance, or behavioral support for individual students and will work together to develop a plan to address those needs.

Family Engagement - Families play a critical role in supporting students both within and outside the classroom. Regular contact with families is an important proactive measure to inform families of trends in students' academics, attendance, or behavior and to invite families to become involved in the solution. Students' advisors, classroom teachers, and administrative staff will reach out to families proactively when these trends arise. When necessary, staff will use translation services to engage with families who have indicated that they speak a language other than English at home.

Mandatory Study Hall - At the high school level, workshops provide time for RTI<sup>2</sup> support, enrichment opportunities, and study hall to occur. Students who have missing work due to absences will attend mandatory study hall until all missing work is completed and submitted to the student's teachers. Students who are failing two or more courses as a result of missing or incomplete work will be enrolled in mandatory study hall until their academic standing improves, and students with failing grades will be enrolled in study hall or exited from study hall every three weeks.

### **Corrective Student Support**

When course failure does occur, TNA will take steps to ensure that students recover the credit needed to graduate on time.

Missing Credits Upon Enrollment - Students who enroll in TNA after the first semester of 9th grade will provide their high school transcript upon enrollment. An administrator will review the transcript to ensure that students are enrolled in the appropriate course. If a student's transcript reveals a previous course failure, then the student will be re-enrolled in that course at TNA to recover the missing credit.

Re-Taking Courses - TNA's schedule allows for students to earn 28.0 course credits between 9th and 12th grade, which makes it possible for students to take 6.0 credits of elective courses beyond those required by the state for graduation. Students may apply these 6.0 credits to pursue elective opportunities in fine arts, world language, Advanced Placement, and the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources pathway. Students who fail a required course for graduation for the year will be re-enrolled in the same course the

following year. This makes it possible for students to recover credit in five classes required for graduation and graduate on time.

**Summer School** - Students who fail one semester of a course are eligible to participate in TNA's summer school programs to recover their missing credits.<sup>115</sup> Upon passing summer school courses, students will receive a grade of 70%, which factors into students' GPA. The student's original grade will remain on their transcript.<sup>116</sup> More information about summer school is provided in Section 1.8.

(d) Describe plans for incorporating early post-secondary and work-based learning opportunities for students.

### Early Post-Secondary Opportunities (EPSOs)

There are several ways for TNA students to satisfy Ready Graduate<sup>117</sup> criteria:

**Score 21 or Higher on the ACT** - Students have multiple opportunities to prepare for the ACT throughout high school. Courses at TNA are informed by Tennessee Academic Standards and by ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, which means that students have regular practice and feedback with ACT-aligned question items. Students also participate in two practice ACT tests in 10th and 11th grade, and the results of these practice tests help to inform the curriculum in students' core classes.

**Complete Four EPSOs** - TNA will offer a total of six Advanced Placement courses: AP Biology, AP English Language and Composition, AP Environmental Science, AP Human Geography, AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based, and AP Psychology.

**Complete Two EPSOs and Earn an Industry Credential** - Students earn industry credentials through their preferred program of study in the Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources electives pathway. Industry credentials offered at TNA include:

- *OSHA 10 General Industry* - All students earn this credential in 9th grade through the Agriscience course.
- *OSHA 30 General Industry* - Students earn this credential in 11th or 12th grade. Students in the Environmental and Natural Resource Management program of study earn this credential through the Plant and Soil Science course. Students in the Veterinary and Animal Science program of study earn this credential through the Veterinary Science course.
- *FAA Part 107 - Remote Pilot License* - 12th grade students have the opportunity to earn this credential through the Unmanned Aircraft Systems (Drones) in Agriculture course.
- *4ACT (Animal Care Technologies) for Veterinary Assisting* - 12th grade students studying Veterinary and Animal Science earn this credential through the Veterinary Science course.
- *Tennessee Specific Industry Certification Animal Science* - 12th grade students studying Veterinary and Animal Science earn this certification after completing the Veterinary Science course. Students who successfully pass the TSIC exam qualify for three hours of college credit.

### Work-Based Learning Opportunities

TNA will maintain a work-based learning (WBL) program which is open to students who are at least 16 years old in grades 11 and 12.<sup>118</sup> TNA will hire a WBL Coordinator in Year 6 (SY 2028-2029) to support students in developing personalized learning plans, source work-based learning opportunities in the

<sup>115</sup> Tennessee State Board of Education. (2019, November 15). *High school policy*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/policies/2000/20200409\\_2.103%20High%20School%20Policy.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/policies/2000/20200409_2.103%20High%20School%20Policy.pdf)

<sup>116</sup> Metro Nashville Public Schools. (2017, September). *Grading procedure IM 4.144*.

<sup>117</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021, February). *2020-21 Ready Graduate indicator detailed user guide (2019-2020 graduates)*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/accountability/acct/2020-21\\_ReadyGrad.UserGuide\\_20210209\\_Final%20\(2\).pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/accountability/acct/2020-21_ReadyGrad.UserGuide_20210209_Final%20(2).pdf)

<sup>118</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2017, May). *Work-based learning policy guide*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/ccte/wbl/wbl\\_policy\\_guide.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/ccte/wbl/wbl_policy_guide.pdf)

community, and match students with opportunities for cooperative education, internships, and transition activities that align to their interests. The WBL Coordinator will also develop a student assessment process that allows students to demonstrate their learning in work-based learning settings. TNA will maintain the Student Job Corps on campus, a school-based enterprise which will allow students to earn compensation and work-based learning credit for their contributions to TNA's community farm and garden. Students who participate in work-based learning opportunities earn credit through the Work-Based Learning: Career Practicum (C25H16) course.

(e) Identify each type of high school diploma to be offered at the proposed school.

In alignment with the Tennessee State Board of Education High School Policy 2.103, TNA offers the following diploma pathways for graduating seniors:

Regular High School Diploma - This is the traditional high school diploma awarded to eligible high school seniors. To earn the regular high school diploma, TNA's graduating seniors must:

- Earn 22.0 credits in fulfillment of the state's graduation requirements.
- Participate in an official administration of the ACT exam (unless the student was not enrolled in a Tennessee public school in 11th grade).
- Maintain satisfactory attendance and disciplinary records.
- Pass the US Civics test provided by Metro Nashville Public Schools.

Special Education Diploma - At the end of their fourth year of high school, students with disabilities may earn a special education diploma if they:

- Have not met the requirements for a regular high school diploma.
- Receive special education services or supports and made satisfactory progress on an individualized education program (IEP).
- Maintain satisfactory attendance and disciplinary records.
  - After earning the Special Education Diploma, students may continue to work toward a regular high school diploma until the academic year in which they turn 22 years old.

Occupational Diploma - At the end of their fourth year of high school, students with disabilities may earn an occupational diploma if they:

- Have not met the requirements for a regular high school diploma
- Receive special education services or supports and made satisfactory progress on an individualized education program (IEP)
- Maintain satisfactory attendance and disciplinary records.
- Complete the Tennessee Department of Education's SKEMA (Skills, Knowledge, and Experience Mastery Assessment).
- Complete two years of paid or unpaid work experience.
  - After earning the Occupational Diploma, students may continue to work toward a regular high school diploma until the academic year in which they turn 22 years old.

Alternate Academic Diploma - At the end of their fourth year of high school, students with disabilities may earn the alternate academic diploma if they:

- Participate in alternate assessments in high school.
- Earn 22.0 credits in fulfillment of the state's graduation requirements.
- Receive special education services or supports and made satisfactory progress on an individualized education program IEP
- Maintain satisfactory attendance and disciplinary records.

- Have completed a transition assessment(s) that measures, at a minimum, postsecondary education and training, employment, independent living, and community involvement.
  - After earning the Alternate Academic Diploma, students may continue to work toward a regular high school diploma until the academic year in which they turn 22 years old<sup>119</sup>.

TNA anticipates that the majority of our students (98% or greater) will pursue a regular high school diploma. In the event that a student's IEP team determines that a special education, occupational, or alternate academic diploma is a good fit, TNA will follow necessary guidelines and support students to meet the requirements related to these diplomas. Once eligible students have earned a special education, occupational, or alternate academic diploma, TNA will continue to support students in achieving their regular high school diploma.

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<sup>119</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2018, August). *Frequently asked questions alternate academic diploma*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/transition/sec\\_trans\\_alt\\_academic\\_diploma\\_faq.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/transition/sec_trans_alt_academic_diploma_faq.pdf)

## SECTION 1.7 - ASSESSMENTS

(a) Identify the primary internal assessments the proposed school will use to assess individual student and sub-group learning needs and progress throughout the year. Explain how these internal assessments align with the school's curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.

TNA uses a variety of internal assessments to measure student performance and mastery. We use internal assessments to measure individual and group progress in two primary ways:

1. TNA uses regular screener, diagnostic, and progress monitoring assessments to measure students' progress in relation to their peers nationwide. These assessments occur at regular intervals throughout the year and inform our RIT<sup>2</sup> systems. Data from these assessments help to measure our progress against Goal 1, Goal 3, and Goal 11 and provide insight into our program's effectiveness in closing achievement gaps between student subgroups:
  - Goal 1 - Students at TNA achieve academic growth and proficiency in all content areas.
  - Goal 3 - TNA meets the needs of diverse learners.
  - Goal 11 - Students at TNA are prepared for college and career success after graduation.
2. TNA uses course-specific internal assessments to measure students' mastery of Tennessee Academic Standards. These assessments are administered daily and are used by TNA staff to inform teaching and learning from day-to-day, week-to-week, and unit-to-unit. Assessment data help to measure our progress against Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3, and Goal 11. (See Section 1.4.)

### **TNA's Assessment System**

TNA uses a collection of norm-referenced, externally-created assessments to measure students' progress and performance in reading, math, and language development across grades 5-12. (See Figure 1.7a.) Screener assessments are given at the beginning, middle, and end of each academic year and give insight into students' reading and math performance compared to middle and high school students across the United States.

Diagnostic assessments give additional details about individual students' strengths and areas for improvement in relation to the goals of a course of study. Results from diagnostic assessments inform the content covered in general education classrooms and help to identify students for additional Tier 2 and Tier 3 academic support. Progress monitoring informs Tier 2 and Tier 3 groupings and interventions: progress monitoring may be used to group students for classroom instruction or re-teaching and may be used to admit or exit students from interventions as appropriate. In this way, diagnostic assessments and progress monitoring help learning and language specialists monitor and address students' needs and help students make measurable progress towards academic goals outlined in students' Individualized Education Plans, Individualized Learning Plans, and 504 Plans.

Outcome assessments demonstrate the effectiveness of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 instruction by providing a summative measure of student performance on norm-referenced state and national assessments. Outcome assessments may include state-specific assessments like the TNReady exams and nationally-administered exams like the ACT and the WIDA ACCESS for ELs 2.0 (ACCESS). Assessments like final performance tasks and exams also demonstrate students' mastery of Tennessee Academic Standards at the conclusion of a course.

Figure 1.7a - TNA's Assessment System

Universal Screener Assessments	
Screener assessments are administered to all TNA students.	
aimswebPlus	Practice ACT
Students in grades 5-12 will complete the aimswebPlus screener assessment to measure performance in math and reading. Students will complete aimswebPlus testing at the beginning, middle, and end of the academic year.	Students in grades 9-12 will complete a practice ACT in the fall of their sophomore year and the fall of their junior year. Data from practice ACT administration will inform ACT content and strategy practice in core academic classes.
<p>In rare circumstances, some students will complete the WIDA Screener Online. TNA will administer this universal screener <b>only if</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Upon enrollment in TNA, the student returns a home language survey indicating that a language other than English is spoken at home.</li> <li>2. Upon enrollment in TNA, the student is identified as EL but does not have up-to-date ACCESS score results.</li> </ol>	

Diagnostic Assessments		
Diagnostic assessments inform classroom planning and instruction. Some diagnostics measure student progress toward mastery in relation to academic performance standards, and some are used to better understand student needs.		
Class Assessments (e.g. Unit Projects, Tests, Quizzes, etc.)	Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems (F&P BAS)	Math Concepts and Applications (MCAP)
Formative and summative class assessments provide a measure of students' progress in relation to the goals of a course. Assessments align with and assess the Tennessee Academic Standards which are introduced or spiraled throughout the unit. Assessments like unit projects and tests take place at the end of each unit of instruction. Student mastery is reflected through standards-aligned items on unit tests and through standards-aligned rubrics on unit projects.	The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (F&P BAS) is a paper-and-pencil test used to evaluate students' reading fluency and comprehension. All 5th grade students undergo F&P diagnostic testing upon enrollment in TNA. In grades 5-6, F&P testing takes place twice a year (BOY and MOY) and is used to inform classroom reading instruction and literacy intervention groups. In grades 7-12, F&P testing takes place if students score at or below the 25th percentile according to aimswebPlus.	The Math Concepts and Applications (MCAP) is a paper-and-pencil test used to evaluate students' general problem-solving skills in mathematics. In grades 5-12, MCAP testing takes place if students score at or below the 25th percentile according to aimswebPlus.

Progress Monitoring Assessments	
Progress monitoring measures students' growth in relation to a set goal. Progress monitoring is used to assess growth for at-risk and advanced students.	
aimswebPlus CBM	Test of English Language Learning

The aimswebPlus CBM measures student growth in reading and math. Progress monitoring takes place every two weeks and helps inform instruction in intervention groups.	English language learners participate in progress monitoring through the Test of English Language Learning (TELL) platform. Progress monitoring takes place every two weeks and helps inform instruction in settings devoted to students' language development.
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Outcome Assessments		
Outcome assessments are administered to all TNA students. Outcome assessments usually occur annually and serve as formal measures of student performance.		
TNReady and End of Course (EOC) Exams	ACT	Advanced Placement Exams
TNReady and End-of-Course (EOC) exams are administered annually to all middle and high school students enrolled in a state-tested subject area to assess student performance in those subjects.	The ACT is administered annually to juniors (in the spring) and seniors (in the fall) and is used as an indicator of college readiness.	High school students enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) classes will participate in AP testing at the end of the course. AP exams help students qualify for EPSO and college credit.
WIDA ACCESS for ELs 2.0	Civics Projects & Citizenship Exam	Final Performance Tasks (Exams)
The WIDA ACCESS for ELs 2.0 (ACCESS) test is administered annually to English learners to measure acquisition and proficiency in English. ACCESS is both an outcome and a diagnostic assessment, since the results of the assessments may qualify a student to change the ESL services they receive or exit from ESL services altogether.	Per T.C.A. § 49-6-1028e, TNA students complete a civics project in grades 5-8 and a civics project in grades 9-12. Additionally, students in 10th grade take the United States Citizenship and Immigration test.	Students in grades 9-12 complete final exams at the end of each credit-bearing class. In a year-long class, final exams take place in the spring. In a semester-long class, final exams take place at the end of the semester in which the course occurs. Final exams count for 20% of a student's final grade in a semester without an End of Course exam. <sup>120</sup>

### Daily Internal Assessments

TNA follows a project-based philosophy for classroom instruction and assessment. Units of instruction in every course align directly to Tennessee Academic Standards and ACT College and Career Readiness Standards. Units of instruction at TNA include two summative assessments: a unit test and a unit project. Unit tests follow the format of key outcome assessments and items, and performance tasks on unit tests measure students' mastery of the specific Tennessee Academic Standards covered in the unit. Unit projects assess the knowledge, skills, and understandings that students master throughout the unit. Unit projects exist in a variety of formats, connect classroom learning to authentic problems, and often have real-world applications. Unit projects are evaluated using performance rubrics that align to the standards introduced in the unit. Initial resources for unit tests and projects - including the unit plan, unit test, project outline, and performance rubrics - are created or sourced by TNA's Chief Academic Officer as part of the curriculum development processes outlined in Section 1.3. The Chief Academic Officer,

<sup>120</sup> Metro Nashville Public Schools. (2017, September). *Grading procedure IM 4.144*.

content area teacher, and the teacher’s instructional coach (typically the Principal or Assistant Principal) will collaborate to adjust projects as necessary prior to the beginning of each unit.

Unit tests and unit projects provide standards-aligned summative data that inform classroom instruction. Standards-aligned summative data help teachers identify topics or skills that may require reteaching in future units and help teachers identify particular students who may benefit from targeted, small-group re-teaching aligned to particular standards. Summative data also guide instructional staff when making decisions about how to adjust curriculum and instruction to support higher student mastery in future years. For example, a unit project’s data may reveal that 90% of students mastered one of the unit’s standards but only 70% of students mastered another. In this case, the teacher might add an additional lesson into the unit’s scope and sequence to allow for additional practice related to this standard the following year.

In addition to summative unit projects and unit tests, TNA staff also use a range of internal formative assessments to guide day-to-day classroom learning. Formative assessments align to a lesson’s targeted standards and may be given at the beginning, middle, and/or end of a lesson. Teachers use formative assessments to check for understanding, drive instruction, and inform differentiation within and between lessons. Formative assessments guide instruction in the same lesson (e.g. a teacher might use the results of a Do Now exercise at the beginning of class to determine which strategy to review before introducing a new concept) or inform the content of an upcoming lesson (e.g. a teacher might review an end-of-class exit ticket and discover that a class has mastered a concept more quickly than she expected; in this case, the teacher can move on to more challenging content in the next class).

(b) Identify the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible for and involved in the building testing coordination.

The Chief Academic Officer serves as the TNA’s District Testing Coordinator and manages student provisioning, materials management, staff training, and administration for state assessments. The Chief Academic Officer also serves as the building testing coordinator in the first year of TNA’s operation. As TNA grows to scale, the Middle School Director of Operations and the Middle School Director of Student Support assume responsibility for building testing coordination for grades 5-8 beginning in SY 2024-2025. The High School Director of Operations and the High School Director of Student Supports assume responsibility for building testing coordination for grades 9-12 beginning in SY 2026-2027. Building testing coordinators at the middle and high schools will work with the Chief Academic Officer and designated assessment teams to coordinate and manage building-level operations and compliance for state testing events.

(c) Explain how the proposed school will collect and analyze student academic data and use it to inform instruction, professional development, and teacher evaluations.

TNA continuously collects and analyzes student data as they become available. It is possible to collect some student data within the same day of an assessment (e.g. student quizzes, classwork, and homework), while data from other norm-referenced assessments (e.g. ACT results) may take several weeks to arrive. Figure 1.7b below shows the frequency with which TNA administers universal screeners, diagnostic assessments, outcome assessments, and assessments for progress monitoring.

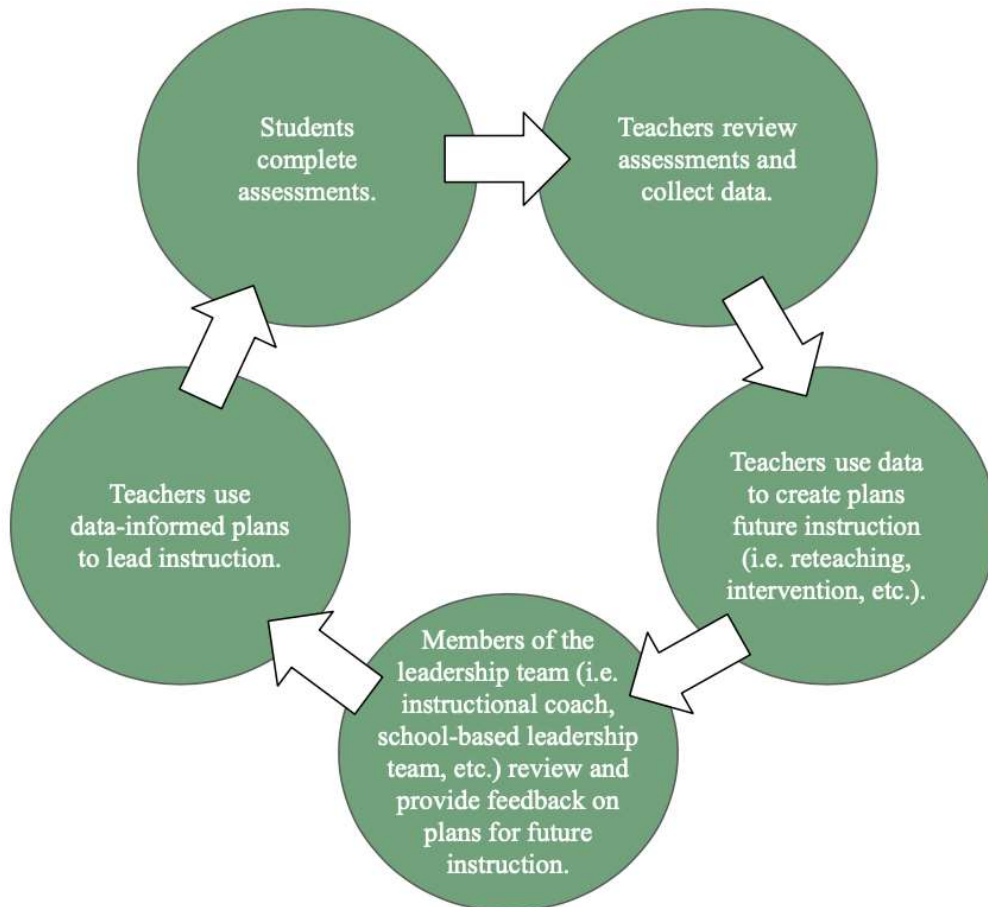
Figure 1.7b - TNA's Annual Assessment Calendar

June	July	August
<p><i>Universal Screener:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswEBPlus - Reading (5)</li> <li>• aimswEBPlus - Math (5)</li> <li>• WIDA Screener Online (5)</li> </ul> <p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F&amp;P BAS (5) - All</li> <li>• MCAP (5) - <math>\leq</math> 25th percentile</li> </ul>	<p><i>Universal Screener:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswEBPlus - Reading (5)</li> <li>• aimswEBPlus - Math (5)</li> <li>• WIDA Screener Online (5)</li> </ul> <p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F&amp;P BAS (5) - All</li> <li>• MCAP (5) - <math>\leq</math> 25th percentile</li> </ul>	<p><i>Universal Screener:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswEBPlus - Reading (6-12)</li> <li>• aimswEBPlus - Math (6-12)</li> <li>• WIDA Screener Online (6-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F&amp;P BAS (6-12) - All 6, 7-12 below 25th percentile</li> <li>• MCAP (6-12) - <math>\leq</math> 25th percentile</li> <li>• Class Assessments (5-12)</li> </ul>
September	October	November
<p><i>Universal Screener:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice ACT (10-11)</li> </ul> <p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Assessments (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Progress Monitoring:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswEBPlus CBM (5-12)</li> <li>• TELL (5-12)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Outcome:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACT (12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Assessments (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Progress Monitoring:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswEBPlus CBM (5-12)</li> <li>• TELL (5-12)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Outcome:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civics Project (MS &amp; HS)</li> </ul> <p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Assessments (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Progress Monitoring:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswEBPlus CBM (5-12)</li> <li>• TELL (5-12)</li> </ul>
December	January	February
<p><i>Outcome:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Exams (9-12)</li> <li>• Citizenship Exam (10)</li> </ul> <p><i>Universal Screener:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswEBPlus - Reading (5-12)</li> <li>• aimswEBPlus - Math (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Assessments (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Progress Monitoring:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswEBPlus CBM (5-12)</li> <li>• TELL (5-12)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Assessments (5-12)</li> <li>• F&amp;P BAS (5-12) - All 5 and 6, 7-12 <math>\leq</math> 25th percentile</li> <li>• MCAP (5-12) - <math>\leq</math> 25th percentile</li> </ul> <p><i>Progress Monitoring:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswEBPlus CBM (5-12)</li> <li>• TELL (5-12)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Assessments (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Progress Monitoring:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswEBPlus CBM (5-12)</li> <li>• TELL (5-12)</li> </ul>
March	April	May
<p><i>Outcome:</i></p>	<p><i>Outcome:</i></p>	<p><i>Outcome:</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACT (11)</li> <li>• ACCESS (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Assessments (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Progress Monitoring:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswebPlus CBM (5-12)</li> <li>• TELL (5-12)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TNReady (5-8)</li> <li>• EOC (9-11)</li> </ul> <p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Assessments (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Progress Monitoring:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswebPlus CBM (5-12)</li> <li>• TELL (5-12)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TNReady (5-8)</li> <li>• EOC (9-11)</li> <li>• AP (11-12)</li> <li>• Final Exams (9-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Universal Screener:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswebPlus - Reading (5-12)</li> <li>• aimswebPlus - Math (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Diagnostic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Assessments (5-12)</li> </ul> <p><i>Progress Monitoring:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aimswebPlus CBM (5-12)</li> <li>• TELL (5-12)</li> </ul>
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TNA staff review and respond to data as soon as possible once the results of an assessment are known. TNA's data review cycle is as follows:

Figure 1.7c - TNA's Data Review Cycle



Academic data inform instruction at the grade-level, classroom-level, and cohort level:

Grade-Level Data Collection and Analysis - TNA uses grade-level data to put together a big picture of general student performance in reading, math, and language. Grade-level data come from sources like screener, diagnostic, and outcome assessments. Grade-level data inform Tier 1 instruction and may identify qualifying students for additional diagnostic testing (as is the case for high school students scoring at or below the 25th percentile on aimswebPlus universal screeners). TNA's school-based leadership teams collect, analyze, and store data digitally, which allows for students' data to be preserved and referred to over time. Grade Level Teams (GLTs) and instructional coaches act on grade-level data by adjusting the content covered in whole-class instruction or remediation.

Classroom-Level Data Collection and Analysis - Classroom-level data are collected from standards-aligned formative assessments, unit tests, and unit projects. Classroom teachers use audits of student work and item-by-item data trackers to analyze classroom-level data. The teacher and their instructional coach work together to review student data together to identify trends and plan for upcoming instruction. Co-teachers (e.g. the classroom teacher and language and learning specialists) also use classroom-level data to inform strategic grouping, select topics to pre-teach or re-teach, and identify opportunities for parallel and team teaching in upcoming lessons. Teachers and their instructional coach also collect and analyze data from outcome assessments like a course's final exam to inform long-range planning with the Chief Academic Officer.

Cohort Data Collection and Analysis -Some assessments describe the performance of particular student sub-groups who qualify for Tier 2 academic support. These assessments may include the ACCESS for English language learners and progress monitoring assessments for student reading and math intervention groups. Cohort data inform the curriculum and instruction that take place in Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention settings and are shared with teachers so that classroom instruction more effectively serves the needs of student cohorts. Cohort data are collected and analyzed by TNA's network team, school-based leadership teams, and student support teams serving grades 5-8 and grades 9-12.

When appropriate, assessment data are used to determine and address academic goals for students with Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs), Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), and 504 Plans, as well as students who receive other forms of Tier 3 academic support. Assessment data measure the effectiveness of existing accommodations and modifications in helping students achieve their goals and reveal opportunities to further adjust accommodations and modifications to better suit students' needs.

Academic data also inform professional development and instructional coaching goals for TNA staff. Classroom-level academic data might reveal trends across subject areas or grade levels that could be best addressed by offering specific, differentiated professional development opportunities during Grade-Level Team (GLT) meetings or Content-Area Team (CAT) meetings. Grade-level data from universal screeners, diagnostics, and outcome assessments might reveal trends in student performance that could be most effectively addressed using a grade-wide or school-wide instructional focus. (For example, practice ACT data might suggest the need for professional development to help 9th and 10th grade teachers build opportunities into their curricula for students to practice reading and interpreting data tables across multiple contexts.) Instructional coaches (e.g. Principals and Assistant Principals) and classroom teachers use data to select professional development goals and action steps; for example, a coach and teacher may determine a need to adjust the teachers' approach to modeling, scaffolding, or checking for understanding based on the results of a classroom-level formative assessment. Finally, teachers' capacity to plan for, analyze, and respond to student data is evident during the planning process and in the classroom. The effective use of data is considered when assigning evaluation scores according to the TEAM rubric, especially in the Planning and Instruction domains.

(d) Explain the training and support that school leadership and teachers will receive in analyzing, interpreting, and using performance data to improve instruction.

TNA's instructional staff participate in professional development in order to support their analysis, interpretation, and response to assessment data in order to address student performance and reduce achievement gaps. Professional development takes place during summer staff training, on staff development days, and during weekly professional development sessions. Professional development sessions are developed and led by the Chief Academic Officer and by members of the school-based leadership team (i.e. the Principal, Director of Learning Support, Director of Language Support, etc.). Professional development sessions related to performance data may address the following skills:

- Breaking down and understanding the Tennessee Academic Standards
- Breaking down and understanding ACT College and Career Readiness Standards
- Aligning academic content to the Tennessee and ACT standards
- Using assessment data to identify target standards for re-teaching
- Using assessment data to identify high-priority content and skills for intervention groups
- Building performance tasks aligned to the Tennessee and ACT standards
- Building rubrics aligned to the Tennessee and ACT standards
- Administering, interpreting, analyzing, and responding to formative assessments
- Administering, interpreting, analyzing, and responding to diagnostic assessments
- Administering, interpreting, analyzing, and responding to progress monitoring assessments

Teachers' instructional coaches ensure that best practices related to data management and analysis are evident in teachers' instructional practices and engage teachers in conversations related to data during each instructional coaching meeting (weekly or bi-weekly, as appropriate). Section 2.5 discusses TNA's structures for professional development and instructional coaching in greater detail.

## SECTION 1.8 - SCHOOL CALENDAR AND SCHEDULE

(a) Provide the annual academic calendar for the proposed school as **Attachment A**.

The projected annual academic calendar for SY 2023-2024 is provided in Attachment A.

(b) Attach the proposed school's detailed daily schedule by grade. Include the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

(c) Explain why the academic calendar and schedule will be optimal for student learning. Summarize how you will plan time for tiered interventions, enrichment, tutoring, and other academic activities.

**Daily Schedule - Grades 5-8**

TNA follows an alternating A Day / B Day schedule. The school day for students in grades 5-8 begins at 8:00am. Dismissal takes place at 3:15pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and at 2:35pm on Wednesdays: a shortened Wednesday schedule allows for weekly staff professional development to occur. Figure 1.8a shows the A Day / B Day schedule for middle school students.

*Figure 1.8a - Middle School Schedule Rotation*

Week 1					Week 2				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Full A Day	Full B Day	Short A Day	Full B Day	Full A Day	Full B Day	Full A Day	Short B Day	Full A Day	Full B Day

TNA uses the following design principles when developing the daily schedule:

- **Daily Advisory Block** - Students begin each day in their advisory groups. Advisory time allows for students to build community, engage in social-emotional learning, and participate in learning experiences aligned to TNA's mission, vision, and core values.
- **Double-Blocked Math and English Language Arts** - TNA double-blocks English language arts and math classes in grades 5-8 and students attend these classes on both A Days and B Days. Students attend science, social studies, and electives classes (like visual or performing arts, physical education, keyboarding, etc.) on either A Days or B Days depending on their schedule. Students' visual and performing arts classes rotate each semester; for example, a 5th grade student may have Visual Arts in the fall and Vocal Music in the spring.
- **Daily Reading Intervention** - TNA's schedule preserves time for student intervention to take place each day. All students participate in an independent reading block, allowing for differentiated literacy instruction to take place. During this time, students might engage in independent reading and conferencing with instructional-level texts or might participate in guided reading groups or reading intervention groups based on student need.
- **Workshop Blocks** - Workshop blocks provide time for students to participate in enrichment activities aligned to their areas of interests. Additional interventions take place during workshop blocks as well.
- **Regular Breaks, Including Recess** - TNA's schedule allows for student movement throughout the day. Students have 15 minute breaks in the morning and afternoon between core classes. Additionally, students in grades 5-8 participate in 30 minutes of recess each day.

A sample 5th grade daily schedule is provided in Figure 1.8b.

Figure 1.8b - Sample 5th Grade Student Schedule, Fall Semester<sup>121</sup>

A Day	
Advisory	8:00 - 8:30
English Language Arts	8:30 - 9:25
Morning Break	9:25 - 9:40
Visual Arts: Natural Materials	9:40 - 10:35
Recess	10:35 - 11:05
Lunch	11:05 - 11:35
Independent Reading (RTI)	11:35 - 12:05
Transition	12:05 - 12:10
Science: Wildlife and the Environment	12:10 - 1:05
Afternoon Break	1:05 - 1:20
Math	1:20 - 2:15
Transition	2:15 - 2:20
Workshop: Garden Club (RTI)	2:20 - 3:15

Shortened A Day	
Advisory	8:00 - 8:30
English Language Arts	8:30 - 9:30
Morning Break	9:30 - 9:45
Visual Arts: Natural Materials	9:45 - 10:45
Recess	10:45 - 11:15
Lunch	11:15 - 11:45
Independent Reading (RTI)	11:45 - 12:15
Transition	12:15 - 12:20
Science: Wildlife and the Environment	12:20 - 1:20
Afternoon Break	1:20 - 1:35
Math	1:35 - 2:35

B Day	
Advisory	8:00 - 8:30
English Language Arts	8:30 - 9:20
Morning Break	9:25 - 9:40
Physical Ed: Outdoor Sports	9:40 - 10:35
Recess	10:35 - 11:05
Lunch	11:05 - 11:35
Independent Reading (RTI)	11:35 - 12:05
Transition	12:05 - 12:10

Shortened B Day	
Advisory	8:00 - 8:30
English Language Arts	8:30 - 9:30
Morning Break	9:30 - 9:45
Physical Ed: Outdoor Sports	9:45 - 10:45
Recess	10:45 - 11:15
Lunch	11:15 - 11:45
Independent Reading (RTI)	11:45 - 12:15
Transition	12:15 - 12:20

<sup>121</sup> In the spring semester, students in 5th grade participate in vocal music education instead of “Visual Arts: Natural Materials.” This time of the day is therefore reserved throughout the year for “Visual or Performing Arts,” as reflected in Figure 1.8c.

Social Studies: Tennessee History	12:10 - 1:05	Social Studies: Tennessee History	12:20 - 1:20
Afternoon Break	1:05 - 1:20	Afternoon Break	1:20 - 1:35
Math	1:20 - 2:15	Math	1:35 - 2:35
Transition	2:15 - 2:20		
Workshop: Garden Club (RTI)	2:20 - 3:15		

Daily schedules vary slightly in order to make the best use of available space on campus. For example, recess, lunch, and the independent reading block may take place at different times for each grade level (e.g. 5th graders follow a Recess → Lunch → Independent Reading sequence while 6th graders follow an Independent Reading → Recess → Lunch sequence). TNA's middle school schedule allows for the following instructional minutes each week:

*Figure 1.8c - Instructional Time (For Courses in Grades 5 and 6)*

Subject	Total Time per Week	Average Time Daily
English Language Arts	4 hours 40 minutes	56 min
Math	4 hours 40 minutes	56 min
Workshop (Enrichment/RTI)	3 hours 40 minutes	44 min
Independent Reading (RTI)	2 hours 30 minutes	30 min
Science	2 hours 20 minutes	28 min
Social Studies	2 hours 20 minutes	28 min
Visual or Performing Arts	2 hours 20 minutes	28 min
Physical Education	2 hours 20 minutes	28 min

### **Teacher Schedules - Grades 5-8**

Figure 1.8d shows sample teacher schedules for full A and B days. (Shortened A and B Days follow the same coverage rotation.) Typically, teachers arrive on campus at 7:30am and leave at 3:45pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and at 4:00pm on Wednesdays. On Wednesdays, TNA staff participate in weekly professional development sessions and planning meetings after student dismissal. (See Section 2.5).

Teachers lead four types of activities during the day: advisory block, core content blocks (e.g. Math 5 or Social Studies 6), independent reading block, and workshop block. Teachers have one 55 minute planning block each day (60 minutes on Wednesdays), a 30 minute break for lunch, and a 15 minute break in the morning or afternoon. Teachers have an additional, 55 minute planning block for one quarter of instruction during workshop time. In the sample schedule below, the Science 5 & 6 teacher has an additional planning period during workshop blocks in Quarter 1 only.

Learning specialists (special education teachers) and language specialists (English as a Second Language, or “ESL,” teachers) have flexible schedules which allow them to arrange time for co-planning and co-teaching with different content-area teachers based on anticipated or emerging needs. Learning and language specialists lead advisory blocks and teach intervention groups during independent reading and workshop blocks. In the sample schedule below, the Learning Specialist 5 teacher co-teaches and co-plans with the Science 5 & 6 teacher on A Days and with the ELA 5 teacher on B Days. The Language Specialist 5 co-teaches and co-plans with the ELA 5 teacher on A Days and with the Math 5 teacher on B Days. Co-teaching and co-planning assignments are coordinated to meet the needs of the particular students in each grade.

Figure 1.8d - Teacher Schedules - 5th Grade Example - Fall Semester<sup>122</sup>

Full A Day	ELA 5 Teacher	Visual Arts Teacher	Math 5 Teacher	Science 5 & 6 Teacher	Learning Specialist 5 (Special Education)	Language Specialist 5 (ESL)
<i>On A Days, the Physical Education 5 &amp; 6 teacher and the Social Studies 5 &amp; 6 teacher lead their 6th grade sections.</i>						
Advisory 8:00 - 8:30	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Period 1 8:30 - 9:25	Teaching	Planning	Teaching	Teaching	Co-Teaching with English 5 Teacher	Co-Teaching with Science 5 & 6 Teacher
Morning Break 9:25 - 9:40	Free	Coverage	Free	Coverage	Coverage	Free
Period 2 9:40 - 10:35	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Planning	Co-Teaching with English 5 Teacher	Co-Planning with Science 5 & 6 Teacher
Recess 10:35 - 11:05	Coverage	Free	Free	Free	Coverage	Coverage
Lunch 11:05 - 11:35	Free	Coverage	Coverage	Coverage	Free	Free
Independent Reading 11:35 - 12:05	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching
Transition 12:05 - 12:10	School-based leadership team covers transition to Period 3.					
Period 3 12:10 - 1:05	Teaching	Teaching	Planning	Teaching	Co-Teaching with English 5 Teacher	Co-Teaching with Science 5 & 6 Teacher
Afternoon Break 1:05 - 1:20	Coverage	Free	Coverage	Free	Free	Coverage
Period 4 1:20 - 2:15	Planning	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Co-Planning with English 5 Teacher	Co-Teaching with Science 5 & 6 Teacher
Transition 2:15 - 2:20	School-based leadership team covers transition to Workshop Blocks.					
Workshop 2:20 - 3:15	Leading Workshop	Leading Workshop	Leading Workshop	Planning (This Quarter Only)	Teaching Intervention	Teaching Intervention

<sup>122</sup> In the fall semester, the music teacher works with students in grades 7 and 8, and the visual arts teacher works with students in grades 5 and 6. In the spring semester, 5th grade students take Vocal Music (G05501) with the music teacher instead of Visual Arts (G05505).

Full B Day	ELA 5 Teacher	Physical Education 5 & 6 Teacher	Math 5 Teacher	Social Studies 5 & 6 Teacher	Learning Specialist 5 (Special Education)	Language Specialist 5 (ESL)
<i>On B Days, the Visual Arts teacher and the Science 5 &amp; 6 teacher lead their 6th grade sections.</i>						
Advisory 8:00 - 8:30	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Period 1 8:30 - 9:25	Teaching	Planning	Teaching	Teaching	Co-Teaching with Math 5 Teacher	Co-Teaching with English 5 Teacher
Morning Break 9:25 - 9:40	Free	Coverage	Free	Coverage	Coverage	Free
Period 2 9:40 - 10:35	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Planning	Co-Teaching with Math 5 Teacher	Co-Teaching with English 5 Teacher
Recess 10:35 - 11:05	Coverage	Free	Free	Free	Coverage	Coverage
Lunch 11:05 - 11:35	Free	Coverage	Coverage	Coverage	Free	Free
Independent Reading 11:35 - 12:05	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching
Transition 12:05 - 12:10	School-based leadership team covers transition to Period 3.					
Period 3 12:10 - 1:05	Teaching	Teaching	Planning	Teaching	Co-Planning with Math 5 Teacher	Co-Teaching with English 5 Teacher
Afternoon Break 1:05 - 1:20	Coverage	Free	Coverage	Free	Free	Coverage
Period 4 1:20 - 2:15	Planning	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Co-Teaching with Math 5 Teacher	Co-Planning with English 5 Teacher
Transition 2:15 - 2:20	School-based leadership team covers transition to Workshop Blocks.					
Workshop 2:20 - 3:15	Leading Workshop	Leading Workshop	Leading Workshop	Leading Workshop	Teaching Intervention	Teaching Intervention

**Daily Schedule - Grades 9-12**

TNA maintains an alternating A Day / B Day schedule for grades 9-12 and includes an Anchor Day on Wednesdays in which students attend all seven core classes. The school day for students in grades 9-12 begins at 8:00am. Dismissal takes place at 3:20pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and at 2:30pm on Wednesdays.

*Figure 1.8e - High School Schedule Rotation*

Week 1				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Full A Day	Full B Day	Short Anchor Day	Full A Day	Full B Day

TNA follows similar design principles to guide the design of the high school schedule, including advisory block, workshop and personalized learning blocks for enrichment and intervention, breaks throughout the day, and an earlier student dismissal on Wednesdays to provide time for professional development. Classes in the high school are longer than in the middle school (80 minutes on full days as opposed to 55 minutes) and occur at equal intervals (e.g. English and math courses are no longer double-blocked). A sample 9th grade daily schedule is shown in Figure 1.8f and a sample 11th grade daily schedule is shown in Figure 1.8g.

*Figure 1.8f - Sample 9th Grade Student Schedule*

A Day - Monday and Thursday		B Day - Tuesday and Friday		Shortened Anchor Day - Wednesday	
Advisory	8:00 - 8:20	Advisory	8:00 - 8:20	Advisory	8:00 - 8:30
Hall Transition	8:20 - 8:25	Hall Transition	8:20 - 8:25	Hall Transition	8:30 - 8:35
English I	8:25 - 9:45	Workshop: Engineering (RTI)	8:25 - 9:02	English I	8:35 - 9:15
Morning Break	9:45 - 10:00	Transition	9:02 - 9:08	Hall Transition	9:15 - 9:20
Visual Arts: Comprehensive I	10:00 - 11:20	Workshop: Gardening (RTI)	9:08 - 9:45	Visual Arts: Comprehensive I	9:20 - 10:00
Lunch	11:20 - 11:50	Morning Break	9:45 - 10:00	Morning Break	10:00 - 10:15
Hall Transition	11:50 - 11:55	Algebra I	10:00 - 11:20	Agriscience	10:15 - 10:55
Personalized Learning Time (RTI)	11:55 - 12:25	Lunch	11:20 - 11:50	Hall Transition	10:55 - 11:00
Agriscience	12:25 - 1:45	Hall Transition	11:50 - 11:55	World History	11:00 - 11:40
Afternoon Break	1:45 - 2:00	Personalized Learning Time (RTI)	11:55 - 12:25	Lunch	11:40 - 12:10
World History	2:00 - 3:20	Personal Wellness	12:25 - 1:45	Algebra I	12:10 - 12:50
		Afternoon Break	1:45 - 2:00	Hall Transition	12:50 - 12:55
		French Level I	2:00 - 3:20	Personal Wellness	12:55 - 1:35
				Afternoon Break	1:35 - 1:50
				French Level I	1:50 - 2:30

Figure 1.8g - Sample 11th Grade Student Schedule

A Day - Monday and Thursday		B Day - Tuesday and Friday		Shortened Anchor Day - Wednesday	
Advisory	8:00 - 8:20	Advisory	8:00 - 8:20	Advisory	8:00 - 8:30
Hall Transition	8:20 - 8:25	Hall Transition	8:20 - 8:25	Hall Transition	8:30 - 8:35
English III	8:25 - 9:45	Workshop: ACT Prep (RTI)	8:25 - 9:02	English III	8:35 - 9:15
Morning Break	9:45 - 10:00	Transition	9:02 - 9:08	Hall Transition	9:15 - 9:20
Chemistry	10:00 - 11:20	Workshop: Photography (RTI)	9:08 - 9:45	Chemistry	9:20 - 10:00
Lunch	11:20 - 11:50	Morning Break	9:45 - 10:00	Morning Break	10:00 - 10:15
Hall Transition	11:50 - 11:55	Algebra II	10:00 - 11:20	Plant and Soil Science	10:15 - 10:55
Personalized Learning Time (RTI)	11:55 - 12:25	Lunch	11:20 - 11:50	Hall Transition	10:55 - 11:00
Plant and Soil Science	12:25 - 1:45	Hall Transition	11:50 - 11:55	US History and Geography	11:00 - 11:40
Afternoon Break	1:45 - 2:00	Personalized Learning Time (RTI)	11:55 - 12:25	Lunch	11:40 - 12:10
US History and Geography	2:00 - 3:20	AP Biology	12:25 - 1:45	Algebra II	12:10 - 12:50
		Afternoon Break	1:45 - 2:00	Hall Transition	12:50 - 12:55
		French Level III	2:00 - 3:20	AP Biology	12:55 - 1:35
				Afternoon Break	1:35 - 1:50
				French Level III	1:50 - 2:30

TNA's high school schedule allows for the following instructional minutes each week:

Figure 1.8h - Instructional Time (Grades 9-12)

Subject	Total Time per Week	Average Time Daily
Course (e.g. English I, Agriscience, etc.)	3 hours 20 minutes	40 minutes
Workshop (Enrichment/RTI)	2 hours 28 minutes	30 minutes
Personalized Learning Time (RTI)	2 hours	24 minutes

### Teacher Schedules - Grades 9-12

Figure 1.8i shows sample teacher schedules for A Days, B Days, and Anchor Days. Typically, teachers arrive on campus at 7:30am and leave at 3:45pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and at 4:00pm on Wednesdays. On Wednesdays, TNA staff participate in professional development sessions and planning meetings after student dismissal.

Teachers lead an advisory block, core content blocks (e.g. Agriscience or English I), and a workshop block. In addition, teachers either lead a personalized learning block or provide lunch coverage. Teachers have one 80 minute planning block each day (40 minutes on Wednesdays), a 30 minute break for lunch, and a 15 minute break in the morning or afternoon. Teachers have an additional 80 minute planning block for one quarter of instruction during workshop blocks. In the sample schedule, the English I and French teachers have an additional planning period during workshop blocks in Quarter 1.

Learning specialists (special education teachers) and language specialists (ESL teachers) have flexible schedules which allow them to schedule time to co-plan and co-teach with different content-area teachers based on anticipated or emerging needs. Figure 1.8k reflects a sample schedule in which the learning specialist for 9th grade co-teaches and co-plans with the Algebra I and English I teachers, while the language specialist for 9th grade co-teaches and co-plans with the English I and World History teachers. Learning and language specialists lead advisory blocks and teach intervention groups during personalized learning and workshops. Based on student need, learning and language specialists may also teach classes like English Language Development ELA, Tier II Mathematics Intervention, and Tier II English Language Arts Intervention during the semester.

Figure 1.8i - Teacher Schedules - 9th Grade Example

A Day - Monday and Thursday													
Grade 9	Advisory	Hall Transition	Period 1	Morning Break	Period 2	Lunch	Hall Transition	Personalized Learning	Period 3	Afternoon Break	Period 4		
	8:00 - 8:20	8:20 - 8:25	8:25 - 9:45	9:45 - 10:00	10:00 - 11:20	11:20 - 11:50	11:50 - 11:55	11:55 - 12:25	12:25 - 1:45	1:45 - 2:00	2:00 - 3:20		
Agriscience Teacher	Advisory	School-based leadership team covers transition to Period 1.	Planning	Coverage	Teaching	Free	School-based leadership team covers transition to Personalized Learning Blocks.	Teaching	Teaching	Free	Teaching		
English Teacher I	Advisory		Teaching	Coverage	Planning	Free		Teaching	Teaching	Free	Teaching		
Media/Vis Arts Teacher	Advisory		Teaching	Free	Teaching	Coverage		Free	Free	Planning	Coverage	Teaching	
Spanish Teacher	Advisory		Teaching	Free	Teaching	Coverage		Free	Free	Teaching	Coverage	Planning	
Algebra I Teacher	Advisory		Teaching	Coverage	Teaching	Free		Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Free	Teaching	
World History Teacher	Advisory		Teaching	Coverage	Planning	Coverage		Coverage	Free	Teaching	Free	Teaching	
Personal Wellness Teacher	Advisory		Teaching	Free	Teaching	Coverage		Coverage	Free	Planning	Coverage	Teaching	
French Teacher	Advisory		Teaching	Free	Teaching	Coverage		Coverage	Free	Teaching	Coverage	Planning	
Language Specialist (ESL)	Advisory		Co-Teach with English I Teacher	Free	Co-Plan with English I Teacher	Free		Free	Teaching	Co-Teach with World History Teacher	Free	Co-Teach with English I Teacher	
Learning Specialist (Special Education)	Advisory		Co-Plan with Algebra I Teacher	Free	Co-Teach with Algebra I Teacher	Free		Free	Teaching	Co-Teach with English I Teacher	Free	Co-Teach with Algebra I Teacher	

B Day - Tuesday and Friday														
Grade 9	Advisory	Hall Transition	Workshop 1	Hall Transition	Workshop 2	Morning Break	Period 5	Lunch	Hall Transition	Personalized Learning	Period 6	Afternoon Break	Period 7	
	8:00 - 8:20	8:20 - 8:25	8:25 - 9:02	9:02 - 9:08	9:08 - 9:45	9:45 - 10:00	10:00 - 11:20	11:20 - 11:50	11:50 - 11:55	11:55 - 12:25	12:25 - 1:45	1:45 - 2:00	2:00 - 3:20	
Agriscience Teacher	Advisory	School-based leadership team covers transition to Workshop 1.	Leading Study Hall	School-based leadership team covers transition to Workshop 2.	Leading Study Hall	Coverage	Planning	Free	School-based leadership team covers transition to Personalized Learning Blocks.	Teaching	Teaching	Free	Teaching	
English Teacher I	Advisory		Planning (This Quarter Only)		Planning (This Quarter Only)	Coverage	Teaching	Free		Teaching	Planning	Free	Teaching	
Media/Vis Arts Teacher	Advisory		Leading Workshop		Leading Workshop	Free	Teaching	Coverage		Free	Planning	Coverage	Teaching	
Spanish Teacher	Advisory		Leading Workshop		Leading Workshop	Free	Teaching	Coverage		Free	Teaching	Coverage	Planning	
Algebra I Teacher	Advisory		Leading Study Hall		Leading Study Hall	Coverage	Teaching	Free		Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Free	Planning
World History Teacher	Advisory		Leading Workshop		Leading Workshop	Coverage	Planning	Coverage		Coverage	Free	Teaching	Free	Teaching
Personal Wellness Teacher	Advisory		Leading Workshop		Leading Workshop	Free	Planning	Coverage		Coverage	Free	Teaching	Coverage	Teaching
French Teacher	Advisory		Planning (This Quarter Only)		Planning (This Quarter Only)	Free	Teaching	Coverage		Coverage	Free	Planning	Coverage	Teaching
Language Specialist (ESL)	Advisory		Teaching Intervention		Teaching Intervention	Free	Co-Plan with World History Teacher	Free		Free	Teaching	Co-Teach with World History Teacher	Free	Co-Teach with English I Teacher
Learning Specialist (Special Education)	Advisory		Teaching Intervention		Teaching Intervention	Free	Co-Teach with English I Teacher	Free		Free	Teaching	Co-Teach with English I Teacher	Free	Co-Teach with Algebra I Teacher

Shortened Anchor Day - Wednesday (Excludes hall transitions.)												
Grade 9	Advisory	Period 1	Period 2	Morning Break	Period 3	Period 4	Lunch	Period 5	Period 6	Afternoon Break	Period 7	
	8:00 - 8:30	8:35 - 9:15	9:20 - 10:00	10:00 - 10:15	10:15 - 10:55	11:00 - 11:40	11:40 - 12:10	12:10 - 12:50	12:55 - 1:35	1:35 - 1:50	1:05 - 1:45	
Agriscience Teacher	Advisory	Planning	Teaching	Coverage	Teaching	Teaching	School-based leadership team covers lunch with language and learning specialists.	Planning	Teaching	Free	Teaching	
English Teacher I	Advisory	Teaching	Planning	Coverage	Teaching	Teaching		Teaching	Planning	Free	Teaching	
Media/Vis Arts Teacher	Advisory	Teaching	Teaching	Free	Planning	Teaching		Teaching	Teaching	Coverage	Teaching	
Spanish Teacher	Advisory	Teaching	Teaching	Free	Teaching	Planning		Teaching	Teaching	Coverage	Planning	
Algebra I Teacher	Advisory	Planning	Teaching	Coverage	Teaching	Teaching		Teaching	Teaching	Free	Planning	
World History Teacher	Advisory	Teaching	Planning	Coverage	Teaching	Teaching		Teaching	Planning	Free	Teaching	
Personal Wellness Teacher	Advisory	Teaching	Teaching	Free	Planning	Teaching		Teaching	Teaching	Coverage	Teaching	
French Teacher	Advisory	Teaching	Teaching	Free	Teaching	Planning		Teaching	Teaching	Coverage	Teaching	
Language Specialist (ESL)	Advisory	Co-Teach with English I Teacher	Co-Plan with English I Teacher	Free	Co-Teach with World History Teacher	Co-Teach with English I Teacher		Coverage	Co-Plan with World History Teacher	Co-Teach with World History Teacher	Free	Co-Teach with English I Teacher
Learning Specialist (Special Education)	Advisory	Co-Plan with Algebra I Teacher	Co-Teach with Algebra I Teacher	Free	Co-Teach with English I Teacher	Co-Teach with Algebra I Teacher		Coverage	Co-Teach with English I Teacher	Co-Plan with English I Teacher	Free	Co-Teach with Algebra I Teacher

(d) Describe any proposed extra-curricular or co-curricular activities or any other student- focused programming

the proposed school will offer, including when will they begin, how often will they occur, and how will they be funded.

Workshop block provides time for extra-curricular and co-curricular activities to take place during the school day. Workshop topics are driven by student and staff interest and may be developed and led by TNA staff or facilitated by community partners. Some extracurricular activities may involve intramural competition and some might interface with other schools across the city and state (e.g. the National FFA Organization, 4-H, Tennessee High School Speech and Drama League, National Honor Society, etc.). Workshops offerings change quarterly, though some may continue across multiple quarters. Beginning in SY 2025-2026, TNA will seek to participate in a co-op athletic partnership with a neighboring school in our district to offer students the opportunity to participate in organized sports.

(e) If Saturday School, summer school, or after school will be offered, describe the program(s). Explain the schedule and length of the program, including the number of hours and weeks. Address the number of students and the methodology used to identify them. For identified students, is the program mandatory? What are the anticipated resource and staffing needs for these programs?

TNA does not plan to offer Saturday School programs. Some extra-curricular and co-curricular activities will involve an after-school component (e.g. if students participate in an evening or weekend competition). Staff who lead workshop blocks with necessary after-hours commitments will be compensated for their additional time.

TNA will offer summer programming each year. Summer programming includes summer school, summer nature camps, Student Job Corps, and new-student testing.

Summer School - TNA will offer summer school programs to students in need of additional academic support. Research suggests that mandatory, remedial summer learning programs can be an effective way to boost student achievement, especially if those programs differentiate instruction, maintain small class sizes, are led by high-quality instructors, and are aligned to the content covered during the regular school year (pp. 32 - 33).<sup>123</sup> TNA will use eligible students' academic data from end-of-year assessments (e.g. final exam results, unit test and unit project results, aimswebPlus, etc.) to determine an appropriate course of summer study covering the major work of the grade. TNA will maintain a base summer school curriculum aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards and will use student data to select lessons and topics for the summer school course of study each year from this base curriculum. Summer school programs will be led by TNA staff, and staff will be compensated for their participation in these programs. We anticipate that 5% of our student body (approximately four students in each grade) will be required to attend summer school to recover academic credit.

TNA will require students to attend summer school if:

1. They were in grades 5-8 the previous school year and failed one or more core courses for the year. Students who do not attend summer school or who do not make progress during summer school will be considered for retention following guidance in Section 1.4.
2. They were in grades 9-12 the previous school year and failed one semester of a course. In this case, summer school provides the avenue for students to recover 0.5 credits of a 1.0 credit course. See Section 1.6 for more information about how high school students recover missing credits.

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<sup>123</sup> McCombs, J. S., Rand Education (Institute), & Wallace Foundation. (2011). *Making summer count: How summer programs can boost children's learning*. RAND.

Summer Nature Camps - TNA will host a two-week summer camp that provides academic, athletic, and nature experiences for potential TNA students (rising 3, 4, and 5th graders). Section 1.11 further details about summer nature camps for our founding years. Camps will explore themes and activities aligned with TNA's values, mission, and vision as a way to get families excited for our school option.

Student Job Corps - Students in Grades 11 - 12 and over the age of 16 will have the opportunity to participate in the Student Job Corps over the summer. Students in the Student Job Corps support farm operations at TNA from June to August each year. Students participating in this aspect of Student Job Corps are compensated for their work and are eligible to earn 0.5 credits Supervised Agricultural Experience credits.

New Student Testing - All incoming 5th graders (and 6th graders Year 1) will schedule time during the summer session to participate in New Student Testing. During New Student Testing, students will complete the aimswebPlus assessments in reading and math and participate in one-on-one screenings using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems. Students scoring in the 25th percentile or below on the math section of aimswebPlus also complete the Math Concepts and Applications (MCAP) assessment. New Student Testing allows TNA staff to collect and analyze student data before the school year begins; these data guide summer planning for 5th grade teachers and inform students' assignments to independent reading, guided reading groups, and reading and math intervention groups. New Student Testing also provides an early, individual touchpoint for each family to transfer their student's academic and behavioral records, share transportation needs, fill out Free & Reduced Lunch paperwork, etc. Translation services will be available during New Student Testing for families who indicate a desire for additional support in this process. New Student Testing will be managed by members of the network team (i.e. Chief Academic Officer, Director of Operations, Director of Community Engagement). Students who are unable to attend New Student Testing prior to the start of the school year will do so during workshop blocks in the first two weeks of school.

## SECTION 1.9 - SPECIAL POPULATIONS

(a) Describe the experience of the leadership team in working with special populations. What staff (by role and number), including support staff, does the proposed school plan to hire to address the needs of the special populations identified in subsections (c), (d), (e) and (f)?

(b) Describe the proposed school's plan to prepare for special populations. What adjustments will be made to the school's daily schedule to address the diverse needs of the students?

**Statement on Student Diversity**

TNA believes that all students contribute unique gifts and talents to our community. We affirm the strengths of diverse learners and offer learning experiences that allow students to build on these strengths. TNA uses research-based, data-informed intervention programs to identify and support students across a variety of special populations - including students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs), and intellectually gifted students - as well as students who are academically at risk. We are committed to supporting all students and families to feel welcomed and successful in our program.

**Staff Experience and Roles**

Our Executive Director has three years of experience serving as a schoolwide 504 Coordinator and has worked through coursework to add a special education endorsement to his license to better serve students with disabilities. As a fully licensed Tennessee administrator, he understands all relevant laws and requirements for serving students with disabilities.

TNA invests in highly-qualified staff to support instruction for our diverse student populations. Beginning in Year 1, TNA employs a full-time "learning specialist" (TNA's title for a licensed special education teacher) and a full-time language specialist (TNA's title for a licensed English as a Second Language or "ESL" teacher) to support students in each grade. Based on our projected student enrollment, this leads to a specialist-to-student ratio of 1:10 for students with disabilities and a specialist-to-student ratio of 1:36 for English Language Learners in Year 1. By the time each campus reaches full-scale, TNA will maintain the specialist-to-student ratios reflected in Figure 1.9a.

*Figure 1.9a - Anticipated Specialist-to-Student Ratios at TNA at Full Scale*

Grade	Student Support Team	Staff <sup>124</sup>	Anticipated Ratio <sup>125</sup>
Middle School Grades 5-8	Special Education	Learning Specialist (4) Director of Learning Support (1)	1:8
	ESL	Language Specialist (4) Director of Language Support (1)	1:29
High School Grades 9-12	Special Education	Learning Specialist (4) Director of Learning Support (1)	1:9
	ESL	Language Specialist (4) Director of Language Support (1)	1:32

TNA will seek to hire licensed learning and language specialists with a background of demonstrated success in working with diverse student populations, including students with low-incidence disabilities

<sup>124</sup> Directors of Learning Support and Directors of Language Support roles at each campus will fulfill school-based leadership responsibilities and will continue to provide services for students through co-teaching, co-planning, and leading intervention groups.

<sup>125</sup> Follows logic from Section 1.2 and assumes that 12% of students will identify as students with disabilities and 45% of students will identify as ELLs. Also assumes full enrollment with 324 students at the middle school and 360 students at the high school.

and students who are recently arrived English learners. At least one learning specialist on our middle school team and one learning specialist on our high school team will be certified to work with intellectually gifted students. As TNA expands, we will also add one Counselor / Social worker to the student support teams at each campus to help attend to the needs of students and families as our student population grows. TNA will increase the number of Counselors / Social Workers if needed over time to ensure that sustainable practices are in place to support students and staff.

Figure 1.9b describes the staffing and management structure for the student support team between Year 1 and Year 7. In Year 1, the Chief Academic Officer will manage learning and language specialists for Grades 5-6. In Year 2, the Chief Academic Officer will manage two school leaders - the Director of Learning and Language Support and the Counselor / Social Worker - who will coordinate student support services and manage learning and language specialists in Grades 5-7.<sup>126</sup> In Year 3, TNA's Middle School Principal will manage the Director of Learning Support, the Director of Language Support, and the Counselor / Social Worker, who will coordinate student support services and manage learning and language specialists in Grades 5-8. Similar hiring and management practices will be in place at TNA's high school campus as the student support team is built out over Years 4-7, as reflected in Figure 1.9b.

*Figure 1.9b - Student Support Team Staffing and Management Structure*

Middle School	Year 1 2023-24	Year 2 2024-25	Year 3 2025-26 <sup>127</sup>
Grades	Grades 5-6	Grades 5-7	Grades 5-8
Total Students	162 students	243 students	324 students
Network Lead	Chief Academic Officer	Chief Academic Officer	Chief Academic Officer
School Lead			Middle School Principal
Leadership Staff		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Director of Learning and Language Support</li> <li>● Counselor / Social Worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Director of Learning Support</li> <li>● Director of Language Support</li> <li>● Counselor / Social Worker</li> </ul>
Teaching Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learning Specialist 5</li> <li>● Learning Specialist 6</li> <li>● Language Specialist 5</li> <li>● Language Specialist 6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learning Specialist 5</li> <li>● Learning Specialist 6</li> <li>● Learning Specialist 7</li> <li>● Language Specialist 5</li> <li>● Language Specialist 6</li> <li>● Language Specialist 7</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learning Specialist 5</li> <li>● Learning Specialist 6</li> <li>● Learning Specialist 7</li> <li>● Learning Specialist 8</li> <li>● Language Specialist 5</li> <li>● Language Specialist 6</li> <li>● Language Specialist 7</li> <li>● Language Specialist 8</li> </ul>

<sup>126</sup> The Director of Learning and Language Support - and later, the Director of Learning Support and the Director of Language Support - will manage learning and language specialists, design and monitor services for students with disabilities and English language learners, coordinate student support services, and maintain a positive, inclusive school culture. The Counselor / Social Worker at each campus will lead TNA's school counseling program and will work directly with students to support their success. Both leaders will support school culture and student behavior in the Restorative Center, described in more detail in Section 1.10.

<sup>127</sup> The student support team staffing and management structures in place at the middle school in Year 3 remain the same in future years.

High School	Year 4 2026-27	Year 5 2027-28	Year 6 2028-29	Year 7 2029-30 <sup>128</sup>
Grades	Grade 9	Grades 9-10	Grades 9-11	Grades 9-12
Total Students	90 students	180 students	270 students	360 students
Network Lead	Chief Academic Officer	Chief Academic Officer	Chief Academic Officer	Chief Academic Officer
School Lead	High School Principal	High School Principal	High School Principal	High School Principal
Leadership Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselor / Social Worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Language and Learning</li> <li>• Counselor / Social Worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Learning Support</li> <li>• Director of Language Support</li> <li>• Counselor / Social Worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Learning Support</li> <li>• Director of Language Support</li> <li>• Counselor / Social Worker</li> </ul>
Teaching Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Specialist 9</li> <li>• Language Specialist 9</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Specialist 9</li> <li>• Learning Specialist 10</li> <li>• Language Specialist 9</li> <li>• Language Specialist 10</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Specialist 9</li> <li>• Learning Specialist 10</li> <li>• Learning Specialist 11</li> <li>• Language Specialist 9</li> <li>• Language Specialist 10</li> <li>• Language Specialist 11</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Specialist 9</li> <li>• Learning Specialist 10</li> <li>• Learning Specialist 11</li> <li>• Learning Specialist 12</li> <li>• Language Specialist 9</li> <li>• Language Specialist 10</li> <li>• Language Specialist 11</li> <li>• Language Specialist 12</li> </ul>

Learning and language specialists and related leadership staff will be responsible for coordinating inclusion, direct instruction, and interventions for students as appropriate, ensuring that students' accommodations and modifications are met, and providing learning experiences that help students to achieve their IEP (Individual Education Plan) and ILP (Individual Learning Plan) goals. The student support team will support classroom teachers to understand students' language and learning goals, provide research-based strategies and interventions for students with diverse learning needs, and manage modifications or accommodations as directed by students' IEPs and ILPs. Directors of Learning Support and Directors of Language Support across the middle and high schools will remain up-to-date on laws and policies related to special student populations and will work with district and state representatives to maintain compliance across our student support department.

<sup>128</sup> The student support team staffing and management structures in place at the high school in Year 7 remain the same in future years.

In addition to hiring and retaining learning and language specialists, TNA will seek to hire classroom teachers who hold dual certification in special education, English as a second language, or gifted education. Dual certified teachers not only bring deep content expertise to the classroom, but are also well-positioned to identify and respond to the needs of diverse learners. Dual certification also enhances TNA's co-teaching model, which is described below.

Occasionally, students may require specialized services beyond those which our student support department can provide onsite. TNA will contract with external providers to provide the occupational, speech, and physical therapies needed to meet all requirements of students' IEPs. TNA has begun initial conversations with Project Play to determine if they are a good fit for our speech and occupational therapy needs. TNA will also seek to contract with a school psychologist as required for the evaluation and reevaluation processes for students with disabilities. For students with intensive behavioral needs requiring additional expertise, we will seek to contract a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) to help conduct the FBA and BIP processes. While private placements are an option for students under IDEA, TNA seeks to educate all students within the least restrictive environment. TNA expects to educate all students with disabilities within the school using its special education services plan and RTI systems.

### **Student Support Department - Overview**

As described in Section 1.2, TNA expects to enroll a student population that reflects the diversity of our community in Southeast Nashville. We anticipate that 45% of our students will identify as English language learners, 12% will identify as students with disabilities, and 42% will identify as economically disadvantaged. Proportions of economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities are comparable with Metro Nashville Public Schools' proportions overall, though TNA expects to serve an English language learner population that is almost double the population observed throughout MNPS based on enrollment trends in middle schools in our area. (Forty-five percent of the middle school student population in the Antioch, Cane Ridge, and Overton clusters identify as English language learners, while 26.2% of the population in MNPS overall identifies as English language learners.)<sup>129</sup>

TNA will provide students with access to educational services in the least restrictive environment as determined by students' IEPs and ILPs. TNA uses an inclusive education model, which allows for most students to receive learning or language services in the context of the general education setting to the greatest extent possible. This inclusive model is supported by content-area teachers, learning specialists, and language specialists who use co-planning and co-teaching strategies to address the needs of diverse learners in the classroom. This inclusive model allows for flexible student grouping and has been shown to support the academic and social-emotional development of all students.<sup>130</sup> Eligible students will receive learning and language services in special settings as required by students' IEPs and ILPs; these services will be prepared and provided by learning and language specialists or by external providers (i.e. occupational, speech, and physical therapists) as needed. These specialized services, provided by a certified staff member, will use research-based interventions to target specific skill deficits as determined by the IEP or ILP in order to close learning gaps.

Students with disabilities and English language learners at TNA may also receive accommodations and modifications to support access to and mastery of academic content. Accommodations and modifications will be aligned to students' IEPs and ILPs and will be applied consistently throughout classroom instruction and assessments, including outcome assessments like the TNReady. The Tennessee Department of Education's Special Education Framework and English as a Second Language Manual provide the following guidance regarding accommodations and modifications:

<sup>129</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). *Metro Nashville Public Schools*. <https://reportcard.tnedu.gov/districts/190/profile>

<sup>130</sup> Hehir, T., Grindal, T., Freeman, B., Lamoreau, R., Borquaye, Y., & Burke, S. (2016, August). *A summary of the evidence in inclusive education*. Instituto Alana. [http://alana.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/A\\_Summary\\_of\\_the\\_evidence\\_on\\_inclusive\\_education.pdf](http://alana.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/A_Summary_of_the_evidence_on_inclusive_education.pdf)

Figure 1.9c - Accommodations and Modifications for Special Student Populations

	Special Education Students <sup>131</sup>	English Language Learners <sup>132</sup>
Accommodations	<p>“Accommodations provide equitable access during instruction and assessments and do not change the construct being assessed nor compromise the integrity or validity of the assessment or content. An accommodation is defined as a change in the routine conditions under which students access and participate in instruction and assessment. Accommodations change how the student is taught or expected to learn. Accommodations are intended to reduce or mitigate the effects of a student’s disability; however, accommodations do not reduce learning expectations.” (Tennessee Department of Education, 2018, pp. 41-42).</p>	<p>“Accommodations are practices and procedures for ELs that provide equitable access during instruction and assessments. They provide a valid means for ELs to show what they know and can do. Accommodations are intended to provide support to students with developing English language proficiency in the classroom and on state assessments in terms of their access to instructional or test content, interactions with content, and response to content. Once an EL becomes English proficient, the accommodation may no longer be necessary” (Tennessee Department of Education, 2018, p. 46).</p>
Modifications	<p>“Changes made in the educational program that allow a student with a disability to attain MAGs (Measurable Annual Goals), be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum, and be educated with other children with disability and without disability... These changes modify what the student is learning compared with his or her general education peers” (p. 114).</p>	<p>Modifications are provided for ELLs and dual-identified students consistent with requirements in students’ Individual Learning Plans.</p>

In alignment with the Tennessee’s MTSS Model,<sup>133</sup> TNA’s inclusive classroom environment provides all students with high-quality, research-based Tier I instruction in the general education classroom. The inclusive classroom setting is further enhanced using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework and the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) models, both of which are discussed later in this section. Special student populations may also benefit from access to Tier II and Tier III interventions to address students’ academic, functional, social-emotional, and behavioral goals. When possible, Tier II and Tier III interventions are provided in the general education setting, though sometimes these interventions may require personalized instruction or support in small-group or individual settings.

### Scheduling Student Support

Instruction and interventions across the multi-tiered system of support are provided by classroom teachers, learning and language specialists, and related service providers at different times and to different degrees depending on students’ IEP and ILP needs. Additionally, students in general education who qualify for Tier II or III services will receive interventions both within the general education environment

<sup>131</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2018, August). *Special education framework*.

[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/framework/sped\\_framework.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/framework/sped_framework.pdf)

<sup>132</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2018, November 9). *English as a second language manual*.

[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/cpm/ESL\\_Manual.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/cpm/ESL_Manual.pdf)

<sup>133</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2018, March). *Overview of student supports in Tennessee*.

[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/reports/student\\_supports\\_overview.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/reports/student_supports_overview.pdf)

or during small group instruction as determined by universal screening and progress monitoring data. TNA's inclusive classroom allows for ELL and special education service minutes to be met during regular classroom time. In addition, TNA's schedule includes independent reading blocks (at the middle school level), personalized learning time (at the high school level), and workshop blocks (at both levels) during which small group or individual instruction can take place if necessary. Figure 1.9d shows sample schedules for students who receive different levels of learning and language support.

*Figure 1.9d - Sample 5th Grade Student Schedules with Student Services Identified*

<b>Student A qualifies for special education services in reading and in speech and language.</b>		
This schedule allows the student to receive 150 service minutes (2.5 hours) of direct support each week in the Independent Reading block (30 minutes, 5x weekly) and 140 minutes (2.3 hours) each week in ELA (110 minutes per week and 60 minutes every other week). The student also receives services from a speech-language pathologist for 30 minutes once weekly. If the student's IEP requires more than 320 minutes (5.3 hours) of direct support per week, the student would be enrolled in an additional RTI group during workshop block on A Days or B Days.		
Period	Class Assignment (A Day)	Student Services
Advisory (30 min)	Homeroom	
Period 1 (55 Min)	English Language Arts	The Learning Specialist provides service minutes while co-teaching in ELA.
Period 2 (55 Min)	Visual Arts: Natural Materials	
Independent Reading (30 Min)	Guided Reading Group	The Learning Specialist provides service minutes in a guided reading group.
Period 3 (55 Min)	Science: Wildlife and the Environment	
Period 4 (55 Min)	Math	
Workshop (55 Min)	Garden Club <i>or</i> Speech-Language	The Speech-Language Pathologist (secured through an external provider) provides services to the student once per week during the workshop block. These services take place in an individual setting. On most days, the student attends their Garden Club.  If needed, the student attends an additional intervention class with the Learning Specialist during the workshop block.

**Student B qualifies for special education services in math and social-emotional-behavioral support.**

This schedule allows the student to receive 140 minutes (2.3 hours) of direct support each week in math

(110 minutes per week and 60 minutes every other week). The student also attends math intervention during workshop block on B Days, which amounts to an additional 110 minutes (1.8 hours) of direct support each week. The student also receives a daily social-emotional-behavioral intervention of check-in / check-out with their special education teacher for 10 minutes at the beginning and end of each day, resulting in 100 minutes (1.7 hours) of direct support each week.

Period	Class Assignment (B Day)	Student Services
Advisory (30 min)	Homeroom	The Learning Specialist pulls the student out of the advisory block for 10 minutes to conduct the daily morning check-in.
Period 1 (55 Min)	English Language Arts	
Period 2 (55 Min)	Physical Ed: Outdoor Sports	
Independent Reading (30 Min)	Independent Reading	
Period 3 (55 Min)	Social Studies: Tennessee History	
Period 4 (55 Min)	Math	The Learning Specialist provides service minutes while co-teaching in math.
Workshop (55 Min)	Math Intervention <i>or</i> Business Club	The Learning Specialist provides service minutes in an additional intervention class during the workshop block on A Days. On B Days, the student attends their Business Club.  The Learning Specialist connects with the student for 10 minutes at the end of Math Intervention <i>or</i> pulls the student out of their Business Club for 10 minutes to conduct the end-of-day check-out.

**Student C** is taking the **alternative assessment** and receives a **modified curriculum**. Student C qualifies for **daily special education instruction in Functional Core Academics ELA and Math in the special education setting**. Student C also receives **occupational therapy** once per week. Student C attends science and social studies with the support of a **paraprofessional**.<sup>134</sup>

This schedule allows the student to receive 275 minutes (4.6 hours) of functional core math instruction per week. The student also receives 275 minutes (4.6 hours) of functional core ELA instruction per week. The student receives special education reading support in a 30-min daily reading intervention

<sup>134</sup> In the event that a student requires daily pull-out instruction in both math and English Language Arts, the Director of Learning Support will arrange co-planning and co-teaching schedules such that one learning specialist with a certification in special education is responsible for leading instruction in these areas. This ensures that the student meets with a consistent, certificated teacher each day. Should the student require support from a paraprofessional, TNA will hire a paraprofessional to support the student.

group during the Independent Reading block, amounting to 150 minutes a week (2.5 hours). The student will receive 275 minutes (4.6 hours) of inclusion science and social studies support from a paraprofessional each week. The student also receives services from an occupational-therapist for 30 minutes once weekly.

Period	Class Assignment (B Day)	Student Services
Advisory (30 min)	Homeroom	
Period 1 (55 Min)	Math	A Learning Specialist provides pull-out services in math.
Period 2 (55 Min)	English Language Arts	A Learning Specialist provides pull-out services in ELA.
Independent Reading (30 Min)	Reading Intervention Group	A Learning Specialist provides service minutes in a reading intervention group.
Period 3 (55 Min)	Physical Education	
Period 4 (55 Min)	Social Studies	Student attends the class with a paraprofessional.
Workshop (55 Min)	Art Club <i>or</i> Occupational Therapy	The Occupational Therapist (secured through an external provider) provides services to the student once per week during the workshop block. These services take place in the special education setting. Otherwise, the student attends Art Club.

#### Student D qualifies for ESL services.<sup>135</sup>

This schedule allows the student to receive 140 minutes (2.3 hours) of direct support per week in ELA (110 minutes per week and 60 minutes every other week) and 140 minutes (2.3 hours) per week in science (110 minutes per week and 60 minutes every other week). The student also receives 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of support per week in the Independent Reading block (30 minutes, 5x weekly). If the student's ILP requires more than 430 minutes (7.17 hours) of support per week, the student would be enrolled in an additional English language development group during workshop block on A Days and/or Language Club on B Days.

Period	Class Assignment (A Day)	Student Services
Advisory (30 min)	Homeroom	
Period 1 (55 Min)	English Language Arts	
Period 2 (55 Min)	Visual Arts: Natural	

<sup>135</sup> If a student is a Recently Arrived English Learner, TNA will provide EL services each day through co-taught classrooms, RTI during the Independent Reading block, and an English language development group at the end of the school day. This would result in 140 minutes of services provided on A Days and 85 minutes of services provided on B Days.

	Materials	
Independent Reading (30 Min)	Guided Reading	The Language Specialist provides service minutes in a guided reading group.
Period 3 (55 Min)	Science: Wildlife and the Environment	The Language Specialist provides service minutes while co-teaching in science.
Period 4 (55 Min)	Math	
Workshop (55 Min)	Business Club	If needed, the student attends an additional English language development group with the Language Specialist during a workshop block on A Days.

Period	Class Assignment (B Day)	Student Services
Advisory (30 min)	Homeroom	
Period 1 (55 Min)	English Language Arts	The Language Specialist provides service minutes while co-teaching in ELA.
Period 2 (55 Min)	Physical Ed: Outdoor Sports	
Independent Reading (30 Min)	Guided Reading	The Language Specialist provides service minutes in a guided reading group.
Period 3 (55 Min)	Social Studies: Tennessee History	
Period 4 (55 Min)	Math	
Workshop (55 Min)	Business Club	If needed, the student attends Language Club with the Language Specialist during a workshop block on B Days.

(c) Describe the following related to students with disabilities:

- Methods for identifying students with disabilities and avoiding misidentification or over-identification;
- Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the proposed school will employ to provide a continuum of services, ensure students' access to the general education curriculum, and ensure academic success for students with disabilities;
- Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of students with disabilities, including coordination with the authorizer's monitoring and evaluation; and
- Plans for promoting graduation for students with disabilities (high school only).

In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, TNA is committed to providing students with disabilities with a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to the maximum appropriate extent. TNA complies with all federal, state, and district regulations governing special education. TNA refers to these policies and regulations when identifying students with disabilities,

supporting students to access the general education curriculum, providing appropriate services, and monitoring and evaluating students' progress and success.

### **Student Identification**

Upon enrollment at TNA, families or the family's previous school will provide any existing documentation of their student's IEP or 504 plan. TNA will use Child Find, a screening procedure to determine eligibility for special education services, to identify students who may be in need of special services and who do not have an existing IEP or 504 plan. TNA's student identification process uses the following steps to avoid overidentification and misidentification:

- Students who are suspected to be in need of special services may be referred to Child Find by the students' family, TNA staff, or other healthcare providers or community agents. Students may be referred to Child Find based on data collected from vision or hearing screenings or from academic, functional, social-emotional, or behavioral data collected during universal screenings, routine progress monitoring, and the RTI<sup>2</sup> process. TNA shall follow MNPS's protocols for accepting, processing, and documenting Child Find referrals.<sup>136</sup>
- TNA will establish an IEP Evaluation Team that includes the student's parents, an administrator, a learning specialist, a content-area education teacher (preferably one of the student's advisory teachers), interpreters (if necessary), and other professionals who may be involved in supporting the students' success in school. When needed, TNA will provide translation and interpretation services throughout the IEP evaluation process to support families who have indicated that they speak a language other than English at home. Additionally, educational documents can be translated into preferred languages as needed.
- The IEP Evaluation Team will identify accommodations and modifications that may benefit the student. Classroom teachers, learning specialists, and other TNA staff will employ provisional accommodations and modifications and monitor and document the effect of these interventions on the student's performance and behavior for 30 days.
- With the consent of the family, the IEP Evaluation Team may recommend and coordinate evaluations like classroom observations, psychological evaluation, psycho-educational testing, and functional behavior assessments. To avoid mis-identifying English language learners for unnecessary special education support, these evaluations may be conducted in ELL's native languages in place of or in addition to English.
- The IEP Evaluation Team will use the data collected and the results of these evaluations to determine whether to move forward with the referral to special education services. If appropriate, the IEP Evaluation Team will develop an IEP or 504 Plan, review the plan with families, and adopt the plan. IEPs and 504 plans are reviewed annually and student reevaluations are conducted every three years. The IEP team may convene at any time upon the written request of any member of the team.
  - TNA will regularly review trends in student enrollment in special education services in order to prevent, identify, and address over-identification among males, students of color, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.<sup>137</sup>

The IEP Evaluation Team will be led by the Director of Learning Support at the middle school campus and at the high school campus. Directors of Learning Support will also serve as 504 coordinators at each campus. In Year 1 (2023-2024), our Executive Director (with both special education and administrative licensure) will lead the IEP Evaluation Team and serve as the 504 coordinator. In Year 2, the Director of

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<sup>136</sup> Tennessee State Board of Education. (2008, February 13). Rules of State Board of Education chapter 0520-01-09 special education programs and services. ([https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/meetingfiles2/3-16-17\\_IV\\_A\\_Special\\_Education\\_Programs\\_and\\_Services\\_Rule\\_0520\\_01\\_09\\_11\\_Clean\\_Copy.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/meetingfiles2/3-16-17_IV_A_Special_Education_Programs_and_Services_Rule_0520_01_09_11_Clean_Copy.pdf))

<sup>137</sup> National Center for Learning Disabilities. 2020. *Significant disproportionality in special education: Current trends and actions for impact*. [https://www.nclld.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2020-NCLD-Disproportionality\\_Trends-and-Actions-for-Impact\\_FINAL-1.pdf](https://www.nclld.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2020-NCLD-Disproportionality_Trends-and-Actions-for-Impact_FINAL-1.pdf)

Learning and Language Support will lead this process and the Director of Learning Support at the middle and high school campuses will lead this process in Year 3 and beyond.

### Serving Students with Disabilities

TNA's nature-based, project-based academic model is well-suited for an inclusive classroom, as it is highly personalized to the needs and interests of individual students. Nature-based, project-based learning also overlaps Universal Design for Learning (UDL),<sup>138</sup> which promotes student engagement, allows for the diverse representation of information, and provides learners with multiple ways to interact with and demonstrate understanding of classroom material. Additionally, studies have pointed to the role that environmental education plays in fostering inclusive environments and supporting students with disabilities to build relationships and develop social-emotional skills.<sup>139</sup> A nature-based environment is itself a proven accommodation for many students with disabilities who benefit from increased attentional and behavioral support.<sup>140,141</sup>

In addition to providing all necessary and required service hours, TNA's nature-based environment and pedagogical approach lends itself to provide research-based accommodations which are not typically provided in an indoor setting. Figure 1.9e depicts how nature-based practices have been demonstrated to promote development for specific disabilities recognized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). While nature-based learning is beneficial to all students, students with disabilities in particular benefit through behavioral, environmental, and instructional accommodations only found in nature-based settings.

Figure 1.9e - Findings on Nature as an Accommodation

Disability under IDEA	How Nature-based Instruction and the Environment Serves as an Accommodation that Benefits Student Growth and Learning
Other Health Impairment	ADHD is one of the most common diagnoses under the Other Health Impairment category. Learning outside is an environmental accommodation that can help alleviate ADHD symptoms. <sup>142</sup> Furthermore, the activity from nature-based child-centered play can help children with ADHD improve their on-task behavior while in the classroom. <sup>143</sup>
Autism Spectrum Disorder	Nature-based learning and play provides an interactive learning environment that benefits students that struggle in the rigid classroom environment. Recurrent patterns observed in nature and animals may promote the psychological development of children with autism. <sup>144</sup>
Emotional Disturbance	Amongst the many social and emotional benefits from nature-based play and learning, time outdoors can result in decreased chance in developing psychiatric disorders later in

<sup>138</sup> CAST. (2018). Universal Design for Learning guidelines version 2.2. <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>

<sup>139</sup> Stavrianos, A., (2016). Green inclusion: Biophilia as a necessity. *British Journal of Special Education*, 43(4), 416-429.

<sup>140</sup> Faber Taylor, A., Kuo, F.E., and Sullivan, W.C. (2001). Coping with ADD: The surprising connection to green play settings. *Environment and Behavior*, 33(1), 54-77.

<sup>141</sup> Ruiz-Gallardo, J., Verde, A., and Valdés, A. (2013). Garden-based learning: An experience with "at risk" secondary education students. *The Journal of Environmental Education*, 44(4), 252 - 270.

<sup>142</sup> Di Carmine, F. & Berto, R. (2020). Contact with nature can help ADHD children to cope with their symptoms. The state of the evidence and future directions for research. *Visions for Sustainability*, 15, 24-33. DOI: 10.13135/2384-8677/4883

<sup>143</sup> Swank, J.M. & Smith-Adcock, S. (2018). On-task behavior of children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder: Examining treatment effectiveness of play therapy intervention. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 27(4), 187-197.

<sup>144</sup> Bystrom, K., Grahn, P., & Hägerhäll, C. (2019). Vitality from experiences in nature and contact with animals - A way to develop joint attention and social engagement in children with autism? *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(23), 46-73. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16234673>

	life. <sup>145</sup>
Speech or Language Impairment	Play- or work-based scenarios in a comfortable outdoor setting can engage students in their speech development in ways a traditional setting cannot. A program integrating animal- and plant- assisted therapy has demonstrated multiple benefits for young children with speech problems. <sup>146</sup> Our innovative schedule allows students to both play outdoors and receive individualized speech services.
Visual Impairment	Students' screen time drastically increased during the shift to tech-based instruction during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Incidences in visual impairments amongst young people have dramatically increased, in particular for young kids with mild to moderate myopia. Lifestyle changes—including spending more time outdoors— may offer children some protection against developing myopia. <sup>147</sup> Our intentionally low-tech atmosphere in the early grades allows students with vision impairments to function in an academic environment that does not constantly demand using a technology that will further damage their vision.
Orthopedic Impairment	All students can benefit from a level of activity appropriate to their development. Our occupational therapists and learning specialists (special education teachers) will work with students with orthopedic impairments throughout our innovative schedule to develop motor skills, coordination, muscle tone, head and trunk control, posture, strength, balance and symmetry, and joint mobility by setting and monitoring appropriate goals in the student's Individualized Education Plan.
Intellectual Disability	Time spent in nature enhances working-spatial memory <sup>148</sup> . For students with memory impairment, this can enhance their academic performance and independent functioning.

As described above, TNA will follow an inclusive model in which content-area teachers and learning specialists co-plan and co-teach in the general education classroom to the greatest extent possible and as determined by the IEP team. Section 1.8 includes a sample teacher schedule and describes when co-planning and co-teaching is scheduled to take place. Content-area teachers and learning specialists will participate in co-planning at least once per week and co-teaching is scheduled to occur every day. The content-area teacher and learning specialist will collaborate to review student data and identify appropriate co-teaching strategies for each lesson (i.e. team teaching, alternative teaching, one teach / one assist, etc.). Depending on the lesson, students will work with a content-area teacher or learning specialist in a small-group setting during shared or independent work time: the content-area teacher and the language specialist will identify opportunities for small group instruction during the co-planning planning process. TNA will provide accommodations and modifications to assignments, assessments, and the environment as outlined in students' IEPs.

Required services for students with disabilities may at times take place in separate settings beyond the general education classroom. TNA will observe students' IEP guidance in providing the least restrictive environment and will offer educational opportunities within the continuum of services, such as

<sup>145</sup> Engemann, K., Pedersen, C.B., Arge, L., Tsirogiannis, C., Mortensen, P.B., & Svenning, J.C. (2019). Residential green space in childhood is associated with lower risk of psychiatric disorders from adolescence into adulthood. *PNAS*, *116*(11), 5188-5193.

<sup>146</sup> Kalashnikova, I.V., Oksana, B.G., Zhurov, V.K., Kalashnikov, A.O., (2016). Integrated animal-assisted and plant-assisted ecotherapy for preschool children with speech disturbances: A program for the Arctic. *Ecopsychology*, *8*(2), 79-88.

<sup>147</sup> Tideman, J.W.L., Polling, J.R., Jaddoe, V.W.V., Vingerling, J.R., & Klaver, C.C.W. (2019). Environmental risk factors can reduce axial length elongation and myopia incidence in 6- and 9-year-old children. *Ophthalmology*, *126*(1), 127-136.

<sup>148</sup> Flouri, E., Papachristou, E., & Midouhas, E. (2019). The role of neighbourhood greenspace in children's spatial working memory. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *89*(2), 359-373.

co-teaching, intervention, or functional core academics when appropriate. Academic accommodations like extended time and read-aloud for assessments may be provided in a separate setting, as will individualized services like occupational, speech, and physical therapy. TNA will also follow the requirements outlined in students' IEPs when scheduling services during the school day. Service minutes may take place during daily intervention times like independent reading block, personalized learning block, and workshop blocks, or during a core content class for students requiring a functional core setting. Intervention groups will follow research-based strategies and will not exceed 12 students.

### **Monitoring Students' Progress**

TNA will monitor students' progress in reading and math using the assessment system in Section 1.7. Students with disabilities will also undergo progress monitoring on a bi-weekly basis related to their learning and behavior goals as determined by their IEP or 504 Plans. Learning specialists and Directors of Learning Support will employ and manage specific progress monitoring systems as well as analyze data to inform instructional decisions for individual students. Data will be formally reported through quarterly IEP progress reports.

### **Preparing for Graduation**

TNA maintains an inclusive classroom model, co-planning and co-teaching structures, and the interventions outlined above throughout the high school program. Additionally, TNA is committed to supporting students with disabilities as they prepare for a sustainable and fulfilling life beyond high school. Supports to ensure this include meaningful transition services and planning based on individual needs.

TNA schedules student services during personalized learning block and offers the following courses as needed to support students in the high school setting:

- Tier II English Language Arts Intervention (G01H24)<sup>149</sup> - Students may enroll in this course for 0.5 elective credit. Credits earned in this class can not be applied to meet the elective focus requirement for graduation.
- Tier II Mathematics Intervention (G02H43) - This course follows similar guidance as Tier II English Language Arts Intervention (G01H24) above.
- Tier III English Language Arts Intervention (G01H19) - Students may enroll in this course for 0.5 elective credit. Credits earned in this class can not be applied to meet the elective focus requirement for graduation.
- Tier III Mathematics Intervention (G02H22) - This course follows similar guidance as Tier III English Language Arts Intervention (G01H19) above.

Students may also participate in the S25X27 Special Education Intervention (6-12) course as an elective in order to receive supplemental intervention in an area of the student's identified deficit.

TNA awards special education diplomas, occupational diplomas, and alternative academic diplomas for qualifying students as outlined in the Tennessee State Board of Education High School Policy 2.103. Students on a special education diploma path may be scheduled with comprehensive course codes in English, Math, and Science. These decisions are made by the IEP team based on multiple factors and points of data, and classes are led by a licensed learning specialist. In alignment with guidance from the Tennessee Department of Education,<sup>150</sup> these special education comprehensive course codes may include:

### *Figure 1.9f - Comprehensive Course Codes for Students on the Special Education Diploma Path*

<sup>149</sup> Jensen, K. (2017, July). *Tier II English language arts and mathematics high school course approval*. Tennessee Department of Education. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/rti/rti\\_tier2\\_coursecodes\\_guidance.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/rti/rti_tier2_coursecodes_guidance.pdf)

<sup>150</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2017, June). *Frequently asked questions: 2017-2018 special education course code revisions*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/sped\\_course\\_code\\_revisions\\_faq.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/sped_course_code_revisions_faq.pdf)

Special Education Diploma Path - Non-Alternate Assessment				
Content Area	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
English	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (English Language Arts) (S01H04) 1.0 credits	English II (G01H10) 1.0 credits - <i>Includes EOC</i>	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (English Language Arts) (S01H04) 1.0 credits	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (English Language Arts) (S01H04) 1.0 credits
Math	Algebra I A (G02H03) 1.0 credits	Algebra I B (G02H04) 1.0 credits <i>Includes EOC</i>	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (Math) (S02H04) 1.0 credits	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (Math) (S02H04) 1.0 credits
Science		Biology 1A (G03H06) 1.0 credits	Biology I B (G03H07) 1.0 credits <i>Includes EOC</i>	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (Science) (S02H03) 1.0 credits

Special Education Diploma Path - Alternate Assessment				
Content Area	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
English	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (English Language Arts) (S01H04) 1.0 credits	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (English Language Arts) (S01H04) 1.0 credits	Alternative Academic Diploma - English II (S01H01) 1.0 credits <i>Includes EOC</i>	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (English Language Arts) (S01H04) 1.0 credits
Math	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (Math) (S02H04) 1.0 credits	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (Math) (S02H04) 1.0 credits	Alternative Academic Diploma - Algebra I (S02H00) 1.0 credits <i>Includes EOC</i>	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (Math) (S02H04) 1.0 credits
Science		Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (Science) (S03H03) 1.0 credits	Alternate Academic Diploma - Biology I (S03H02) 1.0 credits <i>Includes EOC</i>	Comprehensive Program Grade 9-12 (Science) (S03H03) 1.0 credits

(d) Describe the following related to English Learners (EL) in accordance with State Board Policy 3.207:

- Methods for identifying EL students and avoiding misidentification;
- Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the proposed school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for EL students;
- Plans for ensuring individual learning plans (ILPs) are maintained and addressed; and
- Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of EL students, including exiting students from EL services.

TNA provides inclusive, accessible educational programs for English language learners (ELLs) in accordance with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, the Every Student Succeeds Act, and state policies maintained by the Tennessee State Board of Education. TNA's educational program provides ELLs with access to the same academic content and assesses students on the same academic standards as their native English speaking peers. Classes at TNA use English as the language of instruction and content is sheltered so as to be accessible for ELLs. TNA anticipates approximately 45% of the student body to identify as ELLs.

### **Student Identification**

Families will provide information regarding their student's language background during the registration process at TNA. If the family indicates that a language other than English is spoken at home *and* if the family has not previously completed a home language survey in another school or district, then TNA will provide a home language survey in English and in the family's preferred language. (Families will also indicate a need for interpretation and translation services during the registration process.) If the student's family indicates that a language other than English is primarily spoken by the student or in the home, then TNA will administer the WIDA Screener to assess the student's current English proficiency levels. TNA will use the results of the WIDA screener to determine whether the student is eligible for English as a Second Language (ESL) services. Students are considered eligible for ESL services if:

1. They achieve a composite score that is below 4.5 *or*
2. They achieve a score of 4.0 or below in any single language domain (i.e. reading, speaking, writing, and listening).

To avoid overidentification or misidentification, TNA will provide required testing accommodations or modifications for students with IEPs or 504 Plans during the WIDA screener.

If a student is found to be eligible for ESL services, TNA will create an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for the student which includes the student's English language proficiency placement test level, score reports, language goals, recommended ESL services, and strategies, accommodations, and modifications to be used in the general education classroom and on state assessments.<sup>151</sup> The ILP is developed and maintained by language specialists in each grade level and is updated annually to reflect the student's progress. As TNA embodies an inclusive school model, content-area teachers work collaboratively with language specialists to internalize students' ILPs at the beginning of the school year and throughout the school year as new data emerges.

TNA will communicate with families the student's placement, parental rights, and qualifying services with the use of a translator as needed. Families have the right to refuse placement in ESL programs; even if families waive participation in ESL services, content-area teachers will continue to provide accommodations or modifications as outlined in the student's ILP. TNA will support families of English language learners by helping them feel welcome and comfortable in the school environment. This may include offering a school tour and introducing family members to the EL teacher(s), assigning a peer

<sup>151</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2018, November 9). *English as a second language manual*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/cpm/ESL\\_Manual.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/cpm/ESL_Manual.pdf)

buddy, or celebrating students' home countries and multicultural holidays. Supporting families from all backgrounds is vital to our inclusive model; as such, TNA would solicit frequent feedback from families of ELLs on ways to improve the ELL program and would solicit ideas to increase family engagement and celebrate diverse cultural backgrounds.

### **Serving English Language Learners**

TNA maintains an inclusive classroom model in which content-area teachers and language specialists co-plan and co-teach to meet the needs of ELLs. TNA's co-planning and co-teaching approach between content-area teachers and language specialists is similar to that used between content-area teachers and language specialists: content-area teachers and language specialists will engage in co-planning at least once per week, and co-teaching is scheduled to occur every day. These processes allow teachers to collaborate and identify which students are making sufficient progress as well as those who require different support to make progress at the expected rate. Section 1.8 includes a sample teacher schedule that describes when these opportunities for collaboration occur.

TNA uses Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) in general education classrooms to make grade-level academic content accessible. TNA uses English as the language of instruction and follows the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model to guide Tier 1 instruction for ELLs. The SIOP model provides strategies for content-area teachers to help ELLs develop core academic language skills and participate equitably in disciplinary coursework. Teachers will receive ample training on the SIOP model both at the start of the school year and throughout the year with quarterly refresher topics. This professional learning will support a culture of inclusivity at TNA, as all teachers are responsible for knowing ELLs' ACCESS levels, understanding what these levels mean, and incorporating best practices to mitigate barriers to learning. Section 2.5 provides more detail on when and how these professional learning opportunities take place. In addition, teachers across all content areas will use a SIOP-based lesson planning template, which serves to reinforce the equitable and meaningful participation of ELs within the general education setting.

Figure 1.9g demonstrates the eight core instructional features of the SIOP model:<sup>152</sup>

*Figure 1.9g - The SIOP Model*

Component	Description
Lesson Preparation	Teachers create content and language objectives, develop accessible classroom materials, and adapt academic content to support students at all levels of language acquisition.
Building Background	Teachers connect academic content to students' backgrounds and experiences, clarify the link between previous and new learning, and introduce and reinforce key vocabulary throughout the lesson.
Comprehensible Input	Teachers clearly present content so that it is understood by ELLs. This may involve adapting speech for students' proficiency levels, providing directions in simple sentences, and using visuals, gestures, and modeling to support student understanding.

<sup>152</sup> Echevarria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D.J. (2000). *Making content comprehensible for English language learners: The SIOP model*. Allyn and Bacon.

Strategies	Teachers make classroom content accessible by scaffolding the content, using a variety of question types, and teaching students how to use strategies to monitor and demonstrate their own understanding.
Interaction	Teachers promote student-to-student and student-to-teacher interactions through strategic groupings, in-class opportunities for collaboration and discussion, and using wait time for students to clarify their thinking and language when sharing ideas.
Practice & Application	Teachers incorporate hands-on activities and materials in the classroom to help students access and apply their learning and practice language across each domain (i.e. reading, writing, speaking, and listening).
Lesson Delivery	The lesson is designed to engage the majority of students (90% - 100%), uses appropriate pacing, and is structured so that students master the language and content objectives.
Review & Assessment	Teachers provide regular feedback to students on their understanding of content and use of language. Teachers also review key vocabulary and key academic content throughout the lesson.

ELLs will receive accommodations aligned to their ILPs. The content-area teacher and language specialist will work together to ensure that accommodations related to instruction, assessments, and the classroom environment are in place. This collaboration will occur during weekly co-planning meetings as well as during regular data reflection meetings. Additionally, the Director of Learning Support will monitor the use of these strategies during regular fidelity observations within the general education classroom to ensure that ELLs benefit from equitable inclusion. Accommodations are provided alongside any related special education accommodations, modifications, or services for which dually classified learners are eligible according to their IEPs. Depending on the lesson, students will work with a content-area teacher or language specialist in a small-group setting during shared or independent work time. The content-area teacher and the language specialist will collaboratively identify opportunities for small group instruction during the lesson planning process to ensure ELLs meaningfully access the general education curriculum as well as make progress toward ILP goals.

ELLs are eligible for Tier II and Tier III instructional support based on their specific areas of need identified during the universal screening and benchmarking process. (See Section 1.7.) A language specialist, the Director of Language Support, and content-area teachers will consider students' language proficiency when assigning placement in Tier II and Tier III instruction.

### ESL Services

Per the Tennessee Department of Education,<sup>153</sup> ELLs will qualify for ESL services based on students' most recent WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Screener results. Middle school students at WIDA Levels 1-3 will receive 1-2 hours of direct service from an ESL-endorsed teacher daily, while middle school students at WIDA Levels 4-5 will receive up to 1 hour of direct service daily. In addition to support in the general education classroom, ELLs may receive services during independent reading block, personalized learning block, or workshop block depending on their level of need. Additionally, high school students in WIDA Levels 1-2 can apply 2.0 credits of English Language Development ELA courses to the 4.0 required English courses for graduation. Students entering TNA's program between WIDA Levels 1-2 will enroll

<sup>153</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2018, November 9). *English as a second language manual*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/cpm/ESL\\_Manual.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/cpm/ESL_Manual.pdf)

in English Language Development ELA courses until they reach WIDA Level 3 or until they have earned 2.0 credits before enrolling in English I, English II, or English III. Students can continue to enroll in English Language Development ELA courses on an elective basis after applying 2.0 credits toward the state graduation requirement.

### Exiting ELLs

Students at TNA participate in WIDA ACCESS for ELs 2.0 (ACCESS) testing annually. ACCESS results determine students' placement and ELS services for the following year. Students exit from ESL services once they earn a composite score of 4.2 *and* a literacy score of 4.0 on the ACCESS. Upon exit, students reach transitional status and will be monitored by the RTI<sup>2</sup> team in order to ensure continued progress in language development as well as overall success within the general education curriculum.

(e) Describe the following related to at-risk students:

- Methods for identifying at-risk students through academic and behavioral processes; and
- How the proposed school will address the learning needs of at-risk students and monitor their progress. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports that will be provided.

TNA uses the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Framework (MTSS) to identify and support students who may be at-risk. TNA's RTI<sup>2</sup> system works alongside recurring assessment and data review systems to identify students who will benefit from additional academic support, select the most appropriate interventions based on students' needs, and monitor the effectiveness of these interventions. TNA will make initial placement decisions using data from universal screener assessments like aimswebPlus: generally, students scoring at or below the 25th percentile in math or reading on this assessment qualify for Tier II academic supports, while students scoring at or below the 10th percentile qualify for Tier III academic supports. Diagnostic assessments (like Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems for reading and Math Concepts and Applications for math) help to inform these initial placement decisions. After initial placements are assigned, TNA's RTI team will meet on a monthly basis to review progress-monitoring data collected bi-weekly using aimswebPlus CBM and the Test of English Language Learning platform; the team will use these data to inform tiered instructional support decisions. The RTI team consists of grade level teachers, learning and language specialists, and the Directors of Learning Support and Directors of Language Supports.

Students may also require non-academic behavioral support according to RTI<sup>2</sup>B.<sup>154</sup> Students may become eligible for Tier II and Tier III behavioral support using:

- Trends in students' attendance, grades, classroom referrals, in-school and out-of-school suspensions, and participation in restorative conversations.
- Nomination from a student's advisor or grade-level team.
- Requests for support from the student or the student's family.

TNA's RTI team will meet monthly to review measurable data and discuss progress for students who may be eligible to participate in behavioral support interventions under RTI<sup>2</sup>B. During these formal meetings, the RTI team will make decisions regarding students' tier of support, evaluate the effectiveness of existing interventions, and determine whether students may benefit from more intensive interventions. Behavioral interventions are designed to support students in developing prosocial behaviors and may include following an individualized structure for behavior, joining a social skills group, increasing conferencing with an adult, following a check in / check out system, or following a personalized discipline contract. Interventions are applied consistently across the school community and are monitored using daily data inputs and regular family contact. Students who are eligible for Tier II behavioral support may receive

<sup>154</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. *Response to instruction and intervention for behavior (RTI<sup>2</sup>-B) framework*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/rti/rti2b\\_framework.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/rti/rti2b_framework.pdf)

individualized Student Success Plans. Students who are eligible for Tier III behavioral support may also receive a Functional Behavior Assessment and follow a Behavior Intervention Plan.

TNA will provide all teachers with professional learning opportunities that emphasize trauma-informed and restorative practices in order to ensure that all students have access to a safe and inclusive learning environment. Unexpected circumstances may also place a student at sudden physical or psychological risk. TNA maintains resources like a school nurse and a counselor / social worker to provide ongoing support to students in need and to coordinate assistance for students and families outside of school. The school-based leadership teams will also support students who may be facing homelessness,<sup>155</sup> require homebound instruction,<sup>156</sup> or are managing other forms of trauma. These concerns may be brought to the attention of the school-based leadership teams through a student's advisor, teachers, grade-level team, or through direct family contact with the school.

(f) Describe the following related to gifted students:

- Methods for identifying and meeting the needs of intellectually gifted students, including specific research-based instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities the proposed school will employ or provide to enhance their abilities; and
- Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of intellectually gifted students.

TNA will follow a process for identifying and serving intellectually gifted students if it is deemed that students' academic needs exceed those provided in the general education classroom.<sup>157</sup> Upon enrollment at TNA, families or the student's previous school will provide documentation of intellectually gifted IEPs. Intellectually gifted students are also identified through their performance on universal screener assessments or through the Child Find process described above. TNA conducts annual audits to determine the inclusiveness of all academic and cultural programs and to avoid bias in the identification process for intellectually gifted students.

Intellectually gifted students follow IEPs and their progress is monitored by a learning specialist with qualifications in gifted education. TNA's nature-based, project-based model allows for student learning to be differentiated to meet the needs of intellectually gifted students.<sup>158</sup> In this model, intellectually gifted students can accelerate their learning, pursue individual interests, work with peers in homogenous groups, participate in explorations, and exercise creativity and choice in the classroom.<sup>159</sup> Intellectually gifted students benefit from TNA's inclusion model and are supported by content-area teachers and learning specialists to extend their learning. TNA's schedule allows for students to participate in enrichment opportunities during independent reading block (bibliotherapy), personalized learning block (flexible scheduling), and workshop block (flexible grouping and multi-age grouping).<sup>160</sup> TNA also offers formal accelerated learning opportunities for students beginning with Algebra I in 8th grade and expanding to a range of Advanced Placement courses in 11th grade. Finally, intellectually gifted students receive services

<sup>155</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). Local education agency (LEA) requirements for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/cpm/title/title\\_10\\_lea\\_requirements.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/cpm/title/title_10_lea_requirements.pdf)

<sup>156</sup> Tennessee State Board of Education. (2020, May 29). *Homebound instruction*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducationschools/documents/policies/4000/4206\\_Homebound%20Instruction\\_Current\\_Accessible.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducationschools/documents/policies/4000/4206_Homebound%20Instruction_Current_Accessible.pdf)

<sup>157</sup> Stinson, C., & Mumpower, J.E. (2021, April). *Gifted education in Tennessee*. Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury: Office of Research and Education Accountability. <https://comptroller.tn.gov/content/dam/cot/orea/advanced-search/2021/GiftedBrief.pdf>

<sup>158</sup> National Association for Gifted Children. (2014, March 22). *Position statement: Differentiating curriculum and instruction for gifted and talented students*. <https://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/Position%20Statement/Differentiating%20Curriculum%20and%20Instruction.pdf>

<sup>159</sup> National Association for Gifted Children. (2021). *Traits of giftedness*. <https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/my-child-gifted/common-characteristics-gifted-individuals/traits>

<sup>160</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2010, August). *Tennessee state plan for the education of intellectually gifted students*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/eligibility/se\\_eligibility\\_gifted\\_manual.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/eligibility/se_eligibility_gifted_manual.pdf)

as outlined in their IEPs, which may include affective instruction,<sup>161</sup> counseling, or other related services as appropriate.

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<sup>161</sup> Cavilla, D. (2019). Maximizing the potential of gifted learners through a developmental framework of affective curriculum. *Gifted Education International*, 35(2), 136-151.

## SECTION 1.10 - SCHOOL CULTURE AND DISCIPLINE

(a) Provide as **Attachment B** the Student Handbook and/or forms that will be provided to or required of students and families.

A draft of TNA's Student Handbook is included as Attachment B. TNA will translate this document into students' home languages and share it so that all families are aware of TNA's expectations.

(b) Describe the desired school culture or ethos of the proposed school and how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce the school's mission, goals, and objectives.

TNA emphasizes character development and social-emotional learning (SEL) throughout the school day. A 2018 report from the Aspen Institute cited studies which suggest that supporting students' social, emotional, and academic development in school positively impacts students' health and leads to "gains in student achievement, including test scores, on-time graduation rates, and post-secondary enrollment and completion" (p. 3).<sup>162</sup> An additional study found that academic achievement among SEL participants improved by 11 percentile points.<sup>163</sup> These findings suggest that social-emotional learning is an important component in addressing the achievement gaps between student subgroups that have been observed in key academic performance outcomes. Therefore, TNA considers opportunities to support social-emotional learning throughout our approach to school culture.

### Tennessee Nature Academy's Key Principles and School Culture

TNA's key principles provide the foundation for our desired school culture. Our key principles support TNA's mission, goals, and objectives by providing guidance for how our mission is lived each day in our school as we work toward understanding the world, connecting to the outdoors, and doing good work. Each key principle frames decision-making for students, staff members, and our Board of Directors: we connect specific habits and behaviors from Positive Psychology (more detail below) to each principle and recognize students who demonstrate these habits and behaviors.

Figure 1.10a - TNA's Key Principles and Connection to School Culture

Key Principle	Connection to School Culture	Habits and Behaviors from Positive Psychology
Learning through Challenges	Embrace the Challenge	Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence; Creativity; Curiosity; Love of Learning; Persistence; Zest
Building Connectedness	Seek and Sustain Connection	Fairness; Gratitude; Humor; Kindness; Love; Social Intelligence; Teamwork
Sustaining Health and Happiness	Make Healthy Decisions	Forgiveness; Hope; Humility; Judgment; Self-Regulation
Impacting the Community	Consider Your Impact	Bravery; Honesty; Leadership; Prudence; Sense of Purpose

<sup>162</sup> Aspen Institute. (2018). *Pursuing social and emotional development through a racial equity lens: A call to action*. Aspen Education & Society Program. [https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Aspen-Institute\\_Framing-Doc\\_Call-to-Action.pdf](https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Aspen-Institute_Framing-Doc_Call-to-Action.pdf).

<sup>163</sup> Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., & Schellinger, K.B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 82(1), 405-432.

## Resilience and Wellbeing

TNA's school culture is one of Resilience and Wellbeing. We recognize that students are humans first, and we seek to create a culture that supports human flourishing. Schoolwide cultures of Resilience and Wellbeing are backed by decades of research in Positive Psychology,<sup>164</sup> which has been demonstrated to immunize young people from future depression (an all-too-real crisis in our current society).<sup>165</sup> The Penn Resilience Program (PRP) is an evidence-based training program that emerged as the result of over 25 years of research, development, and implementation in the field of Positive Psychology. This strengths-based program equips individuals with a set of practical skills that can be applied in everyday life to navigate adversity and thrive in challenging environments. The six Resilience Competencies outlined by the program have been demonstrated to build resilience, well-being, and optimism.

TNA sets high bars for academic and behavioral success, and we anticipate that students will sometimes fail to meet these high expectations. How students learn to interpret and frame failure is crucial to their social and emotional development, which sets them up for happy and healthy lives. TNA does this by emphasizing the Resilience Competencies in our conversations about failure, challenges, and difficulties.

The state of Tennessee and Metro Nashville Public Schools suggest that schools follow the Collaborative of Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework to support social and emotional learning (SEL). This is demonstrated in the State of Tennessee's 2017 K-12 Social and Personal Competencies Resource Guide<sup>166</sup> and affirmed in MNPS' initiative partnership.<sup>167</sup> The Resilience Competencies overlap with and go beyond the SEL competencies presented in the CASEL framework. The chart below demonstrates the overlap and, where applicable, the extension of Resilience Competencies into a more robust framework where lacking in the CASEL competencies.

*Figure 1.10b - PRP's Resilience Competencies Compared to CASEL Competencies*

Resilience Competency <sup>168</sup>	Definition	Corresponding CASEL Competency <sup>169</sup>
Self-Awareness	The ability to pay attention to your thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and physiological reactions.	Self-Awareness: The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions, thoughts, and values and their influence on behavior.
Self-Regulation	The ability to change one's thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and physiology in the service of a desired outcome.	Self-Management: The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations;  Responsible Decision Making: The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on

<sup>164</sup> Brunwasser, S.M., Gillham, J.E. & Kim, E.S., (2009). A meta-analytic review of the Penn Resiliency Program's effect on depressive symptoms. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 77(6), 1042-1054.

<sup>165</sup> Gillham, J.E., Reivich, K.J., Freres, D.R., Chaplin, T.M., Shatté, A.J., Samuels, B., Elkon, A.G.L., Litzinger, S., Lascher, M., Gallop, R., & Seligman, M.E.P. (2007). School-based prevention of depressive symptoms: A randomized controlled study of the effectiveness and specificity of the Penn Resiliency Program. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 75(1), 9-19.

<sup>166</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2017, November). *K-12 Social and Personal Competencies Resource Guide*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/safety/safe\\_sch/SPC\\_Resource\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/safety/safe_sch/SPC_Resource_Guide.pdf)

<sup>167</sup> Metro Nashville Public Schools. (2022). *Social Emotional Learning*. [https://mnps.org/learn/supporting\\_our\\_students/sel](https://mnps.org/learn/supporting_our_students/sel)

<sup>168</sup> University of Pennsylvania School of Arts and Sciences. (2021). *Resilience skill set*. Positive Psychology Center. <https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/resilience-programs/resilience-skill-set>

<sup>169</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2017, November). *K-12 Social and Personal Competencies Resource Guide*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/safety/safe\\_sch/SPC\\_Resource\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/safety/safe_sch/SPC_Resource_Guide.pdf)

		consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.
Mental Agility	The ability to look at situations from multiple perspectives and to think creatively and flexibly.	Social Awareness: The ability to understand the perspective of others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize and practice civic responsibility in family, school, and community.
Strengths of Character	The ability to use one's top strengths to engage authentically overcome challenges, and create a life aligned with one's values.	Not a CASEL competency.
Connection	The ability to build and maintain strong, trusting, relationships.	Relationship Skills: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups.
Optimism	The ability to notice and expect the positive, to focus on what you can control, and to take purposeful action.	Not a CASEL competency.

Two Resilience Competencies, “strengths of character” and “optimism,” extend social and emotional beyond the CASEL framework. The following sections address why TNA believes these Resilience Competencies are essential to supporting students’ social and emotional learning in our program.

#### Resilience Competency: Strengths of Character

We have adopted Positive Psychology’s 24 Character Strengths<sup>170</sup> as the foundation for our character education curriculum. We cycle through all 24 Character Strengths throughout the year as a way for students to discover and build their strengths over time. These strengths have been developed over decades of research from University of Pennsylvania’s Positive Psychology Department. Exploring a diverse array of Character Strengths allows all students to discover and celebrate strengths in themselves and in others. Our strengths-based approach helps students determine which strengths rise to the top for them and explores how to leverage those strengths for college and career success.

*Figure 1.10c - Positive Psychology’s 24 Character Strengths<sup>171</sup>*

Domain	Wisdom and Knowledge	Courage	Humanity	Transcendence	Justice	Moderation
Character	Creativity Curiosity	Bravery Persistence	Love Kindness	Appreciation of Beauty &	Teamwork Fairness	Forgiveness Humility

<sup>170</sup> Peterson, C. & Seligman, M.E.P. (2004). Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification. Oxford University Press.

<sup>171</sup> Al Taher, R., (2021, July 12). The classification of character strengths and virtues. PositivePsychology.com.

<https://positivepsychology.com/classification-character-strengths-virtues/>. “Sense of Purpose” is called “Spirituality” in some variations of this model. TNA prefers “Sense of Purpose.” TNA is not affiliated with any religion and we respect all religious and nonreligious student backgrounds.

Strengths	Judgment Love of Learning Perspective	Honesty Zest	Social Intelligence	Excellence Gratitude Hope Humor Sense of Purpose	Leadership	Prudence Self-Regulation
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### Resilience Competency: Optimism

Optimism is greater than simply wishful thinking. The University of Pennsylvania has spent decades researching the effects of optimism on the mental and physical health of children and adults. Essentially, young people who view the world through a pessimistic lens are far more susceptible to major and minor depressive episodes and other mental and physical ailments.<sup>172</sup> Once young people are taught how to think in optimistic terms, those trends are reversed. TNA teaches students the optimism competency through Resilience Coaching—breaking down how children interpret and frame negative events and failures into events that are not pervasive, permanent, or personal.

### **Restorative Practices**

While Positive Psychology informs TNA’s approach to character education, we use a restorative approach to classroom management and school discipline. Restorative practices use methods that engage members of the community in reflecting on, taking responsibility for, and developing plans to address and repair harm.<sup>173</sup> Based on literature from the International Institute for Restorative Practices, TNA uses the following principles to guide restorative practices:

1. The goal of restorative practices is to “develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and restoring relationships.”<sup>174</sup>
2. “Human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things *with* them, rather than *to* them or *for* them.”<sup>175</sup>
3. Ideally, 80% of the time we should be proactive with our relationships and developing community, and 20% of the time we are being responsive and repairing relationships.

Rather than “punishing” students who harm the community, restorative practices support students in understanding the impact of their actions, rebuild positive connections with the community, and practice healthy-decision making in the future. This distinction is outlined in Figure 1.10d.

*Figure 1.10d - Restorative vs. “Punitive” Approaches to School Discipline*

Restorative	Punitive
Students receive consequences when harm is done to the community.	Students are “punished” for doing harm to the community.
Student shame is minimized.	Students are stigmatized with shame.

<sup>172</sup> Rasmussen, H.N., Scheier, M., & Greenhouse, J.B. (2009). Optimism and physical health: A meta-analytic review. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 37(3), 239-256.

<sup>173</sup> Porter, A.J. (2007, March 21). *Restorative practices in schools: Research reveals power of restorative approach, part I*. International Institute for Restorative Practices. <https://www.iirp.edu/news/restorative-practices-in-schools-research-reveals-power-of-restorative-approach-part-i>

<sup>174</sup> International Institute for Restorative Practices. (2022). *Restorative practices continuum*. <https://www.iirp.edu/defining-restorative/restorative-practices-continuum>

<sup>175</sup> Wachtel, T. & McCold, P. (2004, August 5). *From restorative justice to restorative practices: Expanding the paradigm*. International Institute for Restorative Practices. <https://www.iirp.edu/news/from-restorative-justice-to-restorative-practices-expanding-the-paradigm>

Redirection given in affective statements. (E.g. “When you do that, it affects our community in this way.”)	Redirection given in simple directives. (E.g. “Don’t do that.”)
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### The Restorative Center

The Restorative Center is a place on campus where students go to settle conflict or to find support. Students can self-select to go to the Restorative Center or can be required to go in the event of a behavioral infraction. The counselor’s office is in the Restorative Center should the need for a private conversation arise, but there is also space for students to reflect on their own. The Restorative is staffed by two TNA adults at any given time, usually the counselor and another member from the leadership team. This includes the Executive Director, Chief Academic Officer, Director of Community Engagement, Director of Operations, and teacher-leaders not leading a workshop block in the early years and then shifts to include the Middle School Principal, Director of Learning, Director of Language, and Assistant Principal. It is important to our unified culture that all members of the leadership team own responsibility in a unified student support system. This is exemplified in every leader owning a time slot to handle student behavior. The section below further describes how the Restorative Center is used.

### Restorative Discipline

TNA handles all discipline incidents using a restorative model. Whenever possible, we prefer to correct behavior and repair harm using consistent, restorative practices rather than suspension and expulsion. Our discipline policy aligns with MNPS’ Discipline Policy; therefore, suspension and expulsion are never required except for Type 5 offenses. Descriptions of Types 1-5 are available in Attachment C. TNA’s process for addressing behavior incidents is as follows:

1. Our teachers create and maintain positive classroom environments for all students using the following practices:
  - a. Frequent Positive Reinforcement (Public and Private) - Students feel included and affirmed through periodic public and private reinforcements. Private reinforcements include notes of affirmation to the student, positive phone calls home, or positive side conversations between an adult and the student. Public reinforcement includes recognition at an assembly, a student shout-out during advisory, or having student work posted in a public space.
  - b. Strong Relationship Investment - Advisories are the time when relationships are cemented together. During this block, small groups of students hold deep conversations, participate in fun and challenging activities, compete against other advisories, and pursue common interests together. The advisory teacher is the go-to person for every student. Because advisories are co-led with two teachers for each group of 27 students, there are always two adults intentionally building a positive relationship with every student, every year.
  - c. Positive Teacher Language - What students hear matters to their perception of themselves. Teachers will work towards maintaining a ratio of four positive remarks with every negative redirection. Positivity ratios are tracked during formal and informal coaching sessions so that teachers can be held accountable to this standard.
  - d. Clearly Communicated Behavioral Expectations - From the beginning of the year, all behavioral expectations are clearly community to all students. These are reinforced in early class sessions, with reminders throughout the year. When a student is redirected, it is a learning experience during which they hear the rationale behind the behavioral expectation through a Restorative conversation.
2. Should a behavior incident occur, the teacher first addresses any minor behavior infractions in the classroom. If the behavior is Type 1 and does not constitute immediate removal, instruction continues. As a general rule,
  - a. If infraction is private, it is privately addressed by the classroom teacher.

- b. If infraction is public, it is publicly addressed by the classroom teacher. This is important so that student perception of a safe and supportive environment remains intact.
3. For Types 2, 3, 4, and 5, the offending student is removed from the classroom and sent to the Restorative Center. In the Restorative Center:
    - a. If needed, offending students participate in therapeutic activities to regulate emotions. These can include breathing exercises, drinking water, meditating in a green space, or walking in a secure location.
    - b. With the assistance of a staff member in the Restorative Center, the offending student prepares a reflection in preparation for a restorative meeting, in which the student takes accountability for their actions and repairs harm. Students are guided towards how they can create a commitment to be vocalized to the other party.
    - c. The offending student has up to 48 hours to process the infraction and prepare for a restorative meeting. We aim to conduct restorative meetings within the same day as the offense to quickly address the events among all participating parties. The desired outcome for the restorative meeting is for the offending student to own their actions and make a commitment in order to begin to mend the relationship between both parties.
  4. A restorative meeting must be held before the offending student can return to the community.
    - a. The offending student reads through the reflection to participating parties. The victim (when applicable) does not need to be present for the restorative conversation if the victim so decides.
    - b. Family contact is made to inform participating parties' guardians of the event and to communicate or discern an appropriate consequence. TNA will provide translation services for these conversations if needed to ensure fair and equitable participation in the conversation.
    - c. The offending student vocalizes commitments for how to move forward.
  5. Re-entry is important so that the broken relationships in the community can truly mend.
    - a. Students are allowed back to the classroom after a completed reflection and restorative conversation, if no other consequences are required.
    - b. Restorative Center staff members will communicate commitments to the student's advisory teachers so they can follow up with the student on their commitments. Student progress will be affirmed on a weekly basis so the student can begin to internalize positive progress.
    - c. Offending students are provided with the opportunity for public acknowledgement or community service if the offending student and their guardians determine that doing so would ease the re-entry process and help the student rebuild their place in the community. Public acknowledgement and community service will never be required of any student and is not used as public shaming.

TNA faculty will engage in ongoing professional development to support the implementation of these restorative practices and will conduct monthly equity audits to determine the effectiveness and inclusiveness of our systems. During an equity audit, comprehensive data (e.g. student infractions, staff involvement, positivity ratios, types of behavior, behavior recurrence, effectiveness of interventions, etc.) will be broken down by sub-group to determine if current systems are equitable for all students.

(c) Explain how you will create, implement, and sustain this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and

parents starting from the first day of school. Describe the plan for acculturating students who enter mid-year.

### **Set the Year**

Staff who sign on to work at TNA are signing on to be a part of our culture. We introduce this culture during the hiring process; staff learn about our unique model of student success and support before they are hired as we determine if the educator is the right fit for our community. During our summer staff training, we conduct deep dives into key components of Positive Psychology, nature-based learning, instructional best practices, and TNA-specific operations. Continuous professional learning reinforces these systems. TNA staff conduct family orientations regarding our culture system in order to set the foundation for expectations for both the parents and their students. Orientations will be conducted in daytime and evening sessions, with a virtual option during times when it is a best practice to limit group sizes. Our orientations are thorough and serve the dual purpose of sharing back-to-school information and establishing the culture we intend to create. This is when we review and sign all behavioral expectations in the Student Handbook and introduce the families to the Character Strengths through various activities and parent and student reflections. Interpretation services and translated materials are available for families during these events. See Attachment C.

A representative of the school will conduct a mandatory orientation meeting with students and families who enter mid-year. When needed, interpretation services and translated materials are available during mid-year orientation meetings. This orientation meeting shares clear expectations of TNA's culture systems and supports students in enjoying a safe and productive start to their first day of school. Students are then introduced to their advisory, where continuous peer support will take place to help the students navigate the new school environment.

### **Set the School Day**

TNA's schedule reserves time for advisory blocks, which take place before academic classes begin. On most days, advisory is held in smaller, "homeroom" settings, though students will occasionally attend school-wide or grade-wide assemblies as well. Advisories include groups of 27 students and two teachers at the middle school and 20 students and two teachers at the high school.

Part of TNA's advisory curriculum will use resources provided by the Positivity Project. These resources include ready-to-teach mini-lessons and projects. Using these lessons, students discuss and explore their strengths with their peers and trusted adults. Throughout the year, students use advisory time to participate in various, character-building activities including:

- Identifying their own strengths.
- Learning to recognize strengths in others.
- Identifying the strengths of the group, class, or whole school community.
- Planning for the future using strengths-based goal setting.
- Receiving feedback related to their strengths development.
- Using their strengths to support personal learning, achievement, and wellbeing.

TNA's strengths-based approach to developing student wellbeing is built into our whole school design through a number of intentional practices that take place on a daily or weekly basis. These include:

Resilience Coaching Sessions for Students - Our curriculum from the Positivity Project includes training on adult-led Resilience Coaching for students. Strengths through coaching sessions improve a young person's performance in school, enhance their psychological well-being, improve engagement and create their own success in life. Because we hold students to high academic and behavioral standards and we anticipate failure from all students at one point or another, these conversations are necessary to help young people frame failure in a healthy manner so they can transform it into success. These brief sessions

will take place during advisory, recess, lunch, or workshop, depending on student and adult schedule. Therapeutic outdoor techniques (e.g. walking, sitting in a green space, tinkering with plants) will be used to allow students to feel comfortable and relaxed.

Peer-to-Peer Support for Students - Young people act as peer supporters and are trained and supported appropriately to help improve the well-being of other students. As the school grows, this will transform into a peer mentoring program in which older students support younger students (and those younger students pass it forward). Time is set aside weekly in advisory for students to take responsibility for their actions and to encourage their peers. The advisory teacher guides these conversations and creates peer groups according to need.

Develop a Culture and Ethos of Strengths - Character Strengths will affect all aspects of the school's culture, from recognition of students and staff in assemblies, to family-student-teacher conferences, and to processing and reflection when a student has been involved in an incident. Our school's atmosphere will celebrate the strengths of individuals, even while highlighting the character weaknesses displayed in a single moment.

(d) Explain how the school culture will embrace special populations, including students with disabilities, English Learners, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out.

TNA expects to serve a diverse student body in which approximately 42% of students identify as economically disadvantaged, 45% of students identify as English language learners, and 15% of students identify as students with disabilities. Our culture of Resilience and Wellbeing benefits all students, regardless of students' past behavioral and academic success. Here, we highlight specific ways in which our culture systems provide equitable engagement for special populations:

Students with Diverse Learning Needs - Often, what can be perceived as a behavioral issue from students with disabilities or English Language Learners stems from an instructional issue. Our staffing model employs one learning specialist (special education teacher) and one language specialist (English as a Second Language teacher) per grade, allowing for integrated co-planning and co-teaching to support students who need varied instructional assistance. An inclusive classroom teaching model allows all students to be challenged and experience success. TNA's culture system applies to all students, and all students participate in the advisory block; this participation allows students to form close relationships with both adults and with their peers, which encourages the development of both social and academic language and skills. It is important that all students have the opportunity to build their Connection Competency, seeing as how important relationships are to happiness.

Students At Risk of Academic Failure - Students at risk of academic failure are more susceptible to behavioral misconduct due to feelings of helplessness and meaninglessness.<sup>176</sup> Our culture of Resilience and Wellbeing is particularly important for these students who, due to years of compounded failure in school, do not perceive success as something to be attained. Reframing failure as a learning experience rewires pessimistic brains to celebrate successes and generate positive self-esteem. Our smaller community allows all students at TNA to be well-known by their teachers and have their progress closely monitored, and students are mentored and advocated for as they work to close opportunity and achievement gaps. Additionally, because we emphasize an active approach not rooted solely in traditional classroom instruction, students are able to identify their Character Strengths in contexts other than the classroom (in a school garden, a forest classroom, through work-based goals, etc).

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<sup>176</sup> Seligman, M.E.P., Ernst, R.M., Gillham, J., Reivich, K., & Linkins, M. (2009). Positive education: Positive psychology and classroom interventions. *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(3), 293-311.

Students with Emotional Disturbances or Adverse Childhood Experiences - From Year 2 onward, TNA will have a full time Social Worker/Counselor position available to assist students with Emotional Disturbances or a history of Adverse Childhood Experiences.<sup>177</sup> Our student discipline policy allows for us to identify the trigger for the event and, in the case it is the result of previous trauma or diagnostic Emotional Disturbance, our Social Worker/Counselor is on site to provide the necessary interventions. Nature-based settings have a documented curative effect for depressive and traumatic episodes.<sup>178,179</sup> Resilience Coaching acknowledges the challenges and failures of the student and helps them interpret how their own Character Strengths can help them develop healthy habits (e.g. self-regulation and optimism). Our culture system also allows for students to self-identify when they are verging on an episode or need a mental break (e.g. self-awareness). These students can sign up for therapeutic nature-based activities during non-academic times like recess, break, or workshop to help regulate strong emotions.

Students who are Economically Disadvantaged - Having a student body that knows they are cared for and are provided for, whatever the need, contributes to a positive school climate and culture. In addition to maintaining our own set of community partners, TNA will network with multiple governmental resources for our economically disadvantaged students. No student is, or will be, denied access to any learning opportunity due to a lack of resources. This will manifest in the development of a food and clothing bank (so that all students are comfortable in all weather conditions). Our Director of Community Engagement will maintain close connections to the families we serve and ensure that conditions outside the school do not negatively impact the students' experience at school.

(e) Provide the student discipline policy as **Attachment C** (if not already included in Attachment B of the school handbook).

A draft of TNA's Student Discipline policy is included as Attachment C. TNA will translate this policy into students' home languages so that all families understand our discipline process.

TNA will follow all state-required online reporting for systems such as bullying and bus safety concerns. We will maintain a cumulative online document for recording DCS reports. We will maintain student anonymity on those documents by recording only the student's initials; if we need to reference the report number, only the reporter will recognize the initials matched with the date and description. Having the reporting numbers for the whole campus in one location provides an assurance to administration and staff that we have documentation and witnesses for fulfilling our responsibility to students and Tennessee state law. An assured and confident staff builds a positive school climate and culture.

(f) If not addressed in the student discipline policy, describe the philosophy for student discipline that supports the proposed school's model, including:

- Practices the school will use to promote good discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior;
- A list and definitions of the offenses for which students in the school must (where nondiscretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended or expelled, respectively; procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a code of conduct violation, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion;

<sup>177</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures. (2022). *Adverse childhood experiences*. <https://www.ncsl.org/research/health/adverse-childhood-experiences-aces.aspx>

<sup>178</sup> Anwar, Y. (2018, July 12). *Nature is proving to be awesome medicine for PTSD*. Berkeley News. <https://news.berkeley.edu/2018/07/12/awe-nature-ptsd/>

<sup>179</sup> Weir, K. (2020, April 1). *Nurtured by nature: Psychological research is advancing our understanding of how time in nature can improve our mental health and sharpen our cognition*. American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/04/nurtured-nature>

- An explanation of how the school will protect the rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings;
- The job description and qualifications of the administrative individuals responsible for carrying out the school's discipline policies; and
- How students and parents will be informed of the school's discipline policy.

### **Promoting Positive Behavior**

TNAs approach to student discipline is based on developing intrinsic motivation. Thus, our incentives are aligned with this approach. We have set aside a significant portion of our calendar for positive, culture-building activities. Below demonstrates how our culture and discipline systems follow the RTI<sup>2</sup>-B Framework to provide students with Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III behavioral support.<sup>180</sup>

Tier I - Our positive, affirmative culture is the driving force to encourage positive student behavior. All students feel seen and known through our advisory block, Character Strengths exercises, and consistent use of restorative practices. Additionally, the structure of the day (e.g. frequent outdoor breaks, joyful classroom activities, and student-selected workshops at the end of the day) encourage students to maintain positive behavior, understanding that positive behavior is requisite to remaining in the community. This positive reinforcement is effective for most of the students, most of the time.

Tier II - Behavioral infractions will arise from time to time. Workshop time-- the time in the day devoted to student-selected activities-- is when Restorative Conversations occur. Therefore, students will be encouraged to avoid behavioral infractions so that they are not spending "their" time in the Restorative office. While recess is important to students from a developmental standpoint, we see forfeiting workshop time as a fair penalty for behavioral infractions. Students receiving Tier II support will receive Resilience Coaching or check-ins from a counselor, their advisory teacher, or another trusted adult in the building. These brief sessions or check-ins will occur during recess, lunch, advisory, or workshop block, depending on the need and student and adult schedule.

Tier III - There will be times when major or continuous infractions occur and a higher level of intervention is needed. This intervention can manifest as a behavioral contract, where the students identify what they determine as positive reinforcement. While we issue suspensions for a last resort, we acknowledge that there are times when that is the appropriate penalty for major behavioral infractions. Students with continuous and major behavioral infractions will be referred to a counselor to determine the underlying antecedents for their actions.

### **Removable Offenses**

Discipline is instructional and develops quality character for our students. In order to remain in our community, students must abide by our behavioral expectations. TNA will implement the MNPS Discipline Policy regarding Suspendable and Expellable Actions and Due Process thereof,<sup>181</sup> which is consistent with our relationship-based and restorative discipline approach. Details about TNA's Discipline Policy, including elements drawn from the MNPS Discipline Policy, are in Attachment C.

### **Students with Special Needs**

Additional guidance, outlined below, will ensure that students with special needs, including students with disabilities, English language learners, and students at risk of academic failure, receive appropriate consideration in discipline proceedings.

<sup>180</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2021). *Response to instruction and intervention for behavior RTI<sup>2</sup>-B framework*. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/rti/rti2b\\_framework.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/special-education/rti/rti2b_framework.pdf)

<sup>181</sup> Metro Nashville Public Schools. (2022). *Handbook - Discipline*. <https://mnps.org/students-families/student-resources/handbook/handbook-discipline>

Students with Disabilities - Nothing in TNA's Student Handbook or Discipline Policy will be permitted to infringe upon any rights provided pursuant to the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans With Disabilities Act. Any student who receives special education services or has been identified as a student with a disability under IDEA and whose acts are determined by TNA leadership or the Board of Directors to have violated any rules, regulations, or laws as alleged, shall be referred to an IEP committee consisting of school personnel, the student's parents, and any educational professional with special knowledge of the student. The IEP committee will be responsible for determining if the student's conduct is a manifestation of his/her disability and whether such conduct warrants a change in placement, amendments to the IEP and/or disciplinary actions. If the IEP committee determines that the student's conduct is not a manifestation of the student's disability, TNA leadership shall determine what, if any, disciplinary actions shall be taken with regard to offenses that the student has been found to have committed. The IEP committee shall also have the authority to consider, recommend, and implement any changes in a student's IEP or educational placement. If a student with disabilities has an IEP that includes disciplinary guidelines, that student will be disciplined according to those guidelines as required by IDEA. Students whose IEP does not include specific disciplinary guidelines may be disciplined in accordance with the school's discipline policies and procedures after following the procedures outlined above. Nothing in these rules shall alter or adversely affect the rights of students with disabilities under applicable federal and state laws.

English Language Learners - Any student who receives EL services or has been identified as an EL and whose acts are determined by TNA leadership or the Board of Directors to have violated any rules, regulations or laws as alleged shall as part of any disciplinary action engage in a thorough review to ensure that the student's misconduct is not a manifestation of language and communication barriers. Students for whom it is determined that language was not a factor in misconduct may be disciplined in accordance with the school's discipline policies and procedures. When misconduct necessitates communication with families who are not English speakers, every effort will be made to provide translation and/or interpretation services for these conversations.

Students at Risk - Staff at TNA will be mindful of the possibility of connection between academic underperformance and student misconduct. Our restorative processes help students identify patterns and triggers in behavior and to name when academic challenges or boredom influence negative behavior patterns. Teachers and culture leaders will support students in proactively and positively responding to both academic underperformance and disciplinary problems.

### **Ownership of Discipline at TNA**

School Culture and Discipline is owned by all members of the TNA staff and managed by the Leadership Team (consisting of the Executive Director, Chief Academic Officer, Director of Operations, and Director of Community Engagement in Year 1 and expanding to include a stratified school-based leadership team as the school grows). Our Executive Director audits culture data to ensure equity across all sub-groups. Annual PD in restorative practices ensure that classroom teachers are well-prepared to implement discipline practices in a consistent, firm, and caring manner. For more serious infractions or repeated patterns of misconduct necessitating written reflection, relationship work, suspension, or expulsion, a member of TNA's school-based leadership team will support discipline proceedings. Job descriptions for founding leadership positions are included in later sections of this application.

### **Parent Communication**

We encourage open lines of communication beginning before the first day of school, with staff members meeting with all families to review important school policies including our discipline

policy. Teachers initiate positive contact with all families at least twice per semester to celebrate each student's academic and social successes and to strengthen relationships with families by showing that we deeply know and value their children. There are several apps that allow for secure, multilingual communication between the school and family (e.g. Band, Talking Points, Remind, etc) and TNA will provide formal translation and interpretation services when needed. TNA's founding team will determine the app of choice in July 2023. When we do contact parents for disciplinary issues, we approach each challenge through a lens of encouraging the emergence of Character Strengths and engaging families as collaborators in solving discipline problems. Our calendar highlights days set aside for Parent-Teacher conferences, when all families will have the opportunity to deep dive on their child's progress. Additionally, a monthly newsletter will allow the school to highlight important information and student successes.

## SECTION 1.11 - RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT

- (a) Provide as **Attachment D** the proposed school's Enrollment Policy, which should include the following:
- Tentative dates for the application period and enrollment deadlines and procedures, including an explanation of how the school intends to receive and process application forms and run a lottery, if necessary (considering the authorizer's open enrollment and lottery schedule);
  - Nondiscriminatory admission policies, pursuant to T.C.A. §49-13-107; Any proposed articulation plans or agreements, pursuant to T.C.A. §49-13-113;
  - Identification of any pre-admission activities for students or parents; and
  - Policies and procedures for student waitlists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers.

TNA's Enrollment Policy is included as Attachment D. The enrollment policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, handicap/disability, sexual orientation, ancestry, need for special education services, or sex, including gender identity, gender expression, and appearance. The TNA Board of Directors ensures that admissions policies and procedures comply with federal, state, and local laws and policies.

- (b) Describe how parents and other members of the community will be informed about the proposed school. How are you assessing the demand for your school?

Since 2016, our Executive Director has piloted a nationally-awarded Outdoor Learning program in the 37013 community. Ultimately impacting over 1000 students, this pilot program began connecting our leadership team to the community partners in our area that are now in partnership with TNA and received the MacArthur Foundation's 2017 Educator Innovator Award. Our Executive Director is well respected as an educational leader and entrepreneur, successfully starting and leading a program that generated a huge demand for outdoor learning experiences in our community. He was a finalist for Teach for America's 2019 Social Innovation Award with a social enterprise program that taught students agriscience and culinary skills while providing a farm-to-table foodbox service for the community. This enterprise also served as a pilot program for TNA's Agriscience curriculum.

Demand for the school has been determined through a number of avenues. We have shown the percentage increase in engagement in each area during the three months since our first submission in February:

1. Our petition for this school model has received 259 signatures to date (a 16% increase from February). It is included along with letters of support in Attachment E.
2. We currently have over 149 families on our mailing list (a 400% increase from February), including educators interested in employment with us and community partners interested in supporting our school.
3. Our school social media account has 218 followers who interact with us (an 84% increase from February).
4. TNA is offering a free art and nature camp for families of Southeast Nashville. Our age range for these camps is the same age range that will make up our student body during the founding years of operation. MNPS also offered free summer programming during these weeks. We believe this data point demonstrates a high number of parents who preferred our program's model over the one offered by their neighborhood school. After one month of open registration, TNA had 104 students sign up for the summer camps, requiring a waiting list.

Section 1.12 provides a comprehensive description of community demand and feedback received from the community.

- (c) Describe your plan to recruit students in your pre-opening year, including the strategies, activities, events,

responsible parties, and a timeline. What established community organizations are you targeting for marketing and recruitment? Consider pre-schools, civic groups, camps, summer programs, faith-based institutions, etc.

(d) Describe how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the proposed school. Specifically describe any plans for outreach to: families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, English learners, and other students at risk of academic failure. If your school has a specific area of focus, describe the plan to market that focus.

Community engagement is a responsibility held by all members of the founding leadership team and Board of Directors. However, current funds allow for us to bring on a Community Engagement Coordinator in the Spring of 2022. This individual reports directly to the Executive Director and will manage the strategy and organizing of recruiting families. In addition to common family engagement strategies (like virtual and in-person informational meetings, mobile booths for enrollment fairs and community events, etc), Tennessee Nature Academy will host and sponsor family engagement events unique to our mission and model.

### **Marketing**

Tennessee Nature Academy has already begun marketing initiatives to engage and inform families and community members about TNA. So far, these marketing initiatives have included:

- Tennessee Nature Academy launched our website in October 2021 and has begun to establish a social media presence through Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook.
- On December 10, 2021, our Executive Director was a guest on 102.5's All About Nashville and was interviewed about the school's mission, vision, and model.
- Since December 2021, TNA has distributed flyers and posted dozens of notices in community locations including coffee shops, restaurants, and retail venues.
- TNA has earmarked \$30,000 from the Charter Schools Expansion Grant for marketing. \$25,000 will be spent Spring and Summer of 2022, with the remaining \$5,000 to be used in the Fall of 2022 (as shown on our budget).
- As of May 2022, TNA has had a booth at the following events: Autism Celebration with Hispanic Family Foundation in Antioch, the Southeast Egg Hunt in Antioch, the Lenox Village Egghunt in Lenox Village, Kite Fest at Mill Ridge Park, and Earth Day in Centennial Park.

### **Recruitment Events for Founding Families**

To form solidarity with diverse shared interest partners, we have and will continue to host events in the places families and community supporters feel most comfortable gathering. These events include:

1. Mill Ridge Park (Winter 2022-Ongoing) -TNA has formed a natural partnership with the Friends of Mill Ridge Park group to provide programming and events at the newly created Mill Ridge Park in the 37013 community. Beginning in January 2022, TNA has participated in their monthly Unseen project in the park's forest (a monthly meet-up that educates families about the different aspects of ecology in the park). TNA has actively participated in park events, including Kite Fest, at Mill Ridge Park.
2. Stream Clean-ups with Cumberland River Compact (Spring and Summer 2022) - TNA will sponsor two stream clean-up campouts co-hosted with the Cumberland River Compact. These events will target families in our area who want to volunteer and have a safe camping experience. Families will learn about the TNA school model and participate in a litter clean-up at a nearby park (Long Hunter State Park), while also being assisted on setting up a basic group campsite. This event serves our school's dual purpose of recruiting interested families while also making a difference in our community. Our TNA founder was spotlighted on the news during a May clean-up at Mill Creek.

3. Summer Nature Camps (Summer and Fall 2022) - For two weeks during the summer of 2022, Tennessee Nature Academy is offering a free art and nature camp called “Wild Discovery.” These free nature camps offer families the opportunity to experience activities that will be typical of a day at Tennessee Nature Academy. Students will experience a morning rotation of interdisciplinary, nature-based projects taught by licensed educators. Due to the high demand of these camps, additional camp offerings will be planned for later in the summer and early in the fall. Funding for these camps has already been secured through the TN Department of Education’s Charter Schools Expansion Grant. Registration and family communication for TNA’s summer art and nature camps are conducted in multiple languages based on families’ language preferences indicated at the time of enrollment.
4. Fall Festival (Fall 2022) - Fall Festivals are a perfect way for TNA to celebrate the agricultural traditions of the various communities in Southeast Davidson County. TNA will host or partner with another organization to host a Fall Festival for the community. While being a lovely opportunity to celebrate the changing of the seasons, the fall festival will also be a touchpoint with diverse members of the community to learn about how they can get involved with TNA. TNA will host these events on our campus (if determined by then) or another leased site or park.
5. World Cup Celebrations (Fall and Winter 2022-23) - TNA will sponsor World Cup Celebrations at local soccer fields in Southeast Davidson County. Soccer events at Orchard Bend park have been known to draw over one thousand visitors over the day, as youth and adults participate in soccer tournaments or walk the trails throughout the park. A presence at normal community events (and sponsoring our own) allows us to connect with families in a comfortable setting. Furthermore, leaning into World Cup festivities allows us to celebrate the myriad of cultures, ethnicities, and nationalities in the Southeast Community.
6. Virtual and In-Person Informational Sessions (Ongoing). Tennessee Nature Academy will host multiple, weekly informational sessions to provide families different avenues to connect with us. To allow all families to have the opportunity to connect, TNA will provide different kinds of meetings in different locations around the community. Meetings will be held at different times of day to accommodate different work schedules. Virtual sessions will allow TNA to connect with families who are unable to travel. Informational sessions will be held in a number of languages, in partnership with supporting community members and interpretation services, so that English language proficiency is not a barrier to participation. Meetings will also be held at diverse locations in the community so that we have an equitable presence in all neighborhoods in Southeast Davidson County.
7. Enrollment Audits (Ongoing). Tennessee Nature Academy’s recruitment efforts aim to provide students with an equal opportunity to attend the school and engage with a diverse-by-design school community that is representative of Southeast Nashville. To support this objective, TNA will conduct frequent equity audits to ensure that the recruitment process is inclusive and equitable. When audits reveal a lack of representation in a particular sub-group, resources will be shifted to include more meet-ups in locations and media that allow for easier accessibility for that sub-group.

Attachment D includes our timeline and policies for student enrollment during our pre-opening year.

(e) Describe student recruitment after the proposed school has opened. How will it differ from pre-opening recruitment? Note: for existing operators, please identify how this will differ from current enrollment strategies.

Our ongoing recruitment plan has a few major components:

1. Equity Audits. After each enrollment cycle, our leadership team will conduct an equity audit to determine our gaps in representation in our student body. That data will be used as we make our recruitment plan for the following year, targeting whichever sub-groups are underrepresented in our student body. For example, if Asian Americans are underrepresented, we will hold focus groups with that community to determine why the model is not perceived to best serve their needs. This data is then used to inform not only our marketing, but the internal structure of schoolwide systems. This is primary in our recruitment process, as we want to create a truly diverse-by-design student body.
2. Student Retention. TNA's HS pathways and progression of outdoor experiences creates the ethos of belonging to a community with a greater tradition. Our primary recruitment strategy is to create a positive school environment to retain all students per grade level. Our equity audits will catch trends in student attrition so we can address the culture gaps in our school environment before it becomes a major systemic problem.
3. Farm Fridays. Friday evenings will be a time of gathering at Tennessee Nature Academy. Even when sports are not in session, current families, prospective families, and community members will be invited to gather on campus (or at a community venue nearby) for Farm Fridays. Farm Fridays are structured community gatherings that serve multiple purposes: building a solid culture amongst our student body and their families, attracting prospective families, and making the produce from our agricultural projects available for an affordable price (or free to some families).
4. Community Presence. With a drive for continuous community impact built into the DNA of our school, Tennessee Nature Academy will have a frequent presence in the multiple communities surrounding our school. This will allow us to both tap into the needs of these communities, while also recruiting families who identify with the work we are doing. TNA will host events in Southeast Nashville including annual stream clean-ups in our adopted section of Mill Creek, educational pop-up events at Mill Ridge Park, and a Fall Festival.
5. Traditional Recruitment. Though we anticipate recruitment to accelerate via word-of-mouth (similar to our petition), we will also participate in traditional student recruitment efforts via mailers and recruitment fairs. When our equity audit demonstrates a deficiency in any particular sub-groups, we will double down on the methods that target that specific sub-groups. Family recruitment will rest primarily with our Community Engagement Coordinator, who will be hired in the Spring of 2022.

## 1.12 - PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

(a) What feedback regarding the startup of the proposed school has been provided by the community, and how has this feedback been incorporated into this application?

Prior to its inception, our co-founders had conversations with several organizations to determine the need and receptiveness of the community to our school model and to make note of recommended practices for creating and managing a successful nature-based, project-based school. We approached a diverse array of community members in order to reflect the amazing diversity in our community. We continue to welcome and value feedback from shared interest partners and are grateful to have connected so far with organizations from a range of backgrounds. Table 1.12a below gives an overview of the feedback we received:

*Table 1.12a - Feedback for TNA*

Domain	Organizations	Areas of Feedback
Feedback on Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Common Ground Charter School;</li> <li>● Evergreen Community Charter School;</li> <li>● Expeditionary Learning;</li> <li>● Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont;</li> <li>● Hixson High School;</li> <li>● Ivy Academy;</li> <li>● Red Oaks Forest School;</li> <li>● The Workshop School</li> </ul>	Curriculum, environmental education, outdoor education, project-based learning, building literacy and literary practices, CTE programs, industry certifications, schoolyard farm management, Student Job Corps, Citizen Science, Community Science, and teacher training.
Feedback on Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tennessee Charter School Center;</li> <li>● Ivy Academy;</li> <li>● Linden Waldorf School;</li> <li>● Reflection Riding Arboretum &amp; Nature Center;</li> <li>● Southern Adventist University</li> </ul>	Facilities, school governance, budgeting, types of outdoor classrooms, methods of outdoor instruction, operations for nature-based instruction, safety policies for nature-based learning, teacher training and recruitment strategies, and campus design.
Feedback on School Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Diverse Charter Schools Coalition;</li> <li>● Roots ConnectED;</li> <li>● The Positivity Project</li> </ul>	Inclusive classroom cultures, core values, restorative culture practices, anti-bias education, inclusive community-building, equity audits, family engagement, school wide Positive Psychology practices.
Feedback on Community Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cane Ridge Community Club;</li> <li>● Cumberland River Compact;</li> <li>● Friends of Southeast;</li> <li>● Friends of Mill Ridge Park;</li> <li>● Mill Creek Watershed Association;</li> </ul>	Need for conservation in the community, community's agricultural and natural identity, concerns of overcrowding in zoned schools, demand for nature-based programs, importance of environmental education, environmental needs in the community.
Feedback on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Brightstone;</li> </ul>	Operations for vulnerable populations,

Community Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hispanic Family Foundation;</li> <li>● Propel Nashville;</li> <li>● Tennessee State University</li> </ul>	best practices for inclusive programming, student accommodations, focus groups for parents, supporting community programming, needs in community youth programming
Special Populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Diverse Learners Cooperative</li> </ul>	Beginning March 2022, TNA began working with the Diverse Learners Cooperative to ensure all elements of the school are designed to accommodate diverse learners, especially English language learners and students with disabilities. This partnership has helped to strengthen our support for special populations to ensure that a comprehensive continuum of services is provided.

Data from our community and state has influenced the selection of our high school CTE pathways. Consistent with our environmental theme, we have partnered with Bloomsbury Farms, Friends of Mill Ridge Park, and the Environmental Institute at Middle Tennessee State University to create pathways for work-based learning, internships, and post-secondary options. Attachment E contains letters of support from various community partners that demonstrate enthusiastic buy-in.

(b) Describe how you will engage parents and community members from the time that the proposed school is approved through the school’s opening.
(d) Outline how the proposed school will engage parents and community members in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles).

Our desire is for Tennessee Nature Academy to be integral to the Southeast Community as a participant in making our community a better place. We want our school campus to be a second home for students and their families, as a place to gather, learn, play, celebrate, and work. Additionally, we are outwardly-focused, ultimately wanting our students and their families to identify ways to use their skills and passions to do good in the community.

We believe this crucial work of community engagement must begin before our doors officially open to students. To that end, our community and parent engagement plan pre-opening looks very similar to ways we will engage parents and the community once we open with students in Fall of 2023.

**Community Engagement**

Specific community events that are related to connecting parents and student recruitment have been described in Section 1.11. Below are some additional examples of ways in which Tennessee Nature Academy has and will continue to engage with the community prior to opening:

1. The Cane Ridge Community has been actively engaged in the incubation of this school, from its inception. The Cane Ridge Community Club and Cane Ridge Community Land Trust will continue to be included in the development of the school. Both groups hold monthly meetings.
2. Tennessee Nature Academy has adopted a section of Mill Creek in the Adopt-A-Stream program hosted by the Cumberland River Compact. We are in frequent communication with the Mill Creek

Watershed and Cumberland River Compact to determine ways that our families can support their work. Both organizations have a mission that aligns with ours and our continued engagement has been a positive way to connect with their organization and to connect our families to efforts to increase the water quality in our community.

3. The Friends of Mill Ridge Park group has been a great partner for TNA. Mill Ridge Park is a new 600+ acre park in the Southeast community, near TNA's desired location. The Friends group works to connect people to the park. In our partnership with Friends of Mill Ridge Park, we've been able to identify diverse families in our community who value nature-based learning. The partnership also works both ways. We've been able to connect our families to the Friends of Mill Ridge Park group so that they are aware of this amazing community space.

### **Family Engagement**

Specific events for family engagement related to recruiting and enrollment have been described in Section 1.11.

1. Our up-to-date parent mailing list is our most direct line of communication with families. These individuals have indicated their current or future interest in enrolling one or more of their children in the school.
2. Roots ConnectED trains educators on community building and how to create intentionally integrated and diverse communities. Our fellowship with the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition has included monthly calls with Roots ConnectED to help us build a space that is inclusive for all families. Ongoing programming, including the establishment of an inclusive space on campus has been designed with the help of Roots ConnectED.

### **Educator Engagement**

TNA has multiple avenues for engaging in professional educator circles in ways that recruits educators and furthers our vision to bring nature-based learning to more students. We intend to expand our impact by sharing culturally-responsive, nature-based materials and resources throughout our region and state. We will do so by curating an open source curriculum that is aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards and integrates the best practices of culturally-responsive, nature-based instruction. While our curriculum will be tailored to serve the needs of Tennessee's 935,000 students, there is a degree of transferability to national standards in some content areas. Our Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer have experience in successful curriculum design and will guide the design, evaluation, and sharing of resources.

Additionally, we will increase our impact by providing professional development in culturally-responsive, nature-based learning to teachers and school leaders. To do so, we intend to leverage our existing partnerships with teacher training organizations and as a member school of the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition. At scale, our open source curriculum will impact over 100 educators and 10,000 students annually. After three years of success, we will share our 5th and 6th grade nature-based curriculum with the public. TNA will release one additional grade per year as it passes the second year mark of implementation. In the 2028-2029 school year, we will begin to roll out the HS curriculum, starting with the 9th grade classes. We will also begin to offer our school design and school leader professional developments at this time.

(c) Provide, as **Attachment E**, any of the following: letters of support, memoranda of understanding, or contracts that indicate the proposed school is welcomed by the community in which the school intends to locate, is viewed as an attractive educational alternative, and/or reflects the community's needs and interests.

TNA's letters of support are provided in Attachment E. We have procured eleven letters of support so far that demonstrate the excitement of diverse shared interest partners in our community.

1. Friends of Mill Ridge Park
2. Teach For America, Nashville-Chattanooga Chapter
3. Middle Tennessee State University, Environmental Science Department
4. Diverse Charter School Coalition
5. Cane Ridge Community Land Trust
6. Bloomsbury Farms
7. Our Joyful Learning Community
8. The Positivity Project
9. The Tennessee Concrete Association
10. Southern Adventist University
11. Charter Schools Development Corporation
12. The Village Nashville
13. Cumberland River Compact

Attachment E also contains our community petition, which includes 259 signatures.

(e) Describe how parents will be informed and educated on all school policies and any commitments or volunteer opportunities the school will seek from, offer to, or require of, parents.

Clear communication with our families is essential for smooth daily school operations. Our Family Communication and Onboarding Plan is covered in depth in Section 1.10, as it pertains to framing the school year to ensure a unified school culture and mutual understandings of student expectations. Additionally, the Student and Family Handbook (Attachment B) will be linked to our website to encourage transparency for families.

### **Ongoing Opportunities for Family Engagement**

Tennessee Nature Academy maintains ongoing opportunities for family engagement, including:

1. Virtual and In-Person Q&A Events - Newly-enrolled families are invited to attend Q&A events,
2. Welcome to TNA days on TNA's campus (summer and fall of 2023).
3. Back-to-School Night - Families are invited to attend Back-to-School night, where they have the opportunity to meet their students' teachers, learn information about the upcoming school year, and receive updated copies of the Student and Family Handbook.
4. Family Conferences - Formal Parent Teacher Conferences will be held twice during the year, in the fall and the spring. Additional conferences may be arranged at any other time during the year by families, teachers, and/or TNA's leadership.
5. Farm Fridays / Student Showcases - We want our campus to be a hub for the community. Our seasonal Farm Fridays create inclusive spaces where families feel comfortable gathering on campus to socialize and celebrate their cultures and families. Farm Friday activities are organized by families as a way to galvanize greater involvement and ownership of the community that surrounds the operations of a school. Common anticipated activities are student showcases, Schoolyard Farm work days, athletic events, culinary gatherings, and musical celebrations.

When needed, TNA will provide translation and interpretation services during these events to support equitable participation among families who speak a language other than English at home.

### **Parent, Grandparent, Guardian and Teacher Association**

It is our desire for our parents, guardians, and grandparents to form close connections to the daily operations of the school. To meet that goal, in addition to our parent representative on our Board of Directors, we have established the Parent, Grandparent, Guardian, and Teacher Association (PGGTA) to assist in elevating the voices of the individuals who spend the most time with our students. The PGGTA is managed by our Director of Community Engagement.

(f) If not already identified, describe any programs you will offer to parents and/or the community and how they may support the school mission and vision.

One of our core values is “Impacting the Community.” To hold true to that value, we try to establish a “triple bottom line” for learning, meaning that there are three impacts: the student learning itself, the positive health benefits of playful, nature-based learning, and the impact that is done to the community. This is what is meant in our mission that we “cultivate young adults who... are motivated to do good work.” While there are numerous ways we will encourage our students to do this, Tennessee Nature Academy will create and build programs to promote community participation in three nature-based areas: outdoor recreation, conservation, and agriculture.

1. Outdoor Recreation -TNA has already received a generous donation of outdoor recreation equipment (tents, sleeping bags, tarps, guidebooks, maps, tools, etc). This equipment will be available to be loaned to families to encourage outdoor recreation outside of school hours. This will encourage students to lead their families in the activities experienced at school, compounding the learning and expanding the health benefits to families in the community who traditionally are not represented in outdoor recreation.
2. Conservation - Students will participate in many conservation projects that are connected to the content learned in class. Some of these will be ongoing and will involve the inclusion of the community (e.g. our Adopt-A-Stream program with the Cumberland River Compact). Other examples will include seminars and workshops hosted by TNA that educate parents and other community members on matters related to sustainability.
3. Agriculture - Another part of student learning is participation in school-wide agricultural programs. Our school will be located in a food desert and we anticipate that some of our families will be food insecure. Produce grown on campus will either be sold to the community to raise money for food insecurity or given directly to families in need. Additionally, through our free seed bank, families will be encouraged and instructed on how to grow food at home.

## SECTION 2.1 - GOVERNANCE

(a) Describe the composition and size of the governing board and board committees. Explain how the proposed governance structure and composition will ensure there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders and will ensure the proposed school will be an educational and operational success.

### Board Composition

TNA will be governed by a non-profit Board of Directors (the Board) in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws (see Attachment F), which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter. The Board shall consist of a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of fifteen (15) community members with a broad range of backgrounds and areas of expertise. TNA has secured and will continue to seek board members who have experience in one or more of the following areas: education, government, law, business, finance/accounting, fundraising, facilities, and community outreach, but shall not prohibit interested candidates from serving on the Board if otherwise qualified. The table below demonstrates the current board matrix.

TNA currently has eight board members who have varying expertise and are able to offer advice, direction and guidance to the school's leadership and representative bodies. Board experience includes a range of roles in traditional public and charter schools; law; nonprofit startup and management; private and government business, finance, and consulting. With a balance of expertise in education, finance and operations, the Board will ensure the initial launch of TNA sets a precedent of high academic achievement as well as strong organizational practices. The Board has the capacity to oversee the successful development and implementation of the education program, the responsibility to manage public funds, and the capacity to oversee and hold responsibility for the school's compliance with its legal obligations.

In compliance with Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-13-104 (3) the Board will include at least one parent representative, whose child is enrolled at TNA, who will be appointed to the Board of Directors within six months of the opening of the school. In addition to the parent representative's voice and contributions, the Board will regularly seek feedback from the community through surveys, family forums, or community meetings as they develop and implement policies and provide governance and oversight for TNA. Many TNA board members have strong connections within the community we serve and possess a valuable fund of knowledge about the needs of our community.

All current Board members live in Nashville and are committed to the TNA mission, vision, and values. Each board member understands the need for high quality public schools and believes that all students have the right to a quality education. Board members consistently engage with the community and have worked to gain a better understanding of community needs. Each board member is dedicated to ensuring that TNA provides a world class education for students and ensures graduates are knowledgeable about the world, passionate about the outdoors, committed to doing good work, and prepared for college and career success.

### Officers

The Board of Directors will include officers. The officers may include Chair (President), Treasurer, Secretary, and Executive Director as described below:

- The Chair (President) will be the principal officer of the Board and serve as the liaison between the Board and the Executive Director. He or she will, when present, preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors. The Chair appoints the members of each standing or ad hoc committee of the Board, and may serve on any standing or ad hoc committee of the Board.
- The Secretary will keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors, see that all notices are properly given in accordance with applicable law and maintain appropriate financial information pertaining to the Board.

- The Treasurer will be responsible for all funds and securities of the School, receive and give receipts for monies due and payable, disburse the funds of the School in accordance with the directives of the Board of Directors, and provide an accounting of financial information.
- The Executive Director will serve at the pleasure of the Board as an ex-officio, non-voting Member, report directly to the Board, be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the School, and will provide regular reports to the Board regarding the performance of the School.

Directors will be elected to serve for a term of two years or until their successor has been elected and qualified, with the initial term commencing on the first July 1st after election; provided that Directors may serve on the Board as a Director, with all duties and powers arising therefrom, prior to commencement of the initial term. A Director may not serve more than three consecutive terms from the commencement of the Director's initial term.

### **Committees**

The Board will conduct its business through an efficient committee structure. TNA bylaws provide the Board with the authority to establish ad hoc and standing committees. Committees will generally consist of three members and Board members will typically participate in only one or two committees to ensure active participation. While specific committee designations are not included in the bylaws, the Board anticipates creating three initial standing committees in order for it to properly exercise its academic, governance, and fiduciary roles.

The Governance Committee of the TNA Board will likely be chaired by the Chair of the full Board. The Governance Committee's primary responsibility will be to provide oversight, monitoring and evaluation of the Executive Director and to serve as a liaison to the full Board. The Governance Committee will serve as the Evaluation Committee and draft the annual evaluation of the Executive Director, with the input of other members of the Board and present it to the full Board for approval.

The Finance Committee will coordinate the Board's financial oversight responsibilities by recommending policy to the Board and monitoring its implementation. The committee will also provide Board oversight of the organization's financial audit. The Treasurer of the Board will serve as chair, and the Committee will monitor the organization's financial records; review and oversee the creation of accurate, timely, and meaningful financial statements to be presented to the Board; review the annual budget and recommend it to the full Board for approval; monitor budget implementation and financial procedures; monitor assets, ensure compliance with federal, state, and other financial reporting requirements; and help the full Board understand the organization's financial standing.

Depending on the evolving needs of TNA, other committees may include: (1) the Resource Development Subcommittee, (drawn from membership of the Finance Committee) which may plan and implement the school's fundraising programs; (2) the Facilities Committee, which assesses the short and long term facilities needs and presents a long range facility plan to the Board; (3) and a Strategic Planning Committee, which develops a 3-5 year blueprint for the school's future.

(b) Describe how the board will evaluate the success of the proposed school, the school leader, and its own performance.

At a minimum, the Board will meet quarterly, with an initial plan of meeting on a monthly basis. All Board meetings will comply with Tennessee's open meetings and record law. Meetings will take place at a time and location set by the school's bylaws. An agenda will be posted at least 72 hours prior to a regular meeting, which contains a brief general description of each item to be discussed at the meeting. Notices

and agendas will be posted online as well as a hard copy at the meeting site. The Board Secretary will be responsible for recording each meeting.

The school's Board shall be the governing body charged with the responsibility for the operation of the public charter school. The most notable responsibilities shall be as follows:

- Create and support a clear mission, vision, and performance objectives;
- Review and maintain bylaws;
- Establish, interpret and enforce policies consistent with the mission;
- Ensure fiscal health of the school including capital assets, operating budgets, fundraising, and endowments;
- Adopt the annual financial budget;
- Approve monthly General Fund and other reports and approve expenditures as required by Board policy;
- Hire, support, manage, and assess the Executive Director;
- Require reports of the Executive Director concerning the school's progress;
- Evaluate itself annually and develop itself through orientation, ongoing education, and leadership succession planning;
- Establish strategic plans;
- Ensure all members are actively involved in the work of the board and committees;
- Assure compliance with federal and state laws, regulations and rules;
- Assist in development of plans and specifications and provide financing for school facilities;
- Act as a final appeals board for personnel, parent, and student grievances;
- Hear communications, either written or oral, from shared interest partners related to matters of policy;
- Act as charter school advocates and liaisons between the community and school;
- Meet the terms of the charter and attaining established goals and objectives set forth in the charter document; and
- Meet the legislative intent of raising student achievement and ensuring the school operates in a fiscally responsible manner evidenced by an unqualified audit annually.

### **Evaluation of School Success**

Previous sections of this application detailed a set of accountability measures and performance standards aligned with the four TNA core values: Learning through Challenges, Sustaining Health and Happiness, Building Connectedness, and Impacting the Community. The Board will conduct annual and ongoing reviews of the School's progress in meeting these goals through monthly reports from the Executive Director at board meetings regarding data sources, such as academic achievement data, language proficiency data, teacher hiring and retention data, and financial health. All data sources associated with the TNA core values are detailed in the previous section on Performance Measures.

### **Evaluation of School Leader**

The Board subscribes to a philosophy of policy governance and accountability. The Board understands that the School is best able to meet its mission by empowering the TNA Executive Director with the autonomy to make decisions in pursuit of its mission, with appropriate accountability structures in place to ensure organizational effectiveness and success. The Board shall be ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of the School and will be governed in its operations and its actions by its bylaws, included in Attachment F, which shall be consistent with the charter agreement and in compliance with applicable law.

The TNA Board of Directors will evaluate TNA's Executive Director (ED) in his management of TNA school leaders and the school site. Through a comprehensive annual evaluation using both formative and summative assessment gathered from faculty, students, and parents, the Board assesses measurable

outcomes and goals set forth annually (in alignment with the TNA strategic plan). Members of the Evaluation Team (roles and processes described below) will also be trained in Tennessee's TEAM evaluation. The Board will provide the ED with the support, resources and coaching necessary to lead TNA to success. The ED's primary goals are to ensure the high quality academic program, strategic growth and operational sustainability of TNA. The Board believes that evaluation is not a one-time event; rather, it is an ongoing and reflective process. The Board will deliver feedback to the ED throughout the year as part of the evaluation process described below:

- In April of each year, one member of the Governance Committee will be appointed to be the lead of the team, with responsibilities including: leading the process and ensuring the proposed timeline is followed; collecting data from all shared interest partners and summarizing it for the Committee, full Board and ED; meeting with the ED to review data and build a development plan based on that data.
- The Evaluation Team (Governance Committee) will manage the following areas: the ED's vision and goals for the school year; formative feedback process; and final evaluation.
- ED Goal-Setting: The ED and the Evaluation Team will develop a high level set of goals (3-7 goals) that the ED will present to the Evaluation Team prior to each school year for approval (Clearly defined academic achievement goals will always be part of the high level set of goals); and the Evaluation Team will supervise a year-end survey of identified shared interest partners focused on the ED's goals for the year.
- The ED and Evaluation Team develop a set of specific areas on which to collect formative feedback, which may include: meeting or Exceeding Academic Performance Goals; Level 3 or Above on the TEAM Administrator Evaluation; School Culture Surveys (Family and Student Feedback); Comprehensive analysis of the 360 Degree Feedback from Board and School Leadership Team (Colleague Feedback).
  - The Evaluation Team will personally interview selected faculty members to gather input on the focus areas. Interviews will take place over the course of the school year. The lead on the Evaluation Team will collect the formative data and will regularly share it with the ED as well as develop support plans to assist in areas of growth as needed.
- Final Review: The Evaluation Team will collect data at year-end related to ED Goals and formative feedback and share it with the ED; the Evaluation Team will develop and propose a support plan for the ED that reflects the needs identified in the data; and the Evaluation Team will make a recommendation to the Board concerning the ED's employment status and performance bonus.

### **Evaluation of Board Performance**

In addition to the responsibility of evaluating the performance of the ED, the Board will engage in reflective practice and self-evaluation of its own performance. The success of TNA depends greatly on the Board's effectiveness in carrying out essential roles and responsibilities. Therefore, board self-evaluation is vital in determining how well the board is performing, and the steps that can be taken for continued improvement. Board self-evaluation will:

- Have the enthusiastic support of Board leadership;
- Be based on standards and best practices that characterize effective board performance;
- Be formal, conducted on a regular, agreed-upon basis, including a written assessment tool; and
- Include an assessment implementation plan to set goals for board improvement.

Given the accountability measures contained within the application, the Board evaluates itself against specific performance measures annually. The Board may use an existing platform and assessment tool such as that developed by Board on Track, which provides expertise, training and web-based tools to support charter school boards in improving their governance effectiveness through annual data tracking and performance analysis.

(c) How will the board develop over time? Explain plans for recruiting board members with identified skills and addressing board member attrition.

### **Election and Terms of Office**

As previously mentioned, directors will serve a two-year term. Founding directors will hold office until the second annual meeting of the members and until the term of office of such director's successor has commenced, or until such director's earlier death, incapacity, disqualification, resignation or removal. At the second annual meeting, as the first order of business of the meeting, new directors shall be elected by the members to succeed those directors whose terms expire with such annual meeting. Any director may be elected for up to three successive terms.

### **Recruiting New Board Members**

Potential new directors will be sourced using the current Board's extensive personal and professional networks. Moreover, the Board will form an ad hoc Board Development Committee which will abide by a written procedure for adding new Board members. This may require service on a Board committee before full membership; an interview with the Board Chair; and a nomination by a Board member. Recruitment and succession planning for the Board is imperative to the success of the school. The Board will create a process that ensures future members are mission aligned as well as have the skills and expertise to govern TNA.

(d) Describe the training or orientation new board members will receive. What ongoing development will existing board members receive? Please note that Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-111 (o) requires annual board training, as certified by the Tennessee Charter Schools Center and approved by the State Board of Education; documentation of this training must be provided to the authorizer.

TNA Board Development will be supported by the Tennessee Charter School Center (TCSC) and Board members will participate in training for continual board development. The majority of the TNA Board has prior experience in the education sector and/or serving on nonprofit boards, bringing a level of expertise to the role of serving on a charter school board. Board members will participate in a training on board obligations and performance management, and will have a thorough understanding of their governing role, the importance and relevance of the charter agreement and performance contract, and ultimate responsibility for the school.

All Board members will receive a handbook containing the Board's By Laws, Tennessee charter law, the articles of incorporation, and 501(c)(3) documentation, as well as member biographies. This handbook ensures members understand their duties and responsibilities as they sit on the board of a public school. All Board members will attend an orientation upon joining the Board. Per T.C.A. § 49-13-111(o), the Board will receive an annual training, as certified by the Tennessee Charter Schools Center, and will provide documentation of the training to the Metro Nashville Public Schools Office of Charter Schools.

(e) Describe the circumstances under which complaints will be brought to the board, and the process for addressing them.

TNA is committed to maintaining a strong partnership and ongoing dialogue between all individuals: teachers, staff, students, and their families. Should any member of the TNA community have a concern about a school policy, academic grade, discipline decision, or any other matter, TNA welcomes their input and encourages them to contact the appropriate staff member at the School. TNA has two processes in place to hear and, where possible, resolve complaints in a timely manner:

1. Informal complaints are complaints that do not concern the alleged violation of law or the charter (e.g., a concern about an academic grade or the school’s cell phone policy). An individual who (or group that) has an informal complaint against a school policy or member of the school community is encouraged to contact the appropriate staff member at the school by telephone or email. All staff members are committed to responding promptly to informal complaints, either in person, by telephone, or in writing. If an informal complaint is not responded to and resolved promptly or satisfactorily, the group or individual should contact the Director to discuss the matter; the Director shall respond in person, by telephone, or in writing.
2. A formal complaint is a complaint that concerns an alleged violation of law and/or charter. An individual who has a formal complaint against a school policy or a member of the school community may follow the steps below. As a matter of policy and practice, the Executive Director, MNPS School Board, and State Board of Education will not intervene in concerns which do not allege a specific violation of law and/or charter. Figure 2.1a below outlines the formal complaint process.

*Figure 2.1a - Formal Complaint Process*

Step 1: Contact staff member involved.	If a parent has an issue or concern, the first step toward resolving the issue will be to contact the staff member involved by phone or email. The parent should call the school’s front desk to obtain phone and email contact information. The staff member and the parent will then set up a meeting to discuss the issue either on the phone or in-person and work to reach a resolution that satisfies both parties.
Step 2: Written complaint sent to the appropriate school leader.	If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, the parent’s next step is to submit a written complaint to the school leader who manages the staff member or domain involved (Academics, Operations, Culture). Note that even if the issue is a problem with the school leader directly, the parent should go through this step. It is important to have clear documentation of all steps. The parent may pick up a complaint form at the school’s front desk and may also fax, email, mail, or hand-deliver (to the school’s front desk) the complaint. The school leader will reply within 2 business days, at least acknowledging the complaint has been received, and the school leader may take up to 10 business days to investigate and reach a decision. The school leader will send a written decision to the parent within 10 business days of the school receiving the complaint letter.
Step 3: Written complaint sent to the Executive Director.	If the parent is unsatisfied with the school leader’s decision, the parent may submit the complaint to the TNA Executive Director (ED). The parent can fax, email, mail, or hand-deliver the letter to the school’s front desk. To get the email address or mailing address for the ED, the parent can contact the front desk of the school. The ED will reply within 2 business days and may take up to 10 business days to investigate and reach a decision. The ED will send a written decision to the parent within 10 business days of receiving the letter or form. (Please note that the ED will not respond to complaints that have not gone through steps 1-2.)
Step 4: Written complaint sent to the TNA Board.	If the parent is unsatisfied with the ED’s decision, the parent may write a letter to the school’s Board of Directors. The parent can fax, email, mail, or hand-deliver (to the school’s front desk) the letter. The Board or its designee will reply within 2 business days on behalf of the Board of Directors, and may take up to 10 business days to investigate and reach a decision. The Board or its designee will send a written decision to the parent within 10 business days of receiving the letter or form. (Please note that the Board will not respond to complaints that have not gone through steps 1-3.)

List all current and identified board members and their areas of focus or expertise in the following table, adding rows as needed.

Full Name	Current Job and Employer	Focus/Expertise
Amanuel Benti	Vanderbilt University; Student	Community Service/Outreach; Parent/Community Involvement
Laurel Creech	Division of Sustainability at Metro Govt Nashville & Davidson Department of General Services; Assistant Director	Community Service/Outreach; Public Relations; Management/Organizational Experience
Vice-Chair: Alice Haston	Sherrard, Roe, Voigt, Harbison; Associate	Legal Expertise/Attorney; Education; Personnel/Human Capital
Secretary: Darrell Hawks	Friends of Mill Ridge Park; Director	Management/Organizational Experience; Fundraising/Grant writing
Jenna Henderson	Nashville A Rocha; Director	Marketing; Management/Organizational Experience;
Alisha Keig	Beloved Community; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consultant	Parent/Community Involvement; Personnel/ Human Capital; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Chair: Roger Waynick, Jr.	Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration; Department of Consumer Oriented Services	Finance; Management/Organizational Experience
Treasurer: Scott Campbell	Persist Nashville; Executive Director	Education; Management/Organizational Experience; Community Service

The following governance documents are included as Attachment F:

- F1. Articles of Incorporation
- F2. Proof of non-profit and tax-exempt status
- F3. By-laws
- F4. Code of Conduct
- F5. Conflict of Interest Policy
- F6. Board member resumes or biographies
- F7. Board policies (including frequency of meetings, open meetings and open records)

SECTION 2.2 - START-UP PLAN

(a) Provide a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals (including compensation for those individuals). This timeline should align with the Start-Up (Year 0) Budget in the Budget Workbook. If you are an existing ASD operator, in lieu of the foregoing, attach a copy of your School Exit Plan.

Figure 2.2a below describes the timeline, tasks, and responsible parties for the major startup action items that must be addressed prior to the opening of the TNA. The TNA startup plan will be reviewed regularly by the TNA board and school directors to ensure timely progress on all action items and will be revised, as needed, to ensure the successful start-up of the school.

The timeline and our working assumptions are based on our current beliefs and expectations related to the timing of each item, and we expect, however, that the process and timing of many of these items will need adjusting as the school periodically evaluates and updates the working assumptions. Upon authorization and receipt of a charter, TNA will create a more specific and comprehensive start-up plan to ensure we are prepared for a successful launch for the 2023-2024 school year.

Figure 2.2a - TNA Start-Up Timeline

Timeline	Start-Up Tasks	Responsible Parties	Notes
<b>Phase 1</b> 12-24 Months Prior to Launch (June 2021-June 2022)	Establish Non-profit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● File articles for incorporation as nonprofit</li> <li>● File for 501c3 Status</li> <li>● Recruit founding board members</li> <li>● Create, approve and file bylaws</li> </ul>	Executive Director (ED)	Articles filed 6/1/2021; 501c3 application filed 8/4/2021
	Secure initial financing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Submit charter startup grants</li> <li>● Identify other grant sources</li> </ul>	ED	Charter Schools Expansion Grant Secured;
	Recruit and identify school leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chief Academic Officer to begin July 2021</li> </ul>	ED	Sarah Savage hired and onboarded 7/19/2021;
	Community Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TNA leadership presents school vision to community organizations and parent groups</li> <li>● Launch website and social media</li> <li>● Recruitment materials posted in key community gathering spaces</li> </ul>	TNA Board, ED	Website and social media launched October, 2021; G Suite established; Meetings held with representatives from dozens of organizations
	Location Identification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify potential incubation sites through a lease or</li> </ul>	TNA Board, ED	Contract signed with Level

	<p>purchase model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assess any improvements required for building code and life safety compliance and design improvements needed;</li> <li>● Secure all permits and approvals for occupancy</li> </ul>		Field to negotiate land purchase and financing structure; three church incubator sites identified
<b>Phase 2</b> 6-12 Months Prior to Launch (July 2022 - December 2022)	<p>Additional School Leadership Hires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Director of Operations to begin in July 2023</li> <li>● Community Engagement Coordinator to begin June 2022. TNA hopes to roll this position into the Director of Community Engagement position.</li> </ul>	ED, Chief Academic Officer (CAO)	Process underway
	<p>Facilities and Operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Facilities/site is identified and design is underway for construction upgrades</li> <li>● Conduct needs analysis for materials procurement (furniture, technology, cleaning supplies, etc.)</li> <li>● Finalize Employee and Community Handbooks (including all school policies and procedures pertaining to staff, students, and families) and conduct legal review</li> </ul>	TNA Board, ED, Director of Operations (DO)	
	Community Advisory Board Established	ED, Director of Community Engagement (DCE)	
	<p>Secure additional funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● donation campaign on strategic days (Giving Tuesday and the Big Payback)</li> <li>● business partners established</li> <li>● Additional grants applied for (e.g.CSP grant)</li> </ul>	ED, TNA Board, DCE	
	<p>Teacher Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recruitment and hiring of lead classroom teachers informally begins in fall of 2022</li> </ul>	ED, CAO	
	<p>Student Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student recruitment formally begins in August or September 2022.</li> <li>● Leadership team &amp; Board host information sessions virtually and in-person at community centers/ organizations, or partner schools</li> <li>● TNA hosts community events and summer camps to recruit students and educators</li> </ul>	ED, TNA Board, Parent Advisory Board; DCE	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Targeted social media and direct-mail marketing campaigns to spread awareness of school option</li> </ul>		
<b>Phase 3</b> 2-6 Months Prior to Launch (January-April 2023)	<b>Facilities and Operations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leasehold improvements at incubation property begin in January 2023</li> <li>● Manage materials procurement including: Curriculum and instructional materials; Furniture; Technology; Cleaning Supplies</li> <li>● Order and install signage</li> <li>● Develop/ finalize school safety plans and schedule emergency drills</li> <li>● Ready student databases for records, grades, attendance, discipline, etc.</li> <li>● Identify transportation vendor and develop transportation plan</li> <li>● Schedule fire marshal inspection to determine whether anything would prohibit student occupancy and remedies if needed</li> </ul>	ED, CAO, Director of Operations	
	<b>Staff Recruitment and Development:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ongoing recruitment, interviews, and hiring until all instructional and support positions filled (start dates for most staff in Phase 4, July 2023)</li> <li>● Hire custodial staff</li> <li>● Finalize Summer Professional Development program and Professional Learning program for the 2023-2024 school year</li> </ul>	ED, CAO, Director of Operations	
	<b>Student Recruitment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Final student outreach applications submitted</li> <li>● Lottery and enrollment in February 2023</li> <li>● Family Orientation April of 2023</li> <li>● Perform equity audit to determine student enrollment demographics match community demographics; shift enrollment strategies to increase outreach to underrepresented demographics.</li> </ul>	Ed, CAO, DO, DCE	
<b>Phase 4</b> 0-2 Months Prior to Launch (May-July 2023)	<b>Facilities and Operations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Furniture, technology, and other materials delivered and school facilities set up</li> <li>● Inventory all technology and ensure network and technology functionality</li> <li>● Final procurement of office supplies</li> <li>● Final health and safety inspections</li> <li>● Develop arrival and dismissal plan through collaboration with police and nearby schools</li> </ul>	ED, DO	

	<b>Staff Training:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff orientation and founding professional development series in July 2023</li> </ul>	ED, CAO	
	<b>Student and Family Recruitment/ Orientation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Solicit additional applications/ pull from waitlist as needed to fill all seats</li> <li>● Student and family orientations prior to first day of school</li> <li>● Pre-opening family / community events</li> <li>● TNA Ready summer camps for enrolled students and interested students</li> <li>● Screeners completed for all students prior to start of school</li> </ul>	ED, DCE, CAO	

Receipt of future funding determines not only how we formulate the budget, but how we apply our time during the planning year. We are working on corporate sponsorships and securing various grants and we currently have an established line of credit with Pinnacle Financial Partners.

Fine-grained details for key startup tasks including recruitment, facilities, and human capital are further developed in the applicable sections of the charter application. Tables detailing these startup timelines are reproduced below from those sections of the charter application:

- Recruitment and Enrollment (Section 1.11)
- Facilities (Section 2.3)
- Human Capital (Section 2.4)

(b) Describe what you anticipate will be the challenges of starting a new school or transitioning to a non-ASD authorizer, as applicable, and how you expect to address these challenges.

Starting a new school has its typical challenges and a school with the mission of TNA will bring its own unique challenges. Our TNA leadership team has visited and/or met with leadership of eleven different schools with an outdoor emphasis in order to better understand the challenges we will encounter that are unique to our outdoor-themed mission. Our incredible TNA Board of Directors has experience in non-profit, government, and educational start-ups and organizational management (including charter schools) that will ensure we are proactive with our plan to address these anticipated challenges. Their experience has helped us create the following action plan for the identified challenges below:

*Figure 2.2b - Anticipated Challenges and Action Plan*

Typical Challenges Associated with Opening a Charter School	TNA Action Plan
Attracting and retaining leadership and talent aligned with the TNA mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strong leader and teacher professional development structures including coaches for every staff member and continuous, personalized learning throughout the year (described in sections on Human Capital and Professional Development).</li> <li>● Distributive leadership responsibilities for teaching staff who elect to grow in that pathway.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Partnerships with talent development organizations including Middle Tennessee State University, Lipscomb University, Trevecca University, Southern Adventist University, and Teach for America to ensure a pipeline of diverse, qualified, mission-aligned teachers and staff. Letters of Support are included as Attachment E.</li> </ul>
<p>Facilities - Securing an appropriate facility in the proposed community to attract an intentionally diverse student population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TNA's Executive Director is in preliminary conversations with a local developer with land that he would like to set aside for a school site and TNA's real estate consultants (Level Field) are running a feasibility assessment to determine development and phasing strategy for building the permanent facility. An architect has also been engaged (Moody Nolan) to begin designing the school facility (indoor and outdoor components) which will be done in line with all public school building code and life safety codes and requirements (including ADA).</li> <li>● The TNA Executive Director is active with major community groups in the area including, Friends of Southeast, Cane Ridge Community Club, and Land Trust for Cane Ridge that are supportive of establishing TNA in the Cane Ridge Community.</li> <li>● TNA Board Member Darrell Hawks has conducted successful fundraising and community support for the development of land in Southeast Davidson county into Mill Ridge Park.</li> <li>● TNA's Executive Director is part of the Diverse Charter School Coalition's UnifiED School Launch Fellowship whose partner organizations provide direct support for the facilities funding process.</li> <li>● The Tennessee Charter School Center provides advisory and support for the facilities process for new charter schools in Tennessee.</li> </ul>
<p>Student / family outreach - Attracting a diverse student body that represents the surrounding community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TNA Founding Board members and proposed school leaders are Nashvillians with deep ties in our proposed community. Many are parents themselves with social networks of other parents who are interested and invested in the model of TNA.</li> <li>● The TNA Executive Director led an outdoor learning program in the community and has an extensive network of alumni support who are eager to recruit within their networks.</li> <li>● Robust parent support established prior to charter application submission demonstrates commitment to the TNA vision and offers first-hand insights into effectively reaching families in our proposed community.</li> </ul>
<p>Strong academic performance - Meeting the needs of diverse learners through our hands-on, PBL model</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Our CAO has created an action plan for administering personalized screeners for all students in the summer of 2023, so that students can begin to receive appropriate literacy intervention from day one of the school year.</li> <li>● Our project-based learning approach blends multiple styles of instruction to allow all students an opportunity to demonstrate understanding.</li> <li>● TNA's Executive Director is undergoing the process to get licensure for Special Education, in order to further understand how the school systems can support the needs of all learners.</li> </ul>
<p>Strong school culture across lines of diversity -</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TNA founding school leadership has experience implementing the cultural systems with demonstrated effectiveness for diverse learners (Responsive Classroom, Compass Social Emotional Learning, Restorative Discipline).</li> </ul>

External and internal integration for students, families, and faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The co-founders' multi-year fellowship with the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition includes intensive leadership development in fostering external and internal integration of diverse students, families, and faculty, and these practices have been built into the TNA school culture.</li> <li>● Annual community surveys and equity audits will allow all voices to contribute to the ongoing TNA organizational priorities.</li> </ul>
Establishing schoolyard farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TNA has partnered with members in the Cane Ridge Community who are passionate about seeing the community maintain its agricultural identity. These community partnerships have made it possible to establish the schoolyard farm in the summer of 2022 and sustainably maintain it until the launch of the school.</li> <li>● TNA's workshops and class experiences will allow for students and families to participate in the maintenance and receive the benefits of the schoolyard farm. Periodic Farm Fridays will become community events that encourage and celebrate our culinary heritages.</li> <li>● An eventual full-time agriculture instructor will allow for the development of a production and instruction farm, working towards the core value of sustainability.</li> </ul>
Creating hazard-free spaces for comfortable outdoor learning in all weather conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TNA's co-founders have visited seven nature-oriented campuses to research the various ways schools have students learn outside and ways in which nature-oriented campuses can be accessible to all students and will plan to implement those in its facility planning.</li> <li>● TNA has begun to assemble a closet of clothing items for various weather conditions so that all students can comfortably spend time outdoors regardless of their income level.</li> <li>● The Director of Operations will conduct a risk analysis in order to identify and remove hazards from the campus.</li> </ul>
Modifying a base curriculum to be applied to outdoor learning situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Our Chief Academic Officer will conduct frequent coaching sessions with staff to determine the needs in aligning curriculum to our nature-based pedagogical approach.</li> <li>● Summer and ongoing PD will orient and align teachers to developing rigorous and enriching nature-based units.</li> <li>● Our teachers will assemble a curriculum resource that will be updated each year. Our CAO will manage the development of this resource so that it can eventually become open source for the community.</li> </ul>
Less funding than anticipated due to under-enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TNA's annual budgets have been created in partnership with 4th Sector, a seasoned financial group with decades of experience in the charter sector.</li> <li>● 4th Sector and TNA have run scenarios accounting for under-enrollment and unanticipated cost.</li> <li>● TNA's Board will meet monthly to review and rightside budget.</li> </ul>

## SECTION 2.3 - FACILITIES

(a) Describe the proposed school’s facility needs based on the educational program and projected enrollment, including: number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, classroom types, common areas, overall square footage, and amenities. Identify additional school spaces and their square footage, including: science labs, art room, computer labs, library/media center, cafeteria, performance/dance room, gymnasium and athletic facilities, auditorium, main office and satellite offices, workroom/copy room, supplies/storage, teacher work rooms, restrooms, and other spaces.

TNA will launch with three 5th grade classes and three 6th grade classes and scale by one grade per year until reaching twelfth grade. Its enrollment capacity needs are shown in the Academic Plan section 1.2(g), with the total enrollment capacity summarized below:

*Figure 2.3a - TNA Enrollment Capacity Summary*

Year	SY 23-24	SY 24-25	SY 25-26	SY 26-27	SY 27-28	All Grades
Enrollment	162	243	324	414	504	684

Based on this projected enrollment capacity, TNA has developed a preliminary space requirements plan that aligns with its program to ensure TNA provides its students and staff a safe and effective learning environment. The space program below includes six traditional classrooms, special education breakout rooms, administrative offices including a welcome area, a dedicated teacher workspace, kitchen, a dining/multi-purpose room, and storage/tech space. Based on this plan, TNA will need approximately 16,700 sf in its first year, growing to approximately 26,850 sf in its third year in its temporary or incubation space. These net square foot spaces will be “grossed up” to adjust for corridors, bathrooms and circulation space. Our long-term plans include developing a permanent facility of 42-50k sf that would accommodate 640 students in grades 5-12, at full enrollment.

### **Outdoor Learning Spaces**

Design of the indoor learning spaces will focus on maximizing natural light, student accessibility, and aesthetics to support our sustainability focus. Beyond physical facility needs, our campus will utilize outdoor space to a larger degree than more traditional schools. Our model differs from the standard classroom-based model in that students will spend time outdoors in their classes, every single day. Activities that would typically have a dedicated room - like the science room, visual or performing arts spaces, or gymnasium - will be held in a variety of accessible, outdoor or open-air spaces.

The Tennessee Department of Education endorses the use of outdoor classrooms as a way to build healthy schools.<sup>182</sup> There are many different designs of outdoor classroom spaces, ranging from primitive to expensive, all that can be designed to allow accessibility for all students. Our Executive Director has previously served as the project lead to create an outdoor classroom for an MNPS middle school in our district. The materials were free and the outdoor classroom met all ADA compliance requirements.

Our main physical building(s) will have sufficient indoor space to accommodate a minimum of three classrooms per grade at any given time in the case of inclement weather. The school will also prioritize outdoor spaces as an outdoor space for Physical Education, manifesting in play fields, a school garden, and a natural wooded area for nature play, all of which will be adapted to be accessible for all. Many of these areas will only require minimal development and maintenance and be a cost effective way to offer a wide variety of academic spaces.

<sup>182</sup> Tennessee Department of Health. (2022). *Healthy Schools - Outdoor Classroom*.  
<https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/environmental/healthy-schools/hs/outdoor-classroom.html>

Figure 2.3b - TNA Facility Needs Over Time

Facility Needs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Classrooms 750 sqft/30 students	6 4,500	9 6,750	12 9,000	16 12,000	20 15,000
Administrative	1,000	1,000	1,500	2,500	3,000
SPED/breakout @ 400 sf/180 students	400	800	800	1,200	1,200
Outdoor Learning Spaces	3,000	4,500	6,000	7,500	7,500
Storage Spaces	750	750	1,000	1,500	1,500
Teacher Work Spaces	600	600	600	600	1,200
Kitchen	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Dining/multipurpose room	2,250	2,250	2,250	2,850	2,850
Outdoor Space for Physical Education	3,000	3,000	4,500	6,000	6,000

(b) Explain how the above-described facility needs tie to the related items in the proposed school's budget.

TNA expects to be able to lease a temporary site in its target geographical area for its initial opening and operating years. TNA has identified several possible locations that would be suitable and is in confidential negotiations for an initial lease term. The operating budget included in this application assumes a rental rate of \$15 per square foot, which is reasonable based on market conditions and the experiences of other start-up charter schools in Nashville. In addition to the rent, the budget assumes capital expenditures by the tenant (TNA) equal to \$1.50 per square foot, plus \$20,000 for each additional nature classroom (which includes funding for ensuring ADA compliance for outdoor spaces). Custodial, maintenance, and utilities expenses are included in the budget at market rates. Technology and furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) are also included in the school's capital budget.

TNA has been in conversations with charter school development consultants, Level Field Partners, about developing and financing a permanent site. Level Field has helped other charter schools in Nashville and nationally assess the feasibility and affordability of a permanent facility project, identify and secure sites, project manage through pre-construction and construction, and secure favorable debt financing through local and national lenders, especially Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI). TNA has engaged in preliminary discussions with two such CDFIs: the Charter Schools Development Corporation, a leading national non-profit developer of public charter schools, and the Level Field Facilities Fund. TNA does not expect to complete the financing for a permanent site until its enrollment is stabilized, so the occupancy assumptions included in the budget are based on a market lease rate. But based on the school's enrollment, operating and financial performance, as well as the robust market for charter school debt and the overall low interest rate environment we have experienced, it is likely that the school will be able to complete the acquisition, development and financing of a permanent site at an annual cost comparable to its temporary site assumptions.

(c) Describe the experience of the board and/or leadership team in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations, as applicable.

TNA's Executive Director has networking experience as a member on the Lead Team of The Village Nashville, a church start-up in the same target community, as it navigated the land search, acquisition, and facility design and build-out (the doors successfully opened December, 2021). He has firsthand experience with the process and timeline of executing facilities acquisition. He will receive continued support through the Unified School Launch Fellowship with the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition in facilities acquisition and management during the planning years, as well as ongoing support through membership in the Coalition.

Board member Laurel Creech currently serves as Metro Nashville Government's first Assistant Director for the Division of Sustainability in the Department of General Services. She manages environmental initiatives including renewable energy, energy efficiency, green infrastructure, waste reduction practices, and outreach/ education via the program called *Socket*. She is currently working on the city's first Climate Action & Adaptation Plan, increasing renewable energy, reducing built infrastructure's energy consumption, fleet electrification, and overall greenhouse gas emissions mitigation strategies. Under her leadership, the Division has received two Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards and four U.S. Green Building Council Impact Tennessee awards. Her familiarity with codes, zoning, and sustainable design practices will be instrumental in the development of a green school.

Board member Darrell Hawks is the Executive Director of Friends of Mill Ridge Park, a community-based nonprofit in the target community of TNA that has successfully advocated for the conservation and transformation of a 600 acre tract of land into a city park. He has a demonstrated record of effective navigation of the legal and zoning requirements and timelines relevant to Davidson County.

Both co-founders have worked in multiple schools that are in the start-up phase and are familiar with the challenges of modifying and growing into a space.

(d) Describe the process for identifying and securing a facility, including any brokers or real estate consultants you are employing to assist in finding a facility.

TNA has carefully considered facility options within its overall growth strategy and has identified leasing a smaller incubation space as the best strategy for our launch and initial 1-3 growth years, allowing additional time to identify a permanent facility.

TNA has already identified four potential incubation spaces in our cluster that hit the metrics of providing adequate classroom space and have a campus with plenty of outdoor space. All contingency properties are described in the appropriate sections below. Upon authorization, TNA will conduct due diligence on the incubation space and engage an architect and contractor in the fall of 2022 so that needed tenant improvements may begin in early 2023 allowing ample time for completion ahead of opening with students in August 2023 (timeline detailed below).

TNA also has a strong lead for a permanent site, which will be introduced and discussed more in depth in Section H. To acquire, develop, and finance that site, TNA plans to work with 4th Sector Solutions as a finance consultant and Level Field Partners as a development consultant. The principals of each firm have each led the development of over 30 charter school projects with 3+ million square feet and \$500+ million of total project cost. These firms will also be a resource in soliciting and negotiating the optimal financing solution for TNA's permanent site development as well as an architect and construction partner that will ensure the facility is built within budget and adheres to all building code and life safety

requirements (including ADA) for school buildings. We have researched and explored different green building options with support from the Tennessee Concrete Associate .

The permanent TNA facility, to be secured via lease or purchase, will serve the school’s mission and vision at scale, and allowing 1-3 additional years to identify the location will allow the school to demonstrate a strong track record of performance and enrollment which will support acquisition of the permanent property. TNA is confident that with this phased plan we will have ample time to identify a quality permanent facility in our target area, and if we can secure additional funding, will expedite the purchase and build out a facility for our permanent location. If we are unable to secure additional funding we will pursue a build-out lease option similar to many current charter operators.

(e) Describe the plan for compliance with all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, all applicable city planning review procedures and all health and safety requirements per T.C.A. § 49-13-107. Include associated costs in budget details.

TNA will abide by all laws and regulations governing the jurisdiction of our schools, Tennessee law, and the municipal permitting process (including fire marshal review and approval) for receiving a certificate of occupancy for Tennessee public school students will ensure compliance. For our incubation years, we are not considering any spaces where ADA compliance is not already in place. In order to do this, we will engage architects, fire marshal and/or building inspector early in our site selection process, having them walk each potential incubation facility to identify the need for code upgrades (including any outdoor space planned to be used).

For our permanent facility, we would only be issued permits after full code compliance (inc. ADA) was verified in the plans by the state fire marshal, city planning department, and all other governing authorities. TNA will plan all future facilities, including outdoor learning spaces, to be ADA compliant. The primary responsibility for ADA compliance planning will sit with the architect, and TNA will work with the local building inspector to ensure both the plans and the completed building are up to code and ADA compliance.

(f) Present a timeline with reasonable assumptions for facility selection requisition,renovation, state fire marshal and health inspections, and occupation.

An estimated timeline for the facilities acquisition and build-out process for the initial incubation space for opening year at TNA is found in the table below. We will follow a similar timeline (years adjusted) during the future search, acquisition, and build-out of the permanent facilities. This timeline takes into account steps needed to ensure ADA compliance.

*Figure 2.3c - TNA Facilities Timeline*

Approximate Timeline	Facilities Goals / Action Items
13-18 months prior to opening (February - July 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TNA charter application submitted, reviewed, approved</li> <li>● Potential locations narrowed to finalists</li> <li>● Codes walk-thru to determine scope of renovations</li> </ul>
12 months prior to opening (August 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Final decision on incubation location made</li> <li>● Contracts signed, architect begins needed designs</li> </ul>

8-10 months prior to opening (October - December 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Architect designs complete</li> <li>● Bidding process for renovations, upgrades, construction</li> <li>● Bidding process closed</li> <li>● Construction/ renovations begin</li> </ul>
6-8 months prior to opening (January - February 2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bidding process for utility and vendors (phone, internet, waste removal, janitorial, etc.)</li> <li>● Utility and vendors contracts signed</li> <li>● Bidding process for furniture, supplies, technology</li> </ul>
3-5 months prior to opening (March - May 2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Furniture, supplies, technology, phone system ordered/purchased and staged for delivery or installation</li> </ul>
June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All construction completed</li> <li>● Certificate of Occupancy approval</li> </ul>
July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All furniture and technology installation complete</li> <li>● Final facilities walkthrough</li> <li>● Staff Summer Institute</li> </ul>
August 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students report for the first day of school.</li> </ul>

(g) Broadly describe a contingency plan, should your facility fall through.

The facilities contingency plan at this time involves identifying additional smaller spaces that TNA could use as an incubation site for 1-3 years to allow more time for identification and build-out of a mission-aligned, long-term school facility. This is a practice charter schools in our district have successfully executed in Nashville. TNA’s Executive Director has connected with city council members representing Southeast Nashville districts, charter leaders in Southeast Nashville, as well as neighborhood associations in Southeast Nashville to explore all facilities options that may be available to the school as either a backup incubation space or the site of the long-term TNA facility. TNA will budget for leasehold improvements as needed. The preferred incubation facility as well as other potential properties are described in the next section.

We have begun initial conversations with three churches in the area to use as an contingency incubator site. We understand the additional requirements to make either of those options work, including potential zoning variances, renovations, and fire marshal approval. We know retrofits, conversions, or upgrades to meet code are costly and take months to accomplish and have outlined that in detail in our Start-Up Plan.

(h) List any properties you may have already identified as suitable to meet the proposed school’s facility needs.

With shifting populations and many congregations shrinking in Southeast Nashville, we have identified three church properties with potential to meet our initial needs along the Nolensville corridor. All properties exist in District 31 in the Cane Ridge Cluster. Upon authorization, the TNA facilities team is prepared to move forward with discussing terms for a lease of the facilities on the three properties listed below and then to execute the full facilities plan outlined previously in this application. This chart breaks down the location of each property and how it aligns with our outdoor campus needs.

Property	Location	Acreage	Outdoor Campus Features
1	7533 Lords Chapel Drive Nashville, TN 37211	20.76 acres	Church layout originally designed to be a school; Community garden space; Outdoor areas; existing trails through wooded area on site
2	7224 Old Burkitt Rd, Antioch, TN 37013	23.08 acres	13 acres of wooded area; Community garden space; Outdoor pavilion
4	10604 Concord Rd, Brentwood, TN 37027	4.3 acres	Access to Mill Creek; Outdoor courtyard; Community garden space; Field for recreational activities

TNA has also identified a strong leading permanent site for our campus. We are currently in conversation with a private owner regarding a parcel of land they have desired to be set aside to be developed into a school. We plan to construct a new facility on this 23 acre plot that is situated in the Cane Ridge Community, with close proximity to green spaces that are imperative for our learning model. Level Field is currently working out the feasibility and desirability of acquiring this site and transforming it into a long-term site. Due to the hot nature of the real estate market in Nashville, we have chosen to withhold the exact details of the location of this property until we are under contract.

TNA will also begin negotiating a contract to construct a model indoor and outdoor classroom somewhere in the community beginning July 2022 which will be used for family outreach and recruitment purposes, with the option to engage in a long-term lease upon confirming the charter authorization.

SECTION 2.4 - PERSONNEL AND HUMAN CAPITAL

(a) Describe the school’s proposed leadership structure. Include a copy of the school’s organizational chart at Year 1 and at full capacity as **Attachment G**. The organizational chart should clearly delineate the roles and reporting structure of the board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/educator councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school.

During the planning year and first year of operation, Tennessee Nature Academy will have a four-person leadership structure. This team includes the following founding members:

- Executive Director (Hired June 2021) - The Executive Director is the primary applicant of TNA. Upon authorization, the board of TNA will confirm and hire Roy (Jay) Renfro, as Executive Director. The Executive Director will serve as one of two school leaders for the Middle School until a principal is hired in Year 2. At that time, the Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer will transition school site-based management to the principal and shift to development of the high school.
- Chief Academic Officer (Hired July 2021) - The founding Chief Academic Officer, Sarah Savage, has been a full-time member of the TNA design team since July 2021. The Chief Academic Officer will serve as one of two school leaders for the Middle School until a principal is hired in Year 2.
- Director of Community Engagement (Recruitment ongoing) - The search has begun for a Director of Community Engagement (DCE). The Director of Community Engagement will manage relationships with our community partners, facilitate programming for learning and service projects in the community, coordinate community events, and manage strategic growth and outreach including the family and staff recruitment processes.
- Director of Operations (Intent to hire January 2023) - We have budgeted for the Director of Operations to begin full time in January 2023, pending authorization and funding. At founding, the four-person, school-based leadership team will have distinct roles and responsibilities. Figure 2.4a details the potential division of leadership roles/responsibilities at the time of school launch.

Figure 2.4a - TNA Founding Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

Executive Director (ED)	Chief Academic Officer (CAO)	Director of Community Engagement (DCE)	Director of Operations (DO)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Finance</li> <li>● Facilities planning</li> <li>● Fundraising</li> <li>● Board management</li> <li>● School culture management                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SEL program</li> <li>○ Discipline program</li> <li>○ Restorative practices</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Growth &amp; expansion</li> <li>● Manage leadership team</li> <li>● Serve as 504 Coordinator and IEP Evaluation Team lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Curriculum development, instructional leadership, and teacher coaching for general academics</li> <li>● Professional development</li> <li>● Coordinate Student Support Team                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Special education</li> <li>○ English Language Learners</li> <li>○ RTI<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>● Testing coordinator                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ State testing</li> <li>○ WIDA ACCESS</li> <li>○ Math and literacy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student recruitment, enrollment, and retention</li> <li>● Staff recruitment, screening, interviews, and hiring</li> <li>● Student data management</li> <li>● Coordinate community partnerships</li> <li>● Fundraising and community support</li> <li>● Organizing community events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Facilities - daily operations</li> <li>● Managing vendor partnerships</li> <li>● HR: Benefits &amp; payroll</li> <li>● Manage front office staff</li> <li>● Transportation</li> <li>● Food services</li> </ul>

	testing		
Shared Roles and Responsibilities (managed by ED)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community engagement</li> <li>● Staff recruitment &amp; hiring                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School culture</li> <li>● Student discipline</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			

The following narrative describes the build-out of Tennessee Nature Academy’s proposed leadership structure between Year 2 (2024-2025) and Year 7 (2029-2030). Figure 2.4b depicts how TNA’s leadership structure will evolve during this time. TNA’s school organization chart for Year 1 (SY 2023-2024) and at full scale (in Year 7, SY 2029-2030) is available in Attachment G.

*Figure 2.4b - TNA’s Proposed Leadership Structure, Year 1 - Year 7*

	Network Leadership Team	School-Based Leadership Team - Middle school	School-Based Leadership Team - High School
Year 1 Grades 5-6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Executive Director</li> <li>● Chief Academic Officer</li> <li>● Director of Community Engagement</li> <li>● Director of Operations</li> </ul>	
Year 2 Grades 5-7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Executive Director</li> <li>● Chief Academic Officer</li> <li>● Director of Community Engagement</li> <li>● MS Principal (0.5)</li> <li>● Director of Operations</li> <li>● MS Director of Learning and Language Support</li> <li>● MS Counselor/Social Worker</li> </ul>	
Year 3 Grades 5-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Executive Director</li> <li>● Chief Academic Officer</li> <li>● Director of Community Engagement</li> <li>● Director of Human Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MS Principal</li> <li>● MS Director of Operations</li> <li>● MS Director of Learning Support</li> <li>● MS Director of Language Support</li> <li>● MS Counselor/Social Worker</li> <li>● HS Principal in Residence</li> </ul>	
Year 4 Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Executive Director</li> <li>● Chief Academic Officer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MS Principal</li> <li>● MS Assistant Principal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HS Principal</li> <li>● HS Director of</li> </ul>

5-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Director of Community Engagement</li> <li>● Director of Human Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MS Director of Operations</li> <li>● MS Director of Learning Support</li> <li>● MS Director of Language Support</li> <li>● MS Counselor/Social Worker</li> </ul>	<p>Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HS Counselor/Social Worker</li> </ul>
Year 5 Grades 5-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Executive Director</li> <li>● Chief Academic Officer</li> <li>● Director of Community Engagement</li> <li>● Director of Human Resources</li> <li>● Outdoor Experiences Coordinator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MS Principal</li> <li>● MS Assistant Principal</li> <li>● MS Director of Operations</li> <li>● MS Director of Learning Support</li> <li>● MS Director of Language Support</li> <li>● MS Counselor/Social Worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HS Principal</li> <li>● HS Director of Operations</li> <li>● HS Director of Learning and Language Support</li> <li>● HS Counselor/Social Worker</li> </ul>
Year 6 Grades 5-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Executive Director</li> <li>● Chief Academic Officer</li> <li>● Director of Community Engagement</li> <li>● Director of Human Resources</li> <li>● Outdoor Experiences Coordinator</li> <li>● Chief Financial Officer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MS Principal</li> <li>● MS Assistant Principal</li> <li>● MS Director of Operations</li> <li>● MS Director of Learning Support</li> <li>● MS Director of Language Support</li> <li>● MS Counselor/Social Worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HS Principal</li> <li>● HS Assistant Principal</li> <li>● HS Director of Operations</li> <li>● HS Director of Learning Support</li> <li>● HS Director of Language Support</li> <li>● HS Counselor/Social Worker</li> <li>● Director of College Access</li> </ul>
Year 7 Grades 5-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Executive Director</li> <li>● Chief Academic Officer</li> <li>● Director of Community Engagement</li> <li>● Director of Human Resources</li> <li>● Outdoor Experiences Coordinator</li> <li>● Chief Financial Officer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MS Principal</li> <li>● MS Assistant Principal</li> <li>● MS Director of Operations</li> <li>● MS Director of Learning Support</li> <li>● MS Director of Language Support</li> <li>● MS Counselor/Social Worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HS Principal</li> <li>● HS Assistant Principal</li> <li>● HS Director of Operations</li> <li>● HS Director of Learning Support</li> <li>● HS Director of Language Support</li> <li>● HS Counselor/Social Worker</li> <li>● Director of College Access</li> </ul>

In Year 2, TNA will build on to the school-based leadership team by hiring a Director of Learning and Language, a Middle School Counselor / Social Worker, and Middle School Principal. These leaders will fulfill the following responsibilities:

- The Middle School Principal will serve as the instructional, cultural, and operational leader for Grades 5-8. The Middle School Principal will also directly manage and develop teachers and school-based leaders on site. The Middle School Principal will be hired mid-year and will gradually take on increased responsibilities for school leadership over the spring semester.
- The Middle School Director of Learning and Language Support will manage learning and language specialists, design and monitor services for students with disabilities and English learners, coordinate student support services, and maintain a positive, inclusive school culture.
- The Middle School Counselor / Social Worker will lead TNA's middle school counseling program and will work directly with students to support their success.

### **Year 3 (2025-2026)**

TNA will add the following leadership positions in Year 3:

- The Middle School Director of Learning and Language Support's responsibilities will be assigned across two leadership team roles, the Middle School Director of Learning Support and the Middle School Director of Language Support. These leaders will support the needs of students with disabilities or the needs of English Language Learners, respectively.
- TNA will hire a High School Principal, who will participate as a member of the school-based leadership team at the middle school while designing and preparing to launch the academic, cultural, and operational systems at the high school in Year 4.
- The Executive Director, Chief Academic Officer, and Director of Community Engagement will transition into the network leadership team and begin planning to launch the high school. The network leadership team will add a Director of Human Resources, who will become responsible for managing talent (including developing and maintaining equitable practices for staff recruitment, hiring, and retention) and compliance within TNA's human resources department. The founding Director of Operations will remain a member of the school-based leadership team and attend to the daily operations of the middle school.

### **Year 4 (2026-2027)**

In Year 4, TNA will finish building out the middle school leadership team by adding a Middle School Assistant Principal. The Middle School Assistant Principal will serve as the primary instructional coach for the middle school team and will support the Middle School Principal in managing curriculum, instruction, assessment, and culture on site. Year 4 will also mark the launch of TNA's high school. The school-based leadership team at the high school will include the High School Principal, the High School Director of Operations, and the High School Counselor / Social Worker. These leaders fulfill similar responsibilities as existing middle school leaders with the same titles, but in the high school context.

### **Year 5 (2027-2028)**

In Year 5, the high school's leadership team will add a High School Director of Learning and Language Support, who fulfills the same responsibilities described for that position above for the high school setting. The network leadership team will add an Outdoor Experiences Coordinator, who will become responsible for managing TNA's farm and garden, coordinating Supervised Agricultural Experiences (until the Work-based Learning Coordinator is hired in Year 6), and designing core outdoor learning experiences across the middle and high school. The Outdoor Experiences Coordinator will also serve as the instructional manager for high school teachers in the Agriscience department and will work with the middle school's Keyboarding and Intro to Agriscience teacher to support Intro to Agriscience's curriculum and assessment specifically. (The Keyboarding and Intro to Agriscience teacher will be otherwise managed by the Middle School Assistant Principal. This shared management responsibility is represented in Attachment G.)

**Year 6 (2028-2029)**

TNA will finish building out the leadership structure in Year 6 - no additional leadership team roles will be hired when TNA reaches full scale in Year 7.

- The high school leadership team will add a High School Assistant Principal, a High School Director of Learning Support, and a High School Director of Language Support, who fulfill similar responsibilities as the middle-school facing version of these roles described above. TNA’s school-based leadership team at the high school will also include a Director of College Access, who is responsible for coordinating college readiness initiatives (e.g. planning college visits, scheduling visits with college representatives, and ACT preparation and testing) and managing the college application process (e.g. providing college counseling services to 11th and 12th graders, supporting students to prepare financially for college through FAFSA completion and scholarship applications, and ensuring that students prepare high-quality applications).
- A Chief Financial Officer will join the network leadership team and will be responsible for maintaining TNA’s financial health by creating and managing the budget, creating monthly financial reports for the Board of Directors, coordinating TNA’s annual financial audit, processing payroll and reimbursements, and filing taxes.

(b) Give a thorough description of the process and timeline for hiring the school leader, identifying the skills, qualifications and characteristics the applicant will seek in a leader. If the leader has already been identified, attach the leader’s resume. Explain the responsibilities of the school leader, how the school leader will be supported and developed, and the state-approved administrator evaluation model that you will be using for this individual, as required by State Board Rule 0520-02-01 and State Board Policy 5.201.

As mentioned, during Years 0-2 the school will be managed by four leaders: an Executive Director, a Director of Community Engagement, a Director of Operations, and a Chief Academic Officer. At opening, these four leaders will divide general responsibilities for school leadership. Position descriptions for these school-based leaders are found below:

*Figure 2.4c - Position Descriptions for Leadership Team Members in Year 1*

Executive Director
<p><b>Roy (Jay) Renfro</b> is the lead applicant of Tennessee Nature Academy and is the proposed Executive Director. His resume is included in Attachment F with governing board documents.</p>
Qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master’s Degree in Education and Administrative Credentials.</li> <li>• Experience with school and organizational leadership and educational innovation (required).</li> <li>• Relevant successful experience as a school leader and teacher; a minimum of five (5) years of teaching and/or administrative experience is required.</li> <li>• Belief in the mission and vision of TNA, interest in our nature-based, project-based, diverse-by-design model of public education, and commitment to the school’s success.</li> <li>• Experience in curriculum design, supervision, and evaluation.</li> <li>• Ability to communicate effectively with diverse groups, the Board, staff members, and the community.</li> <li>• A contagious passion for the outdoors and a drive to challenge students, staff, and family members with new experiences.</li> <li>• Experience with school operations including finances, fundraising, facilities, health and safety and other operational management.</li> </ul>

- Other qualifications and/or qualities deemed important by the Board.

*Responsibilities - The Executive Director shall perform assigned tasks as directed by the Board of Directors and shall be required to undertake many or all of the tasks detailed below. Responsibilities include and are not limited to the following:*

- Ensure TNA lives up to its mission and vision and communicates TNA's mission and nature-based educational philosophy to the larger community.
- Communicate and report to the Board of Directors, including: regular Board reports on academics, operations, development, and community relationships; A calendar for the upcoming school year, finalized no later than December of the preceding year, for Board approval; A fiscally conservative annual budget to the Board that supports TNA's academic, social, and professional mission, in consultation with the Board Executive and Finance Committee, by at least April 30th (two months prior to the close of our fiscal year); Reports to federal, state, or private grant organization, including federal Title I LEA Plan describing the school's Title I services pursuant to the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; Reports on activities, organizational development progress, and student achievement to applicable state and federal reporting agencies.
- Draft, submit to Board, and publish an annual report to community stakeholders including: school success metrics (achievement data, student statements); audited financial statements.
- Complete and submit required documents as requested or required by the charter and/or the TNA Board of Directors, Sponsor, and the State Board of Education.
- Initiate, participate in, and manage fundraising for TNA to ensure the long-term financial health of the organization.
- Identify staffing needs and support employee recruitment, hiring, development, promotion, discipline policies, and/or dismissal.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and help secure local grants.
- Work with the Chief Academic Officer, Director of Operations, and Director of Community Engagement to establish and maintain a system for collecting and reporting tasks such as student records including attendance, health recording and immunization status, teacher records, teacher credentialing information, contemporaneous attendance logs, purchasing, budgets, and timetables.
- Promote positive public relations and interact effectively with the media.
- Develop facilities build-out plan with reasonable finance structure.
- Manage student discipline through: coordinating and implementing a school-wide behavior management system with meaningful proactive strategies, incentives and redirection techniques; leading recognition assemblies, community meetings, and other school-wide culture building activities; working closely and effectively with children who have/are experiencing trauma resulting in behavior challenges; engaging students' families, partnering with behavioral health organizations and supporting services to execute individual individualized behavior interventions when needed; facilitating staff training on student-teacher relationships, classroom management, parent partnership and school culture; conducting regular school culture walk-throughs to help staff maintain a high bar of excellence; supervising and/or leading lunch, recess, dismissal and transitions to ensure they are positive; enforcing and monitor the enforcement of the student code of conduct including but not limited to: attendance, behavior, dress code; implementing the suspension and expulsion process as necessary.
- Cultivate and sustain diverse community partnerships.
- Exude a positive ethos of outdoor leadership and a commitment to sustainability.

**Sarah Savage** joined the TNA design team in July 2021 and is the founding Chief Academic Officer. Her resume is included in Attachment F with governing board documents.

#### Qualifications

- Master's Degree and school leadership experience are highly preferred.
- Relevant successful experience as a school leader and teacher; a minimum of five (5) years of teaching and/or administrative experience is required.
- Demonstrated experience in designing systems to support high academic achievement.
- Demonstrated experience in designing an effective school culture.
- Belief in the mission and vision of TNA and developing a nature-based, project-based, diverse-by-design model.
- Strong communication skills with students, staff and families.
- An incredible work ethic and passion for being part of a team-oriented, mission-driven culture.

Responsibilities - *The Chief Academic Officer will be a chief instructional leader at TNA and will be responsible for creating rigorous, engaging, and purposeful academic and culture programs. The Chief Academic Officer will report to the Executive Director. Responsibilities include and are not limited to the following:*

- Establish and promote high standards and expectations for all students and staff for academic performance and mission-aligned behavior.
- Implement the school's accountability plan, educational program, and annual plans.
- Identify and implement data systems to ensure the school is on track to achieve academic goals.
- Establish direction for school improvement efforts by monitoring the progress of school performance, student achievement objectives, and academic excellence indicators to aligned strategies for school improvement.
- Create the conditions that enable all educators to provide rigorous, authentic, and personalized experiences for all students, particularly historically underserved populations.
- Demonstrate instructional leadership by: developing and implementing a compelling vision for TNA's curriculum and instruction that ensures rigorous, standards-aligned, equitable instruction and instructional support in every classroom, for every student; supervising, coaching, and supporting the instructional team through professional development directing academic service areas (i.e. instructional coaching, curriculum and instruction, gifted services, English as a Second Language, etc.); supporting informed decision-making by the Executive Director and the Board by monitoring, interpreting, and applying the latest research to inform theories of pedagogy and ensure consistent delivery of high-quality instruction aligned with key standards; cultivating a commitment among all TNA staff to enable all students to achieve at high levels; operate with a lens of cultural proficiency, sensitivity, and equity to ensure students' needs are met; assess the distribution of academic supports with a clear equity lens, ensuring allocations provide the best resources to equitably and effectively meet the needs of all TNA students, families, and staff.
- Assist the Executive Director in preparing materials needed for federal, state, and local grant applications and compliance reporting.
- Manage student discipline.
- Carry out other duties as assigned.

#### Director of Community Engagement

Tennessee Nature Academy has not yet hired its Community Engagement Coordinator. We have

<p>budgeted for this role to begin in the Summer of 2022.</p>
<p>Qualifications</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Committed to equity in education and serving the needs of families and students.</li> <li>● Can demonstrate bilingual fluency (highly preferred in Spanish and Arabic).</li> <li>● Previous experience in community organizing, event planning, or recruiting.</li> <li>● Has pride in and knowledge of the 37013 community.</li> <li>● Models a passion for the outdoors and a commitment to healthy lifestyles for young people.</li> <li>● Demonstrates alignment to TNA’s mission, vision, and core values.</li> <li>● Advanced degree in Education, Marketing, Community Development, Public Relations, or Social Services preferred (but not required).</li> </ul>
<p>Responsibilities - <i>The Director of Community Engagement will support community-building initiatives at TNA including student/staff recruitment and enrollment/hiring and will manage community partnerships, events, and fundraising. The Director of Operations will report to the Executive Director. Responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collaborate with TNA’s Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer to fully integrate TNA’s mission and vision into all aspects of community engagement.</li> <li>● Serve as the main point of contact for prospective families and community organizations.</li> <li>● Organize and plan community engagement events in diverse spaces.</li> <li>● Serve as the main point of contact for prospective families and community organizations.</li> <li>● Manage student recruitment during the application, lottery, and enrollment process.</li> <li>● Conduct frequent equity audits to gauge inclusiveness of organizational systems.</li> <li>● Participate in upholding school culture and discipline systems.</li> <li>● Plan and attend family meetings, orientation, and other school events.</li> <li>● Coach teachers to improve their understanding of the diverse cultural dynamics of the community and the students and families at our school.</li> <li>● Developing and sustaining partnerships with community organizations and alliances that enhance student achievement, community development, family involvement, parent advocacy, and student recruitment and support.</li> <li>● Providing opportunities for meaningful, inclusive, supported family involvement in the school.</li> <li>● Support staff recruitment, screening, interviews, and hiring.</li> <li>● Manage TNA’s Parent, Grandparent, Guardian, and Teacher Association.</li> <li>● Support fundraising efforts in partnership with the Executive Director.</li> <li>● Own other duties as necessary (arrival, dismissal, lunch, recess, coverage).</li> </ul>

<p>Director of Operations</p>
<p>Tennessee Nature Academy has not yet hired its Director of Operations. We have budgeted for this role to begin in the Spring of 2023.</p>
<p>Qualifications</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Master’s Degree and 5 years of experience in education is preferred.</li> <li>● Demonstrated experience in designing systems to support high academic achievement.</li> <li>● Demonstrated experience in designing an effective school culture.</li> </ul>

- Belief in the mission and vision of TNA and developing a nature-based, project-based, diverse-by-design model.
- Strong communication skills with students, staff, and families.
- An incredible work ethic and passion for being part of a team-oriented, mission-driven school culture.

*Responsibilities - The Director of Operations will support strong academic and cultural systems at TNA by maintaining daily operations and relationships so that the academic and cultural systems can function with minimal interference. The Director of Operations will report to the Executive Director. Responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:*

- Identify and implement data systems to ensure the school is on track to achieve academic goals.
- Establish direction for school improvement efforts by monitoring the progress of school performance, student achievement objectives, and academic excellence indicators to aligned strategies for school improvement.
- Create the conditions that enable all educators to provide rigorous, authentic, and personalized experiences for all students, particularly historically underserved populations.
- Assist the Executive Director in preparing materials needed for federal, state, and local grant applications and compliance reporting.
- Manage organizational finances and balance sheet: design and adjust a multi-year financial plan for growth and stability; draft annual budget with assistance from the Executive Director; propose organizational budgets for items such as operations, salaries, & technology; collect and maintain invoices, receipts, and other documents in compliance with internal financial management policies; coordinate with TNA's back-office provider to manage disbursements of monthly federal, state, and local revenues.
- Ensure essential policies and procedures are followed in a timely manner.
- Implement policies for human resources, employment contracts, and employee benefits.
- Manage payroll processes in conjunction with outside vendors.
- Address facility needs (custodial, repairs, etc.) in order to maximize student learning; ensure the school facility and grounds are safe, attractive, and meet the needs of students and staff.
- Develop, manage, and improve systems including student transportation and food services.
- Contract and manage day-to-day communication with vendors including: building maintenance, security, and janitorial services; IT support; digital subscriptions; catering and food service; SIS; back-office provider; substitute teachers; support and transportation services as necessary for LEP, homeless, and SPED Students
- Manage non-instructional operations staff and ensure completion of their duties.
- Respond to student, parent, and staff inquiries regarding operational issues, and redirect other inquiries to the correct person or department.
- Maintain a system for student records pursuant to law, including by not limited to: attendance, immunization records, and food service; records of academic performance and standardized test results; documentation for students with disabilities; free-and-reduced priced lunch documentation; records in the student information system.
- Manage student discipline.
- Carry out other duties as assigned.

### **Leadership Team Experience and Qualifications**

In their review, the charter review team asked for clarification on our leadership team's experience and qualifications in running a school. The figure below (2.4d) demonstrates the degree to which our current

founding team's experience and qualifications meet the minimum experience and qualifications set forth by MNPS when hiring a principal to run a school in the district.<sup>183</sup>

*Figure 2.4d - TNA's Founding Team Leadership Experience, Current as of May 2022*

	Executive Director (Roy J. Renfro)	Chief Academic Officer (Sarah Savage)
Master's Degree	M. Ed in Instructional Practice	Ed.M. in Learning and Teaching, Instructional Leadership strand
ILL-B TN Administrator's License	Active ILL-B TN Administrator's License	No
Six Full Years of Certificated Experience	8 full years of certificated experience	5 full years of experience as a teacher, 3 full years of experience as an assistant principal, 1 full year of experience (plus 5 months) as Curriculum Director
2 Years Experience as AP or Comparable Experience	1 year as Executive Director; 1 year as Curriculum Specialist; 3 years as 504 Case Manager	3 years as Assistant Principal of Humanities; 1 year and 5 months as Curriculum Director; 10 months as Chief Academic Officer
Years In Founding/Start-Up Charter School Position*	7 years working in a start-up/founding charter school environment	8 years working in founding or start-up (program still growing to capacity) charter school environments.

\*This is not a metric to be considered as a school principal in MNPS. It is helpful in showcasing our founding team's prior experience in charter schools / start-up environments.

### **Administrator Hiring Process**

The lead applicant of this charter, Roy (Jay) Renfro is the founding Executive Director. As previously described, Mr. Renfro is an exceptional educational leader with expertise in outdoor learning program design and implementation with a diverse group of learners. The TNA Board of Directors is responsible for identifying, hiring, supporting, and firing the TNA Executive Director. The Executive Director will be responsible for hiring additional leadership positions, including the Chief Academic Officer, Director of Operations, and the Director of Community Engagement in Year 0.

The following process will be implemented for hiring future TNA leadership positions:

1. **Inquiry** - Applicants submit a resume. The Executive Director reviews all submitted resumes to ensure candidates meet minimal qualifications.
2. **Application** - After their resume has been screened, the applicant is sent the initial application with open-ended response questions to evaluate the applicant's educational philosophy, alignment with the school's core values, and perceived leadership strengths.

<sup>183</sup> Metro Nashville Public Schools. MNPS Principal Selection Process. [https://cdn5-ss13.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_32970243/File/Careers/Resources/MNPS%20Principal%20Selection%20Process%200SY201.pdf](https://cdn5-ss13.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_32970243/File/Careers/Resources/MNPS%20Principal%20Selection%20Process%200SY201.pdf)

3. Phone Interview - After reviewing their application, selected candidates will be invited to participate in a 30-minute phone interview with a member of the leadership team to discuss the answers to the application.
4. Performance Task - Following a phone interview, candidates will be asked to submit student achievement data as well as a coaching video to demonstrate their instructional leadership and people management.
5. Recommendation Letters and Reference Checks - Three references will complete a recommendation form on the candidate's behalf prior to a Final Selection Interview. Additional reference checks may be conducted preceding or following the final interview.
6. Final Selection Interview - Candidates invited to a Final Selection Interview will be engaged in dialogue with a committee of TNA leaders and staff as well as parent representatives from TNA's parent-teacher association. This is an in-person, full-day event where candidates have an opportunity to demonstrate instructional leadership, cultural leadership, and awareness of personal leadership identity and goals.

### **Administrator Support and Evaluation**

Pursuant to State Board Policy 5.201, TNA administrators will be supported in growing their leadership capacities and evaluated using the TEAM-TN Administrator Evaluation process which combines self-reflection, observation, input of school staff, and student data to create a complete picture of an administrator's performance. This process is based on the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards. The effectiveness rating is calculated using a formula that is 50 percent qualitative and 50 percent quantitative. The 50 percent quantitative portion includes a 35 percent growth measure (one-year school-wide TVAAS) and a 15% achievement measure. Administrators will be evaluated using the TEAM Administrator Evaluation Rubric. Surveys are a required component of the administrator evaluation process. While there is freedom to utilize an instrument of choice, one option, the Teacher Perception Survey, is aligned to the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards.

The TNA Board of Directors will hold responsibility for annual oversight related to development of TNA leadership. During the planning year, the Executive Director will receive additional leadership development support through the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition's UnifiED Fellowship to ensure viability and an effective launch and scale of the school. The Board of Directors will use the following metrics in the annual performance review of the TNA Executive Director:

- Meeting or Exceeding Academic Performance Goals
- Level 3 or Above on the TEAM Administrator Evaluation
- Comprehensive analysis of the 360 Degree Feedback from Board and School Leadership Team (Colleague Feedback)
- School Culture Surveys (Parent and Student Feedback)

(c) Describe your strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and hiring additional key staff, including, but not limited to, operational staff, administrators, and teachers. Identify key selection criteria and any special considerations relevant to your school design. Provide previous student achievement data for the individuals responsible for academic programming (if available) as **Attachment H**.

### **Recruitment and Hiring Strategy**

TNA views our staff as our greatest asset, and in order to ensure the success and continuity of our model we will work closely with institutional partners and networks to attract exemplary administrators, teachers and support staff. We plan to establish a pipeline of high quality, diverse, right-fit talent from the following sources:

- Local Talent: Lipscomb University, Tennessee State University, Relay Graduate School, Nashville Teacher Residency, The New Teacher Project, and Teach for America.

- Regional/ National talent: Relay Graduate School, Teach for America, Middle Tennessee State University, and Southern Adventist University.

Our nature-based model has already attracted inquiries from 16 educators. We are confident that our unique mission and school model will continue to draw talent locally and regionally, and meetings with partner organizations listed above have confirmed this view. Locally, TNA leadership has already met with and gained the support of the higher education departments at Tennessee State University (including the agricultural program), Middle Tennessee State University, Lipscomb University, Southern Adventist University, and Teach for America. The TNA leadership team is in the process of establishing strong relationships with other Nashville and Middle Tennessee higher education institutions before beginning earnest recruitment efforts in fall of 2023. These wide networks coupled with the school's slow growth model (only eight classroom teachers needed for Year 1) will ensure that TNA is able to secure a continuous diverse pool of candidates for administrative, teaching and support positions at TNA at launch and at scale.

In addition to the robust networks detailed above, TNA's long-term recruitment plans will include cultivation of a strong staff culture so that retention of teachers and staff throughout their career reduces the recruitment needs of the school each year. Similarly, through strong staff culture and the unique, innovative opportunities for educators within the TNA model, the existing staff will help to recruit future staff through their diverse personal and professional networks. TNA has multiple avenues for engaging in professional educator circles in ways that recruits educators and furthers our vision to bring nature-based learning to more students. We intend to expand our impact by sharing culturally- responsive, nature-based materials and resources throughout our region and state. We will do so by curating an open source curriculum that is aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards and integrates the best practices of culturally-responsive, nature-based instruction. While our curriculum will be tailored to serve the needs of Tennessee's 935,000 students, there is a degree of transferability to national standards in some content areas. Our Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer have experience in successful curriculum design and will guide the design, evaluation, and sharing of resources

### Hiring Timeline

To ensure that we are prepared to open our doors with a high-quality, mission-aligned teaching team, the TNA founding team has developed a timeline for recruiting and hiring the initial faculty.

*Figure 2.4e - Opening TNA Hiring Timeline*

Date	Recruitment Targets
Upon Authorization of Charter (Date TBD)	Recruitment efforts begin (ongoing until all positions filled).
August 2022 - November 2022	Interviews, hiring, and background check for founding Director of Operations. Begin accepting applications for all 5th and 6th grade teaching positions.
December 2022	Begin interviews for 5th and 6th grade classroom teachers and available staff positions.
January 2023	Reference screenings and background checks take place. Begin extending offers to 5th and 6th grade teachers. Interviews continue for remaining vacancies.

April 2023	Reference screenings and background checks take place for front office staff and part-time nurse.
June 2023	All staff hired.
July 2023	All staff convenes for summer professional development
August 2023	School opens with 5th and 6th grades.

After launch, we will generally follow the timeline detailed in the table below for filling teaching, administrative, and support positions for the following school year:

*Figure 2.4f - Ongoing TNA Hiring Timeline*

Date	Recruitment Targets
Ongoing	Accept applications for all positions and conduct initial phone screenings to determine mission-alignment.
September - December	Interview for expansion positions or known open positions for next school year.
January	Retention conversations with current staff to determine openings for next school year. Administrative openings announced.
February	Interviews, reference screenings, and background checks for administrative positions take place. Offers go out to administrative candidates. Interviews for classroom teachers and all other staff positions begin.
February - April	Reference and background checks for new classroom teachers and other staff positions; offers made.
May - July	Ongoing application review and interviews until all positions are filled.
July - August	All staff attend summer professional development (3 weeks) and prepare to launch the new school year.

The hiring team will maintain an active pool of qualified, right-fit applicants so that when openings arise mid-year, we are prepared to fill them quickly and effectively.

### **Selection Criteria**

During the selection process, TNA seeks evidence related to key competencies associated with success within our unique model. These competencies are as follows:

- *Instructional Effectiveness*: Does the teacher create a productive classroom culture characterized by both high academic expectations and pastoral care for students?
- *Connection to the Mission and Vision*: Does the candidate have a strong rationale for why they want to work at TNA? Are they aligned with the anchors of our unique school model?
- *Initiative*: Does the candidate have a strong sense of personal responsibility and take initiative when approaching a challenge or opportunity?
- *Commitment to Professional Growth*: Does the candidate demonstrate a receptivity to feedback and an ability to incorporate it into their practice? Do they demonstrate curiosity and a commitment to

continued professional growth? All phases of the interview process will include key questions coded to probe teaching candidate competencies in each of these domains.

- *Qualifications/Licensure*: Is the candidate highly qualified and licensed to teach in the content area? If not, is the candidate on a pathway to obtain licensure prior to the start of school?

### **Hiring Process**

Recruitment and hiring of classroom teachers and personnel will follow a multi-step process similar to the process described previously for TNA school leadership positions:

- Application - Applicants submit a resume and a letter of intent. Applicants who meet minimum requirements will be invited to respond to open-ended response questions to evaluate alignment with the school's core values and perceived instructional strengths.
- Phone Interview - After reviewing an application, selected candidates will be invited to participate in a 20-minute phone screen with a member of the leadership team. Phone interviews will follow an interview protocol to ensure consistency.
- In-Person Interview and Demonstration Lesson - Following a successful phone screen, candidates will be invited to a second round interview with the selection team, as well as the review and analysis of a demonstration lesson. For pre-opening candidates, TNA leaders may visit the candidate at their current school, or the demonstration lesson may be submitted as an unedited video. Once TNA is open, candidates will be invited to conduct demonstration lessons on site.
- Reference Checks - The selection team conducts complete and thorough reference checks, credentials confirmation and additional due diligence.
- Offer - Candidates receive an offer of employment, contingent upon the completion of any background checks required by applicable law.

(d) How will your recruiting and hiring practices ensure that the composition of the leadership team and staff reflects the diversity of the student body and surrounding community?

As a diverse-by-design school, it is important to us to have an instructional, non instructional, and leadership team that reflects the beautiful diversity in the 37013 zip code.

### **Leadership**

In building the Founding Board of Directors for TNA we have considered diversity and commitment to our proposed community and unique school vision. The TNA's Executive Director has participated in a multi-year Unified School Launch Fellowship with the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition, regularly engaging in leadership development in support of the aim of establishing TNA as a diverse community of educational leaders. This will lead the hiring team (the co-founders) in examination of the ways that bias can show up in the hiring process in order to ensure that all applicants are able to engage with an equitable hiring experience. TNA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, handicap/disability, sexual orientation, ancestry, need for special education services, or sex, including gender identity, gender expression, and appearance.

### **Teachers and Staff**

We believe that it is important for students to see themselves in TNA's teachers and staff to affirm their own potential and leadership capacity. Partnership with an organization such as Teach for America and Southern Adventist University's Outdoor Education department will support us in providing access to teaching credentials and/or a high-quality Masters degree program to bridge the opportunity gap for many potential teachers of color and ensure a diverse, mission-aligned pipeline of excellent teachers and staff at TNA.

(e) How will you ensure that teachers are licensed and endorsed in their content areas?

TNA will ensure that all teachers are appropriately licensed “highly qualified” staff in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). TNA will share this requirement in job postings and will screen for this requirement during the interview process. TNA will actively recruit currently licensed teachers who are yearning for an alternative teaching environment or who have left the profession due to burn-out in traditional school settings.

Given the numbers of EL students in our proposed location, TNA’s recruitment and hiring procedures will give preference to candidates who hold ESL certification to meet the needs of our anticipated linguistically diverse population. Teachers and language specialists who possess ESL certification will be strategically assigned to deliver daily content-based English language direct services to EL students through our co-teaching model. To further illustrate what this will look like, each homeroom class in the middle school contains 27 students. With a projected EL enrollment of 45% (36 students per grade), TNA will need one or two classroom teachers and/or learning specialists assigned to each grade to maintain the 1:35 staff-to-student ratio. In addition to maintaining co-planning and co-teaching structures, ESL certified teachers and specialists will deliver daily direct services to all EL students in that grade level by meeting with groups of students during independent reading/ personalized learning blocks and during workshops blocks as needed.

(f) Indicate the state-approved evaluation model used for teachers, required by StateBoard Rule 0520-02-01 and Policy 5.201. Describe the policies and procedures for evaluating staff, providing feedback, and celebrating excellence.

TNA will use Tennessee’s TEAM evaluation process to support, develop, and evaluate staff including general educators, school services personnel, and administrators.<sup>184</sup> TNA’s leadership teams will be trained in the TEAM evaluation process. Members of the leadership team will engage staff in TNA’s instructional coaching cycle (Plan - Monitor - Reflect) and provide feedback aligned to TEAM rubric indicators. Classroom observations take place weekly: during these observations, coaches employ live-coaching strategies to share in-the-moment feedback and capture data using an observation form to evaluate staff performance related to their professional development goals. Instructional coaching meetings take place either weekly or bi-weekly based on staff performance and needs. During instructional coaching meetings, coaches and staff discuss observation feedback, set and revise professional development goals, review student data, plan for upcoming classes, and discuss overall progress related to TEAM evaluation rubrics. Teachers who demonstrate exceptional performance are recognized during faculty meetings and are shown individual appreciation by the leadership team, TNA staff, and TNA students.

Our Chief Academic Officer, Principals and Assistant Principals, and Directors of Learning and Language serve as instructional coaches. Coaches host long-term goal check-ins with teachers twice per year (in November and March) and conduct formal performance reviews in January. During formal performance reviews, teachers identify their professional strengths and areas for growth according to the performance rubric for their functional area (e.g. General Educator, School Services Personnel, etc.) and the TEAM Professionalism Rubric. Coaches reflect on teachers’ strengths and areas for growth as well, and coaches and staff develop and revise annual, individualized professional development plans related to teachers’ goals during formal performance reviews. Further information about staff coaching and professional development is available in Section 2.5.

<sup>184</sup> Tennessee Department of Education. (2022). *TEAM Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model*. <https://team-tn.org/teacher-evaluation/>

(g) Describe how the proposed school intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, including termination, as well as leadership/teacher changes.

Being categorized as a non-profit in Tennessee comes with employer responsibility and liability regarding dismissal of employees. Unsatisfactory performance is handled on a case-by-case basis. Speaking in general terms, staff members will be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) if:

- The staff member demonstrates consistently low performance in classroom observations and minimal progress towards meeting professional goals for improvement *or*
- The staff member scored a “2” or below in the TEAM evaluation process or on state assessment scores during the prior academic year.

PIPs are intentional, focused collaborative plans which target critical, time-sensitive areas of growth. Interventions including individualized professional development, increased use of the instructional coaching cycle, and additional research and reading are included in each PIP. The staff member’s progress toward goals is closely monitored and discussed in frequent meetings with their instructional coach and other leadership team members. Failure to appropriately participate or failure to meet the necessary goals of the PIP may result in the staff member’s dismissal or nonrenewal of contract. Additionally, TNA posts positions for any content areas in which the leading staff member earned a Level Of Effectiveness (LOE) of “2” or below the previous year. This condition is included in staff contracts and is designed to provide a pipeline of high-quality candidates should the staff member fail to meet the conditions of the personalized improvement plan.

The basic steps in the dismissal process include the following, notwithstanding the at-will nature of employment at TNA and the authority of the school to terminate employment for any reason, particularly if staff exhibits serious behavior detrimental to the school. TNA will follow all state laws that require reporting a teacher whose actions qualify for suspension or revocation of teaching license. Please find additional information about the school’s personnel policies in Attachment I.

1. The employee will be provided immediate verbal feedback when exhibiting unsatisfactory performance of any kind.
2. The employee will be provided a written explanation of the unsatisfactory performance and suggested steps for corrective action.
3. The employee’s supervisor will develop a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP will detail the status of performance, define the target performance, and outline a proposal for achieving the target. It will also describe targeted instructional and/or culture goals, associated metrics, and a timeline for achieving these goals.
4. The supervisor will monitor the employee’s progress toward meeting the goals and objectives contained in the PIP.
5. Employment is terminated if the conditions of the PIP are not met following ample opportunity for improvement.

(h) Outline the proposed salary ranges and employment benefits, as well as any incentive or reward structures that may be a part of the compensation system. Explain the school’s proposed strategy for retaining high-performing teachers.

### **Salary Ranges**

Tennessee Nature Academy uses the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools’ certified teacher pay scale to stay competitive within our local district. Because administrative titles and roles/responsibilities are different at a charter school, administrative pay will remain competitive but based on individual role and experience.



Chief Academic Officer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Community Engagement	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Operations	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Content Area Teachers (i.e. Math, ELA, Science, etc.)		6	10	12	15	19	23	26
Electives Teachers (e.g. Arts, Phys Ed, World Language, Agriscience, etc.)		2	3	4	9	12	14	15
Specialist Teachers (Learning Specialist, Language Specialist)		4	6	8	10	12	14	16
Front Office Staff		1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Nurse		.5*	1	1	1.5	2	2	2
Principal			0.5	2	2	2	2	2
Director(s) of Learning and Language Support			1	2	2	3	4	4
Counselor / Social Worker			1	1	2	2	2	2
Director of Human Resources				1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Principal					1	1	2	2
Outdoor Experiences Coordinator						1	1	1
Chief Financial Officer							1	1
Director of College Access							1	1
<b>Total FTEs</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>50.5</b>	<b>62.0</b>	<b>74.0</b>	<b>80.0</b>

\* An FTE of 0.5 denotes (1) a part-time employee or (2) an employee hired mid-year.

## SECTION 2.5 - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

(a) Describe the expected number of days and hours for professional development throughout the school year and explain how the proposed school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure support this plan. Include time scheduled for collaborative planning and how such time will typically be used.

(b) Identify the person or position responsible for professional development.

(c) Describe the core components of your professional development plan and how those components will support effective implementation of the academic plan. Be sure to address the areas of special education and English learners, including implementation of IEPs, discipline of students with disabilities, and communication with EL families.

Studies suggest that teacher quality has the greatest impact on student achievement.<sup>185</sup> Therefore, TNA designs and uses professional development to support effective professional learning among teachers and staff. In alignment with recommendations from experts in this field, TNA's professional development sessions develop teachers' capacity and beliefs, focus on improving students' results, and promote a positive, relationship-based learning environment.<sup>186</sup> We believe that an ongoing attention to professional development that occurs regularly, follows research-based best practices, and aligns to TNA's mission and vision is important in helping us to address and eliminate academic achievement gaps between student subgroups. This section further describes when and how professional learning takes place at TNA.

Professional development (PD) focuses on strengthening TNA's culture and community and improving effectiveness in learning and teaching. PD is developed and led by members of the network team (i.e. the Executive Director, Chief Academic Officer, etc.), by members of the school-based leadership team (i.e. the Principal, Director of Learning Support, Director of Language Support, etc.), and by community or external partners as appropriate. TNA's schedule allows for 166 hours of professional development over the course of the school year (excluding instructional coaching) and ensures that staff are supported with comprehensive, current strategies and practices that support student success.

PD begins with summer staff training and continues during periodic staff development days, weekly PD sessions, and individualized instructional coaching. PD opportunities at TNA include:

**Summer Staff Training** - Summer staff training takes place in July and August prior to the start of the school year. Summer staff training provides time to onboard new staff members and allows for 66 hours of professional development and planning before the school year begins. Summer staff training aligns to TNA's mission and vision and focuses on culture, academics, systems, and community-building.

- *Culture Sessions* - PD in culture focuses on building and maintaining positive school-wide culture, enacting TNA's mission, vision, and core values, and on supporting students using TNA's Resilience and Wellbeing practices.
- *Academic Sessions* - Staff engage in big-picture planning and prepare to lead units of instruction, daily lessons, and performance tasks that align to the Tennessee Academic Standards and the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards incorporate elements of nature-based and project-based learning. Academic sessions review best practices for supporting students with disabilities, English language learners, and intellectually gifted students and address strategies for effective co-teaching, co-planning, and differentiation based on TNA students' needs. In addition to whole-staff academic professional development, TNA offers PD development based on teachers' years of experience, content area (e.g. content-specific sessions for math teachers, learning specialists, etc.) and prior

<sup>185</sup> Haycock, K. (1998). Good teaching matters... a lot. How well-qualified teachers can close the gap. *Thinking K-16*, 3(2), 3-14. Cited in Hirsh, S. (2005). Professional development and closing the achievement gap. *Theory into Practice*, 44(1), 38-44.

<sup>186</sup> Hirsh, S. (2005). Professional development and closing the achievement gap. *Theory into Practice*, 44(1), 38-44.

experience in nature-based and project-based school settings. During this time, teachers are introduced to our curriculum and begin planning for the year.

- *Systems Sessions* - During summer staff training, TNA staff internalize systems for student safety and success. These sessions include reviewing RTI<sup>2</sup> systems, monitoring and evaluating students' academic and behavioral progress as required in IEPs and ILPs, and practicing safe arrival, dismissal, and emergency procedures,
- *Community Building* - Summer staff training provides an opportunity for TNA staff to develop positive staff relationships. TNA staff will also prepare to lead advisory lessons and initiate and sustain communication with TNA's families.

Staff Development Days - TNA reserves seven staff development days each year; these days are also used as stockpiled days in the event of inclement weather. Staff development days allow protected time for staff to engage in recurring development activities that build on the work of summer staff training and allow for staff to analyze and respond to student data. Staff development days are typically structured to allow for professional development to take place in the morning and for teacher and team planning to take place in the afternoon. These days make it possible to provide 52 additional hours of staff training throughout the year.

Weekly Professional Development - TNA follows a shortened Wednesday schedule in which students in Grades 5-8 dismiss from school at 2:35pm and students in Grades 9-12 dismiss from school at 2:30pm. Shortened schedules allow for 1 hour and 15 minutes of PD to take place each week, which amounts to 48 hours of professional development throughout the year. Weekly professional development follows a month-by-month scope and sequence, which is informed by TNA's annual goals and anticipated needs throughout the year. (For example, PD sessions in August may focus on preparing teachers to lead workshops and independent reading blocks, while sessions in January might focus on responding to data from midyear exams and performance tasks.) The network team (or middle school-based leadership team, in Years 1 and 2) creates the scope and sequence and builds the outlines for individual sessions. Session materials are built by the individual or team leading the sessions. Topics from the scope and sequence are adjusted based on current data and needs.

Weekly professional development may include a combination of whole-staff PD, differentiated-staff PD, grade-level team meetings, and content-area team meetings. Weekly professional development sessions are broken up into the following designations:

- *Whole Staff Professional Development* - Whole staff development allows time for regular staff learning and collaboration dedicated to improving academic, cultural, and community outcomes. Whole staff professional development is led by the network or school-based leadership teams.
- *Differentiated Staff Professional Development* - Differentiated staff development meets the needs of staff in different functional areas or with different levels of experience. Differentiated staff development offers multiple, simultaneous sessions that provide individualized support for early-career teachers, new-to-TNA teachers, Advanced Placement teachers, etc. Differentiated staff development is led by the network team, school-based leadership teams, content-area team leads, or grade-level team leads.
- *Grade-Level Team (GLT) Meetings* - Grade-Level Team meetings are led and attended by teachers, staff members, and administrators who support students in the same grade (e.g. 6th grade, 10th grade, etc.). GLT meetings provide space for teachers and staff to review student data, prepare advisory lessons, collaborate to support students of concern, and plan for upcoming events like expeditions, benchmark testing, family conferences, etc.
- *Content-Area Team (CAT) Meetings* - Content-Area Team meetings are led and attended by teachers, staff members, and administrators who support students in the same content across multiple grade levels (e.g. middle school science, middle school electives, high school social studies, etc.). In CAT

meetings, teachers analyze and improve curriculum, assessment, and instruction in the content area by planning for vertical alignment, auditing student work, practicing discipline-specific differentiation strategies, and planning interdisciplinary projects.

Figure 2.5a provides a sample monthly professional development calendar.

*Figure 2.5a - Wednesday PD Monthly Sample Schedule - Middle School*

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
2:45 - 3:30pm	Whole Staff PD	Differentiated Staff PD	Whole Staff PD	Differentiated Staff PD
3:30 - 4:00pm	Grade-Level Team Meeting	Grade-Level Team Meeting	Grade-Level Team Meeting	Content-Area Team Meeting

**Instructional Coaching** - TNA follows an instructional coaching model which makes it possible for all staff to benefit from regular, individualized professional development. Instructional coaching meetings last between 30-40 minutes, take place weekly or bi-weekly (as appropriate), and occur during part of a teacher's planning period. The instructional coaching cycle follows a Plan - Monitor - Reflect structure and focuses on advancing teachers' proficiency according to TEAM rubric indicators. The instructional coach uses flexible strategies to support the teacher to advance student learning and meet their individual professional development goals. In addition to facilitating the instructional coaching cycle, instructional coaches may also support professional learning and student outcomes by co-planning, co-teaching, or using other collaborative strategies alongside teachers in the classroom.

The instructional coaching cycle is facilitated by the teacher's direct supervisor; in most cases, the Principal or Assistant Principal serves as the primary instructional coach, though in some circumstances a member of the network team (e.g. the Chief Academic Officer or the Outdoor Experiences Coordinator) or another member of the school-based leadership team (e.g. the Director of Learning Support or the Director of Language Support) may be the most appropriate instructional coach for a teacher depending on their particular professional development needs. The Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer will support new instructional coaches to master specific coaching techniques that support nature-based, project-based pedagogies using institutional best practices learned beginning in Year 0.

To expedite professional learning and growth, instructional coaching approaches are differentiated based on the needs and experiences of each teacher. Per Figure 2.5b, instructional coaching may be:

*Figure 2.5b - Instructional Coaching Strategies*

Strategy <sup>187</sup>	Description
Directive	The coach focuses on helping the teacher master particular instructional and management skills. In a directive partnership, the instructional coach provides the knowledge and creates circumstances that help the teacher to master these knowledge and skills.
Dialogical	The coach collaborates with the teacher and provides research-based strategies and resources to support the teacher in meeting a set goal.

<sup>187</sup> Knight, J. (2018). *The impact cycle: What instructional coaches should do to foster powerful improvements in teaching*. Corwin.

Facilitative	In a facilitative partnership, the coach asks questions and provides resources to help the teacher surface and integrate existing information into their practice.
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Directive, dialogical, and facilitative strategies will be used interchangeably as appropriate as teachers grow and develop. For example: a first-year teacher might benefit from the “See It, Name It, Do It” framework outlined by Bambrick-Santoyo in *Leverage Leadership*.<sup>188</sup> Meanwhile, experienced teachers might benefit from co-creating professional learning goals as described by Knight in *Instructional Coaching: A Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction*<sup>189</sup> or from cognitive coaching conversations described by Costa and Garmston in *Cognitive Coaching: Developing Self-Directed Leaders and Learners*.<sup>190</sup> Personalizing instructional coaching to fit the needs and professional development goals of staff ensures that all staff members are able to effectively implement TNA’s academic plan and support students in meeting their goals.

(d) Provide a schedule and overview of professional development that will take place prior to the school’s opening.

In Year 0 (SY 2022-2023), TNA’s founding leadership team will pursue PD opportunities aligned to project-based learning, nature-based learning, and restorative justice in order to employ best practices when creating materials to support content-area and advisory curricula.

Prior to TNA’s opening, founding 5th and 6th grade staff will participate in summer staff training to ensure that staff are prepared to build a positive school-wide community, use key school systems, and work in alignment with TNA’s academic plan and culture system. Founding staff will complete pre-work before arriving at TNA, which includes:

- Internalizing and analyzing the scope and sequence, first unit plan, and first performance assessments for their assigned course.
- Reading a shared staff text related to nature-based or project-based learning.
- Reading a shared staff text related to diverse learners and culturally-responsive teaching.
- Answering the Positive Psychology Center’s Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ).
- Planning a team-building activity for one day of summer staff orientation.

Figure 2.5c provides a sample summer schedule for founding staff. Sessions align to key PD categories (academics, culture, systems, and community) and dedicate significant time to TNA’s academic model, differentiation for diverse learners, and launching strong systems to support TNA’s culture and community. Sessions allow teachers to collaborate, practice, and receive feedback.

*Figure 2.5c - Summer Staff Session Schedule - Founding Middle School Team*

<sup>188</sup> Bambrick-Santoyo, P. (2012). *Leverage leadership: A practical guide to building exceptional schools*. Jossey-Bass.

<sup>189</sup> Knight, J. (2007). *Instructional coaching: A partnership approach to improving instruction*. Corwin.

<sup>190</sup> Costa, A.L. & Garmston, R.J. (2016). *Cognitive coaching: Developing self-directed leaders and learners*. Rowman & Littlefield.

	Academic Session	Culture Session	Systems Session	Community Session	
	Mon, July 17	Tues, July 18	Wed, July 19	Thurs, July 20	Fri, July 21
Session 1 9:00am - 11:00am	TNA's Mission and Vision	PBL: Principles	PBL: Planning with <i>Understanding by Design</i>	PBL: Unit Assessments & Performance Tasks	Nature-Based Adventures (at the park)
Session 2 12:00pm - 1:30pm	Intro to Nature-Based learning	PBL: Sample Lesson	Resilience and Wellbeing	Supporting Students with IEPs and ILPs	Introduction to GLT (GLT)
Session 3 2:00pm - 3:30pm	New Staff Onboarding	Intro to Positive Psychology	Anti-Racist Curriculum	PBL: Unit Assessments & Performance Tasks	Identifying our Biases
	Mon, July 24	Tues, July 25	Wed, July 26	Thurs, July 27	Fri, July 28
Session 1 9:00am - 11:00am	PBL: Creating Classroom Tasks	PBL: Differentiating Classroom Tasks	PBL: Collecting Data in Classroom Tasks	Workshops	Intro to Independent Reading Block
Session 2 12:00pm - 1:30pm	Supporting Students with Co-Planning	Supporting Students with SIOP Model	Supporting Students with Co-Teaching	Lunch, Recess, & Independent Reading Systems	Preparing for Independent Reading Block
Session 3 2:00pm - 3:30pm	24 Character Strengths	Student Discipline Policy	Review of 504 and IEP caseloads	Preparing for Student Orientation (GLT)	Preparing for Student Orientation (GLT)
	Mon, July 31	Tues, August 1	Wed, August 2	Thurs, August 3	Fri, August 4
Session 1 9:00am - 11:00am	Preparing for Student Orientation (GLT)	Preparing for Student Orientation (GLT)	First Day of School: Student Orientation	Student Orientation + Modified A Day Schedule	Student Orientation + Modified B Day Schedule
Session 2 12:00pm - 1:30pm	Arrival and Dismissal Systems	Preparing for Student Orientation (GLT)			
Session 3 2:00pm - 3:30pm	Classroom Set Up	Classroom Set Up			

(e) Describe the training that will be provided to all staff on the topics of anti-racism, unconscious bias and/or culturally relevant pedagogies.

TNA’s educational program leverages culturally relevant pedagogies<sup>191</sup> and curriculum, addresses unconscious bias, and promotes anti-racist academic and disciplinary practices. PD on the topics of anti-racism, unconscious bias, and culturally relevant pedagogies will be led by the network and school-based leadership team members or by a qualified external provider. Our work in this area will build on the professional support that TNA has already established with the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition<sup>192</sup> and Roots ConnectEd.<sup>193</sup> Sample training topics include:

- Leading Equitable Classroom Discussions
- Supporting Academic Success with Feedback
- Affirming Students’ Funds of Knowledge
- Identifying and Responding to Unconscious Bias
- Addressing Unconscious Bias in Curricular Planning
- Building Inclusive Classroom Cultures
- Recognizing the 24 Strengths in Ourselves and Others

TNA will use regular equity audits to examine the impacts of the organization’s policies, programs, and practices on student outcomes. Student groups should experience equitable outcomes (which are not predictable by race, ethnicity, gender, etc.) related to academics, discipline, attendance, and well-being; discrepancies in these areas suggest the presence of achievement gaps that must be addressed to ensure equitable outcomes among learners. TNA will consider the data below to identify and address disparities between student groups:

Figure 2.5d - Equity Audit Data Sources

Academic Data	Well-Being Data
Aligned to Goals 1, 2, 3, and 11	Aligned to Goals 3, 4, and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Grade point averages</li> <li>● Course mastery</li> <li>● Course assessment performance</li> <li>● Benchmark assessment performance</li> <li>● TNReady assessment performance</li> <li>● Progress towards academic IEP / ILP goals</li> <li>● Math growth</li> <li>● Reading growth</li> <li>● ACCESS growth</li> <li>● ACT data</li> <li>● Ready Graduate status</li> <li>● Four year high school graduation rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Total referrals to counseling team</li> <li>● Changes in counseling team referrals over time</li> <li>● Participation in counseling process</li> <li>● Progress towards social-emotional or functional IEP goals</li> <li>● Student well-being as reported on student surveys</li> </ul>
Disciplinary Data	Attendance Data
Aligned to Goals 3 and 4	Aligned to Goals 3 and 4

<sup>191</sup> Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But that’s just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory into Practice*, 34(3), 159-165. [https://nationalequityproject.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/ladson-billings\\_1995.pdf](https://nationalequityproject.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/ladson-billings_1995.pdf)

<sup>192</sup> Diverse Charter Schools Coalition. (2022). <https://diversecharters.org>

<sup>193</sup> Roots ConnectEd. (2022). <https://www.rootsconnected.org>.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Total referrals to the community restoration process</li> <li>● Changes in community restoration referrals over time</li> <li>● Participation in restorative culture process</li> <li>● Progress towards behavioral IEP goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Daily attendance</li> <li>● On-time attendance</li> <li>● In-class attendance</li> </ul>
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Data from equity audits inform the content of whole-staff PD sessions, Grade-Level Team meetings, and Content-Area Team meetings. TNA will use a variety of tools to identify, analyze, and respond to trends in student data. Staff address trends through conducting curricular audits, developing activities for student advisory and workshop blocks, and revising school-wide systems which have been shown to lead to inequitable outcomes. TNA will seek participation from a variety of shared interest partners and will use PDSA cycles to measure the effectiveness of revised policies, procedures, and programs in order to eliminate inequities in systems.

(f) Describe the plan to cultivate future leadership capacity.

Differentiated instructional coaching allows for TNA to be responsive to staff’s interests and goals. Instructional coaches will facilitate long-term goal check-ins with teachers on their roster twice per year, in November and in March. These conversations give teachers an opportunity to indicate their interests in exploring school-level or network-level leadership opportunities. If teachers indicate a long-term leadership interest, instructional coaches will work with teachers to build their capacity for future leadership. Opportunities for teacher leadership are stipended and include:

- *Grade-Level Team and Content-Area Team Leadership* - GLT and CAT leads plan for and facilitate grade-level and content-area meetings and initiatives.
- *Distributed Leadership through Leadership Projects* - Teachers who participate in leadership projects do so during a semester of workshop block, in lieu of leading a study hall or engaging in an additional planning period. Leadership projects vary depending on staff interests and the community’s needs, and could include experiences like managing internal benchmark testing, building advisory curriculum, coordinating community partnerships, etc.

When hiring for available leadership positions, TNA will first consider strong internal candidates who have a demonstrated history of success in supporting student outcomes and leading within our community. Whenever possible, TNA will schedule start dates for incoming leadership staff to allow for transitioning leaders to onboard these leaders into their new roles. Some leadership roles, including the Director of Learning Support and the Director of Language Support at the middle and high schools, are intended to be hybrid roles that include both teaching and leadership responsibilities. This allows for highly-effective learning and language specialists to develop leadership capacity while continuing to lead student interventions and support content-area teachers in the classroom.

(g) Explain plans for differentiating professional development for different groups of teachers, such as new versus experienced teachers.

PD is differentiated based on teachers’ years of professional experience, experience in their assigned content area, and prior experience in nature-based and project-based settings. This differentiation takes place beginning in academic sessions during summer staff training and continues throughout weekly professional development sessions throughout the year. (Please see the section on “Differentiated Staff Professional Development” above.) TNA’s instructional coaching model allows for frequent and differentiated teacher support to occur. (Please see the section on “Instructional Coaching” above.)

(h) Explain how the proposed school will provide orientation to teachers that are hired mid-year.

TNA will support mid-year hires through an extended onboarding process. Mid-year hires will participate in a two-day condensed orientation based on the topics covered during summer staff training (e.g. culture, academics, school systems, and community building). Following this orientation, mid-year hires will meet daily with their instructional coaching supervisor, who will accompany the new teacher to classroom observations, orient the new teacher to the curriculum, and help the new teacher prepare for future lessons. Mid-year hires will not be initially assigned to lead a workshop block or a guided reading group during the independent reading block, allowing them to gradually increase their teaching responsibilities over time. Mid-year hires have access to the same ongoing professional development opportunities as all TNA staff throughout the remainder of the year.

## SECTION 2.6 - INSURANCE

Charter schools must have appropriate insurance coverage. Applicants should check with their district to determine the necessary coverage amounts. As **Attachment J**, please provide the following:

(a) A list of the types and corresponding amounts of insurance coverage the proposed school will secure. Types of insurance should include, at a minimum, workers' compensation, employer liability, property, professional liability, surety bonds pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. §49-13-111(n), and sexual abuse.

(b) A letter of coverage from an insurance company stating they will provide the required coverage upon approval of the charter application. The letter should include provisions for assuring that the insurance provider will notify TDOE within ten (10) days of the cancellation of any insurance it carries on the charter school, pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. §49-13-107 (b) (19).

Note: if the proposed school intends to have school athletics, additional liability coverage will be required.

TNA will purchase the types and levels of insurance coverage appropriate to the school.

Documentation of this coverage, including a letter of required coverage from TNA's proposed insurance company, is included in Attachment J.

## SECTION 2.7 - TRANSPORTATION

- (a) How will you transport the students to and from your proposed school daily, if applicable?
- (b) How will you transport students to any extracurricular or after school activities, Saturday school, and/or field trips (where applicable)? Include budgetary assumptions and the impact of transportation on the overall budget.
- (c) If applicable, outline your proposed transportation plan as follows:
- Describe the plan for oversight of transportation operations (e.g., whether the proposed school will provide its own transportation, contract out for transportation, request that a district provide transportation, or a combination thereof) and who on the school staff will provide this daily oversight.
  - Describe how the school will transport students with special transportation needs and how that will impact your budget.
  - Describe how the school will ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations related to transportation services.
  - Explain how you will ensure compliance with Tenn. Code Ann. §49-6-2116.

TNA will follow state law and MNPS policy and bus transportation will be available to families who live more than 1.25 miles from school. TNA will provide a transportation service for our students by contracting with a private transportation service. TNA will also support the development of carpool networks and facilitate other volunteer support efforts led by parents. For families who live within the “non-transport” area as determined by state law, transportation to and from school is the responsibility of their parents. Exceptions may be made for areas where unsafe walking conditions exist. Our leading location option is in a neighborhood with an approved Urban Design Overlay that will allow for over 2,000 units; we anticipate a high number of walkers as the school and development builds out.

We anticipate providing transportation services to approximately 60% of our students each year (96 students in Year 1, 144 in Year 2, etc). Parking will be available for HS drivers. At approximately 50 students per bus, 2 buses will be required in Year 1, increasing to 6 buses in Year 5. Key transportation cost assumptions are drawn from reported expenses of other charter schools in the proposed community (who use Grayline as their provider), which include bus driver salaries, fuel, and ongoing expenses, are estimated at a cost of \$375 per bus each day, a yearly cost of approximately \$65,000-\$70,000 per bus. The TNA transportation provider will have the capability to provide services to students with disabilities as required by applicable law and have assumed the cost of these services within the overall assumptions presented above. If we find that more students will need transportation services than our preliminary estimates we will work to ensure that all students that need transportation to school are serviced.

Transportation will be provided daily to school, for all school community field lessons, and for as many after school activities as possible. Depending on the size of the student group, we may also choose to pivot to rented vehicles on some occasions. We will establish a corporate account with rental car companies (such as Enterprise) that rent eight passenger vans. We have a line item in our budget annually for field trip costs. We will have staff drivers who are insured through our liability insurance package and have met all requirements laid out in the policy regarding staff drivers, which includes but is not limited to no traffic violations with students in vehicles, no speeding, at fault accidents, or reckless driving violations showing on an MVR for the past seven years, and no DUI’s for the past 10 years. We will also have a policy in place so that if a staff driver’s qualification status changes, he must notify school administration upon first opportunity, but not more than 48 hours after the incident.

TNA understands that it must abide by state and federal regulations regarding its transportation service, particularly including the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. As a result, we will work with our transportation contractor, both during the initial negotiations and contract development and after implementation, and use additional resources (such as public transportation options) to ensure that any student that meets the qualification for being homeless or temporarily displaced will be able to remain in the school even if temporarily living outside of the general boundaries that transportation services are

provided. In this way, TNA endeavors to minimize the impact of homelessness, as it is defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as a barrier to a sustained high-quality education.

Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-2116, the contract and relationship with the contracted service provider will be managed by the Director of Operations, who will be responsible for the monitoring and oversight of transportation services for the school (including investigating and following up with complaints). The TNA founding school-based leadership team will include the Executive Director, Chief Academic Officer, Director of Community Engagement and Director of Operations and will possess multiple combined decades of experience developing and directing safe and efficient arrival and dismissal procedures incorporating these multiple modes of transportation. In support of all transportation options the Director of Operations will work with our city council representative and relevant neighborhood associations to map and provide signage as needed to promote the safe transportation of all students and to establish TNA as a respectful partner for our neighboring community.

TNA will work diligently to ensure that buses, drivers/monitors, and routes all meet state and federal laws and regulations. The Director of Operations and all bus drivers and monitors will receive the appropriate training. Records will be maintained for bus maintenance and inspections, driver credentials and training records, and complaints. Families will be able to submit complaints via phone, letter, or email to the TNA Director of Operations. There will be a formal response to the complaint within 48 hours. Families will be made aware through a written letter of the bus transportation complaint process each summer. All TNA buses will have the transportation department office number on each bus in a visible area.

(d) If you are not providing transportation, describe how students will get to and from your school.

N/A. TNA will provide transportation to students.

## SECTION 2.8 - FOOD SERVICE

(a) A clear description of how the proposed school will offer food service to the students, including how it will comply with applicable district, state, and federal guidelines and regulations. Include any plans to meet the needs of low-income students.

(b) How the proposed school intends to collect free and reduced-price lunch information from qualified families (including those schools that will participate in the Community Eligibility Provision).

We participate in the Federal Free and Reduced (F&R) lunch program. We strive to meet the breakfast and lunchtime nutritional needs of all students, not just students from households recognized as low income. Our charge policy will be clearly communicated so that students not on F&R lunch know they can ask for food discreetly if they do not have money.

Our food service personnel will participate in annual trainings offered by the state regarding meal components and food safety. Our cafeteria will undergo unannounced health inspections like every other school cafeteria. In addition, the Director of Operations will be responsible for working with other TNA school leaders to ensure that all parents and guardians complete the federal Free-and-Reduced Price Lunch Program to determine eligibility. The F&R lunch application is a required part of our enrollment forms. We ask all families to fill out the information so that no families feel apprehensive about filling out the application. The school will employ various strategies to ensure completion of appropriate forms by including them in initial student documentation, orientation, and other school events and through individual communication with parents. Our Director of Community Engagement follows up with a call home to encourage the family to apply for F&R lunch if financial circumstances have changed since the start of the school year. Our Director of Operations will be trained about how to appropriately handle the F&R application and reimbursement process, and will attend state trainings annually. We will perform internal annual audits and undergo all required state audits, as we are committed to transparency of operations.

(c) Describe how the food service vendor will be selected or, in the alternative, how the proposed school will provide meals in-house.

Since the contract amount for vended meals is over \$10,000, this process is defined by TCA § 12-3-1212. All contracts for goods in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) shall be bid and must be approved by the governing body of each public charter school (Tenn. Code “Compliance”, 49-13-111, e). Beyond following TCA§, we will interview food service vendors in a process that includes student and family participation, asking for sample meals for our focus groups. We will value vendors that use locally and ethically sourced ingredients.

TNA’s food vendor will provide a food service program in compliance with the nutrition regulations outlined in T.C.A. §§ 49-6-2301--2307. The school will offer all students the opportunity to participate in the school breakfast and lunch program. The school will provide its food service program on a contracted basis with the Director of Operations managing the appropriate vendor. TNA will seek bids from local food service providers, all of which will include a price per meal, including the following: a reimbursable meal including milk, condiments applicable to the menu, serving utensils if applicable, packaging and containers needed to transport food in a sanitary manner, and transportation to and from the school. Any vendor must submit milk in a variety of fat contents as defined by current regulations of the National School Lunch Program.

Sample contract provisions and expectations include:

- Maintaining Tennessee Health Department Bi-Annual Inspection with a Passing Score
- Having a HACCP program in place and be able to provide proof of such

- Maintaining Daily Individual Meal Food Production Records
- Maintaining Daily Individual Meal Component Documentation
- Maintaining a “Buy American” Provision
- Maintaining 21-day Monthly Cycle Menus
- Making accommodations for food allergies
- Insuring hot meals maintained at 140°F or above and cold meals at 40°F or below prior to and during transport and delivery
- Providing meals that are individually packaged and sealed.
- All meals will be priced as a unit, which meet USDA requirements
- Any provider shall implement the “Traditional Menu Planning Approach”
- All meals and menus will be appropriate to the age of TNA students
- The provider substitutes food components for a student with disabilities (7 C.F.R. Section 15b) if their disability restricts their diet.

## SECTION 2.9 - ADDITIONAL OPERATIONS

Describe the school's plan for supporting operational needs of the following:

(a) Technology: List the technology that will be required to meet the academic and operational needs of the school. Include any technology needed for classrooms, computer and science labs, library/media center, auditorium, main office, copy rooms, teacher work rooms, and other relevant spaces. Describe how the school will ensure student access to technology required for state mandated assessments, include infrastructure requirements and costs in the budget section.

TNA will establish and maintain a wireless internet network infrastructure. Grades 5-6 will be intentionally low-tech and teachers can check out classroom sets of Chromebooks on an as-needed basis. An additional class set will be added to accommodate our 7th grade Keyboarding class, and we will add 1:1 to meet state testing requirements. We have formulated the budget of the proposed school to coincide with our growth model so that by the time we have grade levels that require online state testing, our shared computer sets will exceed the requirement for state assessments. Our budget allows for each classroom to be outfitted with a projector and a document camera for enhanced instruction. The TNA office and/or work rooms will be the hub for printing and copying on campus. Teachers will be furnished with a TNA laptop or may use their own device.

(b) Student information management: Describe how the school will ensure compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and state regulations regarding student privacy and disclosure of student data and records

TNA will ensure compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act through the following mechanisms:

- Annually notify all students and families of their rights related to student records under FERPA. These rights include the right to review education records, the right to request amendments to education records, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information included in education records.
- Obtain signed, written consent from a parent or student over the age of 18 before any school official releases or shares personally identifiable information to third-party entities.
- Notify all faculty annually on the requirements and prohibitions of FERPA; train new staff and office staff annually on student record sharing regulations under FERPA. Annual professional development includes FERPA training. All staff members sign a non-disclosure statement.
- Annually review all third-party data sharing agreements to ensure all agreements comply with FERPA regulations.

The duties of the registrar are assigned to the front desk receptionist and Director of Operations.

(c) School health and nursing services: Describe your plan for compliance with the Coordinated School Health Program, including any plans to hire a School Nurse and a description of his/her role in the school. Include who at the school will supervise the School Nurse and his/her role in ensuring compliance with health regulations.

Sustaining the health and happiness of our staff and students is a core value. TNA will operate in compliance with the Coordinated School Health Program. Direct student health will be managed by a registered nurse who will develop Individualized Health Plans, manage immunization compliance, capture and communicate essential medical information as needed, train and support staff on first aid and caring for specific student needs, and execute certain medical procedures that a student may require. The School Nurse will be managed within the school by the Director of Operations.

TNA will build out a program that ensures healthy physical environments in the school, encourages physical activity and healthy eating habits, provides health education, provides access to counseling services, and provides access to student health services. Our outdoor-oriented campus encourages frequent movement, which is known to support increased mental and physical wellbeing.<sup>194</sup>

In the spirit of our mission “to cultivate happy and healthy young adults,” TNA provides guidance for all students to create and work towards individual fitness goals. The Center for Disease Control has provided a structured fitness challenge that includes four categories: cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and muscular endurance.<sup>195</sup> Students participate in a fitness challenge at the beginning of the year, mid-year, and the end of the year. Students set goals after their first challenge and reflect on their journey as the year progresses. These results are private and not graded.

TNA’s innovative schedule allows room for extra physical activity for students. Students receive a fifteen minute break between consecutive academic blocks. These blocks are used for active nature play or socialization, which supports building fitness. Additionally, students participate in recess, a student-selected workshop block, and Physical Education core classes.

Our school day schedule is centered on creating routines that allow for students to participate in healthy activities. Each student will receive two fifteen minute breaks and 30 minutes a day of unstructured recess to encourage socialization, exercise, and de-stressing activities as recommended by the National Academy of Medicine (Institute of Medicine, 2013, pp. 6-7).<sup>196</sup> This is in addition to afternoon workshops that can also require physical activity.

Section 1.10 discusses how our school culture and advisory time fosters healthy relationships and positive mental health.

(d) Safety and security: Describe your plan for safety and security for students, staff, guests, and property. Identify the person or position responsible for school safety operations; What will be the process and timeline for creating a school crisis plan?

TNA will ensure the safety and security of students, staff, guests, and property by developing robust safety and security plans. In coordination with the Metro Nashville Public Schools security office, the TNA Director of Operations will develop procedures and evacuation routes for all possible emergency situations (i.e. evacuation, lockdown, severe weather, shelter-in-place, and reunification procedures) prior to opening. Staff and students will regularly practice the procedures to ensure readiness for an emergency situation, abiding by local municipalities’ requirements for drills. Professional development is consistently given to staff members regarding emergency preparedness and school procedures. The school will follow state and district guidelines for creation of the school crisis plan as part of the school’s pre-opening timeline. For day-to-day operations, TNA will ensure the safety of all members of the community by requiring visitors to enter at the front door using a buzzer system. Visitors will be required to sign in at the front office and wear identification at all times while in the building, and must sign out upon leaving the building. When signing in, their ID will be run against a registry for sex offenders. All other external doors will remain locked to outside visitors.

<sup>194</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018, August 27). *Comprehensive school physical activity programs (CSPAP): A guide for schools e-learning module*. Training Tools for Healthy Schools e-Learning Series. [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/professional\\_development/e-learning/cspap.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/professional_development/e-learning/cspap.html)

<sup>195</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2018). *Physical activity guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical\\_Activity\\_Guidelines\\_2nd\\_edition.pdf](https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf)

<sup>196</sup> Institute of Medicine. (2013). *Educating the student body: Taking physical activity and physical education to school*. The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/18314>.

You can see in our Startup Plan (Section 2.2) that safety plans are created before the school starts. Yearly PD opportunities provide for review of safety plans, and we require that all our staff have CPR and first aid training, carry CPR instructions on them, carry a radio on their person at all times, and carry a fanny pack first aid kit when heading out on the trail. Our defibrillator will be located in an accessible location in the front office. Our leadership team will register for the National Outdoor Leadership School's Annual Wilderness Risk Management training, which will be instrumental in updating our outdoor risk management protocols.

(e) School maintenance: Discuss the plan for school maintenance, including maintenance staff or plans to contract for maintenance services.

TNA will hire a property management company to provide maintenance services or to hire and manage vendors to provide both preventive maintenance and reactive services, including but not limited to: plumbing, electrical, grounds keeping, HVAC, and structural supports. TNA will maintain a janitorial contract for daily cleaning requirements. We will go through the bid process for all property management and cleaning contracts.

(f) Any additional operations as applicable.

N/A: No additional operations are applicable.

(g) For an ASD operator only, describe any operational matters that will be handled differently following the transition to a non-ASD authorizer (and that have not already been addressed in another section), the rationale for the differences, and any new resources they would require. If there will be no additional changes to operations, please respond with N/A to this section.

N/A: Tennessee Nature Academy is not an ASD operator.

## SECTION 2.10 - CHARTER MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION (IF APPLICABLE)

- (a) If you intend to contract with a charter management organization (CMO), please detail:
- The name of the CMO, if known, and evidence of its educational and management success;
  - Selection process and criteria;
  - Scope of services and resources to be provided by the CMO;
  - Division of roles and responsibilities between the board and the CMO, disclosure and explanation of any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the board and CMO, and how conflicts of interest will be checked;
  - How performance of the CMO will be measured, including any deliverables;
  - Conditions for renewal and termination of the CMO agreement;
  - Any monetary obligations of the CMO agreement; and
  - Include a copy of the CMO agreement as **Attachment K**, if available, that sets forth proposed key terms, including roles and responsibilities of the school governing board, the school staff, and the service provider; the services and resources to be provided; performance-evaluation measures and mechanisms; detailed explanation of compensation to be paid to the provider; financial controls and oversight; investment disclosure; methods of contract oversight and enforcement; and conditions for contract renewal and termination.
- (b) For a sponsor of an existing school in the ASD contracting with a CMO, in lieu of the above, include a copy of the CMO agreement as **Attachment K**.

N/A: TNA will not contract with a charter management organization and will not sponsor an existing school in the ASD which contracts with a CMO.

## SECTION 2.11 - WAIVERS

Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-111, a sponsor of a proposed charter school may apply to either the authorizer or to the Commissioner of Education for a waiver of any state board rule or statute that inhibits or hinders the proposed charter school's ability to meet its goals or comply with its mission statement. Waivers may not be granted for requirements related to: federal and state civil rights; federal, state, and local health and safety; federal and state public records; immunizations; possession of weapons on school grounds; background checks and fingerprinting of personnel; federal and state special education services; student due process; parental rights; federal and state student assessment and accountability; open meetings; or at least the same equivalent time of instruction as required in regular public schools. Please list all requested waivers below:

T.C.A. Citation; State Board of Ed Rule	Description of Statute, Rule, or Policy	Proposed Replacement Rule, Policy, or Practice	How this Waiver will Increase Student Achievement
T.C.A. § 49-3-306(a); SBE Rule 0520-01-02-.02	Licensed Personnel Salaries	TNA's Board approves salaries during annual budgeting process.	While we ensure that public monies will be used properly and that all personnel will be paid adequately and timely, it is critical to our program that TNA's payroll system reflects TNA's purpose / philosophy.
T.C.A. § 8-23-206(a)	Longevity Pay	TNA's Board approves salaries during annual budgeting process.	Public monies will be used properly to ensure personnel are paid adequately. It is critical that the payroll system reflects TNA's purpose and philosophy. Teachers may be given incentive pay that will compensate them for years of consistent student performance and professional development, not just years of service.
T.C.A. § 49-5-401	Teacher Assignment	TNA's Board approves annual calendar, school schedules, and teacher assignments.	Teaching assignments may change after May 15 each year.
T.C.A. § 49-5-5002-5010; T.C.A. § 49-5-5206-5209; T.C.A. § 49-5-5406; T.C.A. § 49-5-5301; SBE Rule 0520-02-02	Career Ladder	TNA's Board approves salaries during the annual budgeting process.	No need or funding is currently available for career ladder initiatives for teachers, principals, assistant principal, and other instructional supervisors.
SBE Rule 0520-02-01-.02	General Requirements for	TNA's Board approves salaries and compensation	It is essential that TNA is able to design hiring, pay, benefits, promotion and evaluation systems that are aligned with

	Evaluation	during the annual budgeting process.	the school's mission and goals. Guidelines and performance expectations are outlined in annual contracts developed for TNA personnel.
SBE Rules 0520-02-03-01 through 0520-02-03-14	Educator Licensure	TNA's Directors will ensure that all school employees are qualified to succeed in their roles.	This waiver will provide the school with the flexibility needed to properly staff the school. TNA has a proportional leadership model and will not require administrator licenses for leaders as they transition to a position of leadership. All teachers will be required to maintain licensure required for their position.
T.C.A. § 49-5-503	Tenure	TNA's Directors oversee performance evaluations.	TNA is results-driven. Therefore, all employees of TNA will be at-will employees.
SBE Rule 0520-01-02	Administrative Rules and Regulations (Salary Schedules, Leave for Teachers, etc.)	TNA will operate its schools in accordance with applicable laws and policies.	Enhancing TNA's autonomy over its administrative practices will allow the school to focus more of its time and resources on increasing student achievement. The district will hold TNA accountable for outcomes rather than processes to provide TNA with the maximum flexibility to achieve its goals.
T.C.A. § 49-5-101(a)	Licensed Principals	TNA's Directors will participate in internal training & skills development.	TNA will internally train school leaders in alignment with our unique mission and approach and will recruit the most qualified leaders to fulfill its mission.
T.C.A. § 49-6-3004	School Year	TNA's Board approves annual calendar and school schedules.	TNA will utilize an extended annual and daily schedule which includes increased instructional and professional development hours. Teachers will receive compensation commensurate with their work hours. TNA will schedule in-service days, vacation days, etc. in alignment with our annual calendar.
T.C.A. § 49-3-316	Local Fiscal Accounting	TNA's Board approves the budget through annual process.	TNA will ensure that public monies will be used properly, that all non-waived regulations will be met and that all operations will stand up to an annual financial Audit that will be submitted to the State. It is critical to the TNA model that management systems reflect the school's mission and vision, including financial sustainability.

T.C.A. § 49-6-4012 (b)	Formulation & Administration of Behavior & Discipline Codes	TNA's Board approves the student handbooks and discipline policies.	It is important that the discipline practices of TNA ensure a safe and effective learning environment for all students in a manner aligned with our mission and vision.
T.C.A. § 49-6-2206	Use of Unapproved Textbooks	TNA's Board approves use of curricular materials.	TNA's curriculum and instructional approaches will be linked to the school's mission and vision. TNA will use both state-approved textbooks and other unapproved instructional materials to support our distinctive academic model.
SBE Rule 0520-01-03-.07 (1-2)	Classroom Libraries	TNA maintains classroom libraries rather than a school library information center.	To support our independent reading and personalized learning initiatives, TNA will have classroom libraries available to students. These classroom libraries will be maintained by the classroom teacher and school-based leadership team rather than by library information center personnel.
T.C.A. § 49-3-311	Capital Outlay	TNA's Board approves all facility contracts and leases.	Because charter schools must finance their own buildings and do not have the power to raise taxes to fund capital outlay, it is critical that TNA gain freedom from non-health and safety standards for the school site and have control of the facility vested in the TNA board, rather than the city board of education. This freedom will allow us to use the school site resources most effectively and align building choices with TNA's mission and goals.
T.C.A. § 49-6-1021	Opportunities for Physical Activity	TNA's leadership approves schedules including time for student health and well-being through physical activity.	Students will be involved in physical education activities every day, each week. School leaders will schedule these opportunities and ensure that the PE curriculum meets state content standards.

ATTACHMENT A - ACADEMIC CALENDAR (SECTION 1.8)

July 2023						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August 2023						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2023						
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2023						
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November 2023						
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2023						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January 2024						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

February 2024						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

March 2024						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April 2024						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May 2024						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
			1	2	3	4
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June 2024						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Quarter 1 = 46 Instructional Days	Quarter 3 = 46 Instructional Days	181 Instructional Days Total
Quarter 2 = 41 Instructional Days	Quarter 4 = 48 Instructional Days	

ATTACHMENT A - ACADEMIC CALENDAR (SECTION 1.8)

## ATTACHMENT A - ACADEMIC CALENDAR (SECTION 1.8)

	Full Day for Students
	Early Dismissal for Students
	Late Arrival for Students
	Holiday or Break - No Students or Staff
	Staff Inservice - No Students
	Staff Development (Stockpiled Day) - No Students
	Summer School, Summer Camps, and New Student Testing

July 10	Leadership Team Returns to Campus
July 17 - August 1	Staff Inservice - No Students
August 2	First Day for Students. Quarter 1 Begins
September 1	Staff Development - No Students
September 4	Labor Day - No School
October 6	Quarter 1 Ends
October 9 - 13	Fall Break - No School
October 16	Staff Development - No Students
October 17	Quarter 2 Begins
November 7	Election Day - Early Dismissal for Students
November 10	Veterans Day - No School
November 23 - 24	Thanksgiving Break - No School
December 15	Last Day for Students. Early Dismissal for Students. Quarter 2 Ends
December 18 - January 1	Winter Break - No School
January 2	Staff Inservice - No Students
January 3	First Day for Students. Quarter 3 Begins
January 8	Late Arrival for Students
January 15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - No School
February 19	Washington's Birthday - No School
March 8	Quarter 3 Ends.
March 11 - 15	Spring Break - No School
March 18	Staff Development - No Students
March 19	Quarter 4 Begins.
March 29	Good Friday - No School
May 24	Last Day for Students. Early Dismissal for Students. Quarter 4 Ends
May 27	Memorial Day - No School
May 28-29	Staff Development - No Students
May 30	Staff Inservice - No Students
June 17 - June 28	Summer School, Summer Camps, and New Student Testing
June 19	Juneteenth - No School

## ATTACHMENT A - ACADEMIC CALENDAR (SECTION 1.8)

## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

**INTRODUCTION AND TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY MODEL****Director's Welcome + Handbook Purpose**

Hello Founding Families! We are excited to have you as part of Tennessee Nature Academy as we begin to work towards our Mission Statement:

*The mission of Tennessee Nature Academy is to cultivate happy and healthy young adults who are knowledgeable about the world, passionate about the outdoors, and committed to doing good work.*

This Community Handbook provides an overview of important policies and procedures that will ensure we maintain a productive school culture, including both rigorous academics and pastoral care for students. Please set aside some time to carefully review this handbook as a family and keep it handy so you can refer to it when needed. Keep in mind that this handbook is a living document and will be revised each year. The most current version can always be found on the Tennessee Nature Academy website. You will review this document with your child's classroom teachers before the start of the year, and at this time will submit a signed form acknowledging review of all items contained within this handbook. Please always feel free to contact your child's teachers or TNA leadership should you have any questions about policies and procedures at Tennessee Nature Academy. We look forward to the learning adventure we have ahead this year and are so thankful to have you on board!

Warm regards,

Jay Renfro  
Executive Director

**Achieving Our Vision**

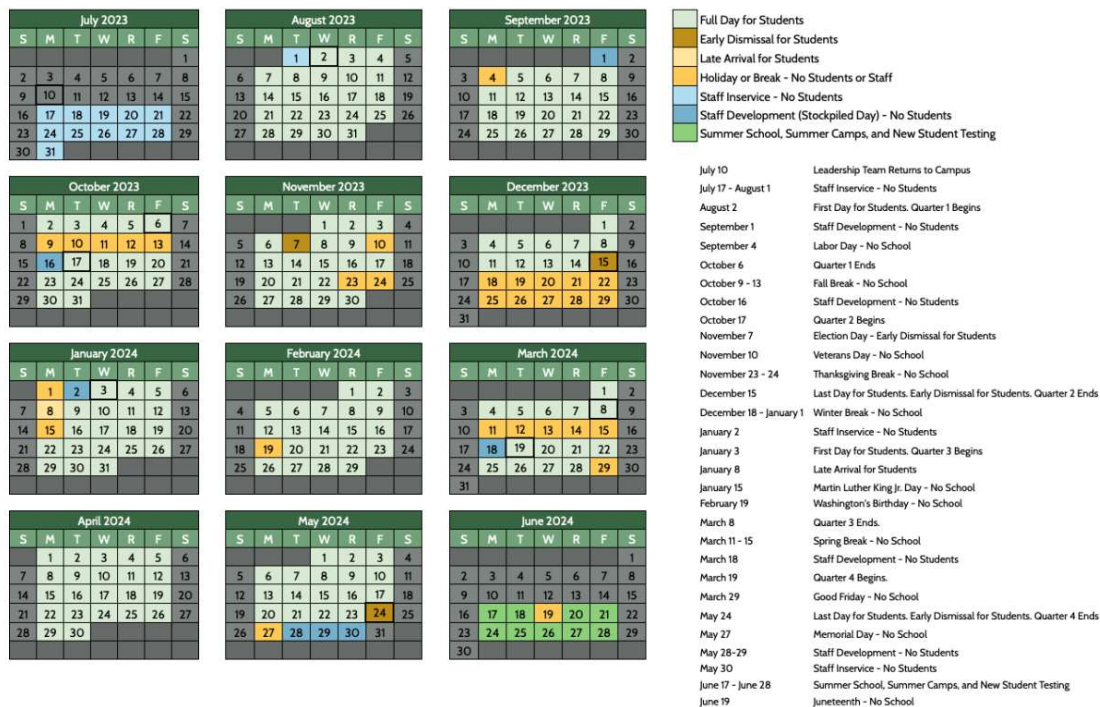
Tennessee Nature Academy is a nature-based, 5-12 public charter school committed to preparing students for a sustainable life. Our students belong to a diverse, affirming community and engage in adventurous, project-based learning to impact the world around them. Students graduate from TNA prepared for future college and career success. The vision for achieving our mission is built around four key principles of our school model:

1. **Learning through Challenges** -Tennessee Nature Academy believes that effective learning takes place when students solve authentic problems or answer relevant questions by mastering and applying disciplinary knowledge and skills. Academic challenges are framed to create a sense of adventure and build students' confidence in their abilities to think critically and work collaboratively. Learning takes place within and beyond traditional classroom spaces and challenges range in scale from answering an essential question in English class to designing and implementing a soil remediation plan for degraded soil in the area. Our emphasis on nature-based play and learning serves the dual purpose of encouraging healthy lifestyles while allowing kids the opportunity to be curious, creative, and explorative. Our goal is to create knowledgeable citizens who are competent to do good work in their chosen industry. Our impactful academic program focuses on individual growth and success to close achievement gaps and create opportunities through college preparatory and industry certification pathways

ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

2. **Building Connectedness** -Tennessee Nature Academy serves a community that is historically disconnected from nature, equal academic and employment opportunities, and communities that elevate and celebrate diverse identities. Our diverse-by design model helps students better understand themselves and build connections to others, to their community, and to the world. Our school values diverse voices and perspectives and honors the uniqueness of each student. Our school celebrates cultural diversity and explores the connections between cultures, which leads to greater understanding of our communities, our peers, and ourselves. We intentionally connect students and families to the networks they need to thrive.
  
3. **Sustaining Health and Happiness** -Tennessee Nature Academy believes that the best practices are sustainable practices. We know that sustainable activities positively influence the environment and we develop systems that prioritize the sustainable use of resources. We also recognize the need for sustainability to exist in our work with others. TNA uses systems that help students learn to care for their emotional and physical well-being and support our community’s culture using restorative, relationship-based ethics and practices. Our emphasis on nature taps into the well-researched curative effect of spending time learning, playing, and simply being outdoors.
  
4. **Impacting the Community** –The best learning reveals an insight, provides a service, or yields enduring habits or practices that can be applied to future challenges. For this reason, Tennessee Nature Academy’s students use what they learn to make a positive impact in their community and in the environment. This provides a greater importance to day-to-day classroom learning while also providing a service to the community. Student experiences progress to allow for frequent service learning that develops into work-based learning opportunities that create future employment opportunities.

**School Calendar: 2023-2024 School Year**



## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

**School Hours**

The school day for students in the Tennessee Nature Academy begins at 8:00am and dismisses at 3:15pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and at 2:35pm on Wednesday. Punctuality is important and ensures that instructional time for students is protected and prioritized each day at TNA. Punctuality is an important value that demonstrates respect for TNA staff and the engaging learning activities that students experience each day at school.

Tennessee Nature Academy offers before and after school care to accommodate families' work schedules. The projected schedule will be 7:00-8:00 am for morning care, and 3:15-5:45 pm for afternoon care. Cost will be determined on numbers needed to break even. Families qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch will pay for before- and after-school care on a sliding scale.

In case of inclement weather, school hours may be impacted:

- **School Closing:** Occasionally, weather conditions will cause schools to open late, dismiss early, or close altogether. If we are experiencing or expecting severe weather, we will post on our website, Instagram, and Facebook pages. TNA follows its own policies for school closings. If MNPS schools are closed, please confirm that TNA will also be closed. Sometimes MNPS bus routes may be inaccessible, but bus routes to TNA are clear after one day. Whenever TNA opens late, dismisses early, or closes for any reason, TNA will send a call out and email on our automated server.
- **Modified Schedule:** If inclement weather causes an early dismissal or late arrival, TNA will follow a modified schedule. For early dismissals, TNA will follow the regular daily schedule until the time that students need to be dismissed early. Classes will continue the regular length of time, and students may miss some classes scheduled for the end of the day. For late arrivals, TNA will follow a pre-created schedule that begins the school day at 10:00am and ends at the normal time.

**Staff Directory** *(To be completed upon hiring founding faculty)*

Name and Role	Contact me about:	Contact
Mr. Jay Renfro, Executive Director	Student Discipline, Staff Concerns	rrenfro@tennesseenateacademy.org
Dr. Sarah Savage, Chief Academic Officer	Academics	ssavage@tennesseenateacademy.org
Director of Community Engagement (to be hired Spring 2022)	Student Enrollment, Family Needs	
Director of Operations (to be hired January 2023)	Bus Routes, Free and Reduced Lunch Paperwork	

## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

## SECTION 2: ACADEMICS AT TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY

**Academic Standards**

Tennessee Academic Standards provide the foundation for all learning activities at Tennessee Nature Academy. Beginning in Grade 7, students will also begin to participate in learning activities aligned to the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards. The standards are *what* we learn at TNA, but our curricular projects and instructional methods are *how* we learn.

**Curriculum and Instructional Methods**

Our instructional methods blend practices of nature-based and project-based learning educational approaches. Classroom instruction makes use of instructional best practices for promoting equitable outcomes for all students including students with special needs and English Language Learners.

Decades of research conducted in countries all around the world has shown that time spent learning and playing outdoors contributes to strong academic gains and multiple social emotional benefits. TNA intentionally brings nature-based practices to its students through time set aside for nature play, nature-oriented classrooms, and projects with an emphasis on the outdoors. Students will spend most of the school day learning and playing outside.

Project-based learning allows for students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts in multiple ways, typically culminating in a performance task and unit test. Using Tennessee State Standards as the base, TNA applies academic standards to outdoor themed projects whenever possible.

**Academic Grades and Report Cards**

Report cards are issued to families at the end of each quarter. The purpose of the TNA report card is to communicate student achievement in relation to standards-based academic goals for the marking period, updated aimswebPlus scores, Character Strengths development, and progress in Resilience Competencies. Report cards provide a comprehensive picture of student progress in becoming lifelong learners and contributing members of the TNA learning community.

**Homework Policy**

Teachers will assign homework at TNA. All students are expected to read independently every evening for an appropriate amount of time for their grade level. In addition to reading, students may be assigned specific homework tasks. The purpose of homework is to allow students to practice skills and research topics introduced in class, prepare for upcoming lessons or assessments, and apply and extend concepts that have already been learned. Homework helps students develop independent study habits and learn how to manage their time. Students will be clearly notified when they are expected to return homework assignments.

**Make-Up Work**

If a student misses a day or block of the day, graded work must be made up at another time. The number of school days a student misses determines the number of days they have to make up graded work. For example, if a student misses 1 day of school, they have 1 day to make up the work upon their return. Students may be required to make up work during their workshop block.

## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

**Academic Dishonesty**

Acts of academic dishonesty including plagiarism, stealing tests, copying from other students or sources, and using notes or recordings without permission are considered serious offenses. Students are expected to use good digital citizenship when using technology. A student charged with academic dishonesty is subject to disciplinary action. A student contributing to another student's act of dishonesty is considered to be equally at fault and will also be subject to disciplinary action. Please discuss with a member of the school-based leadership team if you observe a student engaging in academic dishonesty.

**Learning and Language Support**

All TNA students with disabilities are provided services and programs as prescribed by their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). All services and placement decisions are made by the IEP team based on the individual needs of the student. TNA employs a co-teaching and inclusion model to provide students with appropriate educational services in the least restrictive environment. This means that most TNA students with an IEP or Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will receive services within the context of the general education classroom with targeted interventions by specialists. A full-inclusion model allows students to receive individualized and small group instruction within the general education classroom setting and provides significant academic and social benefits to all students.

Our project-based learning approach and daily school schedule are optimally designed to provide students with equitable academic support, interventions, and enrichment to meet their individual needs. Adaptation and modifications of assignments, assessments, and the classroom environment are provided as indicated by the student's IEP or ILP. Assessment accommodations will be given during state/district assessments in alignment with IEPs and ILPs as well.

**A Day at Tennessee Nature Academy**

The following table shows activities that may occur during a typical day in fifth grade at TNA.

TNA Middle School Student Schedule (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday)

Block	Time	Instructional Activities
Before Care	7:00 - 8:00am	Optional Before Care (breakfast, free play)
School Begins	8:00am	Students report to their advisory block to begin the day.
Advisory	8:00 - 8:30am	Engage in community-buildings aligned to TNA's core values and the Penn Resilience Skill Set.
Period 1	8:30 - 9:25am	Math, English, Science, Social Studies, Art, or P.E.
Morning Break	9:25 - 9:40am	Students play, socialize, and use the bathroom.
Period 2	9:40 - 10:35am	Math, English, Science, Social Studies, Art, or P.E.
Recess	10:35 - 11:05am	Students participate in free play.
Lunch	11:05 - 11:35am	Students enjoy a nutritious lunch.

## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

Block	Time	Instructional Activities
Independent Reading	11:35 - 12:05am	Students receive literacy intervention and/or read independently.
Transition	12:05 - 12:10pm	Students move to their next class.
Period 3	12:10 - 1:05pm	Math, English, Science, Social Studies, Art, or P.E.
Afternoon Break	1:05 - 1:20pm	Students play, socialize, and use the bathroom.
Period 4	1:20 - 2:15pm	Math, English, Science, Social Studies, Art, or P.E.
Transition	2:15 - 2:20pm	Students move to their workshop assignment.
Workshop	2:20 - 3:15pm	Students participate in workshop activity; if necessary, students attend study hall to complete missing or unsatisfactory work.
School Ends	3:15pm	Students are dismissed from school.
After Care	3:15- 5:45pm	Optional After Care (snack, time for homework, free play)

## SECTION 3: CULTURE AT TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY

**Behavior Expectations**

TNA has high expectations for students behaviorally and academically. Our behavior expectations are grounded in our core values:

- Embrace the challenge.
- Seek and sustain connection.
- Make healthy decisions.
- Consider your impact.

Students are expected to demonstrate a caring, respectful attitude towards staff, students, and the school environment at all times. The following sections describe our approach to fostering productive school culture at TNA. Additional details about discipline infractions and responses may be found in our Student Discipline Policy.

**Resilience and Wellbeing**

To create its schoolwide culture plan, TNA utilizes decades of Positive Psychology research from the University of Pennsylvania. We define our culture as one that emphasizes Resilience and Wellbeing. At TNA we have high academic and behavioral expectations. We expect all students to fail at one time or another: what is important is how our students learn to frame and bounce back from academic and behavioral failures. To equip our students to face bigger challenges in the future, we support them in building their Resilience Competencies. Students who sharpen their Resilience Competencies have displayed a greater ability to navigate challenging experiences in their adult lives.

## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

### Resilience Competencies:

- **Self-Regulation:** The ability to change one’s thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and physiology in the service of a desired outcome.
- **Self-Awareness:** The ability to pay attention to your thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and physiological reactions.
- **Mental Agility:** The ability to look at situations from multiple perspectives and to think creatively and flexibly.
- **Connection:** The ability to build and maintain strong, trusting, relationships.
- **Optimism:** The ability to notice and expect the positive, to focus on what you can control, and to take purposeful action.
- **Character Strengths:** The ability to use one’s top strengths to engage authentically overcome challenges, and create a life aligned with one’s values.

### **Bullying**

TNA takes bullying extremely seriously. Throughout each year, we work with teachers, staff, students, and families so that they will know and understand our definition of bullying, how to deal with it appropriately, and how it is different from the developmentally typical personal conflict that all young people face.

Bullying can be physical (e.g., pushing, hitting, kicking) or verbal (e.g., yelling, teasing, insulting). It can be direct (to their face) or indirect (e.g., excluding someone, spreading rumors, telling lies about someone, using social media to damage someone’s reputation, etc.). Bullying is inappropriate, hurtful behavior that is usually deliberate, repeated, and based on a situation or perception that one person has power over another.

At TNA we work with all students to develop the skills and strategies they need to help eradicate any bullying. One of the most important skills that we want students to develop is the ability to speak up about problems they are having with others. These skills are modeled and reinforced within each advisory block during regular community meetings that develop a sense of trust and openness for discussions and lessons on bullying. If students need more support than what is offered in the classroom, TNA’s leadership team will work together with the student to support them in the development of more pro-social skills.

## SECTION 4: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### **Acceptable Use of Technology**

Internet access is available to all TNA students and staff. Access for students is for educational purposes only. Technology is integrated into the curriculum and daily lives of students to enhance learning. Students have computers available in their classrooms and teachers use the computer cart for whole group lessons or special projects.

The main objectives of our technology integration program and the technology curriculum are to foster confidence and skills in the use of the computer and computer applications, to develop student's critical and creative thinking, to stimulate and foster an interest in and understanding of the use of technology for communication and research purposes, and to encourage students to work with a computer either independently or in cooperative situations.

## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

**Attendance Policy**

TNA has an average daily attendance goal of at least 95% of students in attendance. TNA is aligned with the MNPS attendance policy and we expect all students to attend school each day. We accept the following reasons for an excused absence:

- Student's personal illness
- Family member's illness that requires the student's temporary help
- Death in the family (up to three days)
- Deployment of a parent or guardian serving in the military (one day for deployment, one day for return, and up to 10 days when the service member is on temporary leave at home)
- Head lice (up to three days)
- Recognized religious holidays regularly observed by persons of the student's faith
- Court appearance or legally mandated meetings
- Documented college visitations (up to three days per year for students in 11th and 12th grades)

Special circumstances may be approved as excused at the discretion of school leadership who will work with families to problem-solve and prevent future absences. Examples include housing difficulties, transportation difficulties, or required family travel. When possible families should call, email, or send a written note to the advisory teacher in advance detailing the reason for the absence.

School attendance is a strong predictor of a wide range of outcomes including academic performance, reading level, and likelihood of graduating from high school. TNA makes a great effort to hold students and families accountable for ensuring students are at school each day. To reduce the number of students who are chronically absent (defined as missing 10% of school days) or who are at risk of becoming chronically absent, TNA implements a number of interventions:

Absence Threshold	Actions/ Interventions
Daily absence not excused in advance	Contact guardians- call or text
3 unexcused absences	Attendance notification
5 unexcused absences	Attendance meeting between school representative and guardian Attendance Improvement plan developed and shared with stakeholders Truancy letter sent home
7 unexcused absences	Attendance meeting between school representative and guardian Attendance Improvement plan reviewed and updated Truancy next steps shared with families
10 unexcused absences	TNA is mandated by Compulsory School Attendance Law (TCA § 49-6-3001) to report a truancy concern to the Juvenile Courts. School director communicates this requirement to families.

**ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)****Classroom Placement**

TNA places students in heterogeneous classrooms at each grade level. Classroom placements are determined by the school leadership team. Families may make requests and all requests will be considered, but ultimately classroom placement is the decision of the leadership team. In rare cases classroom assignments may change during the school year based on meeting the best needs of the students and the school community.

**Communication**

Families are informed of the current curriculum, major assignments, projects, upcoming classroom/school events, extension activities to further the learning process at home, and other pertinent information. The following guidelines inform communication during the year:

- Teachers will keep in close contact with families by phone, email, or through notes home, especially when there is good news to share and when there are areas of concern.
- Teachers have up to 48 hours during the work week to respond to parents' questions or requests.
- Weekly classroom or grade level communication will be shared with families via email, a class blog, or other format as determined by teaching teams.
- TNA's leadership will offer special parent information sessions during the year.

**Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is a key factor in building strong, positive relationships with our students. In order for students to feel comfortable and safe enough to talk about the delicate subjects that concern them (e.g. feelings, friendships, difficult situations at home and in school, etc.), they must trust that the teacher, counselor, administrator, or staff member that they confide in will respect their concerns by honoring their rights of confidentiality. Maintaining confidentiality, being honest, and treating students with respect are what create the relationships and bonds that allow us to have a positive impact and help our students manage difficult situations.

As professional educators, we have an ethical and legal obligation as mandatory reporters to break confidentiality as needed in order to ensure the physical and emotional safety of our students. If during the course of consultation or conversation there is any reason to suspect that the student is at risk in any way, if he or she is considering self-injury, or is a danger to others, we are required to seek additional support and report the situation to a higher official.

**Dress Code**

Our dress code is intentionally lenient to allow for student's personal and cultural expression. Our only ask is that students wear clothing that is safe, appropriate, and sensible for the activity. Clothing should not depict content that is offensive or illegal (e.g. drugs and alcohol, weapons, violence, hateful speech, or sexual content). Due to the active nature of our program, students should dress in a manner that is comfortable to them and appropriate for current outdoor conditions (e.g. footwear, outerwear, etc.). If the condition ever arises that a student is not prepared for an activity, they can request to visit our community closet to identify alternative clothing to borrow for the activity. School leadership retains the right to ask any student to change their clothing or to wear school-provided clothing.

## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

Tennessee Nature Academy takes care to follow weather advisories when determining whether outdoor learning activities can take place. TNA does not host outdoor learning activities when inclement weather is expected (e.g. storm watch, threat of lightning, etc.). TNA makes the following recommendations for student dress at different temperatures:

Temperature	Expectations
Above 100 degrees (heat index)	No outdoor activities take place.
Above 96 degrees (heat index)	Outdoor activities optional.
88-95 degrees (heat index)	Short sleeves and shorts, water breaks every 30 minutes.
60 - 88 degrees	Clothing that is comfortable and appropriate for the activity.
Below 60 degrees	Long sleeves recommended.
Below 50 degrees	Jacket required; hat and gloves optional.
32-40 degrees (with wind chill)	Outdoor activities become optional.
Below 32 degrees (with wind chill)	No outdoor activities take place.

### Emergency Drills

Tennessee Nature Academy considers the safety of students our top priority. TNA is vigilant in its communication with all stakeholders within the school. TNA has its exterior doors locked at all times. To enter the school, visitors must enter through a security buzzer equipped with a camera in the front office during school hours. Throughout the school year, teachers, students and staff participate in the following drills:

- **Lockout:** Is when there is a threat in the area that is not school specific but could affect the school in which no one is allowed to transition in or out of the building. In these situations, the Metro Nashville Police Department in partnership with TNA will maintain ongoing communication regarding the nature of the incident.
- **Lockdown:** This is when there is a threat of any nature that requires that all classrooms and exterior doors remain locked and no student movement within the building as the school implements its crisis response plan.
- **Shelter in Place:** This is a weather-related response in which students are kept inside the school in safe areas of the building when there is a risk of inclement weather. Students will remain in their shelter in place locations until the danger has passed.
- **Fire Drills:** TNA is required to conduct at least one fire drill monthly. Fire drills require full evacuation from the school.
- **Tornado Drills:** TNA is required to conduct tornado/severe storm drills twice a year. TNA has developed procedures to minimize risks to students, staff, and visitors in the event of tornadoes and severe storms.

## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

**FERPA**

Tennessee Nature Academy is required to provide annual notice of The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the rights it provides parents and students. The FERPA gives parents, students over 18 years of age and others certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents of eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request an amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. To do this, the parent or eligible student should write to the school principal (or appropriate official) and clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the TNA board of directors; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); a parent or student on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official performing his or her tasks; or an attorney from the Department of Law with a legitimate educational interest. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school can disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (Note: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:
  - a. Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education; 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

Yearbook information is restricted in accordance with FERPA guidelines. If you do not want TNA to disclose the types of information designated below as yearbook information from your student's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify TNA either in writing, or by indicating your choice on the media release form shared at the start of school.

## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

- Student's name
- Photograph
- Years of attendance
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Honors and awards received

**Harassment**

Misconduct that may be perceived or described as bullying, cyber-bullying, discrimination, intimidation, or hazing may constitute prohibited harassment under this policy when the conduct (1) is based on a student's real or perceived race, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, handicap/disability, sexual orientation, ancestry, or sex, including gender identity, gender expression, and appearance; and (2) creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may take many forms and is not limited to conduct that constitutes bullying. Harassing conduct may include verbal acts and name-calling; graphic and written statements, which may include use of cell phones or the internet; or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating if such conduct is based on a student's real or perceived race, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, handicap/disability, sexual orientation, ancestry, or sex, gender identity, gender expression, and appearance. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently serious (severe, pervasive, or persistent) and objectively offensive so as to deny or interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the programs, services, activities, or opportunities offered by TNA.

Sexual harassment means any unwelcomed sexual advance or request for sexual favors or conduct of a sexual nature:

- When submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's participation in an education program or activity;
- When submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of any educational or service decision affecting the individual; and/or,
- When such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an education program or activity or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or learning environment.

Sex-based harassment includes sexual harassment and non-sexual harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity, transgender status, gender expression or appearance, stereotypical notions of what is female/feminine v. male/masculine, or a failure to conform to those gender stereotypes. Behaviors that constitute sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to sexually suggestive or offensive remarks; sexually suggestive pictures, sexually suggestive gesturing, verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature, harassing, abusive or sexually suggestive or offensive messages sent by e-mail or other electronic medium, subtle or direct propositions for sexual favors, and touching, patting, or pinching. Sexual harassment may be directed against a particular person or persons, or a group, whether of the opposite sex or the same sex.

## ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)

**Mandated Reporting**

Under Tennessee state law, any person with reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused or neglected is a mandated reporter, meaning they must immediately report to the Tennessee Department of Children's Services or to local law enforcement. All TNA staff members are mandated reporters under this law. TNA staff members are not required to discuss their suspicions with families prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the law, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. As mandated reporters, staff members cannot be held liable for reports made to the Department of Children's Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith." Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

If your child or family is in need of resources or support that are impacting your child's or family's well being, please reach out to any TNA teacher or staff member with whom you feel comfortable.

**Medications and Student Illness**

All medications will be kept in a locked cabinet in the office. Students should never bring medication to their classroom. Each prescription medication to be administered by school personnel must be accompanied by a signed statement from the physician/ parent detailing the dosage to be administered and the time for administration. The child's doctor must fill in the section stating that the medication must be administered at school. Calls to parents or guardians to verify the information in the request may be placed by school personnel.

Over-the-counter medications will not be administered by designated school personnel unless requested specifically by the parent or legal guardian. The office will provide these forms. School personnel will distribute no medication until a completed medication form is on file.

If your child has a temperature equal or above 101F, please do not bring him/her to school. If your child has or has recently had lice, they may not return to school until nits, eggs and lice are all completely gone.

If a child becomes ill during class appropriate first aid will be provided in consultation with the student's parents. A child will only be authorized to go home after parents' approval.

**Non-discrimination**

TNA does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, color, age and/or disability in admission to, access to or operation of its programs, services or activities. Tennessee Nature Academy does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices.

**ATTACHMENT B: STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK / SCHOOL FORMS (SECT. 1.10)****Parent, Grandparent, Guardian and Teacher Association**

It is our desire for our parents, guardians, and grandparents to form close connections to the daily operations of the school. To meet that goal, we have established the Parent, Grandparent, Guardian, and Teacher Association (PGGTA) to assist in elevating the voices of the stakeholders who spend the most time with our students. If you are interested in joining the PGGTA to provide guidance on crucial school matters, please contact our Director of Community Engagement.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Formal Parent Teacher Conference will be held twice during the year, in the fall and the spring. Additional conferences may be arranged at any other time during the year by families, teachers, and/or TNA's leadership team. To protect the instructional time of our students, please call or email and arrange a convenient time to meet with your child's teacher. If you bring your child to school or pick them up, please do not have conferences at the door. Teachers are trying to attend to the students and it is better to make an appointment.

**Phones**

It is our firm stance that students should not use mobile phones or smart watches at any point during the school day. Students who bring devices to school must leave them turned off in a backpack while at school. Students will not be allowed to wear smartwatches during the school day. Students using devices during the school day will have them confiscated to be picked up at the end of the day by a parent, followed by the discipline response outlined in our student discipline plan.

**Release of Students**

Teachers will not release students to unauthorized persons. If a doubt arises regarding the relationship to the student, the teacher will check the student's file for authorized names. Teachers must be alert to changes in household personnel or cases of custody and divorce, and should inform the office if these occurrences indicate a revision of names on the authorized list.

**Toys and Lost & Found**

Toys, games, music players, electronics, and other like items, should not be brought to school unless requested by a teacher for special purposes. Exceptions include balls or other recreational items to be used only during recess. If an item is brought without the teacher's permission, the item will be held at school until picked up by a parent. At the end of the school year, all unclaimed items will be donated or discarded.

Misplaced toys or clothing will be taken to the Lost and Found located in the school office. If an item has been lost, families should submit a Lost Item form and the school will return the item if it has been found. At the end of each trimester, any remaining Lost and Found items will be placed in the cafeteria for families to claim. Unclaimed items will be donated or disposed of as appropriate.

**Volunteers and Visitors**

All faculty and staff members will wear an identification badge at all times while on campus. Volunteers and visitors for school activities are welcome, and for safety reasons must sign in at the office before going to the classroom and must wear an identification badge when in the building. Visitors must also check out in the office when they leave for the day.

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

**TNA Student Discipline Policy**  
2023-2024

Tennessee Nature Academy (TNA) implements the MNPS Discipline Policy which is consistent with our relationship-based and restorative discipline approach. To foster productive school culture, we also incorporate elements of University of Pennsylvania's Resilience and Wellbeing research as explained in our Student Handbook. Elements drawn from the MNPS Discipline Policy included in the TNA Student Discipline Policy are denoted with an asterisk(\*) next to the section header. Additional details and definitions may be found in the discipline handbook at [www.mnps.org](http://www.mnps.org).

**Behavior Expectations**

TNA has high expectations for students behaviorally and academically. Our behavior expectations are grounded in our core values:

- Challenges: Am I learning through this challenge?
- Connectedness: Which relationships can I connect with?
- Sustainability: Are these actions sustainable to maintain a healthy school culture?
- Impact: What is the impact of my actions?

The best behavioral intervention is a strong and engaging academic program. Behavioral issues often arise when students are unclear of expectations or procedures or are unengaged with the content. Students are expected to demonstrate a caring, respectful attitude towards staff, students and the school environment at all times.

**Multi-Tiered System of Support\***

Behavior focuses on teaching students appropriate behaviors, as opposed to punishing inappropriate behaviors, and develops positive relationships between students and school staff. MTSS is a framework of evidence-based, system-wide interventions and supports to address students' academic and behavioral needs and helps schools identify and quickly provide help to struggling students.

**Parental Assistance\***

There are times when students exhibit repeated patterns of challenging behavior. The steps below can be followed to advocate for your student. TNA will provide translation or interpretation services for families who request language assistance in this process.

1. If you suspect your student needs additional help with their behavior, contact your student's teacher, school counselor or principal in writing to request a conference to discuss your concerns.
2. During this meeting, parents and teachers can discuss proactive solutions to repeated behaviors.
3. If the behaviors continue after the parent/teacher conference, the parent and/or teacher should request a Student Support Team (S-Team) meeting.
4. If the interventions are successful, the S-Team will document and may continue to monitor as needed.
5. If the behaviors continue after interventions and a disability is suspected, the appropriate assessment specialist is invited to a meeting by the S-Team.
6. If a disability is suspected at any point in this process, the school and parent should convene a meeting within 10 days to obtain written parental consent to an evaluation for special education services or a 504.

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

### **Discipline Responses\***

Toxic stress and traumatic events faced by students outside of the school setting can impact brain development and health, learning, and behavior. Studies show that students with three or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are three times more likely than students with no known ACE exposure to experience academic failure, five times more likely to have chronic absenteeism, six times more likely to have serious school disciplinary concerns, and four times more likely to exhibit health complaints like headaches and stomachaches.<sup>197</sup>

Students and staff are expected to demonstrate mutual respect for themselves and others at all times. When students are disruptive or act inappropriately, school leadership and staff are expected to respond logically, appropriately and consistently. The MNPS Discipline Table (provided below) describes five types of behavior, increasing in seriousness from a Type 1 behavior to a Type 5 behavior. For example, a dress code violation is a Type 1 behavior, while bringing a firearm to school is a Type 5 behavior.

The Discipline Table also includes five levels of possible responses to inappropriate behavior (Levels A through E) and an additional potential response (Level T) for behavior on the bus. Each behavior is assigned to one or more of these levels of intervention and response. Principals and school staff may use only the levels provided for each behavior. Only one response letter may be chosen. Responses and interventions are to be progressive. If a behavior is assigned to two or more levels of response, the lowest level of intervention should be used for the first occurrence of behavior.

When choosing a higher-level response within the range of possible responses, an administrator must consider:

- The student's age, health, disability, decision-making ability and prior intervention history.
- The student's willingness to repair the harm.
- The seriousness of the act.
- The harm caused or the potential to cause harm, including any injuries caused.
- The extent of actual disruption to the learning environment.

An administrator must clearly document the reasons for using the selected response by citing the factors above in the discipline referral. In each case, TNA administrators and staff will ensure that consequences applied will minimize the amount of instructional time lost. Suspensions and expulsions are measures of last resort. An administrator is never required to expel a student unless the behavior is a Type 5 Zero Tolerance Offense.

Except for Type 5 Behaviors, students will not be expelled. Except for Type 5 behaviors, law enforcement will not be called to make an arrest. "Informal" suspensions are prohibited. A parent may not be called to pick up their student for disciplinary or behavioral reasons unless the incident and the suspension are documented. Parents must be provided a copy of the student's discipline referral when a suspension occurs. Unless otherwise noted, all codes apply to behavior at school, on the bus, or at school-sponsored activities.

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

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<sup>197</sup> Crisis Prevention Institute. (2014). Trauma: When life deals kids a handful of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences). <https://www.crisisprevention.com/Blog/Trauma-When-Life-Deals-Kids-a-Handful-of-ACEs>

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

**Discipline Table\***

TNA will classify and respond to behaviors using the MNPS Discipline Table. Additional details and definitions can be found in the discipline handbook at [www.mnps.org](http://www.mnps.org).

<b>Type 1 Behaviors - Teachers address Type 1 behaviors in the classroom with assistance from adults in TNA's Restorative Center as needed.</b>			
Behavior	Code	Definition	Response
Tardy to School, Bus or Class	100	Arriving late to school, bus, class or activity.	<u>A</u>
Noncompliance With a Reasonable Request	102	Not following the reasonable request of a teacher, administrator or staff member.	<u>A</u>
Agitating Other Students	103	Unwanted and/or unreciprocated picking on or bothering of other students.	<u>A</u>
Profane or Indecent Language	104	Using profane or indecent language, such as cursing. If directed at a teacher, staff member or administrator, see Code 301.	<u>A</u>
Possession of Fireworks	106	Knowingly possessing fireworks. Fireworks will be confiscated and not returned.	<u>A</u>
Dress Code Violation	107	Wearing clothing that does not comply with the school's requirements for appropriate dress.	<u>A</u>

<b>Type 2 Behaviors - Type 2 behaviors are addressed in TNA's Restorative Center.</b>			
Behavior	Code	Definition	Response
Repeated Violations of a Pattern of Same Type 1 Behaviors, With Evidence of Implemented Interventions	200	Three or more of the same Type 1 behaviors occurring within one quarter that continue after interventions addressing the specific behavior have been implemented. Interventions must be documented in the referral and in Support and Intervention.	<u>A, B, T</u>
Possession of Tobacco Products	202	Possessing any tobacco products, including but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, vapor or e-cigarettes, or chewing tobacco. All items will be confiscated and not returned. Students under 18 will be issued a citation.	<u>A, B</u>

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

Electronic Devices	203	Using a cell phone, electronic device, or the internet for non-educational purposes or without the permission of the classroom teacher or school administrator.	<u>A, B</u>
Disruption of Classroom	204	Continuously and intentionally disrupting the classroom learning environment to the extent that the learning of other students or the routine functioning of the class is significantly impaired. The discipline referral must describe the significant impairment to the learning or routine functioning of the class.	<u>A, B</u>
Gambling	208	Betting on games or activities for money or things of value.	<u>A, B</u>
Drug Paraphernalia	210	Possessing any material used to produce or consume illegal drugs. Drug paraphernalia includes, but is not limited to, bongos, roach clips, miniature spoons and pipes used to consume illegal drugs. All items will be confiscated and not returned.	<u>A, B</u>
Cutting Class	211	While on school property, failing to attend a scheduled class or activity without authorization. If the student is not attending any classes while in the building for the entire school day for five days, truancy protocol should be triggered.	<u>A, B</u>
Inappropriate Physical Contact With Other Students	212	Engaging in unwanted minor physical contact with another student such as pushing, bumping or touching.	<u>A, B, I</u>

**Type 3 Behaviors - Type 3 behaviors are addressed in TNA's Restorative Center.**

Behavior	Code	Definition	Response
Repeated Violations of a Pattern of Same Type 2 Behaviors, With Evidence of Implemented Interventions	300	Three or more of the same Type 2 behaviors occurring within one quarter that continue after interventions addressing the specific behavior have been implemented. Interventions must be documented in the referral and in Support and Intervention.	<u>B, C, I</u>
Profane or Indecent Language Towards Teacher or Staff	301	Directing profane or indecent language toward a teacher, staff member or administrator.	<u>B, C, I</u>

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

Leaving School Grounds or Bus Without Authorization	302	Leaving school grounds without the permission of school officials. Exiting the bus at an unauthorized stop or jumping from exit doors or windows.	<u>B, C, T</u>
Noncompliance With an Administrative Directive or an Assigned Disciplinary Response	303	Repeatedly refusing to follow an administrative directive or to comply with an assigned disciplinary response. Repeated could be defined as repeated defiance happening in one event or multiple incidents over a period of time.	<u>B, C</u>
Vandalism Under \$1000	304	Willfully destroying or defacing school or personal property. The damage caused is less than \$1000. A child's willingness to repair property damaged or to make restitution will be taken into account in determining appropriate level of response.	<u>B, C, T</u>
Theft Under \$1000	305	Taking the property of another individual or the school without permission, with the intent of depriving the owner of the property. The value of the property taken is under \$1000. A child's willingness to return or replace item taken or make restitution will be taken into account in determining the appropriate level of response.	<u>B, C, T</u>
Falsifying School Records	306	Falsifying or altering school records, including, but not limited to, written, electronic or digital school records. This does not include cheating.	<u>B, C</u>
Inappropriate Sexual Behavior  <i>*A referral to DCS will be made.</i>	307	Engaging in mutual activity of a sexual nature that does not meet the criteria of harassment or sexual assault. First offense for sexual intercourse should range between 1-3 days of OSS including a Restorative Conference with guardians upon returning to school.	<u>B, C, D, T</u>
Indecent Exposure	308	Intentionally exposing body parts generally considered private. For shirts exposing cleavage, use Code 107 (Dress Code).	<u>B, C, T</u>
Offensive Touching	309	Engaging in unwanted or offensive touching of areas generally considered private.	<u>B, C, T</u>

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

Fighting	311	Mutual participation in an incident involving physical violence.	<u>B, C, D, T</u>
Alcohol or Drug-Like Substance: Use or Possession, Under the Influence	312	Possessing, using or being under the influence of substances that have the potential to intoxicate. A collaborative referral is required. Students violating this code are not eligible for the First Time Drug Offender Program.	<u>B, C, T</u>
Threats, Class 1	313	A threat to cause harm to students, staff or school in which no plan exists to carry out the threat. The threat must be one that would cause a person to reasonably fear bodily injury. A Building Level Threat Assessment must be completed.	<u>B, C, T</u>
Possession of a Non-Lethal Weapon or Replica of Lethal Weapon	314	Possessing a non-lethal weapon, weapon replica, stun gun, BB gun, air gun, airsoft gun, pellet gun, cap gun or toy gun. Water guns are excluded.	<u>B, C, T</u>
Possession of Other Weapons	317	Possessing an instrument capable of causing serious bodily injury, such as a knife, Taser or pepper spray. Weapons will be confiscated and turned over to the appropriate authorities.	<u>B, C, D, T</u>
Trespassing on School Grounds	318	Entering and remaining on school property or during school-sponsored activities without authorization. Parents will be called. If the student remains on campus, law enforcement may be contacted.	<u>B, C</u>
Inappropriate Physical Contact Toward School Staff	319	Engaging in intentional physical contact with MNPS staff that does not rise to the level of causing bodily injury (pushing, tripping, running into and biting).	<u>B, C, T</u>
Gang Activity: Recruitment, Display or Possession of Symbols or Paraphernalia	320	Displaying gang symbols, gang paraphernalia or participating in the recruitment/initiation of a student into a gang (violent or disruptive group).	<u>B, C, D, T</u>
Use of Tobacco Products	321	Using any tobacco products, including but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, vapor or e-cigarettes, or chewing tobacco. For the first offense, a B response will be used. All items will be confiscated and not returned. Students under 18 will be issued a citation.	<u>B, C, D, T</u>

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

<b>Type 4 Behaviors - Type 4 behaviors are addressed in TNA's Restorative Center.</b>			
Behavior	Code	Definition	Response
Harassment of School Staff	400	Repeated incidents of intentional verbal, electronic, sexual, or physical harassment or intimidation directed at teachers, administrators or school staff. Documentation of incidents must be included in the referral.	<u>C, D, E</u>
Assault of a Student	401	Intentionally, knowingly or recklessly committing an unprovoked physical attack on another student. Minor physical contact, such as pushing or shoving, does not constitute assault. Students may not receive the same disciplinary consequence for their involvement in an altercation if the school administrator determines they acted in self-defense to protect themselves from physical harm (TCA 49-6-3401). <i>Response E may be used if the assault or the resulting injuries are severe. When response E is used, evidence documenting the incident's severity and any resulting injuries must be included in the discipline referral.</i>	<u>D, E</u>
Under the Influence of Illegal Drugs	402	Being under the influence of <u>any</u> illegal drug(s) while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. A collaborative referral will be made for any student found in violation of this code. If it is the student's first offense of under the influence of illegal drugs offense, the student qualifies for the First Time Drug Offender Program.	<u>C, D, E</u>
Threats, Class 2	403	A threat to cause harm to students, staff or school. The threat must be verbal or written and include a detailed plan. Evidence must support that the threat is actually or potentially harmful or lethal to the safety of other students in the student's school as determined by the results of a Building Level threat assessment. The Building Level Threat Assessment must be completed within 24 school-day hours from when school administrators are made aware and the student returns to school. A District Level Threat Assessment can be conducted with approval from the Chief Officer of Student Services. In determining whether an E response should be used, a threat assessment must be conducted to determine whether the threat is credible.	<u>D, E</u>
Threats by Electronic Transmission	404	A student who transmits, by an electronic device, a credible threat to cause bodily injury or death to another student or school employee and creates actual disruptive activity at the school that requires administrative intervention.	<u>D, E</u>

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

Bullying	405	<p>Any intentional act that is severe, persistent or pervasive and substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance, and has the effect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property</li> <li>● Knowingly placing a student(s) in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student's property</li> <li>● Causing emotional distress to a student(s)</li> <li>● Creating a hostile educational environment</li> </ul> <p>Bullying incidents must be reviewed for civil rights violations. If bullying is repeated over time and persists after documented administrative intervention, expulsion may result.</p> <p>Hazing is an intentional or reckless act on or off property, by one student acting alone or with others, directed against any other student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of that student, or that induces or coerces a student to endanger that student's mental or physical health or safety. Hazing does not include physical contact associated with athletic events, training or with competition conducted under a coach's or sponsor's supervision.</p>	<u>C, D, E</u>
Cyberbullying	406	Using technology, including, but not limited to email, cell phones, voicemails, texts, photos, video messages, instant messaging, defamatory websites, social networking sites, online personal polling sites or journals to bully another student. See the definition of bullying above.	<u>C, D, E</u>
Harassment Based on Race, Color or National Origin	407	<p>Based on a student's real or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, disability or ancestry. Harassment is misconduct that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. May be perceived or described as bullying, hazing, or cyberbullying, discrimination or intimidation</li> <li>2. Is based on a student's real or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or ancestry, and</li> <li>3. Creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive <i>or</i> persistent to interfere or limit a student's ability to participate in school services, activities, or opportunities.</li> </ol> <p>Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.</p> <p>Includes codes: 407, 408, 409.</p>	C, D, E
Harassment Based on Religion or Creed	408	See definition above.	C, D, E

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

Harassment Based on Gender, Gender-Identity or Sexual Orientation	409	<p>Based on a student's real or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or appearance.</p> <p>Harassment is misconduct that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. May be perceived or described as bullying, hazing, or cyberbullying, discrimination or intimidation</li> <li>2. Is based on a student's real or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or appearance; and</li> <li>3. Creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive <i>and</i> objectively unreasonable to interfere or limit a student's ability to participate in school services, activities, or opportunities. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.</li> </ol> <p>Includes code 411.</p>	C, D, E
Harassment Based on Disability	410	See definition above (407).	C, D, E
Sexual Harassment	411	See definition above (409).	C, D, E
Assault of a Teacher or Staff	412	Any act, intentional or unintentional, that causes or has the potential to cause physical injury to a teacher or school staff. An assault is more than incidental contact. Pushing or bumping a bus driver while the bus is operating constitutes assault of staff.	D, E
Extreme Disruption of the School Environment or Bus	413	Disrupting the school environment or bus to the extent that the safety of other students is at risk. The discipline referral must include evidence of actual disruption and actual risk of harm. Starting a fire or igniting fireworks constitutes extreme disruption. Using technology to access and alter student records or electronically tampering with MNPS technology systems and services (including but not limited to electronic records, databases, networks, and cloud services) in a manner that impairs normal school functioning constitutes extreme disruption.	C, D, E
Group Fighting	414	Three or more students engaging in a physical altercation. The altercation may include more students against a few students or multiple one on one fights.	D, E
Repeated Violations	415	Repeated violations of a pattern of the same Type 3 Behaviors, with evidence of implemented interventions.	C, D, E
Gang Intimidation	416	A gang-involved student behaving in a way that would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury to any person. Evidence must be provided in the referral showing that a student is gang-involved and intimidation is gang-related.	C, D, E

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

Off Campus Behavior: <i>For a felony charge under T.C.A. 49-6-3051(b) OR An act committed against a member of the student's school community that poses a threat to the safety of the school</i>	417	Students may be subject to disciplinary action for off-campus behavior when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student's behavior results in a felony charge under T.C.A. 49-6-3051(b): murder, rape, aggravated robbery, kidnapping, aggravated assault, felony reckless endangerment and aggravated sexual battery and the student poses a threat to the safety of other students or staff.</li> <li>• When a student commits an act against a member of the student's school community that poses a threat to the safety of other students or school staff in the student's school as determined by the results of a Building Level Threat Assessment. The referral must include a specific description of the safety threat posed to students or staff.</li> </ul>	C, D, E
Sexual Assault	418	Unwanted sexual contact with the use of force against a person's will or when the victim is unable to give consent that poses physical, emotional or psychological distress or injury upon the victim.	D, E
Robbery	419	Intentionally or knowingly taking the property of another person by use of violence or with the use of a weapon.	D, E
Reckless Endangerment	420	A reckless action in which the behavior causes serious injury or may potentially cause serious injury. The potential harm must be foreseeable by a reasonable person.	D, E
Fighting: Repeated	421	A middle or high school student who participates in three or more fights during the current year is subject to a five day suspension, or expulsion as determined by the executive principal. An elementary student may receive OSS for up to two days for three fights and five days for a fourth fight.	D, E
Vandalism Over \$1000	423	Willfully destroying or defacing school or personal property. The damage caused is over \$1000. A child's willingness to repair the damage or make restitution will be taken into account in determining the appropriate level of response.	D, E
Theft Over \$1000	424	Taking the property of another individual or of the school without permission with the intent of depriving the owner of the property. The value of the property is over \$1000. A child's willingness to return or replace an item taken or make restitution will be taken into account in determining the appropriate level of response.	D, E

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

Refusing or Fleeing Drug or Weapon Search	425	A student who refuses to submit to a drug or weapon search when requested is in violation of this code. Reasonable suspicion of drugs or firearms must exist for expulsion. A student violating this code is not eligible for the First Time Drug Offenders Program.	C, D, E
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**Zero Tolerance Offenses**

A Zero Tolerance (ZT) Offense requires an expulsion of not less than one calendar year (180 school days) under Tennessee State Law. However, the Executive Director may modify the length of the expulsion on a case-by-case basis through the appeals process or through a request for modification. The following are Zero Tolerance offenses under Tennessee Law.

<b>Type Five Behavior</b> - <i>Type 5 behaviors are addressed in TNA's Restorative Center with support from law enforcement.</i>			
Behavior	Code	Definition	Response
Rape	501	Committing oral, anal or vaginal penetration with use of force, against a person's will or when the victim is unable to give consent.	<u>E</u>
Attempted Homicide	502	Attempting to kill another person.	<u>E</u>
Homicide	503	Killing another person.	<u>E</u>
Drugs	505 (ZT)	Unlawful possession, use or distribution of drugs on school grounds, including any controlled substance, controlled substance analog or legend drug (prescription drug). Prohibited drugs include, but are not limited to, ketamine, bath salts and salvia. Distribution of drugs is defined as the intentional exchange of any prohibited drug for money or other benefit. A collaborative referral will be made for any student found in violation of this code. If it is the student's first offense under unlawful possession and use, not distribution, of drugs, the student qualifies for the First Time Drug Offender program.  After completion of the 1st Time Drug Offender program, a 30-day follow up with parent and student to determine what additional services were offered and whether the student/parent participated/completed the services/support provided.	<u>E</u>

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

Aggravated Assault of Teacher, School Staff or a School Resource Officer (SRO)	506 (ZT)	Intentionally or knowingly  1. Causing serious bodily injury or 2. Committing an assault with a deadly weapon of a teacher, school staff, or SRO.  "Serious bodily injury" is injury that requires more than basic first aid. A "deadly weapon" is a weapon, such as a firearm or knife, that is designed to inflict serious bodily injury.	<u>E</u>
Explosives	507 (ZT)	Possession of any destructive device, which includes any explosive, incendiary device or poison gas, including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines and similar devices. Possession of fireworks altered or modified to constitute an explosive may be considered a Zero Tolerance offense only if the altered fireworks are identified as an explosive by law enforcement officials. Fireworks are not considered an explosive.	<u>E</u>
Firearm	508 (ZT)	Possession of a firearm or bringing a firearm to school. This includes, but is not limited to, handguns, rifles and shotguns. As required by state and federal law, any student who brings a weapon to school will be referred to law enforcement.	<u>E</u>

**Restorative Practices**

TNA handles all discipline incidents using a Restorative Model. A restorative and consistent approach is preferable to utilizing suspension and expulsion. Suspension and expulsion are never required, except for Type 5 offenses. Length of in-school suspension (ISS) and out-of-school suspension (OSS) may not exceed the days allowed in this Handbook. Below are possible responses to the behaviors found in the previous chart.

Our process for handling behavior incidents is the following:

1. The classroom teacher first handles any minor level behavior infractions in the classroom. If the behavior is Type 1 and does not constitute immediate removal, instruction continues.
2. For Types 2, 3, 4, and 5, the student is removed from the classroom and sent to the Restorative Center. This is a space for students to process and make amends for their actions. The Restorative Center is staffed by two adults at any time (the Counselor/Social Worker and a Lead Teacher or Administrator).
  - a. If needed, the student participates in therapeutic activities to regulate emotions. This can include breathing exercises, drinking water, meditating in a green space, or walking in a secure location.
  - b. With the assistance of a staff member in the Restorative Center, the student prepares a reflection in preparation for a restorative meeting, in which the student takes accountability for their actions and repairs harm. Students are guided towards how they can create a commitment to be vocalized to the other party.
  - c. The student has up to 48 hours to process the infraction and prepare for a restorative meeting. We aim to conduct restorative meetings within the same day as the offense to quickly address the events among all participating parties. The desired outcome for the restorative meeting is for the offending student to own their actions and make a commitment in order to begin to mend the relationship between both parties.

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

3. Restorative Conversation
  - a. The student reads through the reflection to participating parties. The victim (when applicable) does not need to be present for the restorative conversation if the victim so decides.
  - b. Family contact is made to inform participating parties' guardians of the event and to communicate or discern an appropriate consequence.
  - c. The student vocalizes commitments for how to move forward.
4. Re-entry
  - a. Students are allowed back to the classroom after a completed reflection and restorative conversation, if no other consequences are required.
  - b. Restorative Center staff members will communicate commitments to the student's advisory teachers so they can follow up with the student on their commitments. Student progress will be affirmed on a weekly basis so the student can begin to internalize positive progress.
  - c. Offending students are provided with the opportunity for public acknowledgement or community service if the offending student and their guardians determine that doing so would ease the re-entry process and help the student rebuild their place in the community. Public acknowledgement and community service will never be required of any student and is not used as public shaming.

**Behavior Responses\***

## LEVEL A: TEACHER, STUDENT, PARENT, SCHOOL STAFF

1. All relevant stakeholders (the teacher, student(s), or any other adult) involved in the behavior incident share their perspective on what happened and how they were impacted. The intent is to achieve resolution through mutual understanding and respect. Classroom expectations should be discussed and reiterated at this time.
2. The teacher will check-in with the student periodically to ensure the relationship has been restored and to encourage continual relationship building
3. Parent(s) should be notified to:
  - a. Alert them of the infraction.
  - b. Get parental perspective on solutions (parent voice).
  - c. Share the outcome of the restorative intervention.
  - d. To encourage at home support for the identified classroom expectation.
  - e. To discuss, if necessary, the need for additional support for the student (e.g. counselor / social worker, S-Team, 504 Team, restorative assistant, counselor, psychologist or cluster support team). Additional support may be needed to support the classroom environment and/or teacher.
4. Interventions will be documented.

## LEVEL B: ADMINISTRATIVE REFERRAL

1. Administrator will hear the student's side of the story and provide an opportunity to write a statement.
2. The administrator will provide the student an opportunity to right the wrong and repair the harm.
3. A plan will be created to support the student's needs through providing interventions and support. Staff determines whether to involve a school social worker, nurse, school guidance counselor, psychologist, behavioral analyst, S-Team, 504 Team, IEP Team, or cluster support team. If school-based resources are unable to address the student's needs, a collaborative referral is created.
4. All interventions should be documented and provided to the parent or guardian.
5. If necessary, the administrator will have a conversation with the parent or guardian to discuss the student's needs and how to best support the student.
- 6.

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

## ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

7. If necessary, in-school suspension (ISS) of up to two days or comparable services may be utilized for middle and high school students. ISS does not take the place of a collaborative referral.

### LEVEL C: SUSPENSION OPTION

1. Steps one through five are repeated from Level B.
2. If necessary, administrators may give middle school and high school students ISS or comparable services for one to three days OR one to three days of out-of-school suspensions (OSS), not to exceed a total of three days.
3. A formal restorative conference must occur upon return from suspension with all necessary parties to modify the student's plan of support. Parents/guardians, student, teacher(s), relevant support staff and community supports must be invited.

### LEVEL D: SUSPENSION OPTION

1. Same as Level C, except that administrators may give ISS or comparable services for one to three days and/or OSS for one to five days if necessary. The combination of ISS and OSS may not exceed a total of five days for middle and high school students.
  - i. Code 414 ONLY – Group Fight violations, up to a 10 day suspension option may be used in lieu of expulsion for middle and high.
2. When choosing a higher-level response within the range of possible responses, an administrator must consider:
  - a. The student's age, health, disability, decision-making ability and prior intervention history.
  - b. The student's willingness to repair the harm.
  - c. The seriousness of the act.
  - d. The harm caused or the potential to cause harm, including any injuries caused.
  - e. The extent of actual disruption to the learning environment.
3. Upon return from suspension, a restorative conference must occur and a collaborative referral must be made. A plan of support for the student must be created.

### LEVEL E: EXPULSION OPTION

1. Same as level D, except that the administrator may expel a middle or high school student if necessary.
2. Expulsion Documentation: All interventions utilized prior to expulsion must be clearly documented. All reasons for expelling a student rather than using a lower level of response must be clearly detailed.
3. Upon return from expulsion, a formal restorative conference must be held with appropriate individuals including parent/guardian, student, teacher(s), relevant support staff and community supports.

Expulsion is a measure of last resort. Prior to expulsion, all of the following factors must be considered:

- The student's age, health, disability, decision-making ability and prior intervention history.
- The student's willingness to repair the harm.
- The seriousness of the act.
- The harm caused or the potential to cause harm, including any injuries caused.
- The extent of actual disruption to the learning environment.
- Whether the act was intentional.

\*\*Zero Tolerance Offenses as defined by state law require a level E response. All Zero Tolerance offenses require a mandatory expulsion of 180 school days.

### **Disciplinary Due Process for Suspensions and Expulsions\***

TNA shall maintain compliance with LEA policies and procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a student discipline policy/code of conduct violation.

ATTACHMENT C - STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY (SECTION 1.10)

## ATTACHMENT D: TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY ENROLLMENT POLICY (SECT. 1.11)

Tennessee Nature Academy (TNA) is an open enrollment charter school located in Nashville, TN serving grades 5-12. TNA will open its doors in the Fall of 2023, serving grades 5 and 6.

As a school of choice, TNA is committed to providing a fair and transparent process for prospective students to apply and enroll. The following document outlines the policies and procedures that TNA and its representatives employ to administer the annual student enrollment cycle.

**Eligibility** - Per TN § 49-13-106, “Public charter schools authorized by an LEA may be formed to provide quality educational options for all students residing within the jurisdiction of the chartering authority; provided, however, an LEA may authorize charters to enroll students residing outside the LEA in which the public charter school is located pursuant to the LEA out-of-district enrollment policy and in compliance with § 49-6-3003 and § 49-6-403(f).” To be eligible to attend TNA, a student must:

1. Be of appropriate age and/or meet the promotion requirements for a given grade level.
2. Have full-time, legal residence in Davidson County.

In order to prove a student meets residency requirements, TNA may ask the student’s legal parent/guardian to provide additional documentation at the time of enrollment or registration. Acceptable forms of residency documentation include:

- A residential utility bill in the resident’s name (issued within the last 60 days)
- Documentation from a federal, state, or local government agency (issued within the last 60 days)
- An original lease, mortgage statement, or deed
- A current property tax or homeowner’s/renter’s insurance bill
- Official payroll documentation (e.g. paystub) from an employer (issued within the last 60 days)

The TNA Enrollment Policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, handicap/disability, sexual orientation, ancestry, need for special education services, or sex, including gender identity, gender expression, and appearance. TNA admissions practices will comply with federal, state, and local laws and policies.

**Homeless Students** - The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act defines “homeless children and youth” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are: Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar Reason;

- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds, cars, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Abandoned in hospitals;
- Awaiting foster care placement;
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above; or
- Unaccompanied youth, including youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, such as runaways and youth denied housing by their families.

Homeless youth are afforded several important rights:

1. The right to immediate enrollment in school, even if lacking paperwork normally required for enrollment;

## ATTACHMENT D: TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY ENROLLMENT POLICY (SECT. 1.11)

## ATTACHMENT D: TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY ENROLLMENT POLICY (SECT. 1.11)

2. The right to attend school in his/her school of origin (if this is requested by the parent and is feasible) or in the school in the attendance area where the family or youth is currently residing;
3. The right to receive transportation to his/her school of origin, if this is requested by the parent;
4. The right to services comparable to those received by housed schoolmates, including transportation and supplemental education services;
5. The right to attend school along with children not experiencing homelessness.

Segregation based on a student's status as homeless is strictly prohibited. TNA will screen for homelessness as part of the enrollment and registration process and will keep in mind the possibility that a family may qualify as homeless, and thus have the enrollment rights stated above, when asking for additional documentation or proof of residency.

**Custody/Guardianship** - A parent/guardian must have legal custody or guardianship of a student to claim his or her residence as proof of enrollment eligibility. The residence of someone who is not the child's legal guardian cannot be claimed for eligibility purposes, even if a child stays at that residence. In circumstances of joint custody, either guardian's residence can serve as proof of enrollment eligibility.

**Shared Residency** - Parents/guardians of students may reside temporarily or permanently with a family member or other individual. In those circumstances, the parent/guardian will not be able to provide adequate proof of residency documents associated with his/her name. Accordingly, the parent/guardian and the primary resident of the home/apartment will be asked to complete a Shared Residence Affidavit.

**Lottery** - At the end of the application period, TNA staff will count all the applications postmarked, both physically and electronically, by 11:59 on the day of the deadline. In the event that TNA receives more student applications than available seats in a given grade level, offers of enrollment shall be determined through a public, random lottery. A third party will run the lottery and an independent accountant/attorney shall inspect the results and certify that the lottery was conducted in accordance with stated enrollment policies.

**Priority Groups** - Per TN § 49-13-113(c), TNA may afford enrollment preference to certain groups of students. TNA defines its enrollment priority groups, in order of preference, as follows:

Group	Name	Description
1	Children of TNA Employees & Board Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Not to exceed 10% of total school enrollment or 25 students, whichever is less.</li> <li>● Subject to the definition of "children" included below.</li> </ul>
2	Siblings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Applies to students who have a sibling currently enrolled at TNA</li> <li>● Subject to the definition of "sibling" included below</li> <li>● Note: Siblings who participate in the same lottery for the same grade (e.g. twins) shall be considered as a group. Provided capacity permits, if one sibling is chosen in the lottery, then all other siblings will automatically be offered enrollment as well.</li> </ul>
3	All Other Students	Any other eligible student who does not fall into one of the categories identified above.

## ATTACHMENT D: TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY ENROLLMENT POLICY (SECT. 1.11)

## ATTACHMENT D: TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY ENROLLMENT POLICY (SECT. 1.11)

**Relevant Definitions**

- **Children** - Sons or daughters of an employee or board members. Grandchildren, nieces, and nephews do not receive the children of employees and board members enrollment preference.
- **Sibling** - Children who share a common biological or legal guardian as opposed to children who live in the same household but do not share a common parent. TNA reserves the right to require proof of sibling status.

**Lottery Process** - MNPS requires that TNA employ its Student Assignment System (SAS) software for its enrollment lottery. The SAS system processes student records in the following manner:

1. The system sorts students, by grade level, into their associated priority groups.
2. After all students have been placed into a priority group, the system then randomizes the ranking of students within each group.
3. Students in a given grade level are then processed, one by one, in order of their priority group and ranking within that priority group.
4. If an opening exists, the student will receive an enrollment offer.
5. The system then repeats these steps for the next priority group and grade level.

**Waitlist** - Openings may not exist for all students processed during the lottery. If an opening does not exist at the time that the student's record is processed, the student will automatically be waitlisted. The order that a student is randomly processed in the lottery determines the order of that student on the waitlist. Applications received after the deadline will be added to the end of the waitlist. Late applications will be placed in the order in which they were received starting with the position immediately after the last student application processed in the lottery.

**Enrollment Procedure** - TNA will formally notify all families in attendance of the lottery outcome on the evening of the event. TNA will also notify families via phone, email, and mail on the day after the lottery event. To secure their student's seat, families must notify TNA in writing of intent to enroll by March 20th. Acceptable forms of written notification include:

- Intent to enroll form (in-person, mailed, scanned/emailed)
- Intent to enroll web-form

In the event that some families decline an offer of enrollment, TNA will begin processing waitlisted students as soon as seats become available. The families of waitlisted students will be notified via a combination of email, home visits, and telephone and will have 48 hours to verbally notify TNA of intent to enroll. Waitlisted families will have a week from the initial date of the enrollment offer to notify TNA in writing. TNA will continue to process waitlisted students, as necessary, until the last Friday in August 2023. At that point, TNA will no longer admit any new students for the remainder of the school year.

**Timeline** - TNA will adhere to the following timeline for its 2023 student enrollment cycle (dates subject to change based on application calendar established by MNPS):

## ATTACHMENT D: TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY ENROLLMENT POLICY (SECT. 1.11)

Milestone	Date	Description
Applications Available	August, 2022	Application Attachment launched on TNA website
Applications Due	February, 2023 (specific date TBD in accordance with MNPS school choice timeline)	This deadline represents when a student's application must be postmarked (mail) or sent (electronically) in order to be included in the lottery
Final Capacity Determination	3 Business Days after app due date	TNA staff will finalize the number of seats available and the associated number of students who will be offered enrollment.
Lottery (if necessary)	March, 2023 (Date TBD in accordance with MNPS school choice timeline)	Conducted in advance under legal supervision. Results will be announced to families. All families will also be notified by email and mail.
Intent to Enroll Decisions Due	March, 2023 (Date TBD in accordance with MNPS school choice timeline)	Families selected in the initial student enrollment lottery must notify TNA in writing of intent to enroll.
No Additional Offers	August 26, 2023	Following this date, TNA will no longer backfill seats off its waitlist

Firm dates, once established/confirmed, will be advertised to the public and posted on the TNA website.

**Mid-Year Transfers and Withdrawal** - Families who elect to withdraw their student from TNA or transfer to another school mid-year will be required to sign the MNPS withdrawal form acknowledging that they are forfeiting their seat at TNA and may not be able to apply again until the following academic year.

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

# Cane Ridge Community Trust

January 20, 2022

Mr. Jay R. Renfro  
Magistrate  
Cane Ridge Education Alliance

Via Email to royjamesrenfro@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Renfro,

We are pleased to provide our support for your idea of a Nature Academy at an appropriate site in Cane Ridge.

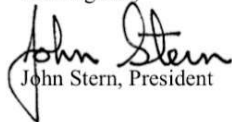
As you know, the Cane Ridge area was a primarily rural community with farms and homesteads dominating the natural and built environments. That brought with it an ongoing process of offspring learning to experience and understand the interactions between land-animals-humans.

Today, significant development pressure is causing the suburbanization of large tracts of land. That means that the lessons that were taught as a natural component of growing up are now missing from many of our newer residents.

Those skills will likely be needed again as climate change brings with it harsh new realities such as drought, floods, and more violent storms to our area.

We do hope that you are successful in your efforts, as we need this knowledge base imbued in the minds and souls of some of our young people.

Best regards,



John Stern, President

6688 Nolensville Pike Ste.108-202 • Cane Ridge, Tennessee 37027-8833

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)



School of Education and Psychology  
 Southern Adventist University  
 PO Box 370  
 Collegedale, TN 37315

January 17, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

As the director of the MEd in Outdoor Teacher Education at Southern Adventist University, I am excited to hear about Tennessee Nature Academy. Local to us is Ivy Academy, a charter school in Hamilton County, which is similar to what is being planned by the Nature Academy. Ivy Academy enrollment is in high demand. The community highly supports Ivy Academy and plans are in place for Skillern Elementary (K-5 programming component of Ivy Academy) to start soon.

I have talked with Mr. Renfro and some of the leadership team planning the Tennessee Nature Academy. We have discussed how SAU's program may be able to help in the planning process as well as possibly being a source of future teachers for the school. The team seems to have a good direction in their planning efforts.

I am personally excited about possible partnership with Tennessee Nature Academy. With COVID's impact on education, Tennessee Nature Academy would be well situated in providing an education environment that would be conducive in controlling the spread of the virus. The outdoor learning space provides for the student needs: fresh air, regular exercise, increase focus are just a few.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions at [mmurdoch@southern.edu](mailto:mmurdoch@southern.edu) or 423.236.2984

Sincerely,

Dr. Monty Murdoch  
 Professor of Outdoor Education  
 Director, MEd programs

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

March 19, 2021

To whom it may concern,

Bloomsbury Farm is a 400-acre, organic farm located in Smyrna, Tennessee. We have a commitment to sustainability, not only to the land, but to ourselves and to those around us. Every fruit and vegetable is grown with dedication, love, and good old-fashioned (and organic) Tennessee soil. Our commitment is simple — to provide only the best.

The Covid-19 pandemic brought with it many challenges and shifts in priorities—one of them being the expansion of our Camp Bloomsbury. Camp Bloomsbury quickly became a popular solution to how to provide an active, enriching, safe learning environment in this wild year. We've seen first-hand how powerful a nature-based model of learning is for young people and encourage more models to make this shift.

Additionally, we believe young people not only need to learn about food, farming, and nature, but young people also need to envision themselves as future farmers. We need young people to be passionate about farming. For those reasons, we are excited about the prospects of a school like Tennessee Nature Academy to launch nearby in Southeast Davidson County. We think farms and schools can and should work together to make our community better.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Bell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

June 28, 2021

President, Regent Homes, LLC  
 6901 Lenox Village Drive #107  
 Nashville, TN 37211  
 (615) 333-9000  
[david.mcgowan@regenthomes-tn.com](mailto:david.mcgowan@regenthomes-tn.com)

To David McGowan and Regent Homes,

I write to share Diverse Charter Schools Coalition's (DCSC) support of Tennessee Nature Academy's application to open a new, diverse-by-design charter school in the extremely diverse Cane Ridge Community in Nashville. DCSC's mission is to catalyze and support the creation and expansion of high-quality diverse public charter schools through strategic research, advocacy, membership activities, and outreach.

Tennessee Nature Academy's co-founder Jay Renfro is a member of our 2021 School Launch Program-Fellowship. The School Launch Program-Fellowship, in collaboration with host school site leaders, member schools, and local partners, recruits and prepares future school leaders for new, excellent diverse-by-design charter schools, to launch by 2023. Successful Fellows of the School Launch Program are entrepreneurial leaders with a deep understanding of the diverse-by-design model. They establish a clear vision and lead people toward it by creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive school community. They use data to inform decisions and measure outcomes. Ultimately, they launch diverse-by-design charter schools that lead students to strong academic results for all students and are closing the gaps in student performance, family satisfaction, and staff retention across relevant subgroups.

Over the course of the year-long program:

- Fellows develop their school leadership skills through an intensive residency at a school aligned to their individual needs and goals. Fellows complete a full year residency, under the mentorship of a Coalition member school leader. School leaders are selected through a rigorous process to ensure the Fellow will have a successful year.
- The Fellowship arms Fellows with broad access to experts and resources. Experts from across the Coalition lead all content sessions at Workshops, Kickoff, and Capstone. Workshops are held in conjunction with Coalition-wide events, such as Regional Convenings and the Annual Convening, so that Fellows expand their network of experts in diverse by design schools. Finally, outside presenters with expertise in diversity, equity, and inclusion work with Fellows over the course of the year.

26 Broadway  
 8th Floor  
 New York, NY 10004  
[www.diversecharters.org](http://www.diversecharters.org)



- During the Fellowship, Fellows are exposed to exemplary diverse-by-design models from across the Coalition. Fellows tour 12 schools during three Excellent School Visits, participate in three in-person Workshops, attend Kickoff, and present at Capstone over the course of the Fellowship.
- We coordinate across and among stakeholders to ensure all learning is individualized, relevant, and actionable. Fellows develop their own strategic plans to guide their learning throughout the Fellowship. The individual goals within Fellows' strategic plan inform the schools they tour on Excellent School Visits, the professional development they participate in during Workshops, their work at Kickoff and Capstone, and their ongoing coaching.

As alumni, Fellows will continue to receive individualized support, a Coalition member mentor, and participate in Excellent School Visits.

We are excited by Jay's development as a Fellow and about the charter school application he is creating. Many of the programmatic elements have been modeled by other successful diverse design schools, and is backed by education research. We support his application to open an excellent diverse-by-design charter school for the students and families of the greater Nashville Community.

Sincerely,

Sonia C. Park  
 Executive Director  
 Diverse Charter Schools Coalition  
[www.diversecharterschools.org](http://www.diversecharterschools.org)

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

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Friends of Mill Ridge Park  
PO Box 676  
Antioch, Tennessee 37013

**March 26, 2021**

To whom it may concern,

Mill Ridge Park is a forthcoming 600-acre regional park located in Davidson County. Friends of Mill Ridge Park is an Antioch-based nonprofit that exists to enhance and advocate for Mill Ridge Park to strengthen the community in Southeast Davidson County.

Our work is guided by the following organizational values:

- Healthy and active living
- Inclusion, diversity, culture, shared space
- Equitable access to outdoor space and recreation
- Environmental protection, nature conservation
- Historical preservation
- Sustainability
- Partnership
- Agriculture

Since 2018, we have enjoyed working with Mr. Roy Renfro as he has developed partnerships with the park in the public and charter school sectors. Our partnership has led to nature-based learning experiences for over two hundred students. Environmental monitoring projects have provided a crucial service to the park and the community.

We would welcome continued partnership with Mr. Renfro as he develops Tennessee Nature Academy. Our strategy includes partnering with schools in Southeast Davidson County for the purposes of expanding access to the outdoors. We are hopeful a partnership with Mr. Renfro would lead to more schools incorporating nature-based learning into their methodology.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Darrell Hawks". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Darrell Hawks

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

**Biology Department**

MTSU P.O. Box 60  
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37132  
(615) 898-2847



March 19, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

Middle Tennessee State University is a public university located less than an hour from the proposed target zip code for Tennessee Nature Academy. We see our collaborative partnership as serving two purposes. First, partnering with local schools is key to attracting students who would be well-prepared for our academic areas of study. The second goal is to provide job placement for our students once they have completed their academic study at MTSU.

MTSU has a wide range of areas of study related to the proposed pathways of Tennessee Nature Academy. Several of them are listed here:

1. Agribusiness
2. Animal Science
3. Biology
4. Environmental Science
5. Plant and Soil Science
6. Nutrition and Food Science
7. Special Education

Our Center for Environmental Education, which is part of the Department of Biology, has worked closely with Mr. Roy Renfro over the past three years as he and his students have engaged in important conservation projects in our region. Environmental monitoring projects provide a crucial service to the parks and the community; we look forward to the opportunity to continue this work.

This letter serves as MTSU's commitment to continue to work with Mr. Renfro as he develops Tennessee Nature Academy. We are committed to partnering with schools in Southeast Davidson County for the purposes of expanding access to the outdoors and would hope this partnership would lead to more schools adopting a nature-based approach in Tennessee.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions at [kim.sadler@mtsu.edu](mailto:kim.sadler@mtsu.edu) or 615.904.8283.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Cleary Sadler".

Dr. Kim Cleary Sadler  
Director, Center for Environmental Education  
Co-director, Center for Cedar Glade Studies

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)



March 21, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

Our Joyful Learning Community, LLC provides nature-based experiences for families and professionals that honor culture, explore well-being, and inspires joy. We do this by centering the narratives and roles of past and present Indigenous, Black and People of Color in nature.

We are excited to support the TN Nature Academy and to provide the following services:

- *Community-based Inquiry*
  - Community-based inquiry is a beautiful process for shifting power to community members to lead in the creation of programs and curricula that meet the needs in communities. Key community members will be identified and paid a stipend to unearth and utilize the skills and talents of the community as the foundation for the curriculum and programming. Our Joyful Learning Community, LLC will serve as a coordinator and facilitator of this process by training community members to analyze the data collected from community members about their ideas, skills, and knowledge related to nature. The data would then inform strategic plans, curriculum development and program decisions. This process is critical to supporting long-term outcomes for programs, buy-in from community members and building an equitable organization.
- *Professional Learning*
  - Professional learning will be provided to the staff about how to create culturally relevant nature-based programs and curriculum. The strategies presented are grounded in multicultural education teaching strategies and culturally relevant education. The strategies include: 1) Examining bias through an anti-racist lens; 2) Shifting mindsets about what counts as nature; 3) Building trust in YOUR community; 4) Creating an inclusive environment; 5) Transforming curriculum; 6) Advocating for access and equity; and 7) Inspiring joy. Each strategy will be presented overtime with tools to support understanding and implementation.
- *Coaching*
  - Coaching is essential for teaching and leadership staff to be able to implement the strategies listed above. So, in addition to taking part in professional learning regularly, coaching sessions will support staff to carefully think through each strategy and how they may implement it in their role, curriculum and program.

We are excited about pursuing this partnership with the TN Nature Academy.

Peace and joy,

Ashley Brailsford

ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

One day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education.



March 18, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

Teach For America works toward the day when all children will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education. We find, develop, and support equity-minded leaders – individually and in teams – so they can transform education and expand opportunity with children, starting in the classroom.

TFA recruits outstanding leaders from all backgrounds and career sectors to become TFA “corps members.” That includes people who have previously taught, people transitioning to a career in education, and people who are just graduating from college.

In partnership with local universities such as Lipscomb University and Relay Graduate School of Education, nonprofit organizations, and Tennessee businesses, corps members receive initial training, ongoing professional development, and access to an unparalleled resource and support network.

After serving as a corps member in 2013-2015, Mr. Roy Renfro was a National Finalist in Teach for America’s Social Innovation Award— an award given annually to educators with innovative solutions to address issues that impact educational inequality. Given our confidence in Mr. Renfro’s leadership and the need for high-quality diverse school models for our students in Nashville, we write to share support and enthusiasm for the incubation of Mr. Renfro’s nature-based school, Tennessee Nature Academy.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can be of service.

In partnership,



Ben Schumacher  
TFA Nashville-Chattanooga | Executive Director | 314-518-9445



One day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education.

[Check out our Top Stories](#)



AN AMERICORPS PROGRAM

220 Athens Way, Suite 300 • Nashville, Tennessee 37228 • P 615.242.6263 F 615.242.6249 • www.teachforamerica.org

ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)



January 14, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

The Tennessee Concrete Association is a 501 (C) 6 trade association serving the concrete and construction industry across Tennessee. We were formed in 1986 and represent approximately 200 companies that operate in the concrete construction community within Tennessee. Our ready mix producer members represent about 70% of the ready mixed concrete produced in our state.

We are excited about the mission of Tennessee Nature Academy to cultivate happy and healthy young adults who are knowledgeable about the world, passionate about the outdoors, and committed to doing good work. We would welcome a continued partnership with Tennessee Nature Academy to further this mission that emphasizes sustainability in our community, and in our construction practices.

We believe a partnership with Tennessee Nature Academy would provide an excellent opportunity to introduce young people to the many opportunities that exist in the concrete construction industry for careers that pay well while providing the satisfaction of shaping and creating the essential infrastructure that our society needs. Our organization looks forward to working with the Tennessee Nature Academy to provide hands-on learning and skill training to their students as they move through the Academy's well-rounded and practical curriculum.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alan Sparkman", is written over a horizontal line.

Alan Sparkman, CAE, LEED AP  
Executive Director  
Tennessee Concrete Association

699 PRESIDENT PLACE, SUITE 400, SMYRNA, TN 37167

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)



January 14, 2022

Dear Tennessee Charter School Application Review Team,

The Positivity Project (P2) is dedicated to empowering America's youth to build positive relationships and become their best selves. Positive psychology's 24 character strengths serve as its foundation. Ranging from bravery and perseverance to integrity and gratitude, the character strengths are classified and described in the 800-page book *Character Strengths and Virtues* co-authored by Drs. Chris Peterson and Martin Seligman. These strengths aren't about ignoring the negative. Instead, they help us overcome life's inevitable adversities.

To achieve its mission, P2 partners with Pre-K – 12 public, private, and charter schools across the country and equips educators with the resources, training, and strategy to teach their students about character strengths and positive relationships. P2 is a school-wide endeavor grounded in the consistency of daily classroom instruction. P2 Partner Schools dedicate one week to each strength and students learn through daily 15-minute classroom lessons that are different for every grade level. These lessons help students understand character through definitions, examples, discussions, and exercises. P2's model is holistic, incorporating students, educators, and parents through regular interaction with character strengths vocabulary and concepts.

By consistently teaching students about the character strengths that people possess, they see themselves and other people based on the content of their character. This ability enhances their self-awareness and self-confidence, understanding and appreciation of others, and interpersonal relationships – which, in the long-term, will positively influence students across their lifespans. In the short-term, it leads to more positive interactions and positive relationships within classrooms and schools – ultimately leading to a more positive school culture that supports teachers' ability to teach and students' ability to learn.

P2 empowers students by acknowledging that the 24 character strengths are already part of who they are as people. It helps them realize that each and every one of them can tap into these strengths – and not just as students, but for the rest of their lives.

The Positivity Project would be thrilled to partner with Tennessee Nature Academy, as we believe the school's core focus areas of adventure, connectedness, sustainability, and impact pair perfectly with positive psychology. As students engage in real-world learning within TNA's diverse, affirming community, their focus on health and happiness will empower them to respond to the world's inevitable adversities and effectively prepare them for college and/or career success.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth MacWilliams  
Director of Partnerships - Southeast Region

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)



January 27, 2022

Mr. Roy James Renfro  
 Founder  
 Tennessee Nature Academy  
 5844 Pettus Road  
 Antioch, TN 37013-4514

Dear Mr. Renfro,

Charter Schools Development Corporation ("CSDC") is pleased to submit this letter of intent to Tennessee Nature Academy as a representation of our interest in providing facilities and facilities financing assistance for the school's future site.

CSDC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit Community Development Finance Institution ("CDFI") and eight time U.S. Department of Education credit enhancement recipient, the largest single grantee. We are the largest national CDFI focused exclusively on the financial and facility needs of charter schools. We pride ourselves in promoting community development by providing financing and real estate services to our client schools. CSDC will finance acquisitions, site development, construction financing, leasehold improvements and mini- permanent loans, or obtain financing to acquire and construct/renovate a facility for lease with option-to-purchase. Since inception, CSDC and its affiliates have assisted over 200 schools in 30 states - serving over 71,000 students , and leveraged over a half billion in private capital financing and lease commitments for more than 6.3 million sf of safe, modern and efficient educational facilities..

Our website, [www.csdc.org](http://www.csdc.org), can also give you additional information.

CSDC believes that Tennessee Nature Academy will be a positive educational alternative for families in Antioch, TN. We look forward to working with the school on this very exciting project.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Secrest  
 Senior Vice President

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7880 Milestone Parkway \* Suite 425 \* Hanover, MD 21076 \* Tel (443) 561-1280 \* Fax (443) 561-1281

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)



To whom it may concern,

The Village is a new church with a brand new facility located at the intersection of Antioch, Cane Ridge, Brentwood, Nolensville, and South Nashville. One of our aims as a church is to be a church "for the community," which means we want to be the kind of church that serves the community so well and so thoroughly that we would be missed if we were no longer here. We have partnered with multiple schools during our six years as a church. These partnerships have included helping start backpack feeding programs for students who suffer from food insecurity on the weekends, working with schools on improvement and beautification projects as needed on their campuses, and supporting teachers, staff members, and administrators with additional resources and gifts of appreciation.

We are excited about the mission of Tennessee Nature Academy to cultivate happy and healthy young adults who are knowledgeable about the world, passionate about the outdoors, and committed to doing good work. We would absolutely look forward to ways we could be in partnership with Tennessee Nature Academy, its staff, and its students, in order to further this mission that emphasizes sustainability in our community and our shared interests for the community.

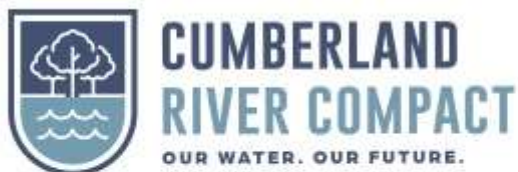
We agree that introducing young people to the outdoors is important to their overall well-being. We have a shared interest in providing outdoor spaces and green spaces for our community on our property so that people can access the outdoors, so we are eager for Tennessee Nature Academy to begin in our area and for the ways that our missions align. We are very excited that this school will be neighbors with us in our city's most diverse community, and we are excited to support them and partner with them in any way we can.

Sincerely,

**Travis Garner**

Travis Garner  
Lead Pastor, The Village  
[travis@thevillagenashville.com](mailto:travis@thevillagenashville.com)  
615-828-8728

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT (SECTION 1.12)



January 24, 2022

To whom it may concern,

The Cumberland River Compact is excited to partner with the Tennessee Nature Academy (TNA) as they build their school to support project-based learning, outdoor education, and future college and career success for the young people of Nashville.

The Cumberland River Compact's mission is to enhance the health and enjoyment of the Cumberland River through education, collaboration, and action. Education is a key part of our mission and we work to support equitable access to learning experiences and a healthy environment. We do this through experiential learning, resource development, and teacher training.

We are excited about the mission of Tennessee Nature Academy to cultivate happy and healthy young adults who are knowledgeable about the world, passionate about the outdoors, and committed to doing good work. The approach of the Tennessee Nature Academy aligns with our mission and vision for education in the region.

As part of a partnership with the Tennessee Nature Academy, the Cumberland River Compact will support student learning and community action through our Adopt-a-Stream program. In this program, students commit to steward and care for a stream over a 2 year period, engaging in regular activities like stream clean-ups. TNA is also partnering with us on our summer 2022 recreation clean-ups at State Parks in Tennessee where they will be promoting the opportunity to their community and supporting the events with the Compact. We also continue to support schools like TNA through the development of our environmental STEM curriculum and associated professional development trainings.

We are hopeful the success of the Tennessee Nature Academy will lead to more schools incorporating nature-based learning into their methodology. We are excited that this school will be rooted in our city's most diverse community, further expanding access to the outdoors.

Sincerely,

Catherine Price  
Education and Outreach Program Manager  
Cumberland River Compact

---

2 VICTORY AVE #500, NASHVILLE, TN 37213  
INFO@CUMBERLANDRIVERCOMPACT.ORG  
615.837.1151

TEACH. PROTECT. RESTORE.

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT- Petition signatures (SECTION 1.12)

petition\_signatures\_jobs\_30660251\_20220523160434

Name	City	State	Postal Code	Country	Signed On
Roy Renfro				US	2021-09-13
Alisha Keig	Nashville	TN		US	2021-10-29
Valentine O	Smyrna	TN	37167	US	2021-10-29
joel O	Lavergne	TN	37086	US	2021-10-29
janelle biney	mt.juliet	TN	37122	US	2021-10-29
jaylin stallworth	La Vergne	TN	37086	US	2021-10-29
Gabe Adade	La Vergne	TN	37086	US	2021-10-29
Sarah Clanton	Nashville	TN	37214	US	2021-10-29
Satricia Moore	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-10-29
Rachel Hinson	Brentwood	TN	37027	US	2021-10-29
Taya Ray	antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-10-29
Hakheme El-Amin	Smyrna	TN	37167	US	2021-10-29
Devin Donkor	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-10-29
Sarah Savage	Mount Juliet	TN	37122	US	2021-10-29
Amanda Kumor	Philadelphia	PA	19128	US	2021-10-29
LeNia Stanley	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-10-29
Victory Iduoze	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-10-29
Morin Kristen	Memphis	TN	38111	US	2021-10-29
Abigail Mensah	Birmingham	AL	35211	US	2021-10-29
Sloane Bridget	Nolensville	TN	37135	US	2021-10-29
Jessica Russell	Wayne	PA	19087	US	2021-10-29
Sydney Miller	Pompano Beach	FL	33063	US	2021-10-29
Hendren Kathleen	Franklin	TN	37064	US	2021-10-29
Jessica Reimers	Charleston	SC	29455	US	2021-10-29
Elizabeth Farris	Kansas City	MO	64114	US	2021-10-29
Vicki Dooley	Nashville	TN	37209	US	2021-10-29
Erin Truman	Nashville	TN	37206	US	2021-10-29
Glasgow Cathie	Brentwood	TN	37027	US	2021-10-29
serena ruiz	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-10-29

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT -petition signatures (SECTION 1.12)

<b>Samuel Miller</b>	Philadelphia	PA	19128	US	2021-10-29
<b>Utonah Ruiz</b>	Goodlettsville	TN	37072	US	2021-10-29
<b>Tiffany Hyde</b>	Franklin	TN	37067	US	2021-10-29
<b>Martha Martinez</b>	Brentwood	TN	37027	US	2021-10-29
<b>Ginger Eley</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-10-29
<b>Pat Caldwell</b>	Franklin	TN	37069	US	2021-10-29
<b>Emily Baker</b>	Brentwood	TN	37027	US	2021-10-29
<b>Bill DeLoache</b>	Nashville	TN	37205	US	2021-10-29
<b>Allison Gossett</b>	Nolensville	TN	37135	US	2021-10-29
<b>Jason Amaya</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-10-29
<b>Brayan Hernandez</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-10-29
<b>nasreen atrushi</b>	nashvillie	TN	37211	US	2021-10-29
<b>Makenzie Boen</b>	Azle	TX	76020	US	2021-10-29
<b>Ian Norvet</b>	Franklin		37064	Honduras	2021-10-29
<b>Goss Molly</b>	Nashville	TN	37217	US	2021-10-29
<b>Miller Joshua</b>	Pineville	NC	28134	US	2021-10-29
<b>Lopez Kellee</b>	Nashville	TN	37221	US	2021-10-29
<b>Natalie Morosi</b>	Nashville	TN	37212	US	2021-10-29
<b>Rebecca Miller</b>	Monteagle	TN	37356	US	2021-10-29
<b>Christina Theodoru</b>	Nashville	TN	37220	US	2021-10-29
<b>Chelsea Merkel</b>	Pittsburgh	PA	15218	US	2021-10-29
<b>prodby silvia</b>	oxford		27565	US	2021-10-29
<b>Shannon Frost</b>	Nolensville	TN	37135	US	2021-10-29
<b>Philip Philip Henninger</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-10-29
<b>Mitzi Renfro</b>	Brentwood	TN	37027	US	2021-10-30
<b>Marie Miller</b>	Centerville	TN	46550	US	2021-10-30
<b>Lilly Dodge</b>	Columbia		38401	US	2021-10-30
<b>Emma Reynolds</b>	Denver	NC	28037	US	2021-10-30
<b>Jillian Reily</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-10-30
<b>Sam Reily</b>	ANTIOCH	TN	37013	US	2021-10-30
<b>nikki ford</b>	Wichita		67226	US	2021-10-30
<b>Donna Minatra</b>	Lebanon	TN	37090	US	2021-10-30

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT -petition signatures (SECTION 1.12)

<b>Elizabeth Smith</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-10-30
<b>Travonda Taylor</b>	Goodlettsville	TN	37072	US	2021-10-30
<b>Watkins Shalom</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-10-30
<b>Nathan Brown</b>	Smyrna	TN	37167	US	2021-10-30
<b>Gomez Madeline</b>	Smyrna	TN	37167	US	2021-10-30
<b>Eric Hobbs</b>	Maryville	TN	37801	US	2021-10-30
<b>Heather Neisen</b>	Smyrna	TN	37167	US	2021-10-30
<b>mary paul</b>	Franklin	TN	37064	US	2021-10-31
<b>Savanna Hobbs</b>	Maryville	TN	37801	US	2021-10-31
<b>matthew reynolds</b>	Knoxville		37920	US	2021-10-31
<b>Teddi Bullard</b>	Johnson City		37601	US	2021-10-31
<b>Mohamed Ali</b>	Fayetteville		28314	US	2021-10-31
<b>Sara Johnson</b>	Kingsport		37664	US	2021-10-31
<b>Valerie Cumakova</b>	Bayonne		7002	US	2021-10-31
<b>Nate Renfro</b>	Franklin	TN	37064	US	2021-10-31
<b>Rebecca Hays</b>	Norristown	PA	19401	US	2021-10-31
<b>Scott McDowell</b>	Jackson	WY	83001	US	2021-10-31
<b>Anna Hudson</b>	Peachtree Corners		30092	US	2021-10-31
<b>Gabriella Ward</b>	Memphis		38103	US	2021-11-01
<b>Crystal Mccauley</b>	Washington		20011	US	2021-11-01
<b>Madison M</b>	Murfreesboro		35810	US	2021-11-01
<b>Kathleen Dennis</b>	Nolensville	TN	37135	US	2021-11-01
<b>Raymond Ochoa</b>	Pomona	CA	91766	US	2021-11-01
<b>Jennifer Mcconnell</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-11-01
<b>Karen Brown</b>				US	2021-11-01
<b>David Perez</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-11-01
<b>Franpaul Lobo</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-11-01
<b>Isaac Delgadillo</b>	Nashville	TN	37013	US	2021-11-01
<b>Peter Abdala</b>	Spring Hill	TN	37174	US	2021-11-01
<b>Jenna Henderson</b>	Nashville	TN	37206	US	2021-11-01
<b>Stanley Phanthavong</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-01
<b>Lesly Zelaya</b>	Nashville	TN	37013	US	2021-11-01

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT -petition signatures (SECTION 1.12)

<b>Justin Hughes</b>	Murfreesboro	TN	37129	US	2021-11-01
<b>Juan Marquez</b>	Nashville	TN	37013	US	2021-11-01
<b>Christopher Piloto</b>	Nashville	TN	37013	US	2021-11-01
<b>Jaylen Stinson</b>	Louisville	KY	40216	US	2021-11-01
<b>Michael Smith</b>	Brentwood	TN	37027	US	2021-11-01
<b>Roberto Hernandez</b>	Antioch	TN	37122	US	2021-11-01
<b>Jonathan Perez</b>	Birmingham	AL	35215	US	2021-11-01
<b>Eric Ferrer</b>	Antioch	TN	37211	US	2021-11-01
<b>Ariet Chavez</b>	Nashville	TN	37013	US	2021-11-01
<b>Sydney Price</b>	Nashville	TN	37203	US	2021-11-01
<b>Demerius Webster</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-11-01
<b>Amanuel Benti</b>	Nashville	TN	37013	US	2021-11-01
<b>Laurencia Austrie</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-01
<b>Roxana Milosis</b>	Basking Ridge		8812	US	2021-11-01
<b>Keiyoki Rembert</b>	Franklin		53132	US	2021-11-02
<b>Lisette Roman</b>	Parlin	NJ	8859	US	2021-11-02
<b>Zachary Durbin</b>	Hendersonville	TN	37075	US	2021-11-02
<b>kapil sharma</b>	sadar hp		175008	US	2021-11-02
<b>Ming Mo</b>	Brooklyn		11233	US	2021-11-02
<b>Ángel Vega</b>	Waterbury		6710	US	2021-11-02
<b>Trisha Christensen</b>	Joliet		60432	US	2021-11-02
<b>Dmitrii Zavialov</b>	Fort Lauderdale		33311	US	2021-11-03
<b>Jason Bargsley</b>	Russellville		37860	US	2021-11-03
<b>Audrey Adams</b>	Ocala		34473	US	2021-11-03
<b>Paityn Swift</b>	Clarksville		37042	US	2021-11-03
<b>nevaeh garton</b>	La Vergbe	TN	37128	US	2021-11-03
<b>Dylan Lupo</b>	Murfreesboro		37127	US	2021-11-03
<b>Ahmet Ismailoglu</b>	Chicago		60625	US	2021-11-03
<b>Owen Bam</b>	Chestertown		21620	US	2021-11-03
<b>Linda Ramsey</b>	Riverside		92506	US	2021-11-03
<b>Krista Bing</b>	Brownsburg		46112	US	2021-11-03
<b>Suzanne Peters</b>	Knoxville		37934	US	2021-11-03

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT -petition signatures (SECTION 1.12)

<b>Buddy Barbour</b>	Creedmoor	NC	27522	US	2021-11-03
<b>Paloma Calderon</b>	Franklin		37064-2409	US	2021-11-03
<b>Keshav Lincoln</b>	Annapolis		21401	US	2021-11-04
<b>Fallon Britt</b>	Pikeville		37367	US	2021-11-04
<b>Rickkay King</b>	Washington	DC	20002	US	2021-11-04
<b>Akther Hossain</b>	Los Angeles		90096	US	2021-11-04
<b>Ted Martinez</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-11-04
<b>Trevor Henderson</b>	Nashville	TN	37206	US	2021-11-04
<b>nader gerges</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-05
<b>david rooker</b>	Rockford		49341	US	2021-11-08
<b>Jason Cazarez marrufo</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-11-08
<b>stephanie guadarrama</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-08
<b>Kason Jackson</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-08
<b>Alula Gebru</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-08
<b>Ana Morales</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-08
<b>JaVarion Houston</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-08
<b>samuel mejia carrera</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-08
<b>Joy Logston</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-08
<b>Hassani cruz</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-08
<b>Isteer Aiad</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-08
<b>tommy seals</b>	Nashville	TN	37217	US	2021-11-08
<b>Amy Huffman</b>	Nashville	TN	37204	US	2021-11-08
<b>Jacklynn Barnett</b>	Charleston		25312	US	2021-11-09
<b>Jay Marrufo</b>	Birmingham	AL	35211	US	2021-11-09
<b>Natalie Cessner</b>	Conroe		77384	US	2021-11-09
<b>Amber Calvert</b>	Nashville		37221	US	2021-11-09
<b>Caitlyn Harris</b>	Stafford		22554	US	2021-11-09
<b>Douglas Knake</b>	Fort mill		29708	US	2021-11-09
<b>Shelby Alexander</b>	Hermitage	TN	37122	US	2021-11-09
<b>Joseph Arriaga</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-11
<b>Josh Standiford</b>	Lake Zurich		60047	US	2021-11-11
<b>jayah Bocanegra</b>	los angeles		91754	US	2021-11-11

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT -petition signatures (SECTION 1.12)

<b>Joshua Fletcher</b>	Arlington		38002	US	2021-11-13
<b>Karin Savage</b>	Hermitage	TN	37076	US	2021-11-14
<b>Ahmed Al-Nassary</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-16
<b>Mark Gerges</b>	Birmingham	AL	35211	US	2021-11-16
<b>Cindi Gonzalez</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-16
<b>jenny serrano</b>	nashville	TN	37013	US	2021-11-16
<b>Erenee Makram</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-16
<b>dunia soud</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-16
<b>milly tadele</b>	La Vergne	TN	37086	US	2021-11-16
<b>Emily Cantrill</b>	Mount Juliet	TN	37122	US	2021-11-19
<b>Alexandra Cantrill</b>	Nashville	TN	37215	US	2021-11-19
<b>Reis Cantrill</b>	Mount Juliet	TN	37122	US	2021-11-19
<b>Julie Simone</b>	Nashville	TN	37205	US	2021-11-19
<b>Daniel Brink-Washington</b>	Buffalo	NY	14220	US	2021-11-20
<b>Daniel Jimenez</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-20
<b>Sherri Johnson</b>	Brentwood	TN	37027	US	2021-11-25
<b>Edgar Gonzalez-Alvarado</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-11-28
<b>Melissa Aust</b>	Nashville	TN	37215	US	2021-11-30
<b>Holly Harrison Cline</b>	Lewisburg	PA	17837	US	2021-11-30
<b>Lathram Berry</b>	Franklin	TN	37064	US	2021-11-30
<b>Jackeline Navarrete</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-30
<b>Zachary Cline</b>	Lewisburg	PA	17837	US	2021-11-30
<b>Nancy Waynick</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-11-30
<b>Keeley Kirk</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-11-30
<b>Kathy Conrad</b>	Cookeville	TN	38506	US	2021-11-30
<b>abrianna morales</b>	Nashville	TN	37222	US	2021-11-30
<b>Amanda Hasher</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-11-30
<b>Rashaun Whitman</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2021-12-01
<b>Lydia Wood</b>	Fort Wayne	IN	46804	US	2021-12-06
<b>Heather Lose</b>	Coalmont	TN	37313	US	2021-12-08
<b>Meredith Melrose</b>	Murfreesboro	TN	37128	US	2021-12-09
<b>Tracey Ferrin</b>	Kingston Springs	TN	37082	US	2021-12-10

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT -petition signatures (SECTION 1.12)

<b>Jeff Miller</b>	Syracuse	IN	46567	US	2021-12-10
<b>Laurel Creech</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-12-18
<b>JaMille Donaldson</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2021-12-27
<b>Corina Newsome</b>	Atlanta	GA	30331	US	2022-01-05
<b>Will Mackintosh</b>	Decatur	GA	30030	US	2022-01-06
<b>MOIRA MOYNIHAN</b>	Philadelphia	PA	19103	US	2022-01-09
<b>Meco Polk</b>	Nashville	TN	37216	US	2022-01-10
<b>Jacob Hand</b>	Surprise	AZ	85379	US	2022-01-11
<b>Lisa Dalrymple</b>	Phoenix	AZ	85044	US	2022-01-12
<b>Raymond Williams</b>	Nashville	TN	37209	US	2022-01-12
<b>Lauren Walsh</b>	Pittsburgh	PA	15220	US	2022-01-25
<b>Shannon Pickering</b>	South Pittsburg	TN	37380	US	2022-01-25
<b>Zach Fisher</b>	Bell Buckle	TN	37020	US	2022-01-25
<b>Jennifer Detrick</b>	Franklin	TN	37064	US	2022-01-25
<b>Matthew Johnson</b>	Walterboro	SC	29488	US	2022-01-25
<b>Jose Amaya</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2022-01-25
<b>Dantriel McWilliams</b>	Smyrna	TN	37167	US	2022-01-25
<b>Katherine Orr</b>	Brentwood	TN	37064	US	2022-01-25
<b>Andrew Rayner</b>	Brooks	ME	4921	US	2022-01-25
<b>Katie Hollis</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2022-01-25
<b>Caroline Ragon</b>	Little Rock	AR	72207	US	2022-01-26
<b>Lynn Warren</b>	Centerville	TN	37033	US	2022-01-26
<b>Haidar Alsayegh</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2022-01-26
<b>Cooper Pinson</b>	Lebanon	TN	37090	US	2022-01-26
<b>Andrew Tharpe</b>	Knoxville	TN	37916	US	2022-01-26
<b>Mason Bryant</b>	Nashville	TN	37209	US	2022-01-26
<b>David Pinson</b>	Nashville	TN	37235	US	2022-01-26
<b>Jackson Liggett</b>	Powell	TN	37849	US	2022-01-26
<b>Stan LeQuire</b>	Nobleboro	ME	4555	US	2022-01-27
<b>Jan Witte</b>	Simpsonville	SC	29681	US	2022-01-27
<b>JOSH WILSON</b>	NASHVILLE	TN	37216	US	2022-01-27
<b>Jennifer Sauer</b>	Crossville	TN	38572	US	2022-01-29

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT -petition signatures (SECTION 1.12)

<b>Megan Renfro</b>	Franklin	TN	37064	US	2022-01-29
<b>Diane Brogan</b>	College Grove	TN	37046	US	2022-01-29
<b>Bess Greevy</b>	Nashville	TN	37221	US	2022-02-04
<b>Youssef Abdala</b>	Spring Hill	TN	37174	US	2022-02-05
<b>Wendy Hernandez</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2022-02-07
<b>Elandriel Lewis</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2022-02-09
<b>Glenn Rohrbach</b>	Nashville	TN	37217	US	2022-02-10
<b>Abby DePriest</b>	Madison	TN	37115	US	2022-02-10
<b>Art Fuller</b>	Terre Haute	IN	47802	US	2022-02-14
<b>Kate Schwartz</b>	Minneapolis	MN	55416	US	2022-02-14
<b>Kristen Hironimus</b>	Nolensville	TN	37135	US	2022-02-15
<b>Kari Parson</b>	Spring Hill	TN	37174	US	2022-02-15
<b>Heather Koons</b>	Nashville	TN	37204	US	2022-02-15
<b>Katherine Honea</b>	Madison	TN	37115	US	2022-02-15
<b>Cristine Steele</b>	Franklin	TN	37064	US	2022-02-15
<b>Charissa Tosh</b>	Nashville	TN	37209	US	2022-02-16
<b>Hadassah Bird</b>	Nashville	TN	37206	US	2022-02-16
<b>Daniela Zarate</b>	Antioch	TN	37013	US	2022-02-16
<b>Nicole Dutcher</b>	Nashville	TN	37215	US	2022-02-17
<b>Michelle Henderson</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2022-02-19
<b>Anna Raines Guidry</b>	Nashville	TN	37206	US	2022-02-23
<b>Erika Bright</b>	Antioch	TN	37217	US	2022-02-24
<b>Maggie Conran</b>	Nashville	TN	37206	US	2022-02-26
<b>Kevin Heffel</b>	Nashville	TN	37206	US	2022-03-06
<b>Shelby Slowey</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2022-03-07
<b>Katherine Yeaworth</b>	Chattanooga	TN	37405	US	2022-03-08
<b>Jiapiao Zhuang</b>	Wilmington		19810	US	2022-03-31
<b>Xiao He</b>	Burke		22015	US	2022-04-01
<b>Melissa Laughman</b>	Harrisburg	PA	17110	US	2022-04-04
<b>Allison Kennedy</b>	Nashville	TN	37013	US	2022-04-08
<b>Tyler Scott</b>	Nashville	TN	37203	US	2022-04-14
<b>Beatrice Herndon</b>	Spring Hill	TN	37174	US	2022-04-23

## ATTACHMENT E - LETTERS OF SUPPORT -petition signatures (SECTION 1.12)

<b>Vittoria Erdem</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2022-04-25
<b>Amanda Outlaw</b>	Nashville	TN	37216	US	2022-04-26
<b>Courtney Biddle</b>	Nashville	TN	37211	US	2022-04-26
<b>Wendy Hesselman</b>	Charlotte	NC	28205	US	2022-04-29
<b>Robert Pilling</b>	Nashville	TN	37203	US	2022-05-05




ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

This attachment includes the following documents:

- F1. Articles of Incorporation
- F2. Proof of non-profit status (IRS confirmation)
- F3. Bylaws
- F4. Code of Conduct (Included in Bylaws)
- F5. Conflict of interest policy (Included in Bylaws)
- F6. Board member profiles and school leader resumes
- F7. Board Policies (Included in Bylaws)

ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

F1. Articles of Incorporation


		B1029-9127 05/10/2021 1:45 PM Received by Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett 001198678
<b>CHARTER NONPROFIT CORPORATION</b>		
 Tre Hargett Secretary of State	Division of Business Services Department of State State of Tennessee 312 Rosa L. Parks AVE, 6th FL Nashville, TN 37243-1102 (615) 741-2286	For Office Use Only <b>-FILED-</b> Control # 001198678
The undersigned, acting as incorporator(s) of a nonprofit corporation under the provisions of the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, adopt the following Articles of Incorporation.		
1. The name of the corporation is: Tennessee Nature Academy		
2. Name Consent: (Written Consent for Use of Indistinguishable Name) <input type="checkbox"/> This entity name already exists in Tennessee and has received name consent from the existing entity.		
3. This company has the additional designation of: School Organization - Exempt		
4. The name and complete address of its initial registered agent and office located in the State of Tennessee is: ROY JAMES RENFRO ROY 5844 PETTUS RD ANTIOCH, TN 37013-4514 DAVIDSON COUNTY		
5. Fiscal Year Close Month: December                      Period of Duration: Perpetual		
6. If the document is not to be effective upon filing by the Secretary of State, the delayed effective date and time is: Jun 1, 2021 12:00AM                      (Not to exceed 90 days)		
7. The corporation is not for profit.		
8. Please complete all of the following sentences by checking one of the two boxes in each sentence: This corporation is a <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public benefit corporation / <input type="checkbox"/> mutual benefit corporation. This corporation is a <input type="checkbox"/> religious corporation / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not a religious corporation. This corporation will <input type="checkbox"/> have members / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not have members.		
9. The complete address of its principal office is: ROY 5844 PETTUS RD ANTIOCH, TN 37013-4514 DAVIDSON COUNTY		
(Note: Pursuant to T.C.A. §10-7-503 all information on this form is public record.)		

ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

F1. Articles of Incorporation



<b>CHARTER NONPROFIT CORPORATION</b>		SS-4418																
 <b>Tre Hargett</b> Secretary of State	<b>Division of Business Services</b> <b>Department of State</b> State of Tennessee 312 Rosa L. Parks AVE, 6th FL Nashville, TN 37243-1102 (615) 741-2286	For Office Use Only <b>-FILED-</b> Control # 001198678																
The name of the corporation is: Tennessee Nature Academy																		
<b>10. The complete mailing address of the entity (if different from the principal office) is:</b> ROY 5844 PETTUS RD ANTIOCH, TN 37013-4514																		
<b>11. List the name and complete address of each incorporator:</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 5px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;">Title</th> <th style="width: 30%;">Name</th> <th style="width: 35%;">Business Address</th> <th style="width: 20%;">City, State, Zip</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Incorporator</td> <td>Roy J Renfro</td> <td>5844 PETTUS RD</td> <td>ANTIOCH, TN 37013-4514</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Title	Name	Business Address	City, State, Zip	Incorporator	Roy J Renfro	5844 PETTUS RD	ANTIOCH, TN 37013-4514								
Title	Name	Business Address	City, State, Zip															
Incorporator	Roy J Renfro	5844 PETTUS RD	ANTIOCH, TN 37013-4514															
<b>12. School Organization:</b> (required if the additional designation of "School Organization - Exempt" is entered in section 3.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I certify that pursuant to T.C.A. §49-2-611, this nonprofit corporation is exempt from the \$100 filing fee required by T.C.A. §48-51-303(a)(1). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This nonprofit corporation is a "school support organization" as defined in T.C.A. §49-2-603(4)(A). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This nonprofit corporation is an educational institution as defined in T.C.A. §48-101-502(b).																		
<b>13. Insert here the provisions regarding the distribution of assets upon dissolution:</b> In the event of dissolution of the Corporation, all assets will be distributed to another nonprofit organization with a similar purpose.																		
<b>14. Other Provisions:</b>  _____																		
<i>(Note: Pursuant to T.C.A. §10-7-503 all information on this form is public record.)</i>																		
Electronic Signature Roy J Renfro <small>Printed Name</small>	Incorporator <small>Title/Signer's Capacity</small> May 10, 2021 1:45PM <small>Date</small>																	

B1029-9128 05/10/2021 1:45 PM Received by Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

## F1. Original Articles of Incorporation



**Tre Hargett**  
Secretary of State

**Division of Business Services**  
**Department of State**  
State of Tennessee  
312 Rosa L. Parks AVE, 6th FL  
Nashville, TN 37243-1102

Tennessee Nature Academy  
ROY  
5844 PETTUS RD  
ANTIOCH, TN 37013-4514

July 14, 2021

### Filing Acknowledgment

Please review the filing information below and notify our office immediately of any discrepancies.

**Control # : 1198678**      Status: Active  
Filing Type: Nonprofit Corporation - Domestic

#### Document Receipt

Receipt #: 006504828	Filing Fee:	\$20.00
Payment-Check/MO - CAPITAL FILING SERVICE, INC. , NASHVILLE, TN		\$20.00

Amendment Type: Articles of Amendment      Image #: B1028-7047  
Filed Date: 07/12/2021 12:30 PM

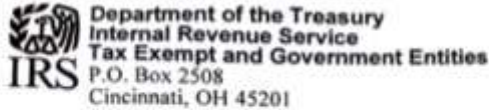
This will acknowledge the filing of the attached articles of amendment with an effective date as indicated above. When corresponding with this office or submitting documents for filing, please refer to the control number given above.

You must also file this document in the office of the Register of Deeds in the county where the entity has its principal office if such principal office is in Tennessee.

Tre Hargett  
Secretary of State

Processed By: Michelle Holloway

ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)  
 F2. Proof of non-profit status (1023 submission confirmation)



TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY  
 C/O ROY JAMES RENFRO III  
 5844 PETTUS RD  
 ANTIOCH, TN 37013-4514

Date: 04/09/2022  
 Employer ID number: 86-3761014  
 Person to contact: Name: Will Schroder  
 ID number: 31694  
 Telephone: 877-829-5500  
 Accounting period ending: December 31  
 Public charity status: 170(b)(1)(A)(ii)  
 Form 990 / 990-EZ / 990-N required: Yes  
 Effective date of exemption: May 10, 2021  
 Contribution deductibility: Yes  
 Addendum applies: No  
 DLN: 26053618004441

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

**Information for Charter Schools**

You're not subject to the specific publishing requirements of Revenue Procedure 75-50, 1975-2 C.B., page 587, as long as you operate under a contract with the local government. If your method of operation changes to the extent that your charter is terminated, cancelled or not renewed, you should notify us. You'll also be required to comply with Revenue Procedure 75-50.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

Letter 947 (Rev. 2-2020)  
 Catalog Number 35152P

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

F3. Bylaws

F4. Code of Conduct (Included in Bylaws)

F5. Conflict of interest policy Included in Bylaws)

F7. Board Policies (Included in Bylaws)

**BYLAWS  
OF  
TENNESSEE NATURE ACADEMY**

**ARTICLE II  
NAME**

The name of the nonprofit corporation is Tennessee Nature Academy (the “Corporation”). It is intended that the Corporation shall have the status of a corporation which is exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or any corresponding provisions of any future federal tax laws (hereinafter referred to as the “Code”), as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

**ARTICLE III  
OFFICES**

**Section 3.1 Corporate Office.** The principal office of the Corporation shall be located at 5844 Pettus Road, Antioch, TN 37013. The Corporation may have such other offices, either within or without the State of Tennessee, as the Board of Directors may designate or as the affairs of the Corporation may require from time to time.

**Section 3.2 Registered Office.** The registered office of the Corporation required to be maintained in the State of Tennessee by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended from time to time (the “Act”) may, but need not, be identical with the principal office in the State of Tennessee; and the address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE IV  
PURPOSE AND USE OF FUNDS**

**Section 4.1 Purpose.** The Corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code (hereinafter referred to as “Charitable Purposes”), including operating a public charter school management organization specializing in grade 5 – 12 junior and high schools.

The Corporation is organized to engage in any activity, and to exercise any and all powers, rights and privileges, afforded a nonprofit corporation under the Act. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, the Corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation organized as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Tennessee, which is exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, contributions to which are deductible under Sections 170(c)(2), 2055(a) or 2522(a) of the Code. **Section 4.2 Use of Funds.** In making distributions to effectuate the religious, charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes of the Corporation, as delineated in Section 3.1 above, the Board of Directors shall have the

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

authority to make distributions of both income and principal in such proportions and amounts as the Board of Directors, in its discretion, determines advisable, provided that all such distributions are consistent with all applicable federal tax laws and regulations, as herein provided. The Corporation is not formed for financial or pecuniary gain; and no part of the assets, income, or profits of the Corporation shall be distributable to, or inure to, the benefit of its directors or officers or any other private person, except as provided in Section 5.11, Section 6.10 and Article XI as reimbursement for expenses or reasonable compensation for services rendered to the Corporation, and except to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the Charitable Purposes of the Corporation, as set forth in the Charter and Section 3.1 above. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation; and no part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the participation in, or intervention in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

**Section 4.3 Administration of Funds.** In the event the Corporation is a private foundation within the meaning of Section 509 of the Code for a taxable year, the Corporation: (a) shall distribute its income for each tax year in such manner so that it will not become subject to the tax on undistributed income imposed by Section 4942 of the Code; (b) shall not engage in any act of self-dealing, as defined in Section 4941(d) of the Code; (c) shall not retain any excess business holdings, as defined in Section 4943(c) of the Code; (d) shall not make any investments in a manner that would incur tax liability under 4944 of the Code; and (e) shall not make any taxable expenditures, as defined in Section 4945(d) of the Code. In order fully to effectuate the provisions of this Section, the Corporation shall adopt such procedures, and shall otherwise adhere to such administrative requirements as may from time to time be necessary, in order fully to comply with all applicable federal tax laws and regulations.

**Section 4.4 Termination of Corporation.** The Board of Directors shall have the authority to terminate the Corporation at any time that, by a unanimous vote, it deems such termination appropriate or advisable. In such event, after paying, or making provision for the payment of, all liabilities of the Corporation then outstanding and unpaid, the Board of Directors shall distribute the assets of the Corporation exclusively for Charitable Purposes. Any assets not so distributed shall be distributed to one or more Qualified Beneficiaries, as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any assets not so disposed of by the Board of Directors shall be disposed of by a court having equity jurisdiction in the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, with the distribution of assets to be made for such Charitable Purposes, or to such Qualified Beneficiaries, as such court shall determine.

**ARTICLE V**  
**MEMBERS**

**Section 5.1 Members.** The Corporation shall not have members.

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

**ARTICLE VI  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Section 6.1 General Powers.** The business and affairs of the Corporation shall be supervised by its Board of Directors (sometimes referred to herein as the Board), which shall exercise in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation all of the rights and privileges legally exercisable by the Corporation as a corporate entity, except as may otherwise be provided by law, the Charter, or these Bylaws. The Board of Directors, as the governing body of the Corporation, shall have the authority to receive, administer, invest and distribute property on behalf of the Corporation in accordance with the provisions set forth in these Bylaws.

**Section 6.2 Number, Tenure, Qualifications and Election.** The number of the members of the Board of Directors shall be not less than five (5) nor more than fifteen (15). The initial members of the Board of Directors shall be appointed by the Incorporator and thereafter shall be elected by a majority of the Directors then in office. Directors shall serve for two (2) year terms with the initial term commencing on the first July 1st after appointment (or election); provided that directors may serve on the Board as a director, with all duties and powers arising therefrom, prior to commencement of initial term. Directors may not serve more than three (3) consecutive terms; provided that current or former Officers of the Board may serve up to five (5) consecutive terms. Directors shall be natural persons who have attained the age of twenty-one (18) years, but need not be residents of the State of Tennessee..

**Section 6.3 Advisory Members.** The Board of Directors may elect advisory members from time to time, including without limitation employees of the Corporation, who may attend, without vote, all meetings of the Board of Directors. Advisory members shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors and shall advise and counsel the Board of Directors on appropriate matters. **Section 6.4 Ex-Officio Non-voting Members.** The Chief Executive Officer shall be an Ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board of Directors. The CEO will partake in all Board activities but will not have voting rights.

**Section 6.5 Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held within or without the State of Tennessee as close as practicable to the end of the Corporation's fiscal year. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be to approve the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, elect Officers, and address such other business matters as may be pertinent at such time. **Section 6.6 Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, or at the request of any director. The President shall fix the time and place, either within or without the State of Tennessee, of any special meeting.

**Section 6.7 Notices.** Notice of any special meeting shall be given at least three (3) business days prior thereto. The attendance of a director at a meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a director attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting was not lawfully called or convened. The business to be transacted at, or the purpose of, any special meeting of the Board of Directors must be specified in the notice of such meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

**Section 6.8 Quorum.** A majority of the total number of directors in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

**Section 6.9 Participation in Meeting.** Each director, other than an advisory member, shall be entitled to one (1) vote upon any matter properly submitted for a vote to the Board of Directors. The affirmative vote of a majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors, except as may otherwise be specifically provided by law, by the Charter, or by these Bylaws. Members of the Board of Directors absent from any meeting shall be permitted to vote at such meeting by written proxies. The members of the Board of Directors, or any committee designated by the Board of Directors, may participate in a meeting of the Board of Directors, or of such committee, by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear one another; and participation in a meeting pursuant to this provision shall constitute presence in person at such meeting. The directors shall be promptly furnished a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors.

**Section 6.10 Action Without a Meeting.** Any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting by the Board of Directors, or by any committee thereof, may be taken without a meeting if all members of the Board of Directors or committee, as the case may be, consent in writing to taking such action without a meeting. If all members entitled to vote on the action shall consent in writing to taking such action without a meeting, the affirmative vote of the number of votes that would be necessary to authorize or take such action at a meeting shall be the act of the Board of Directors. The action must be evidenced by one (1) or more written consents describing the action taken, signed in one (1) or more counterparts by each member entitled to vote on the action, indicating each signing member's vote or abstention on the action taken. All such written consents and actions shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors or committee. A consent signed under this Section shall have the same force and effect as a meeting vote of the Board of Directors, or any committee thereof, and may be described as such in any document.

**Section 6.11 Compensation and Reimbursement of Expenses.** No director shall be entitled to receive compensation for services rendered to the Corporation in the person's capacity as a director. Each director may be paid his or her reasonable expenses incurred by the director directly related to the affairs of the Corporation upon prior approval by the Board of Directors and proper substantiation of such expenses.

**Section 6.12 Presumption of Assent.** A director of the Corporation who is present at a meeting of the Board of Directors at which action on any Corporation matter is taken shall be presumed to have assented to the action taken, unless his or her dissent shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting, or unless he or she shall file his or her written dissent to such action with the person acting as the secretary of the meeting before the adjournment thereof, or forward such dissent by registered mail to the Secretary of the Corporation immediately after the adjournment of the meeting. Such right to dissent shall not apply to a director who voted in favor of such action.

**Section 6.13 Removal.** Any or all of the directors may be removed for cause or without cause by vote of two thirds (2/3) of the total number of the voting directors in office. Removal of a director shall also constitute removal as an officer of the Corporation and as a member of all committees of the Board of Directors.

**Section 6.14 Resignation.** A director may resign his or her membership at any time by tendering his or her resignation in writing to the President or, in the case of the resignation of the President, to the Secretary. A resignation shall become effective upon the date specified in such notice or, if no date is specified, upon receipt of the resignation by the Corporation at its principal place of business.

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

**ARTICLE VII  
OFFICERS**

**Section 7.1 Number.** There shall be a President, Treasurer, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer (subject to timing qualifications set forth below) of the Corporation, each of whom shall be elected in accordance with the provisions of this Article. The Board of Directors may also elect such additional officers as the Board of Directors may from time to time deem necessary or appropriate. Any two or more offices may be held by the same person, except for the offices of President and Secretary.

**Section 7.2 Election and Term of Office.** The initial officers of the Corporation shall be appointed by the Incorporator for a term of office expiring at the first annual meeting of the Corporation. The officers of the Corporation shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors at its annual meeting. If the election of the officers shall not be held at such meeting, such election shall be held as soon thereafter as may be convenient. Each officer shall hold office for a term of one (1) year expiring immediately following the annual meeting at which he or she was elected and until his or her successor shall have been duly elected and qualified, or until his or her earlier death, resignation, or removal from office in the manner hereinafter provided. A retiring officer may succeed himself or herself in his or her office.

**Section 7.3 President.** The President shall be the principal officer of the Corporation and shall serve as the principal liaison between the Board and the Chief Executive Officer. He or she shall, when present, preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors. The President shall be charged with the responsibility of appointing the members of each standing or ad hoc committee of the Board, and the President shall be entitled to serve on any standing or ad hoc committee of the Board. The President may sign, with the Secretary or any other proper officer thereunto authorized by the Board of Directors, deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which the Board of Directors has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board of Directors or these Bylaws to some other officer or agent of the Corporation, or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed. The President shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board.

**Section 7.4 Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds and securities of the Corporation; receive and give receipts for monies due and payable to the Corporation from any source whatsoever, and deposit all such monies in the name of the Corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected in accordance with the provisions of Article VIII of these Bylaws; disburse the funds of the Corporation in accordance with the directives of the Board of Directors, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements, and render to the Board of Directors, at its annual meeting and at such other times as may be requested by the Board of Directors, an accounting of all the transactions of the Treasurer and of the financial condition of the Corporation; and in general perform all duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to him or her by the President or by the Board of Directors.

**Section 7.5 Secretary.** The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors in one or more books provided for that purpose; see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or as required by law; be custodian of the corporate records and of the seal, if any, of the Corporation and see that the seal is affixed to all documents, the execution of which is duly authorized on behalf of the Corporation under its seal; keep a register of the post office address of each member of the Board of Directors, which address shall be furnished to the Secretary by each director; and in general perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as may from time to

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

time be assigned to him or her by the President or by the Board of Directors.

**Section 7.6 Removal.** Any member of the Board of Directors removed from office pursuant to Section 5.13 shall be automatically removed as an officer. The Board of Directors may by a two-thirds (2/3) vote remove any officer when, in its judgment, the best interests of the Corporation will be served thereby.

**Section 7.7 Vacancies.** A vacancy in any office, because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise, may be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Board of Directors for the unexpired portion of the term.

**Section 7.8 Resignation.** An officer may resign his or her office at any time by tendering his or her resignation in writing to the President or, in the case of the resignation of the President, to the Secretary. A resignation shall become effective upon the date specified in such notice, or, if no date is specified, upon receipt of the resignation by the Corporation at its principal place of business.

**Section 7.9 Salaries and Expenses.** The officers of the Corporation shall not be entitled to receive compensation for services rendered to the Corporation in the person's capacity as an officer. Reasonable expenses incurred by all of the officers of the Board of Directors in the course of coordinating the affairs of the Corporation shall be reimbursed by the Corporation upon proper substantiation.

**Section 7.10 Chief Executive Officer.** In addition to the other officers described herein, the Corporation shall, at all times after approval of any initial public charter school application and during the operation of any such, or subsequently approved, public charter school, have a Chief Executive Officer, who shall be an employee of the Corporation, shall serve at the pleasure of the Board, shall report directly to the Board, and shall not be subject to the limitations set forth in Section 6.9 hereof. The Chief Executive Officer shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Corporation. The Chief Executive Officer shall perform such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Board. The Chief Executive Officer shall be an ex officio, non-voting member of the Board of Directors, as described within Section 5.4 hereof. At each meeting of the Board of Directors, the Chief Officer shall report to the Board on the operations of the Corporation for which he or she has direct responsibility.

#### ARTICLE VIII COMMITTEES

**Section 8.1 Standing Committees.** The Board of Directors may maintain such standing committees as it may determine from time to time to be necessary or desirable for its proper functioning. Such committees shall consist of at least one (1) Director, and may include advisory members as contemplated by Section 5.3 hereof, as appointed by the President, shall be under the control and serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors, shall have charge of such duties as may be assigned to them by the Board of Directors or these Bylaws, shall maintain a permanent record of their actions and proceedings, and shall regularly submit a report of their actions to the Board of Directors, which shall ratify the actions of each committee. The President shall serve on each committee as a non-voting member, unless specifically designated by the Board as a voting member. Such standing committees shall have such authority as the Board of Directors may stipulate.

**Section 8.2 Ad Hoc Committees.** The President, with the approval of the Board of Directors as evidenced by resolution, may from time to time create such ad hoc committees as the President believes necessary or desirable to investigate matters or advise the Board of Directors. Ad hoc committees shall

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

limit their activities to the accomplishment of the tasks for which created and shall have no power to act except as specifically conferred by resolution of the Board of Directors. Such committees shall operate until their tasks have been accomplished or until earlier discharged by the Board of Directors. Members of ad hoc committees do not need to be members of the Board of the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE IX**  
**CONTRACTS, LOANS, CHECKS, DEPOSITS, INVESTMENTS**

**Section 9.1 Contracts and Employment of Agents.** The Board of Directors may authorize any director, officer, or agent to enter into any contract, or execute and deliver any instrument, in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation. The Board of Directors shall be specifically authorized, in its sole discretion, to employ and to pay the compensation of such agents, accountants, custodians, experts, consultants and other counsel, legal, investment, or otherwise, as the Board of Directors shall deem advisable, and to delegate discretionary powers to, and rely upon information furnished by, such individuals or entities. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

**Section 9.2 Loans.** No loans shall be contracted on behalf of the Corporation, and no evidences of indebtedness shall be issued in its name, unless authorized by a resolution of the Board of Directors. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

**Section 9.3 Checks, Drafts, etc.** All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Corporation shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, of the Corporation, and in such manner, as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

**Section 9.4 Deposits.** All funds of the Corporation not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Corporation with such banks, trust companies, brokerage accounts, investment managers, or other depositories as the Board of Directors may from time to time select.

**Section 9.5 Investment Authority.** The Board of Directors shall be authorized to retain assets distributed to the Corporation, even though such assets may constitute an over-concentration in one or more similar investments. Further, the Board of Directors shall have the authority to make investments in unproductive property, or to hold unproductive property to the extent necessary until it can be converted into productive property at an appropriate time, provided the retention of such property is in the best interest of the Corporation and does not in any way jeopardize the tax-exempt status of the Corporation.

**ARTICLE X**  
**STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

**Section 10.1 Standards of Conduct.** A director or an officer of the Corporation shall discharge his or her duties as a director or as an officer, including duties as a member of a committee: (a) In good faith; (b) With the care an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances; and (c) In a manner he or she reasonably believes to be in the best interest of the Corporation.

**Section 10.2 Reliance on Third Parties.** In discharging his or her duties, a director or officer is entitled to rely on information, opinions, reports, or statements, including financial statements and other financial data, if prepared or presented by:

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

(a) One or more officers or employees of the Corporation whom the director or officer reasonably believes to be reliable and competent in the matters presented; (b) Legal counsel, public accountants, or other persons as to matters the director or officer reasonably believes are within the person's professional or expert competence; or (c) With respect to a director, a committee of the Board of Directors of which the director is not a member, as to matters within its jurisdiction, if the director or officer reasonably believes the committee merits confidence.

**Section 10.3 Bad Faith.** A director or officer is not acting in good faith if he or she has knowledge concerning the matter in question that makes reliance otherwise permitted by Section 9.2 unwarranted.

**Section 10.4 No Liability.** A director or officer is not liable for any action taken, or any failure to take action, as a director or officer, if he or she performs the duties of his or her office in compliance with the provisions of this Article, or if he or she is immune from suit under the provisions of Section 48-58-601 of the Act. No repeal or modification of the provisions of this Section 9.4, either directly or by the adoption of a provision inconsistent with the provisions of this Section, shall adversely affect any right or protection, as set forth herein, existing in favor of a particular individual at the time of such repeal or modification.

**Section 10.5 No Fiduciary.** No director or officer shall be deemed to be a fiduciary with respect to the Corporation or with respect to any property held or administered by the Corporation, including, without limitation, property that may be subject to restrictions imposed by the donor or transferor of such property.

**Section 10.6 Prohibition on Loans.** No loans or guarantees shall be made by the Corporation to its directors or officers. Any director who assents to or participates in the making of any such loan shall be liable to the Corporation for the amount of such loan until the repayment thereof.

## ARTICLE XI CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

**Section 11.1 Purpose.** The purpose of the conflict of interest provisions is to protect the Corporation's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Corporation or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. These provisions are intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

**Section 11.2 Definitions.**

(a) Interested Person. Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

(b) Financial Interest. A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

1. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Corporation has a transaction or arrangement,
2. A compensation arrangement with the Corporation or with any entity or individual with which the Corporation has a transaction or arrangement, or
3. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Corporation is negotiating a transaction or arrangement. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

favors that are not insubstantial.

**Section 11.3 Procedures.**

(a) Duty to Disclose. In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement. (b) Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists. After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the Board of Directors or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

(c) Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest.

1. An interested person may make a presentation at the Board of Directors or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
2. The Board of Directors or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
3. After exercising due diligence, the Board of Directors or committee shall determine whether the Corporation can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

(d) Manner of Approval. A transaction in which a director or officer of the Corporation has a conflict of interest may be approved if:

1. A more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Board of Directors or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Corporation's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement; or
2. Approval is obtained from the Attorney General of the State of Tennessee, or from a court of record having equity jurisdiction in an action in which the Attorney General is joined as a party.

(e) Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

1. If the Board of Directors or committee has reasonable cause to believe a person has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the person of the basis for such belief and afford the person an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
2. If, after hearing the person's response and after making further investigation is warranted by the circumstances, the Board of Directors or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

**Section 11.4 Records of Proceedings.** The minutes of the Board of Director's meetings and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

- (a) The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

(b) The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

**Section 11.5 Compensation.**

(a) A voting member Board of Directors who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Corporation for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

(b) A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Corporation for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

(c) No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Corporation, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

**ARTICLE XII  
INDEMNIFICATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF EXPENSES**

**Section 12.1 Mandatory Indemnification of Directors and Officers.** To the maximum extent permitted by the provisions of Sections 48-58-501, et seq., of the Act, as amended from time to time (provided, however, that if an amendment to the Act in any way limits or restricts the indemnification rights permitted by law as of the date hereof, such amendment shall apply only to the extent mandated by law and only to activities of persons subject to indemnification under this Section which occur subsequent to the effective date of such amendment), the Corporation shall indemnify and advance expenses to any person who is or was a director or officer of the Corporation, or to such person's heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, for the defense of any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, and whether formal or informal (any such action, suit or proceeding being hereinafter referred to as the "Proceeding"), to which such person was, is or is threatened to be made, a named defendant or respondent, which indemnification and advancement of expenses shall include counsel fees actually incurred as a result of the Proceeding or any appeal thereof, reasonable expenses actually incurred with respect to the Proceeding, all fines, judgments, penalties and amounts paid in settlement thereof, subject to the following conditions:

(a) The Proceeding was instituted by reason of the fact that such person is or was a director or officer of the Corporation; and

(b) The director or officer conducted himself or herself in good faith, and he or she reasonably believed

(i) in the case of conduct in his or her official capacity with the Corporation, that his or her conduct was in its best interest;

(ii) in all other cases, that his or her conduct was at least not opposed to the best interests of the Corporation; and (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, that he or she had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The termination of a proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent is not, of itself, determinative that the director or officer did not meet the standard of conduct herein described.

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

**Section 12.2 Permissive Indemnification of Employees and Agents.** The Corporation may, to the maximum extent permitted by the provisions of Section 48-58-501, et seq., of the Act, as amended from time to time (provided, however, that if an amendment to the Act in any way limits or restricts the indemnification rights permitted by law as of the date hereof, such amendment shall apply only to the extent mandated by law and only to activities of persons subject to indemnification under this Section which occur subsequent to the effective date of such amendment), indemnify and advance expenses in a Proceeding to any person who is or was an employee or agent of the Corporation, or to such person's heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, to the same extent as set forth in Section 11.1 above, provided that the Proceeding was instituted by reason of the fact that such person is or was an employee or agent of the Corporation and met the standards of conduct set forth in subsection 11.1(b) above. The Corporation may also indemnify and advance expenses in a Proceeding to any person who is or was an employee or agent of the Corporation to the extent, consistent with public policy, as may be provided by the Charter, by these Bylaws, by contract, or by general or specific action of the Board of Directors.

**Section 12.3 Non-Exclusive Application.** The rights to indemnification and advancement of expenses set forth in Sections 11.1 and 11.2 above are contractual between the Corporation and the person being indemnified, and his or her heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, and are not exclusive of other similar rights of indemnification or advancement of expenses to which such person may be entitled, whether by contract, by law, by the Charter, by a resolution of the Board of Directors, by these Bylaws, by the purchase and maintenance by the Corporation of insurance on behalf of a director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation, or by an agreement with the Corporation providing for such indemnification, all of which means of indemnification and advancement of expenses are hereby specifically authorized.

**Section 12.4 Non-Limiting Application.** The provisions of this Article XI shall not limit the power of the Corporation to pay or reimburse expenses incurred by a director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation in connection with such person's appearing as a witness in a Proceeding at a time when he or she has not been made a named defendant or respondent to the Proceeding.

**Section 12.5 Prohibited Indemnification.** Notwithstanding any other provision of this Article XI, the Corporation shall not indemnify or advance expenses to or on behalf of any director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation, or such person's heirs, executors, administrators or legal representatives:

- (a) If a judgment or other final adjudication adverse to such person establishes his or her liability for any breach of the duty of loyalty to the Corporation, for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law, or under Section 48-58-304 of the Act; or
- (b) In connection with a Proceeding by or in the right of the Corporation in which such person was adjudged liable to the Corporation; or
- (c) In connection with any other Proceeding charging improper personal benefit to such person, whether or not involving action in his or her official capacity, in which he or she was adjudged liable on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received by him or her.

**Section 12.6 Repeal or Modification Not Retroactive.** No repeal or modification of the provisions of this Article XI, either directly or by the adoption of a provision inconsistent with the provisions of this Article, shall adversely affect any right or protection, as set forth herein, existing in favor of a particular individual at the time of such repeal or modification.

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

**ARTICLE XIII**  
**NOTICES AND WAIVER OF NOTICE**

**Section 13.1 Notices.** The notices provided for in these Bylaws shall be communicated in person, by telephone, facsimile or email transmission, telegraph, teletype, or by mail or private carrier. Written notice is effective at the earliest of (a) receipt, (b) five (5) days after its deposit in the United States mail, if mailed correctly addressed and with first-class postage affixed thereon, (c) on the date shown on the return receipt, if sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, and the receipt is signed by or on behalf of the addressee, (d) twenty (20) days after its deposit in the United States mail, if mailed correctly addressed, and with other than first-class, registered, or certified postage affixed, or (e) in the case of facsimile or e-mail transmission, when successfully sent to the email address or fax number shown on the records of the Corporation. Whenever any notice is required to be given to any director, officer, or committee member of the Corporation under the provisions of the Charter, these Bylaws, or the Act, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

**ARTICLE XIV**  
**FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall end on June 30th, or on such other date as may be fixed from time to time by the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE XV**  
**AMENDMENTS**

These Bylaws and the Charter may be altered, amended, or repealed, and a new Charter or Bylaws adopted, upon the affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) members of the Board of Directors at any annual or special meeting, except to the extent that such alteration, amendment, or repeal is inconsistent with Article XV hereof.

**ARTICLE XVI**  
**EXEMPT STATUS**

The Corporation has been organized and will be operated exclusively for exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and, as such, will be exempt from taxation under Section 501(a) of the Code. The Corporation Intends to apply for recognition of its exempt status by filing Internal Revenue Service Form 1023 within the time prescribed under Section 508 of the Code and Treasury Regulation Section 1.508-1(a)(2). Any provision of these Bylaws or of the Charter which would in any manner adversely affect the Corporation's tax exempt status shall be void and shall be deleted or modified as necessary to comply with all applicable federal and state requirements for the maintenance of the Corporation's tax exempt status.

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

## F6. Board member profiles and school leader resumes

Alice Haston (Vice-Chair) - Alice Haston is an associate attorney with the law firm Sherrard Roe Voigt & Harbison. She graduated from Vanderbilt Law School. During law school Alice served as a student attorney in the Youth Opportunity Clinic, representing young adults in school disciplinary hearings and record expungement. She taught eighth-grade English for four years between college and law school.

Alisha Keig - Alisha S. Keig is an anti-racist educator and social justice advocate who has worked in the diversity, equity, and inclusion space for 7 years. She is currently an Associate Directors of Equity in Schools at Beloved Community where she facilitates, coaches, and guides cohorts of school and district administration through yearlong diversity, equity and inclusion programming. She is an anti-racist educator and social justice advocate who has worked in education for eight years as a classroom teacher focused on English Learners and district leader, focused on creating and delivering high quality DEI curriculum to a variety of staff at all levels and guiding district-wide equity and inclusion initiatives. Alisha has presented at local, state, and national conferences on designing culturally responsive curriculums and spaces. She received her bachelor's degree from Wake Forest University, where she was also a D1 athlete. She holds master's degrees in Instructional Practice and K-12 Education Policy from Lipscomb University and Vanderbilt University, respectively. Alisha also sits on the board for the Diverse Learners Cooperative Nashville-based non-profit focusing on equity and inclusion initiatives for students with disabilities and English Learners

Amanuel Benti - Amanuel has lived in the 37013 zip code for the past 15 years and is passionate about working to bring great opportunities to his neighborhood. After attending both a charter school and traditional public school, he enrolled on scholarship at Vanderbilt University where he is pursuing a degree in Molecular and Cellular Biology with a minor in Mediterranean Studies.

Darrell Hawks (Secretary) - Since earning an MBA from Belmont University, Darrell has been involved in the design, launch, and leadership of multiple award-winning social enterprises serving marginalized people in Nashville, including those returning from prison and those experiencing homelessness. Since 2018, Darrell Hawks has served as founding executive director of Friends of Mill Ridge Park in Antioch, Tennessee. Additionally, Darrell is a business management consultant to nonprofit and for-profit organizations and teaches an undergraduate course at Vanderbilt University.

Laurel Creech - Laurel Creech currently serves as Metro Nashville Government's first Assistant Director for the Division of Sustainability in the Department of General Services. She oversees environmental initiatives including renewable energy, energy efficiency, green infrastructure, waste reduction practices, and outreach/ education via the program called *Socket*. Projects she is currently working on include the city's first Climate Action & Adaptation Plan, increasing renewable energy, reducing built infrastructure's energy consumption, fleet electrification, and overall greenhouse gas emissions mitigation strategies. Under her leadership the Division has received two Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards and four U.S. Green Building Council Impact Tennessee awards.

Prior to joining the Mayor's Office Laurel was the founder and director of Team Green Adventures with the goal to connect the Middle Tennessee community to the outdoors through active and engaging events for all ability levels. She was also on-air talent on both WRLT Lightning 100 and WYYB The Phoenix. In 2009 after an interview with Mayor Dean, she co-founded Live on the Green.

**ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)**

Jenna Henderson - Jenna Henderson is the Director of Programs for A Rocha USA, a Christian environmental conservation organization engaged in biodiversity conservation, education, and ecological action. Previously, Jenna worked locally with A Rocha to develop programs and workshops, and build networks and partnerships with local organizations and churches. During this time, she led efforts to help Nashvillians practice biodiversity conservation at home, facilitating the installation of 100 pollinator gardens in yards around Nashville. Prior to her work with A Rocha, Jenna served with other nonprofit organizations including Saint Thomas Health in Nashville and Habitat for Humanity Northern Ireland in Belfast. She is a graduate of Wake Forest University and Regent College (Vancouver, Canada). She lives in Nashville with her husband and two teenage sons.

Roger Waynick (Chair) - Roger Waynick serves as a Senior Management Consultant in the Office of Customer Focused Government (CFG) for Tennessee State Government. As a Senior Management Consultant, Roger is a project manager responsible for planning, directing, and implementing major enterprise-wide cross-functional projects. He is responsible for twenty-three cabinet-level executive departments; communicating and partnering with senior leaders to build a more efficient state government. Roger serves as the program manager for the MyTN mobile application, a statewide initiative to give citizens access to state services on a mobile device, as well as Transparent Tennessee, the state's online "one-stop shop" for Tennessee taxpayers to learn how the administration is achieving its goals and understand how tax dollars are being spent.

Prior to joining the State of Tennessee, Roger worked as a Client Executive for DXC Technology (formerly Hewlett-Packard) in their public sector and insurance services division. Roger has also worked as an Account Manager at a Nashville based healthcare startup, as well as an independent consultant developing sustainable business solutions. Roger holds a Master of Business Administration degree from Lipscomb University. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

Scott Campbell (Treasurer) - Scott is the co-founder of Persist Nashville and a former classroom teacher and administrator. Persist Nashville is a 501c3 nonprofit that serves over 1500 Metro Nashville Public Schools graduates to enroll and Persist in college. They partner with MNPS, Nashville State Community College, 5 charters, and YMCA Black Achievers and Latino Achievers to serve their students. In his career he has worked at 6 different urban, rural, and suburban schools. He has led and taught at traditional public, magnet, and charter schools in 4 different states and DC.

Before moving to Nashville he was a teacher and assistant principal at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, the nation's top rated public high school. In Nashville he has helped lead and develop the early years of RePublic High School and Valor Collegiate Academies. Previous to starting Persist in 2019, he served as Principal at RePublic High School before starting Persist Nashville, where he graduated their inaugural class. He serves on the TN State Board of Education Charter Schools Appeals Board.

**ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)**

ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)  
 Founding Executive Director Resume

ROY "JAY" RENFRO, III

SKILLS & ABILITIES	<p><b>LANGUAGES:</b> Limited professional fluency – French and Spanish, Native Fluent - English</p> <p><b>ENDORSEMENTS:</b> Ill-B (Administrative), 440 (Middle Grades 4-8), 418 (Earth Science 7-12).</p> <p><b>PROFICIENCIES:</b> Project Management, Instructional Leadership, School Culture and Discipline, Personalized Learning, Project-based Learning, Grant Writing</p>
EXPERIENCE	<p><b>Founder and Executive Director- <i>Tennessee Nature Academy</i></b>        June 2021- Current        Founded nonprofit to manage a nature-based public charter school in the Greater Nashville area. Recipient of the 2021 Charter Expansion Grant to fund the venture through its authorization.</p> <p><b>Lead Teacher/Attendance Case Manager- <i>Valor Voyager Academy</i></b>        June 2020- Current        Worked on a team to achieve top 1% academic growth in the state. Managed attendance caseloads for truant and at-risk for truancy students.</p> <p><b>High School Science Teacher- <i>Cane Ridge High School</i></b>        June 2019- June 2020        Initiated horizontal and vertical collaboration in the science department. Created school-wide partnership with neighboring Mill Ridge Park.</p> <p><b>CURRICULUM SPECIALIST FOR OUTDOOR LEARNING – <i>KNOWLEDGE ACADEMIES, INC.</i></b>        July 2018 – May 2019        Wrote and secured over \$30,000 in grant funding for STEAM projects. Created a nationally recognized Outdoor Learning program focused on agriculture, citizen science, and outdoor adventure, for a diverse student body, grades 5-12. Created project-based learning curriculum aligned to new TN State Science Standards. Trained and coached teachers new to TN State Science Standards and to Summit Personalized Learning Curriculum. Led school culture events and initiatives. Managed 504 caseloads.</p> <p><b>7<sup>TH</sup>/8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE SCIENCE TEACHER – <i>KNOWLEDGE ACADEMIES, INC.</i></b>        July 2014 – July 2018        Served as science department head from 2015-2018. Nationally recognized for innovative project-based approach to learning. Piloted Summit Personalized Learning Curriculum for Tennessee teachers. Started and coached school cross country and soccer teams. Managed 504 caseloads.</p> <p><b>7<sup>TH</sup>/8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE SCIENCE TEACHER – <i>BOYS PREPARATORY NASHVILLE.</i></b>        July 2013 – May 2014        Taught state science curriculum to 7th and 8th grade students. Started the cross country and soccer team. Created and lead the Outdoors Club. Participated in student recruitment.</p> <p><b>Corps Member—<i>Teach for America</i></b>        June 2013- May 2015        Selected from approximately 42,000 applicants nationwide to join national teacher corps who commit to teach in under-resourced public schools. Participated in intensive training program to develop the skills and knowledge needed to achieve significant gains in student achievement.</p>

EDUCATION	<p><b>LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY – NASHVILLE, TN – MASTER OF EDUCATION</b>  Graduated in December 2014 with an M.Ed in Instructional Practice. Completed coursework while working full-time during my first year of teaching. Added Administrative License endorsement in 2020.</p> <p><b>EASTERN UNIVERSITY – ST. DAVIDS, PA – BACHELOR OF ARTS</b>  Graduated in May 2013 from the Templeton Honors College with a major in environmental science and a minor in political science.</p>
COMMUNITY	<p><b>The Village United Methodist Church</b>, Lead Team Member – Fall 2015 – Current  <b>Friends of Mill Ridge Park</b>, Regional Advisor – Spring 2018 – Current  <b>Youth Innovation Lab</b>, participant-- Spring 2018 – Current  <b>Urban Green Lab Education Committee</b>, Member – Spring 2014 – Fall 2017</p>
AWARDS	<p><b>UnifiED Explorer Fellow- Diverse Charter Schools Coalition</b>  January 2021- Current  Participated in a fellowship that prepares leaders of charter schools to deliver an excellent, integrated education in their respective communities while growing the movement for integrated schools nationwide, by providing exposure to exemplary models and access to experts and resources.</p> <p><b>Social Innovation Award Finalist, Teach For America – May 2019</b>  The Arthur &amp; Toni Rembe Rock Social Innovation Award recognizes bold, new innovations to compete for up to \$100,000 in funding to develop social ventures that eliminate barriers to educational equity and excellence. My venture (CommUnity Fresh Foundations) offers a subscription food box targeted toward low-income communities, paired with a job training program that can be integrated into the curriculum at any public school interested in starting an agriscience or culinary program.</p> <p><b>Sustainable Teacher Award, Urban Green Lab – July 2018</b>  The Sustainable Teacher Award for Project Management is given annually to one educator who has lead projects and programs in their schools or classrooms that have given students hands-on opportunities.</p> <p><b>Educator Innovator Award, MacArthur Foundation, National Writing Project – May 2017</b>  Sponsored by John Legend in partnership with the MacArthur Foundation and National Writing Project, the annual Educator Innovator Challenge provides teachers with \$20,000 to redesign how learning could look beyond the classroom walls. With these funds, I started an outdoor learning program at Knowledge Academies, introducing over 1,000 students to agriculture, environmental conservation, and outdoor adventure through various trips, projects, and class experiences.</p> <p><b>Alumni of the Year, Templeton Honors College – October 2016</b>  Nominated and selected as Alumni of the Year by a committee of fellow alumni for living out the university’s values of faith, reason, and justice.</p> <p><b>Shell Science Lab Finalist, National Science Teachers Association – March 2016</b>  \$10,000 given in lab supplies in recognition of my students demonstrating high scientific achievement, despite the lack of proper science facilities or supplies.</p>

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

Founding Chief Academic Officer

Resume condensed and abbreviated for Tennessee Nature Academy's charter application submission, January 2022.

**Sarah E. Savage**Mt. Juliet, TN  
[www.linkedin.com/in/sarahesavage/](http://www.linkedin.com/in/sarahesavage/)**Education**

- 
- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| <b>Vanderbilt University</b>  | Expected 2022 |
| <i>Doctor of Education.</i> Program: Leadership and Learning in Organizations                     |               |
| <b>Harvard Graduate School of Education</b>   | 2016          |
| <i>Master of Education.</i> Program: Learning and Teaching; Instructional Leadership              |               |
| <b>University of Minnesota Twin Cities</b>  | 2010          |
| <i>Bachelor of Arts, Summa cum Laude.</i> Major: English. Minors: French Studies and Theatre Arts |               |

**Work Experience**

- 
- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Co-Founder and Chief Academic Officer</b>   | July 2021 - Present      |
| <i>Tennessee Nature Academy; Nashville, TN</i>   |                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the design of Tennessee Nature Academy's systems for curriculum, instruction, and assessment during the organization's start-up phase.</li> </ul>   |                          |
| <b>Curriculum Director</b>   | January 2020 - June 2021 |
| <i>STEM Preparatory Academy; Nashville, TN</i>   |                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support curricula, instruction, and assessments for English Language Arts and Humanities courses in grades 5-12. Serve as academic team program lead for ACT and Advanced Placement initiatives.</li> </ul> |                          |
| <b>Assistant Principal of Humanities</b>   | June 2016 - June 2019    |
| <i>RePublic High School; Nashville, TN</i>   |                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coach and develop a team of high school teachers to drive student achievement. Design and lead professional development in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.</li> </ul>                              |                          |
| <b>Adjunct Instructor</b>  | July 2015 - August 2018  |
| <i>Building Excellent Schools; Boston, MA</i>  |                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and present professional development in secondary ELA curriculum and instruction for current and aspiring school leaders at national Weekend Warrior conferences.</li> </ul>                        |                          |
| <b>Instructional Coach and Evaluator</b>   | August 2013 - June 2016  |
| <i>Sposato Graduate School of Education, Match Teacher Residency; Boston, MA</i>   |                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coach new middle and high school English and History teachers, using feedback to develop teacher presence, behavior management, and instructional strategies.</li> </ul>                                    |                          |
| <b>Founding Fifth Grade English Teacher and Grade Level Content Chair</b>  | July 2012 - June 2016    |
| <i>Excel Academy - Orient Heights Public Charter School; East Boston, MA</i>   |                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a rigorous ELA curriculum in a high-achieving, college preparatory charter school.</li> </ul>   |                          |

## ATTACHMENT F: GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS (SECTION 2.1)

**High School English Teacher and Department Chair**

July 2010 - June 2012

*Weldon City School District; Weldon, NC*

- Create curriculum and lead English instruction for high school students in courses including English I, English I Honors, American Literature, and British Literature. Serve as English Department Chair.

**Achievements**


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Urban Scholars Fellowship Program, Harvard Graduate School of Education	2015
Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, Alpha Chapter of Minnesota	2010

ATTACHMENT G: SCHOOL ORGANIZATION CHART (SECTION 2.4)

**Year 1**

Board of Directors		
Executive Director		
Chief Academic Officer	Director of Community Engagement	Director of Operations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers (8)</li> <li>• Language Specialist (1)</li> <li>• Learning Specialist (1)</li> </ul>	Front Office Staff (1)	Nurse (0.5)

**At Scale (Year 7)**

**TNA Organization Chart - Network-Level Leadership Team**

	Board of Directors					
	Executive Director					
Network-Level Leadership Teams	Chief Academic Officer		Director of Community Engagement	Director of Human Resources	Outdoor Experiences Coordinator	Chief Financial Officer
School-Based Leadership Teams and Teaching Staff	MS - Principal (School-Based Leadership Team)	HS - Principal (School-Based Leadership Team)	Director of College Access (School-Based Leadership Team)		Intro to Agriscience, Agriscience, Environmental Management Lead; Animal Science Lead; Work-Based Learning Coordinator and Drones (MS and HS Teaching Staff)	

ATTACHMENT G: SCHOOL ORGANIZATION CHART (SECTION 2.4)

**TNA Organization Chart - Grades 5-8 (Middle School)**

Network-Level Leadership Teams	Board of Directors					
	Executive Director					
	Chief Academic Officer					
School-Based Leadership Team	MS - Principal					
		MS - Assistant Principal	MS - Director of Operations	MS - Director of Learning Support	MS - Director of Language Support	MS - Counselor / Social Worker
Middle School Teaching Staff	Math 5-8	English 5-8; Science 5-8; Social Studies 5-8; Visual and Performing Arts 5-8; Physical Education 5-6; Keyboarding and Intro to Agriscience	Front Office Staff 1; Front Office Staff 2; Nurse	Learning Specialists 5-8	Language Specialists 5-8	

**TNA Organization Chart - Grades 9-12 (High School)**

Network-Level Leadership Teams	Board of Directors						
	Executive Director						
	Chief Academic Officer						Outdoor Experiences Coordinator
School-Based Leadership Team	HS - Principal						
		HS - Assistant Principal	HS - Director of Operations	HS - Director of Learning Support	HS - Director of Language Support	HS - Counselor / Social Worker	HS - Director of College Access
Middle School Teaching Staff	Math Teachers 9-12	English 9-12; Science 9-12; Social Studies 9-12; World Language 9-12; Wellness; Physical Education and Personal Finance; Fine Arts	Front Office Staff 1; Front Office Staff 2; Nurse	Learning Specialists 9-12	Language Specialists 9-12		Intro to Agriscience, Agriscience; Environmental Management Lead; Animal Science Lead; Work-Based Learning Coordinator and Drones

ATTACHMENT G: SCHOOL ORGANIZATION CHART (SECTION 2.4)

**ATTACHMENT H - STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA (SECTION 2.4)**

N/A: Immediately prior to founding Tennessee Nature Academy, our co-founders served most recently on staff at Valor Voyager Academy and STEM Preparatory Academy, both of which serve students in the Nashville area. Neither of these schools operate in a nature-based, project-based model as TNA proposes. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about circumstances that affected student achievement data statewide, including introducing barriers to student testing and exacerbating student learning loss. These circumstances make it difficult to share student achievement data that are predictive of TNA's anticipated student outcomes for SY 2023-2024.

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

**INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to Tennessee Nature Academy! We're excited to have you on our team and look forward to your many contributions toward our mission:

*The mission of Tennessee Nature Academy is to cultivate happy and healthy young adults who are knowledgeable about the world, passionate about the outdoors, and committed to doing good work.*

Our Employee Handbook has two purposes:

- 1.) Summarize all employment related information, policies, and procedures in one document
- 2.) Provide a practical resource for new and returning TNA employees

Please review this handbook carefully and direct any clarifying questions you have to TNA leadership. Thank you!

**EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

The following are foundational terms of your employment at Tennessee Nature Academy.

Equal Opportunity Employment - Tennessee Nature Academy ("TNA") is an equal opportunity employer. We afford equal employment and advancement opportunity to all qualified individuals without regard to race, creed, color, religion, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, citizenship status, medical condition, or any legally protected status. This policy extends to all employees and to all aspects of the employment relationship, including the hiring of new employees and the training, transfer, promotion, compensation, benefits, and termination of existing employees.

To comply with applicable laws ensuring equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with a disability, TNA will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or an employee unless undue hardship would result. To request an accommodation, please speak with your immediate supervisor.

Employment at Will - Tennessee is an "at will" state, and unless stated otherwise, TNA employees have an "at will" relationship with Tennessee Nature Academy. This means:

1. You are employed for an indefinite/unspecified time period, and
2. Either you or TNA may terminate your employment at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

Later sections of this handbook will address topics like our discipline policies and grounds for termination. Nothing contained in this document, employment applications, memos, or other materials will alter the at-will employment relationship or otherwise restrict TNA's right to terminate an employee at any time for any reason.

Categories of Employment - TNA complies with the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA") and all other applicable federal and state wage and hour laws.

- Non-Exempt Employees - According to the FLSA, non-exempt employees are entitled to receive overtime pay at a rate of one and one half their regular rate for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours in a work week. Non-exempt employees' rates of pay are typically stated in terms of hourly rates. Non-exempt employees must accurately report hours worked each day and the total

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

for each workweek. Additionally, non-exempt employees are prohibited from working “off the clock,” even voluntarily. Non-exempt employees may not work overtime without the expressed consent of their supervisor, a principal, or the Executive Director. Failure to obtain consent prior to working overtime may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Hourly employees will be paid for all hours worked.

- Exempt Employees - All other employees are considered exempt employees. Exempt employees’ rates of pay may be stated in terms of a monthly or annual salary (although this does not mean that such employees are employed for any definite period of time). Exempt employees are not compensated for overtime (i.e., hours in excess of 40 in a workweek).

In addition to the above categories, employees will belong to one or more of the categories below:

- Full-time - Over thirty (30) hours or above each week.
- Part-time - Under thirty (30) hours each week.
- Temporary Employment - Employees who are hired for a specific time frame. Temporary/seasonal employees are not eligible to participate in employee benefits.

Harassment Policy & Procedure - All employees must be able to work in an atmosphere free from discrimination and harassment. TNA neither condones nor tolerates harassment of any type by any employee. This policy applies to all employee actions and relationships, regardless of position or gender. TNA will promptly investigate any complaint of harassment and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted.

Conduct can constitute harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for personnel decisions, including appraisals, promotion, salary increases, and termination.
- Such behavior has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's performance on the job or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Any employee who has experienced or is aware of a situation that he or she believes to be harassing has a responsibility to report the situation immediately to a member of the leadership team. All complaints of harassment will be investigated promptly, objectively, and as confidentially as possible. Employees are required to cooperate in any investigation. Retaliation against any employee for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation is prohibited and shall be cause for termination.

Background Checks -The Metropolitan Nashville Public School District requires fingerprinting and criminal background clearance for all employees. Willful falsification of employment documents or omission of information by applicants will result in the withdrawal of the offer of employment. Employees found to have falsified employment documents are subject to immediate termination. Fingerprint and background clearance must be received by TNA before any employee may start work.

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

Immigration Law Compliance - All offers of employment are contingent upon verification of the employee's authorization/right to work in the United States. Before employment commences, the employee will be asked to complete a Federal I-9 Employment Eligibility Form and provide supporting documentation. If the employee cannot verify his/her right to work in the United States, TNA reserves the right to revoke the employment offer or terminate employment.

### THE WORKPLACE

Alcohol & Drug-Free Workplace - TNA is committed to providing a drug-free and alcohol-free workplace. TNA seeks to promote safety in the workplace, employee health and well-being, student and family confidence, and an environment conducive to attaining high work standards. The use of drugs and alcohol by employees jeopardizes these goals because it adversely affects health and safety, security, productivity, and public confidence and trust.

The bringing to the workplace, possession, or use of intoxicating beverages or drugs on any TNA premises is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Some work-related events (including those not sponsored by TNA) may serve alcoholic beverages. All state and federal guidelines must be enforced during these events, and employees are expected to use good judgment in these situations.

If you believe you have a drug or alcohol problem, we encourage you to seek help. TNA will handle all related discussions or referrals for treatment with strictest confidentiality. If you enter an alcohol or drug rehabilitation program voluntarily and request a leave of absence to do so, TNA will make every reasonable effort to grant the leave. All TNA employees are subject to random drug testing.

Smoking - In the interest of the health and safety of students and employees, smoking is prohibited on TNA premises.

Attendance & Tardiness - TNA depends heavily upon our employees, especially instructional staff. Accordingly, we expect employees to attend work as scheduled. Dependability, attendance, punctuality, and a commitment to do the job right are essential at all times. Should an employee anticipate being absent or late, they should call and email their direct supervisor. If you are absent from work for longer than one day, you are expected to keep your supervisor informed of your situation. Excessive or unexcused absences or tardiness may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Personal Appearance - Employees are expected to wear clothing appropriate for the nature of our organization and the type of work performed. Because each employee is a representative of TNA in the eyes of the public, each employee must report to work properly groomed, wearing appropriate clothing and maintaining a professional appearance, given the activities for the day. TNA will work to accommodate any religious appearance requirements if doing so will not place an undue burden on TNA.

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

TNA's flexible dress code allows for professionals to engage in fun and active learning experiences with their students. We ask that all staff members arrive at school with outfits that are neat and functional. We encourage staff members to have a change of clothes at school, in the event of inclement weather. The following are generally regarded as inappropriate while school is in session: offensive symbols or messages, revealing clothing, clothing that is too tight or otherwise interferes with students' learning or degrades the image of the school. If TNA leadership deems an employee's attire unsuitable, they may ask the employee to return home and change.

Conflict of Interest - All employees must avoid situations involving actual or potential conflict of interest. An employee involved in any relationships or situations that may constitute a conflict of interest should immediately and fully disclose the relevant circumstances to his or her immediate supervisor for a determination about whether a potential or actual conflict exists. If an actual or potential conflict is determined, TNA may take whatever corrective action appears appropriate according to the circumstances. Failure to disclose facts constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

All employees will avoid any action, whether or not specifically prohibited by this policy, that might result in or create the appearance of using employment with TNA or influence on TNA decision-making for private gain.

The organization recognizes the right of employees to engage in activities outside of their employment that are of a private nature and unrelated to our business. Any outside employment should be promptly disclosed to your immediate supervisor. In certain circumstances, outside employment will be approved, if it does not conflict with TNA's mission or the employee's work at TNA.

Political Engagement - TNA is a non-partisan organization. Employees may engage in partisan and election political activities though must not use their title or employment status with TNA. Only the Executive Director or those approved by the Executive Director may represent TNA in any official capacity during these private activities.

Safety - TNA is committed to providing a safe environment and complying with all workplace safety requirements. Employees are responsible for familiarizing themselves with TNA safety/security rules and practices.

- Employees should know the location of all alarms and fire extinguishers and the proper procedure for using those tools in the event of an emergency.
- Employees should ensure the fire evacuation procedure is posted in classrooms/offices and know their role in an emergency evacuation of the building.
- Employees should be prepared to maintain student safety in the event of an emergency (e.g. lockout, lockdown, shelter-in-place, etc.).
- Employees should properly secure all entrances and equipment when leaving a TNA facility.
- Employees should carry a first-aid kit and a reliable means of communication (e.g. walkie talkie, charged cell phone, etc.) when leading student activities outdoors.
- Employees should follow guidance from the Student and Family Handbook when determining whether it is appropriate for an outdoor activity to take place given the temperature and weather conditions for the day.

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

Weapons - TNA prohibits all persons, including employees, who enter TNA property from carrying a handgun, firearm, knife, or other weapon as defined in TCA § 39-17-1309 regardless of whether the person is licensed to carry the weapon or not. This includes “carry” permits. The only exception to this policy will be police officers, security guards, or other persons who have been given written consent by TNA to carry a weapon on TNA premises as part of their official duties. Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action and may be referred to the appropriate legal authorities for prosecution.

**TECHNOLOGY & MEDIA**

Equipment - TNA provides employees access to technology such as computers, phones, email, cameras, and copy machines. TNA property should be primarily used for conducting TNA business. Please treat your TNA issued equipment with the same care and respect that you would treat your own property. TNA often purchases accidental damage protection and extended warranties for its technology equipment. However, if an employee demonstrates negligence or a consistent track record of damage/loss, TNA may require an employee to replace or furnish his/her own device at his/her own expense. Appropriate personal use of computers and other systems is permitted, but communications will be treated no different than other business-related information and messages as described below.

Communications - Employees shall not use TNA email addresses to solicit for commercial ventures, religious, or political causes. Additionally, employees may not use the internet or email systems for any disruptive or offensive messages, such as messages that contain sexual implications, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comments that address a person’s age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability.

The internet may not be used to send (upload) or receive (download) copyrighted materials without authorization. TNA maintains the right to enter into any company-issued electronic systems, including voicemail, email, text messages, and computer systems, and to inspect and review any data recorded in those systems. Employees should not assume that information messages or content stored on any TNA devices are private or that TNA representatives will not access or review this information. The contents of computers, voicemail, and e-mail may be disclosed as necessary by TNA to satisfy public records requests.

Social Media - TNA respects the right of its employees to express themselves through social media outlets. However, TNA has an interest in protecting its brand and executing a communications strategy.

*Postings authorized by TNA* - TNA manages several social media accounts for informational and promotional purposes. Only employees authorized by relevant TNA leadership may use social media accounts to conduct official TNA communications. Employees should not post any pictures of students and should refrain from posting any kind of student data/information that is personally identifiable.

*Other Postings* - Employees are encouraged to resolve workplace grievances internally, and should refrain from posting comments and materials that could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, intimidating, or that could create a hostile environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion, or any other status protected by law if they choose to address the grievance using social media.

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

Employees should refrain from using their position or the nature of business at TNA to engage in online discussions. Employees are prohibited from impersonating TNA, making statements purportedly on its behalf without authorization, or making statements that can be construed as establishing TNA's official position or policy on any particular issue. Where relevant, an employee must include a disclaimer that his/her views and opinions do not necessarily reflect the view of the organization or management. Employees are further prohibited from disclosing confidential information regarding TNA on social media, or using social media to otherwise violate any terms of this handbook or other agreement the employee has entered into with TNA. Always remember, posted information is public information.

Interaction with Media - All media inquiries regarding TNA and its operations must be referred to the leadership team. Only these TNA leaders are authorized to make or approve public statements pertaining to TNA. If you are contacted by the media about a TNA matter, please decline comment unless previously authorized by the Executive Director or their designee. In the interest of protecting the privacy rights of students and parents and preserving the instructional environment of our school, TNA will grant media access to students only upon prior consent from a parent/guardian.

### COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Pay Schedule and Format - TNA pays its employees on a bi-weekly schedule. Pay stubs include the total number of regular, overtime hours, special pay for non-worked hours, rate of pay, any deductions authorized by you and the deductions required by law (Federal Income Tax, Social Security, and Medicare Tax). To better facilitate timely disbursement, TNA strongly encourages its employees to enroll in direct deposit. If there is an error on your paycheck, please report it to the Executive Director.

Withholdings - TNA is required by law to make certain deductions from every employee's compensation, including applicable federal, state, and local income taxes. Medicare and Social Security taxes also must be deducted from each employee's earnings. TNA contributes the employer portion of Medicare and Social Security payroll taxes.

The organization offers its employees certain programs and benefits beyond those required by law. Eligible employees may voluntarily authorize deductions from their paychecks to cover the costs of participation in these programs. Contact your supervisor with questions concerning deductions and how they are calculated. Every deduction from your paycheck is explained on your pay stub. If you do not understand the deductions, ask the Executive Director to explain them to you.

Federal Withholding Tax deduction is determined by the employee's W-4 form. The W-4 form should be completed upon hire and it is the employee's responsibility to report any changes in filing status to the Executive Director and to fill out a new W-4 form. At the end of the calendar year, a "withholding statement" (W-2) will be prepared and forwarded to each employee for use in connection with preparation of income tax returns. The W-2 shows Social Security information, taxes withheld, and total wages.

Wage Attachments and Garnishments - Under normal circumstances, TNA will not assist creditors in the collection of personal debts from its employees. However, creditors may resort to certain legal procedures such as garnishments or levies that may require TNA, by law, to withhold part of your earnings in their favor.

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

Benefits - Full time TNA employees are eligible for benefits. Benefits are administered through two different organizations based on an employee's classification. Certificated employees (i.e. have an active TN teaching license) receive benefits through the Metropolitan Nashville Public School District. Support employees (i.e. do not have an active TN teaching license) receive benefits through the Metropolitan Nashville Government. The actual Plan documents for any specific benefit will be the final authority and most up to date source of information on benefits provided to TNA employees.

Paid Time Off (PTO): Holidays and Personal Days - The master calendar should be consulted for all federal and TNA-designated holidays. Personal Days are days for personal time which an employee may voluntarily elect to be paid for not attending work as described below. Employees may take Personal Days PTO off for any purpose including rest, relaxation, illness/sickness, or any other personal necessity reason (other than bereavement, jury duty, or maternity/paternity leave which are covered by other policies). Employees will lose and not be paid for any unused PTO at the end of the calendar year. Prior to requesting time off, a supervisor should be consulted to coordinate personal days to minimize multiple staff being out on the same day in a given grade level. Employees are also asked to not use 3 or more personal days consecutively. PTO days cannot be rolled over into the next calendar year.

Bereavement Leave - Regular employees are eligible for up to one week of paid bereavement leave to attend the funeral of an "immediate family" member. An "immediate family member" is generally defined as mother, father, spouse, domestic partner, son, daughter, or step-family. An employee should discuss the need for bereavement leave with their manager as soon as practical after the employee learns of the need for the leave.

Worker's Compensation - If you are injured on the job, a portion of your wages may be protected under TNA's paid worker's compensation coverage. In addition to continuing your wages for lost time, workers' compensation coverage may also assume the responsibility of paying medical expenses that are related to the covered injury. In the event you are hurt on the job, you must immediately report the injury to your school leader, who will help you file a claim and instruct you on the proper procedures to follow. All workers' compensation claims should be reported immediately. Failure to report an injury promptly may lead to a reduction or denial of workers' compensation benefits.

Jury Duty - Employees who serve on a jury, and provide written documentation, will be paid for the time spent on jury duty at their current rate. TNA requests that its employees stay in close contact with their supervisors to advise them on their status and timeline for a return to work as it relates to jury duty. For the purposes of overtime calculation for hourly employees, time off for jury duty will not count towards actual hours worked.

Time Off to Vote - If an employee does not have sufficient time outside of working hours to vote, schedules may be adjusted as needed to ensure that the employee is able to cast a vote in a governmental election. Please notify your supervisor as early as possible if you anticipate the need to adjust your schedule to vote.

Military Leave - An employee who is a member of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, National Guard, Reserves or Public Health Service will be granted an unpaid leave of absence for military service, training or related obligations in accordance with applicable law. Employees on military leave may substitute their accrued paid leave time for unpaid leave. At the

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

conclusion of the leave, upon the satisfaction of certain conditions, an employee generally has a right to return to the same position he or she held prior to the leave or to a position with like seniority, status, and pay that the employee is qualified to perform. Contact TNA for additional exclusions and terms as defined by federal and state law requirements.

Personal Leave of Absence - The provisions and terms of the FMLA will control a requested leave of absence to eligible employees. To the extent that an employee and a requested leave is covered under Tennessee Code Annotated section 4-21-408, the provisions and terms of Tennessee Code Annotated section 4-21-408 will control a requested leave of absence.

If the FMLA does not cover an employee or an employee's requested leave, an employee may nonetheless be granted a leave of absence in situations in which TNA determines that an extended period of time away from the job will be in the best interest of the employee and TNA.

Requests for a leave of absence or any extension of a leave should be submitted in writing to the employee's supervisor at least thirty days before the beginning of the leave period, or as soon as practicable. The final decision concerning the request will be made by the Executive Director or their designee. All employees on approved leave are expected to report any change of status in their need for leave or their intention to return to work to their supervisor as soon as practicable.

Employees on personal leave will be required to use all unused PTO while on leave. TNA will continue health insurance and other benefits to employees on leave for no longer than 12 weeks from the beginning date of leave so long as the employee continues to pay any employee portion of the contribution. Benefits that accrue according to the length of service, such as paid vacation, holiday, personal, and sick days, do not accrue during periods of leave.

Employees returning from a personal leave due to an illness or injury must provide a return-to-work certification from their physician. Any restrictions must be noted on the release. Employees on an authorized personal leave of absence may not perform work for any other employer, unless approved by TNA prior to leave.

It is possible that an employee returning from a personal leave of absence may not be returned to the same job position he or she held before taking leave. TNA will do its best to return the employee to a same or similar position, but it cannot guarantee any positions will be available upon employee's return. If an employee fails to return to work at the conclusion of an approved leave of absence, including any extension of the leave time, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment with TNA, unless prohibited by any state or federal law.

Maternity/Paternity Leave - TNA strives to be a family-friendly work environment and desires to work with faculty members needing maternity and paternity leave to support the addition of a new family member.

- The primary caregiver is entitled to take up to 16 weeks off for the birth or adoption of a child. TNA will provide payment for 8 weeks plus any unused PTO if requested.
- The non-primary caregiver may take up to 2 weeks of paid leave after the birth or adoption of a child.
- Health care benefits will be provided for the entire leave so long as the employee continues to pay any employee portion of the contribution.

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

## ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

**PERFORMANCE EVALUATION & REVIEW**

General Standards of Conduct - TNA expects its employees to act in a professional and responsible manner at all times. The following list provides examples of the conduct that TNA will not tolerate and may merit disciplinary action, up to and including termination, even for a first offense. This list is not exclusive or comprehensive and provides examples of conduct that may result in disciplinary action:

- Insubordination or refusal to follow instructions properly issued by the employee's supervisor regarding the employee's work.
- Violation of safety and security rules.
- The release of confidential documents/information about the organization, its students, or employees.
- Negligence or careless action that endangers the lives or well-being of another person.
- Theft or unauthorized possession of TNA property, the property of an TNA employee, or the property of an TNA student.
- Fighting, any act of violence, or any threat of violence on company property or while performing work for the organization.
- Dishonesty, misrepresentation, or falsification of an employment application or other TNA document.
- Careless work or repeated failure to meet quality standards.
- Harassment of any kind.
- Failure to cooperate in or interfering with an TNA investigation.

Employment Guidelines - Violations of TNA policy, whether written in the Employee Handbook, written elsewhere, or otherwise transmitted to employees, as well as other unacceptable behavior by employees may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Possible types of disciplinary action may include: a verbal warning, written warning, suspension, and termination. Management, in its sole discretion, may warn, reassign, suspend, or discharge any employee at will. The guidelines listed above may or may not be used in the order presented, depending on the severity of the action or behavior. TNA reserves the right to skip any step in its disciplinary process, depending on the severity of the offense, at TNA's sole discretion.

Performance improvement may be suggested whenever TNA management believes that an employee's performance is less than satisfactory and can be resolved through adequate counseling. Corrective counseling is at the discretion of TNA. TNA reserves the right to discharge "at will." Even if corrective counseling is implemented, TNA may terminate employment at any step at the discretion of management.

Performance Reviews - The Executive Director will be evaluated by the Board of Directors. All other employees will be evaluated by the Executive Director or their designee or both. TNA will communicate the official written evaluation based on results from the TEAM evaluation processes for general educators, school services personnel, and administrators.

Employee Records - Employee personnel records are the property of TNA. Please keep your supervisor advised of changes that should be reflected in your personnel file, including change in contact information, marital status, number of dependents, and person(s) to notify in case of emergency. Prompt notification of these changes is essential and will enable TNA to contact you should the change affect your other records.

ATTACHMENT I - EMPLOYEE MANUAL / PERSONNEL POLICIES (SECTION 2.4)

TNA restricts disclosure of your personnel file to authorized individuals within TNA or other individuals outside of TNA, as required by law or business purposes. Only the Executive Director or their designee is authorized to release information about current or former employees. All personnel files are the property of TNA and will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by the law. However, TNA will cooperate with requests from authorized law enforcement or local, state, or federal agencies conducting official investigations or as otherwise legally required.

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Acknowledgment of Receipt of the Employee Handbook

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of Tennessee Nature Academy Employee Handbook for the 2023-2024 academic year. I have read and understand the contents of this handbook and will act in accord with these policies and procedures as a condition of my employment with Tennessee Nature Academy. I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the handbook or the Standards of Conduct, I will consult my immediate supervisor. I also acknowledge that the handbook contains an employment-at-will provision that states:

- Either Tennessee Nature Academy or I can terminate my employment relationship at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice;
- That this employment-at-will relationship is in effect regardless of any other written statements or policies contained in this handbook, in any other Tennessee Nature Academy documents, or in any verbal statements to the contrary; and
- I understand that the contents of this employee handbook are simply policies and guidelines, not a contract or implied contract with employees. The contents of the employee handbook may change at any time.

Please read this Handbook and these employee Standards of Conduct carefully to understand these conditions of employment before you sign this document.

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Employee Signature

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Date

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Employee Name (Please Print)

## ATTACHMENT J - INSURANCE COVERAGE (SECTION 2.6)



Commercial Insurance Associates, LLC

December 2, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

Please be advised that we certify and confirm that Tennessee Nature Academy will have, at minimum, the following insurance coverage in place prior to opening. Certificate of Insurance will be provided accordingly.

- General Liability / Automobile Liability: equal to or greater than \$5,000,000. This insurance shall be primary and non-contributory and will name Metropolitan Government as an additional insured. The policy will cover contractual liability and will cover vehicles owned, hired and non-owned.
- Professional Liability: Teachers Professional Liability equal to or greater than \$1,000,000.
- Directors & Officers Liability: equal to or greater than \$5,000,000.
- Workers Compensation: statutory coverage including employers liability limits greater than or equal to the state minimum limits \$100,000.
- Property / Boiler & Machinery Coverage: the policy will insure any owned and rented property on a replacement cost basis with no coinsurance penalty provision.
- Sexual Abuse: limits greater than or equal to \$1,000,000.
- 10 days notice of cancellation in favor of Metropolitan Government/TDOE will be included.

Please let us know if you have further questions or require any additional documentation.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jacqueline LaFont".

Jacqueline LaFont  
Principal  
Direct: 615.973.1393  
Email: [jlafont@com-ins.com](mailto:jlafont@com-ins.com)

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103 Powell Court, Suite 200 | Brentwood, TN 37027  
Tel: 615.515.6000 | Fax: 615.620.0912 | Toll: 866.400.0141 | [www.com-ins.com](http://www.com-ins.com)

ATTACHMENT K - CMO AGREEMENT (IF APPLICABLE) (SECTION 2.10)

This attachment is Not Applicable to Tennessee Nature Academy because Tennessee Nature Academy does not have an agreement with a Charter Management Organization.


## ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)

Public charter schools are required to operate under an annual budget on a July 1 – June 30 fiscal year. For purposes of this application, the proposed charter school must submit the Public Charter School Planning and Budget Worksheet which is provided on the department’s website, as **Attachment N**. The budget must include:

- (a) All anticipated revenues and expenditures
- (b) A back-office budget
- (c) Financial implications of facilities plans
- (d) Explicitly detail major assumptions including but not limited to:
  - Student enrollment;
  - All anticipated funding sources<sup>1</sup>, including:
    - Local, state, and federal per-pupil funding; eligibility levels; and annual increases
    - Other government resources
    - Private fundraising
    - eRate
    - Student fees
  - Compensation, including
    - Salary table and number of staff by position
    - Yearly pay increases
    - Pension contribution and other benefits
  - Line items for each major expense and delineation of assumptions, including:
    - Instructional materials and supplies
    - School equipment and furniture
    - Technology for student and teacher use
    - Professional development
    - Student assessments
    - Student information system
    - Special education services
    - Student activities
    - Authorizer fee
    - Contracted services at school (audit,I/T,etc.)
    - Rent,utilities and other facility expenses
    - Office supplies and equipment
    - Technology for administrative use
      - Fundraising materials and resources (non-staff)
      - Marketing costs
      - Management fees and any other management compensation to the CMO or network (if applicable)
      - Capital, contingency, and insurance reserve funds

## ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS - PAGE 1 OF 1



**New Charter School Application Budget Template**  
**Instructions**

**Template Tabs**


<a href="#">1) Proposed School Information</a>	Enter proposed school name, contact information, and proposed year of opening
<a href="#">2) Student Assumptions</a>	Enter enrollment and key student demographic information assumptions
<a href="#">3) Pre-Opening Budget</a>	Enter budget details and assumptions for 12 month period prior to Year 1
<a href="#">4) Pre-Opening Cash Flow</a>	Enter cash flow details and assumptions for 12 month period prior to Year 1
<a href="#">5) Years 1-10 Staff Assumptions</a>	Enter staffing assumptions; assumptions will drive over tabs
<a href="#">6) Year 1 Budget</a>	Enter budget details and assumptions for Year 1
<a href="#">7) Year 1 Cash Flow</a>	Enter cash flow details and assumptions for Year 1 (July to June 12 month period)
<a href="#">8) Years 2 through 10 Budget</a>	Enter budget details and assumptions for Years 2 through 5
<a href="#">9) Summary</a>	Informational; enter a starting fund balance if applicable


**Template Guidance**

- Input financial information into light yellow cells
- Input assumption information or notes into light green cells
- Provides additional information or instruction for specific tab or section of tab
- Cells with red comment tag include additional guidance and instruction

**information for the proposed charter school. You may add additional worksheets to this workbook to otherwise supplement the information being provided on the existing worksheets.**

Developed in partnership with





Template Version 02222017

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 PROPOSED SCHOOL INFORMATION - PAGE 1 OF 1

**Tennessee Nature Academy  
 New Charter School Application Budget Template  
 Proposed School Information**

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Proposed School Name	Tennessee Nature Academy
Lead Sponsor Name	Roy Renfro
Lead Sponsor E-mail Address	<a href="mailto:rrenfro@tennesseenatureacademy.org">rrenfro@tennesseenatureacademy.org</a>
Lead Sponsor Phone Number	629-259-2429
CMO/EMO Affiliation	N/A
Proposed Authorizer	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Proposed Opening Grade Level(s)	5th - 6th Grades
Proposed Final Grade Level(s)	5th - 12th Grades
Proposed First Year of Operations	2023-24

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
Anticipated Enrollment	162	243	324	414	504

**Note: These cells auto-populate after completing Tab 2.**

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 STUDENT ASSUMPTIONS - PAGE 1 OF 2

<b>Tennessee Nature Academy New Charter School Application Budget Template Student Assumptions</b>					
<b>Enrollment Assumptions</b>					
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>2026-27</b>	<b>2027-28</b>
Pre-Kindergarten (Informational Only)	0	0	0	0	0
Kindergarten	0	0	0	0	0
1st Grade	0	0	0	0	0
2nd Grade	0	0	0	0	0
3rd Grade	0	0	0	0	0
4th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
5th Grade	81	81	81	81	81
6th Grade	81	81	81	81	81
7th Grade	0	81	81	81	81
8th Grade	0	0	81	81	81
9th Grade	0	0	0	90	90
10th Grade	0	0	0	0	90
11th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
12th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Enrollment (excluding Pre-Kindergarten)</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>504</b>
<b>Change in Net Enrollment</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>
<b># of Classes By Grade</b>					
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
Pre-Kindergarten (Informational Only)	0	0	0	0	0
Kindergarten	0	0	0	0	0
1st Grade	0	0	0	0	0
2nd Grade	0	0	0	0	0
3rd Grade	0	0	0	0	0
4th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
5th Grade	3	3	3	3	3
6th Grade	3	3	3	3	3
7th Grade	0	3	3	3	3
8th Grade	0	0	3	3	3
9th Grade	0	0	0	3	3
10th Grade	0	0	0	0	3
11th Grade	0	0	0	0	0

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 STUDENT ASSUMPTIONS - PAGE 2 OF 2

12th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total # of Classes</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Change in Net # of Classes</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

		Other Key Assumptions Enter Estimated Percentages				
SPED %		15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
<b>SPED Count</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>76</b>
ELL %		45%	45%	45%	45%	45%
<b>ELL Count</b>		<b>73</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>227</b>
Anticipated Paid %		50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Anticipated Reduced %		15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Anticipated Free %		35%	35%	35%	35%	35%
<b>Anticipated Paid Count</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>252</b>
<b>Anticipated Reduced Count</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Anticipated Free Count</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>176</b>
<b>Total Free and Reduced Count</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>252</b>
School Days		181	181	181	181	181
Attendance Rate		95%	95%	95%	95%	95%

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 PRE-OPENING BUDGET - PAGE 1 OF 2 -

Tennessee Nature Academy New Charter School Application Budget Template Pre-Opening Budget			
Revenue Assumptions			
		Year 0 2022-23	
Federal Revenues	Rate/Assumption	Amount	Assumption Notes
Title I	\$0	-	
Title II	\$0	-	
Title III	\$0	-	
NSLP	\$0	-	
E-Rate	\$0	-	
CSP Startup Grant		233,333	Will Apply - Funds allocated over 3 years. Estimated \$700K
Other	\$0	-	
Other	\$0	-	
<b>Fundraising &amp; Philanthropy</b>			Detail any private funding sources
Charter Growth Fund		\$116,667	Spread over three years generally \$250-\$600K, Estimated - \$350K
Charter School Expansion Grant		\$241,173	Ends September 2022 - total awarded \$580K
NSVF		\$215,000	Disbursed on July 2022 and January 2023 \$100K July and \$115K Jan
Other		\$0	
Other		\$0	
<b>Total Revenues</b>		<b>806,173</b>	
Additional Space to Provide Fundraising Details			

Compensation Assumptions			
		Year 0 2022-23	
Administrative Staff	FTE Count		Assumption Notes
Principal/School Leader	1.00	\$90,000	Executive Director
Assistant Principal	0.00	\$0	
Special Education Coordinator	0.00	\$0	
Deans, Directors	0.00	\$0	
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	1.00	\$90,000	Chief Academic Officer
<b>Total Administrative Compensation</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>180,000</b>	
<b>Instructional Staff</b>			
Teachers	0.00	\$0	
Special Education Teachers	0.00	\$0	
Educational Assistants/Aides	0.00	\$0	
Elective Teachers	0.00	\$0	
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	0.00	\$0	
<b>Total Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Non-Instructional Staff</b>			
Clerical Staff	0.00	\$0	
Custodial Staff	0.00	\$0	
Operations	0.50	\$40,000	Director of Operations beginning on January 2023
Social Workers/Counseling	0.00	\$0	
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	1.00	\$80,000	Director of Community Engagement (Starting in July 2022)
<b>Total Non-Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>1.50</b>	<b>120,000</b>	
Bonus		-	
Other Non FTE Compensation		-	
Other Non FTE Compensation		-	
Other Non FTE Compensation		-	
<b>Total FTE Count</b>	<b>3.50</b>		
<b>Total Compensation</b>		<b>300,000</b>	

Employer Benefits & Tax Assumptions			
		Year 0 2022-23	
Base Assumption			Assumption Notes
Social Security	6.20%	\$18,600	6.2% of Gross Total Salaries
Medicare	1.45%	\$4,350	1.45% of Gross Total Salaries
State Unemployment	2.00%	\$6,000	Estimated State Unemployment at 2% of Total Salaries
Disability/Life Insurance	0.00%	\$0	
Workers Compensation Insurance	1.00%	\$3,000	1% estimated of Total Salaries
Other Fringe Benefits	0.00%	\$0	
Medical Insurance	\$4,500	\$15,750	Estimated at \$4500 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears
Dental Insurance	\$350	\$1,225	Estimated at \$350 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears
Vision Insurance	\$225	\$788	Estimated at \$225 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears
Other Retirement	10.27%	\$30,810	Estimated 10.27% of Total Salaries
<b>Total Employer Benefits &amp; Taxes</b>		<b>80,523</b>	

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 PRE-OPENING BUDGET - PAGE 2 OF 2

Operating Expenses			
		Year 0	
		2022-23	
<b>Contracted Services</b>			<b>Assumption Notes</b>
Professional Development	\$0	\$0	
Financial Services	\$0	\$40,000	Start Up Fee for Backoffice provider for Operations, Finance, & HR
Audit Services	\$0	\$0	
Legal Fees	\$0	\$7,000	Start Up Legal Fees
Copier Lease and Usage	\$0	\$2,500	Copier Expense for Curriculum and Students
Internet and Phone Service	\$0	\$2,750	Office Internet and Phones
Cell Phone Service	\$0	\$3,000	Company Cellphones
Payroll Services	\$0	\$0	
Health Services	\$0	\$0	
Transportation	\$0	\$0	
IT Services	\$0	\$3,200	Contracted Services for Preopening Services
Contracted SPED Services	\$0	\$0	
Insurance	\$0	\$3,500	D&O Insurance, Liability, Ect
Postal Charges	\$0	\$2,000	Recruiting Packages
Bank Charges	\$0	\$600	Banking Start up Fees
<b>Supplies &amp; Materials</b>			
Textbooks and Instructional Supplies	\$125	\$20,250	Expensed half of the planned expense for curriculum in supplies prior due to a grant
Education Software	\$25	\$4,050	Expensed half of the planned expense for curriculum in supplies prior due to a grant
Student Supplies	\$0	\$0	
Faculty Supplies	\$0	\$0	
Library Books	\$0	\$0	
Testing & Evaluation	\$0	\$0	
Student Laptops	\$350	\$18,900	1 Class Set purchased in Pre-Opening due to grant received
Faculty Laptops	\$900	\$18,900	Assuming \$900 per Computer per Employee that will be included in pre-opening and will repurchase computers for year 1 staff due to grant
Office Supplies	\$0	\$2,500	Pre-opening Office Supplies
Printing Paper	\$0	\$1,000	Pre-Opening Printing Paper
Marketing Materials	\$0	\$5,000	Marketing Material for branding and recruiting
Student Uniforms	\$0	\$0	
Gifts & Awards - Students	\$0	\$0	
Gifts & Awards - Teachers and Staff	\$0	\$0	
Health Supplies	\$0	\$0	
<b>Facility Related Expenses</b>			
Rent	\$0	\$0	
Utilities	\$0	\$0	
Custodial	\$0	\$0	
Waste	\$0	\$0	
Faculty Furniture	\$500	\$8,750	\$500 per any new FTE
Student Furniture	\$250	\$40,500	\$250 per student and any change in students in the out years
Internet/Network Equipment	\$0	\$0	
Other Equipment	\$0	\$0	
Building Decorum	\$0	\$0	
Tenant Improvements	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
<b>Other Charges</b>			
Staff Recruitment	\$300	\$5,250	\$300 per FTE
Student Recruitment & Community Engagement	\$150	\$24,300	\$150 per student for Student Recruitment supplies, events, marketing, Ect.
Parent & Staff Meetings	\$0	\$0	
Authorizer Fee	\$0	\$0	
Meals Provided to Students	\$0	\$0	
<b>Debt Service</b>			
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>		<b>213,950</b>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>594,473</b>	

# ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)

## PRE-OPENING CASH FLOW - PAGE 1 OF 2 -

Tennessee Nature Academy New Charter School Application Budget Template Pre-Opening Cash Flow															
Cash Flow Summary															
Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0
2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23
Total Budget	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total	AR/AP	
<b>Beginning Cash</b>	-	134,185	168,370	202,555	273,016	226,810	180,604	281,620	267,636	253,652	239,668	225,685			
<b>Revenues</b>															
Federal Revenues	233,333	-	-	-	-	-	38,889	38,889	38,889	38,889	38,889	38,889	233,333	0	
Fundraising & Philanthropy	572,840	180,391	80,391	80,391	116,667	-	115,000	-	-	-	-	-	572,840	(0)	
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>806,173</b>	<b>180,391</b>	<b>80,391</b>	<b>80,391</b>	<b>116,667</b>	-	<b>153,889</b>	<b>38,889</b>	<b>38,889</b>	<b>38,889</b>	<b>38,889</b>	<b>38,889</b>	<b>806,173</b>	<b>(0)</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>															
Staffing	300,000	21,667	21,667	21,667	21,667	21,667	21,667	28,333	28,333	28,333	28,333	28,333	300,000	-	
Employer Benefits & Taxes	80,523	6,710	6,710	6,710	6,710	6,710	6,710	6,710	6,710	6,710	6,710	6,710	80,523	-	
Contracted Services	64,550	5,379	5,379	5,379	5,379	5,379	5,379	5,379	5,379	5,379	5,379	5,379	64,550	0	
Supplies & Materials	70,600	5,883	5,883	5,883	5,883	5,883	5,883	5,883	5,883	5,883	5,883	5,883	70,600	(0)	
Facility-Related Expenses	49,250	4,104	4,104	4,104	4,104	4,104	4,104	4,104	4,104	4,104	4,104	4,104	49,250	(0)	
Other Charges	29,550	2,463	2,463	2,463	2,463	2,463	2,463	2,463	2,463	2,463	2,463	2,463	29,550	-	
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>594,473</b>	<b>46,206</b>	<b>46,206</b>	<b>46,206</b>	<b>46,206</b>	<b>46,206</b>	<b>46,206</b>	<b>52,873</b>	<b>52,873</b>	<b>52,873</b>	<b>52,873</b>	<b>52,873</b>	<b>594,473</b>	<b>0</b>	
Operating Income (Loss)	211,701	134,185	34,185	34,185	70,461	(46,206)	(46,206)	101,016	(13,984)	(13,984)	(13,984)	(13,984)	211,701	(0)	
Changes in Accounts Receivable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Changes in Accounts Payable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Line of Credit Proceeds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Line of Credit Repayments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Other Balance Sheet Activity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Ending Cash</b>	<b>134,185</b>	<b>168,370</b>	<b>202,555</b>	<b>273,016</b>	<b>226,810</b>	<b>180,604</b>	<b>281,620</b>	<b>267,636</b>	<b>253,652</b>	<b>239,668</b>	<b>225,685</b>	<b>211,701</b>			

Details of Cash Flow														
Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0
2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23
Total Budget	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total	AR/AP
<b>Revenues</b>														
<b>Federal Revenues</b>														
CSP Startup Grant	233,333	-	-	-	-	-	38,889	38,889	38,889	38,889	38,889	38,889	233,333	0
<b>Fundraising &amp; Philanthropy</b>														
Charter Growth Fund	116,667	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$116,667	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	116,667	(0)
Charter School Expansion Grant	241,173	\$80,391	\$80,391	\$80,391	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	241,173	-
NSF	215,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$115,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	215,000	-
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>806,173</b>	<b>180,391</b>	<b>80,391</b>	<b>80,391</b>	<b>116,667</b>	-	-	<b>153,889</b>	<b>38,889</b>	<b>38,889</b>	<b>38,889</b>	<b>38,889</b>	<b>806,173</b>	<b>(0)</b>

Compensation														
Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0
2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23
Total Budget	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total	AR/AP
<b>Compensation</b>														
Principal/School Leader	90,000	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	90,000	-
Assistant Principal	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Special Education Coordinator	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Deans, Directors	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	80,000	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	80,000	-
<b>Total Administrative Compensation</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Instructional Staff</b>														
Teachers	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Special Education Teachers	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Educational Assistants/Aides	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Elective Teachers	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
<b>Total Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Non-Instructional Staff</b>														
Clerical Staff	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Custodial Staff	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Operations	40,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	40,000	-
Social Workers/Counseling	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	80,000	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	80,000	-
<b>Total Non-Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>6,667</b>	<b>6,667</b>	<b>6,667</b>	<b>6,667</b>	<b>6,667</b>	<b>6,667</b>	<b>13,333</b>	<b>13,333</b>	<b>13,333</b>	<b>13,333</b>	<b>13,333</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>-</b>
Bonus	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other Non FTE Compensation	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other Non FTE Compensation	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other Non FTE Compensation	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
<b>Total Compensation</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>28,333</b>	<b>28,333</b>	<b>28,333</b>	<b>28,333</b>	<b>28,333</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>-</b>

Employer Benefits & Taxes														
Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0
2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23
Total Budget	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total	AR/AP
<b>Social Security</b>	18,600	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$1,550	18,600	-
Medicare	4,350	\$363	\$363	\$363	\$363	\$363	\$363	\$363	\$363	\$363	\$363	\$363	4,350	-
State Unemployment	6,000	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	6,000	-
Disability/Life Insurance	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Workers Compensation Insurance	3,000	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	3,000	-
Other Fringe Benefits	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Medical Insurance	15,750	\$1,313	\$1,313	\$1,313	\$1,313	\$1,313	\$1,313	\$1,313	\$1,313	\$1,313	\$1,313	\$1,313	15,750	-
Dental Insurance	1,225	\$102	\$102	\$102	\$102	\$102	\$102	\$102	\$102	\$102	\$102	\$102	1,225	-
Vision Insurance	788	\$66	\$66	\$66	\$66	\$66	\$66	\$66	\$66	\$66	\$66	\$66	788	-
Other Retirement	30,810	\$2,568	\$2,568	\$2,568	\$2,568	\$2,568	\$2,568	\$2,568	\$2,568	\$2,568	\$2,568	\$2,568	30,810	-
<b>Total Employer Benefits &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>80,523</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>6,710</b>	<b>80,523</b>	<b>-</b>

# ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 PRE-OPENING CASH FLOW - PAGE 2 OF 2

Operating Expenses																
Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0		
2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23		
Total Budget	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total	AR/AP		
<b>Contracted Services</b>																
Professional Development	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	Professional Development	
Financial Services	40,000	\$3,333	\$3,333	\$3,333	\$3,333	\$3,333	\$3,333	\$3,333	\$3,333	\$3,333	\$3,333	\$3,333	\$3,333	40,000	-	Financial Services
Audit Services	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Audit Services
Legal Fees	7,000	\$583	\$583	\$583	\$583	\$583	\$583	\$583	\$583	\$583	\$583	\$583	\$583	7,000	0	Legal Fees
Copier Lease and Usage	2,500	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	2,500	0	Copier Lease and Usage
Internet and Phone Service	2,750	\$229	\$229	\$229	\$229	\$229	\$229	\$229	\$229	\$229	\$229	\$229	\$229	2,750	0	Internet and Phone Service
Cell Phone Service	3,000	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	3,000	-	Cell Phone Service
Payroll Services	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Payroll Services
Health Services	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Health Services
Transportation	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Transportation
IT Services	3,200	\$267	\$267	\$267	\$267	\$267	\$267	\$267	\$267	\$267	\$267	\$267	\$267	3,200	0	IT Services
Contracted SPED Services	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Contracted SPED Services
<b>Insurance</b>																
Insurance	3,500	\$292	\$292	\$292	\$292	\$292	\$292	\$292	\$292	\$292	\$292	\$292	\$292	3,500	0	Insurance
Postal Charges	2,000	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	2,000	(0)	Postal Charges
Bank Charges	600	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	600	-	Bank Charges
<b>Supplies &amp; Materials</b>																
Textbooks and Instructional Supplies	20,250	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	20,250	-	Textbooks and Instructional Supplies
Education Software	4,050	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	4,050	-	Education Software
Student Supplies	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Student Supplies
Faculty Supplies	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Faculty Supplies
Library Books	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Library Books
Testing & Evaluation	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Testing & Evaluation
Student Laptops	18,900	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	18,900	-	Student Laptops
Faculty Laptops	18,900	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	\$1,575	18,900	-	Faculty Laptops
Office Supplies	2,500	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	\$208	2,500	-	Office Supplies
Printing Paper	1,000	\$83	\$83	\$83	\$83	\$83	\$83	\$83	\$83	\$83	\$83	\$83	\$83	1,000	(0)	Printing Paper
Marketing Materials	5,000	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	5,000	-	Marketing Materials
Student Uniforms	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Student Uniforms
Gifts & Awards - Students	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Gifts & Awards - Students
Gifts & Awards - Teachers and Staff	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Gifts & Awards - Teachers and Staff
Health Supplies	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Health Supplies
<b>Facility Related Expenses</b>																
Rent	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Rent
Utilities	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Utilities
Custodial	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Custodial
Waste	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Waste
Faculty Furniture	8,750	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	8,750	(0)	Faculty Furniture
Student Furniture	40,500	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	40,500	-	Student Furniture
Internet/Network Equipment	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Internet/Network Equipment
Other Equipment	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other Equipment
Building Decorum	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Building Decorum
Tenant Improvements	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Tenant Improvements
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
<b>Other Charges</b>																
Staff Recruitment	5,250	\$438	\$438	\$438	\$438	\$438	\$438	\$438	\$438	\$438	\$438	\$438	\$438	5,250	-	Staff Recruitment
Student Recruitment & Community Engagement	24,300	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$2,025	24,300	-	Student Recruitment & Community Engagement
Parent & Staff Meetings	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Parent Meetings
Authorizer Fee	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Staff Meetings
Meals Provided to Students	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
<b>Debit Service</b>																
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>																
	213,950	17,829	17,829	17,829	17,829	17,829	17,829	17,829	17,829	17,829	17,829	17,829	17,829	213,950	0	
<b>Total Expenses</b>																
	596,473	46,206	46,206	46,206	46,206	46,206	46,206	46,206	46,206	46,206	46,206	46,206	46,206	596,473	0	

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 YEAR 1-5 STAFF ASSUMPTIONS - PAGE 1 OF 2 -

Tennessee Nature Academy New Charter School Application Budget Template Year 1-5 Staff Assumptions					
FTE Assumptions					
	Year 1 2023-24	Year 2 2024-25	Year 3 2025-26	Year 4 2026-27	Year 5 2027-28
Fiscal Year					
Enrollment	162	243	324	414	504
# of Classes	6	9	12	15	18
<b>Administrative Staff</b>					
Principal/School Leader	1.00	1.50	2.00	3.00	3.00
Assistant Principal	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00
Special Education Coordinator	0.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	3.00
Deans, Directors	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00
<b>Total Administrative FTE</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>4.50</b>	<b>8.00</b>	<b>9.00</b>	<b>11.00</b>
<b>Instructional Staff</b>					
Teachers	6.00	10.00	12.00	15.00	19.00
Special Education Teachers	4.00	6.00	8.00	10.00	12.00
Educational Assistants/Aides	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Elective Teachers	2.00	3.00	4.00	9.00	12.00
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Instructional FTE</b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>19.00</b>	<b>24.00</b>	<b>34.00</b>	<b>43.00</b>
<b>Non-Instructional Staff</b>					
Clerical Staff	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00
Custodial Staff	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Operations	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00
Social Workers/Counseling	0.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.50	2.00
<b>Total Non-Instructional FTE</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>7.50</b>	<b>8.00</b>
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>17.50</b>	<b>27.50</b>	<b>36.00</b>	<b>50.50</b>	<b>62.00</b>

Compensation Assumptions					
	Year 1 2023-24	Year 2 2024-25	Year 3 2025-26	Year 4 2026-27	Year 5 2027-28
<b>Annual Increase</b>	0.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
<b>Cumulative Increase</b>	100.00%	102.00%	104.04%	106.12%	108.24%
<b>Administrative Staff</b>					
Principal/School Leader	\$90,000	137,700	187,272	286,526	292,257
Assistant Principal	\$65,000	-	-	68,979	70,358
Special Education Coordinator	\$65,000	66,300	135,252	137,957	211,074
Deans, Directors	\$85,000	170,000	173,400	265,302	276,608
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	\$85,000	-	88,434	-	92,007
<b>Total Administrative Compensation</b>	<b>260,000</b>	<b>377,400</b>	<b>676,260</b>	<b>764,070</b>	<b>941,716</b>
<b>Instructional Staff</b>					
Teachers	\$51,250	307,500	522,750	639,846	815,804
Special Education Teachers	\$41,250	165,000	252,450	343,332	437,748
Educational Assistants/Aides	\$41,250	-	-	-	-
Elective Teachers	\$51,250	102,500	156,825	213,282	489,482
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	\$51,250	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>575,000</b>	<b>932,025</b>	<b>1,196,460</b>	<b>1,743,034</b>	<b>2,255,518</b>
<b>Non-Instructional Staff</b>					
Clerical Staff	\$25,000	25,000	26,010	53,060	54,122
Custodial Staff	\$25,000	-	-	-	-
Operations	\$70,000	70,000	71,400	72,828	148,569
Social Workers/Counseling	\$50,000	-	51,000	52,020	106,121
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	\$70,000	35,000	71,400	72,828	111,427
<b>Total Non-Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>219,300</b>	<b>223,686</b>	<b>419,177</b>	<b>465,446</b>
Summer School Program Stipends	7,500	10,000	24,000	28,500	34,000
Other Compensation	-	-	-	-	-
Other Compensation	-	-	-	-	-
Other Compensation	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Compensation</b>	<b>972,500</b>	<b>1,538,725</b>	<b>2,120,406</b>	<b>2,954,781</b>	<b>3,696,680</b>

Assumption Notes
Executive Director, MS Principal, HS Principal
MS Assistant Principal
MS Director of Learning and Language & HS Director of Learning and Language
Chief Academic Officer, Community Engagement Director, Director of Human Resources
HS Principal in Residency, Outdoor Experiences Coordinator
Standard Curriculum based Teachers
ELL & Sped Teachers
MS and HS curriculum based Elective teachers
Front office Staff
MS Director of Operations & HS Director of Operations
MS Social Workers & HS Social Workers
MS Nurse & HS Nurse
Summer Program Stipends and Year 5 Covers Student Salaries for Student Job Corps

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 YEAR 1-5 STAFF ASSUMPTIONS - PAGE 2 OF 2

Employer Benefits & Tax Assumptions						
		Year 1 2023-24	Year 2 2024-25	Year 3 2025-26	Year 4 2026-27	Year 5 2027-28
Social Security Medicare State Unemployment Disability/Life Insurance Workers Compensation Insurance Other Fringe Benefits	<b>Base Assumption</b>					
	6.20%	\$60,295	\$95,401	\$131,465	\$183,196	\$229,194
	1.45%	\$14,101	\$22,312	\$30,746	\$42,844	\$53,602
	2.00%	\$19,450	\$30,775	\$42,408	\$59,096	\$73,934
	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	1.00%	\$9,725	\$15,387	\$21,204	\$29,548	\$36,967
	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<b>Health Insurance Annual Increase</b>	0.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
	<b>Cumulative Increase</b>	100.00%	102.00%	104.04%	106.12%	108.24%
Medical Insurance	\$4,500	\$78,750	\$126,225	\$168,545	\$241,160	\$301,999
Dental Insurance	\$350	\$6,125	\$9,818	\$13,109	\$18,757	\$23,489
Vision Insurance	\$225	\$3,938	\$6,311	\$8,427	\$12,058	\$15,100
TCRS Certified Legacy	10.27%	\$99,876	\$158,027	\$217,766	\$303,456	\$379,649
TCRS Certified Hybrid	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TCRS Classified Legacy	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TCRS Classified Hybrid	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Classified Retirement	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Retirement	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Assumption Notes	
Assumes 6.20% for Social Security	
Assumes 1.45% Medicare	
Assumes 2% State Unemployment	
Assumes 1% for workers compensation	
Estimated at \$4500 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears	
Estimated at \$350 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears	
Estimated at \$225 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears	
10.27% Retirement	

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 YEAR 1 BUDGET - PAGE 1 OF 3 -

Tennessee Nature Academy New Charter School Application Budget Template Year 1 Budget			
Revenue Assumptions			
		Year 1	
		2023-24	
Annual Revenue Increase		0.00%	
Cumulative Increase		100.00%	
State Revenues	Rate/Assumption		Assumption Notes
Basic Education Program	\$12,200	\$1,976,400	Rate is based on prior year per pupil per BEP for Davidson County.
BEP Transportation Component	\$0	\$0	Included in the BEP Above
BEP Capital Outlay	\$200	\$32,400	Rate is based on prior year per pupil.
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Federal Revenues			
	\$0	\$0	
Title I	\$463	\$75,006	Rate is based on the estimated number of students in Davidson County (81,876) divided by total funding for the county
Title II	\$45	\$7,290	Rate is based on the estimated number of students in Davidson County (81,876) divided by total funding for the county
Title III	\$27	\$1,971	Funding is based on Davidson County, Title III Allocations to get the per pupil amount for each ELL student
NSLP	\$0	\$86,503	50% Free and 15% Reduce with 95% attendance, 35 percent paying with 80% eating lunch and 40% eating breakfast.
E-Rate	\$0	\$15,360	80% Internet covered through ERATE
CSP Startup Grant	\$0	\$233,333	Will Apply - Funds Allocated over 3 years. Estimated at \$700K
IDEA	\$1,522	\$36,528	Rate is based 15% of the estimated number of students in Davidson County (12,900) divided by total funding for the county
Other	\$0	\$0	
School Activity Revenues			
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Fundraising & Philanthropy			
Charter Growth Fund	\$116,667	\$116,667	Spread over three years generally \$250-\$600K, Estimated - \$350K
Charter School Expansion Grant	\$0	\$0	
NSVF	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$30,000	\$30,000	Fundraising Goal
Other	\$0	\$0	
<b>Total Revenues</b>		<b>2,611,458</b>	

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 YEAR 1 BUDGET - PAGE 2 OF 3

Compensation				
		Year 1 2023-24		
Administrative Staff	FTE Count			Assumption Notes
Principal/School Leader	1.00	90,000		Executive Director, MS Principal, HS Principal
Assistant Principal	0.00	-		Ms Assistant Principal
Special Education Coordinator	0.00	-		MS Director of Learning and Language & HS Director of Learning and Language
Deans, Directors	2.00	170,000		Chief Academic Officer, Community Engagement Director, Director of Human Resources
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	0.00	-		HS Principal in Residency, Outdoor Experiences Coordinator
<b>Total Administrative Compensation</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>260,000</b>		
Instructional Staff				
Teachers	6.00	307,500		Standard Curriculum based Teachers
Special Education Teachers	4.00	165,000		ELL & Sped Teachers
Educational Assistants/Aides	0.00	-		
Elective Teachers	2.00	102,500		MS and HS curriculum baed Elective teachers
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	0.00	-		
<b>Total Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>575,000</b>		
Non-Instructional Staff				
Clerical Staff	1.00	25,000		Front office Staff
Custodial Staff	0.00	-		
Operations	1.00	70,000		MS Director of Operations & HS Director of Operations
Social Workers/Counseling	0.00	-		MS Social Workers & HS Social Workers
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	0.50	35,000		MS Nurse & HS Nurse
<b>Total Non-Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>130,000</b>		
Summer School Program Stipends		7,500		
Other Compensation		-		
Other Compensation		-		
Other Compensation		-		
<b>Total Compensation</b>		<b>972,500</b>		

Employer Benefits & Taxes				
		Year 1 2023-24		
Social Security		60,295		6.2% of Gross Total Salaries
Medicare		14,101		1.45% of Gross Total Salaries
State Unemployment		19,450		Estimated State Unemployment at 2% of Total Salaries
Disability/Life Insurance		-		
Workers Compensation Insurance		9,725		1% estimated of Total Salaries
Other Fringe Benefits		-		
Medical Insurance		78,750		Estimated at \$4500 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears
Dental Insurance		6,125		Estimated at \$350 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears
Vision Insurance		3,938		Estimated at \$225 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears
TCRS Certified Legacy		99,876		Estimated 10.27% of Total Salaries
TCRS Certified Hybrid		-		
TCRS Classified Legacy		-		
TCRS Classified Hybrid		-		
Other Classified Retirement		-		
Other Retirement		-		
<b>Total Employer Benefits &amp; Taxes</b>		<b>292,260</b>		

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 YEAR 1 BUDGET - PAGE 3 OF 3

Operating Expenses				
		Year 1		
		2023-24		
		Assumption Notes		
<b>Contracted Services</b>				
Professional Development	\$500	\$8,750	Estimated at \$500 per FTE	
Financial Services	\$0	\$80,000	Contracted Services per quote to include Finance and HR services in YR1 with outyears increased based on preliminary Contract	
Audit Services	\$11,000	\$11,000	Estimate cost for the Audit based on Trends	
Legal Fees	\$0	\$5,000	Estimated at \$5,000 additional legal fees for the first year	
Copier Lease and Usage	\$0	\$4,740	\$750 per copier, 1 copier per 100 students with an additional \$20 usage fee per student	
Internet and Phone Service	\$0	\$18,000	Estimate of \$1,500 per month	
Cell Phone Service	\$150	\$5,400	\$150 per Admin Staff per month	
Payroll Services	\$500	\$6,000	Estimated at \$500 per month	
Health Services	\$50	\$8,100	\$50 per student	
Transportation	\$275	\$80,190	\$275 per day for 181 school days at 50% ridership with a max of 50 students per bus	
IT Services	\$2,500	\$30,000	\$2500 per month contracted rate	
Contracted SPED Services	\$1,000	\$24,000	\$2000 per Sped student for Sped Services	
Insurance	\$0	\$20,000	D&O, General Property, Accident, Etc	
Postal Charges	\$200	\$2,400	\$200 per month	
Bank Charges	\$50	\$600	\$50 Per month	
<b>Supplies &amp; Materials</b>				
Textbooks and Instructional Supplies	\$125	\$20,250	Budgeted for half of the curriculum and supplies in the pre-opening due to a grant received	
Education Software	\$25	\$4,050	Budgeted for half of the curriculum and supplies in the pre-opening due to a grant received	
Student Supplies	\$100	\$16,200	\$100 per student	
Faculty Supplies	\$250	\$4,375	\$250 per FTE	
Library Books	\$25	\$4,050	\$25 per student	
Testing & Evaluation	\$50	\$8,100	\$50 per student	
Student Laptops	\$0	\$0	\$350 1 to Class Sets (54) budgeted for in pre-opening, with an additional set added for the high school	
Faculty Laptops	\$0	\$0	\$900 per computer for each FTE with Software budgeted for in pre-opening	
Office Supplies	\$125	\$2,188	\$125 per FTE	
Printing Paper	\$25	\$4,050	\$25 per student	
Marketing Materials	\$50	\$8,100	\$50 per additional student in the following year	
Student Uniforms	\$20	\$3,240	\$20 per student	
Gifts & Awards - Students	\$10	\$1,620	\$10 per Student	
Gifts & Awards - Teachers and Staff	\$200	\$3,500	\$200 per FTE	
Health Supplies	\$10	\$1,620	\$10 per Student	
<b>Facility Related Expenses</b>				
Rent	\$0	\$237,000	75 psf per child plus common space at \$15 psf for lease in Yr 1 - 5	
Utilities	\$0	\$31,600	\$2 per square ft	
Custodial	\$0	\$48,000	Assumes 2 contracted custodians @ \$15 per hour for 8 hours a day for 200 days	
Waste	\$650	\$7,800	Assumes \$650 per month based on trends	
Faculty Furniture	\$0	\$0	Purchased Furniture in the Preopening year	
Student Furniture	\$0	\$0	Purchased Furniture in the Preopening year	
Internet/Network Equipment	\$1,600	\$19,200	\$1600 per month	
Other Equipment	\$0	\$0		
Building Decorum	\$0	\$0		
Tenant Improvements	\$2	\$43,700	Assumes \$1.50 per sq foot for updates and an additional \$20,000 for Nature Classrooms when added in years 1,3, & 5	
Other	\$0	\$0		
Other	\$0	\$0		
Other	\$0	\$0		
Other	\$0	\$0		
Other	\$0	\$0		
<b>Other Charges</b>				
Staff Recruitment	\$0	\$1,200	Staff will be mainly recruited in start up	
Student Recruitment & Community Engagement	\$100	\$16,200	\$100 per student for continued recruitment for the years out	
Parent & Staff Meetings	\$200	\$2,000	\$200 per meeting assuming 10 meetings per year	
Authorizer Fee	\$0	\$35,000	Estimated at 3% per pupil funding or Cap of \$35,000	
Meals Provided to Students	\$549	\$89,000	Estimate of \$549 per student for Student Meals Provided daily	
<b>Debt Service</b>				
Other	\$0	\$0		
Other	\$0	\$0		
Other	\$0	\$0		
Other	\$0	\$0		
Other	\$0	\$0		
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>		916,223		
<b>Total Expenses</b>		2,180,982		

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 YEAR 1 CASH FLOW - PAGE 1 OF 3 -

Tennessee Nature Academy  
 New Charter School Application Budget Template  
 Year 1 Cash Flow

Cash Flow Summary															
Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	
2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	
Total Budget	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total	AR/AP	
<b>Beginning Cash</b>	211,701	211,701	80,174	131,265	182,356	233,447	284,539	335,630	386,721	437,812	488,903	539,994	591,086		
<b>Revenues</b>															
State Revenues	2,008,800	-	182,618	182,618	182,618	182,618	182,618	182,618	182,618	182,618	182,618	182,618	182,618	2,008,800	0
Federal Revenues	455,991	37,999	37,999	37,999	37,999	37,999	37,999	37,999	37,999	37,999	37,999	37,999	37,999	455,991	0
School Activity Revenues	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fundraising & Philanthropy	146,667	12,222	12,222	12,222	12,222	12,222	12,222	12,222	12,222	12,222	12,222	12,222	146,667	0	
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>2,611,458</b>	<b>50,222</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>2,611,458</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Expenses</b>															
Staffing	972,500	81,042	81,042	81,042	81,042	81,042	81,042	81,042	81,042	81,042	81,042	81,042	81,042	972,500	(0)
Employer Benefits & Taxes	292,260	24,355	24,355	24,355	24,355	24,355	24,355	24,355	24,355	24,355	24,355	24,355	24,355	292,260	(0)
Contracted Services	304,180	25,348	25,348	25,348	25,348	25,348	25,348	25,348	25,348	25,348	25,348	25,348	25,348	304,180	(0)
Supplies & Materials	81,343	6,779	6,779	6,779	6,779	6,779	6,779	6,779	6,779	6,779	6,779	6,779	6,779	81,343	(0)
Facility-Related Expenses	387,300	32,275	32,275	32,275	32,275	32,275	32,275	32,275	32,275	32,275	32,275	32,275	32,275	387,300	(0)
Other Charges	143,400	11,950	11,950	11,950	11,950	11,950	11,950	11,950	11,950	11,950	11,950	11,950	11,950	143,400	(0)
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,180,982</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>2,180,982</b>	<b>(0)</b>
<b>Operating Income (Loss)</b>	<b>430,476</b>	<b>(131,527)</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>51,091</b>	<b>430,476</b>	<b>0</b>
Changes in Accounts Receivable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Changes in Accounts Payable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Line of Credit Proceeds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Line of Credit Repayments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Balance Sheet Activity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Ending Cash</b>	<b>80,174</b>	<b>131,265</b>	<b>182,356</b>	<b>233,447</b>	<b>284,539</b>	<b>335,630</b>	<b>386,721</b>	<b>437,812</b>	<b>488,903</b>	<b>539,994</b>	<b>591,086</b>	<b>642,177</b>			

Details of Cash Flow															
Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	
2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	
Total Budget	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total	AR/AP	
<b>Revenues</b>															
<b>State Revenues</b>															
Basic Education Program	1,976,400	\$0	\$179,673	\$179,673	\$179,673	\$179,673	\$179,673	\$179,673	\$179,673	\$179,673	\$179,673	\$179,673	\$179,673	1,976,400	-
BEP Transportation Component	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
BEP Capital Outlay	32,400	\$0	\$2,945	\$2,945	\$2,945	\$2,945	\$2,945	\$2,945	\$2,945	\$2,945	\$2,945	\$2,945	\$2,945	32,400	0
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
<b>Federal Revenues</b>															
Title I	75,006	\$6,251	\$6,251	\$6,251	\$6,251	\$6,251	\$6,251	\$6,251	\$6,251	\$6,251	\$6,251	\$6,251	\$6,251	75,006	-
Title II	7,290	\$608	\$608	\$608	\$608	\$608	\$608	\$608	\$608	\$608	\$608	\$608	\$608	7,290	-
Title III	1,971	\$164	\$164	\$164	\$164	\$164	\$164	\$164	\$164	\$164	\$164	\$164	\$164	1,971	-
NSLP	86,503	\$7,209	\$7,209	\$7,209	\$7,209	\$7,209	\$7,209	\$7,209	\$7,209	\$7,209	\$7,209	\$7,209	\$7,209	86,503	-
E-Rate	15,360	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280	15,360	-
CSP Startup Grant	233,333	\$19,444	\$19,444	\$19,444	\$19,444	\$19,444	\$19,444	\$19,444	\$19,444	\$19,444	\$19,444	\$19,444	\$19,444	233,333	0
IDIA	36,528	\$3,044	\$3,044	\$3,044	\$3,044	\$3,044	\$3,044	\$3,044	\$3,044	\$3,044	\$3,044	\$3,044	\$3,044	36,528	-
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
<b>School Activity Revenues</b>															
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
<b>Fundraising &amp; Philanthropy</b>															
Charter Growth Fund	116,667	\$9,722	\$9,722	\$9,722	\$9,722	\$9,722	\$9,722	\$9,722	\$9,722	\$9,722	\$9,722	\$9,722	\$9,722	116,667	0
Charter School Expansion Grant	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
NSVF	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other	30,000	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	30,000	-
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>2,611,458</b>	<b>50,222</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>232,840</b>	<b>2,611,458</b>	<b>0</b>

Assumption Notes

Assumption Notes

## ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1) YEAR 1 CASH FLOW - PAGE 2 OF 3

Compensation															
Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1
2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24
Total Budget	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total	AR/AP	
<b>Compensation</b>															
Principal/School Leader	90,000	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	90,000	-	Assumption Notes
Assistant Principal	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
Special Education Coordinator	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
Deans, Directors	170,000	\$14,167	\$14,167	\$14,167	\$14,167	\$14,167	\$14,167	\$14,167	\$14,167	\$14,167	\$14,167	\$14,167	170,000	-	
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
<b>Total Administrative Compensation</b>	<b>260,000</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>21,667</b>	<b>260,000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Instructional Staff</b>															
Teachers	307,500	\$25,625	\$25,625	\$25,625	\$25,625	\$25,625	\$25,625	\$25,625	\$25,625	\$25,625	\$25,625	\$25,625	307,500	-	
Special Education Teachers	165,000	\$13,750	\$13,750	\$13,750	\$13,750	\$13,750	\$13,750	\$13,750	\$13,750	\$13,750	\$13,750	\$13,750	165,000	-	
Educational Assistants/Aides	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
Elective Teachers	102,500	\$8,542	\$8,542	\$8,542	\$8,542	\$8,542	\$8,542	\$8,542	\$8,542	\$8,542	\$8,542	\$8,542	102,500	(0)	
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
<b>Total Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>575,000</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>47,917</b>	<b>575,000</b>	<b>(0)</b>	
<b>Non-Instructional Staff</b>															
Clerical Staff	25,000	\$2,083	\$2,083	\$2,083	\$2,083	\$2,083	\$2,083	\$2,083	\$2,083	\$2,083	\$2,083	\$2,083	25,000	0	
Custodial Staff	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
Operations	70,000	\$5,833	\$5,833	\$5,833	\$5,833	\$5,833	\$5,833	\$5,833	\$5,833	\$5,833	\$5,833	\$5,833	70,000	(0)	
Social Workers/Counseling	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	35,000	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	35,000	(0)	
<b>Total Non-Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>10,833</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>(0)</b>	
<b>Summer School Program Stipends</b>															
Other Compensation	7,500	\$625	\$625	\$625	\$625	\$625	\$625	\$625	\$625	\$625	\$625	\$625	7,500	-	
Other Compensation	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
Other Compensation	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
Other Compensation	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
<b>Total Compensation</b>	<b>972,500</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>81,042</b>	<b>972,500</b>	<b>(0)</b>	
Employer Benefits & Taxes															
Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1
2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24
Total Budget	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total	AR/AP	
<b>Social Security</b>															
Medicare	14,101	\$1,175	\$1,175	\$1,175	\$1,175	\$1,175	\$1,175	\$1,175	\$1,175	\$1,175	\$1,175	\$1,175	14,101	0	
State Unemployment	19,450	\$1,621	\$1,621	\$1,621	\$1,621	\$1,621	\$1,621	\$1,621	\$1,621	\$1,621	\$1,621	\$1,621	19,450	-	
Disability/Life Insurance	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
<b>Workers Compensation Insurance</b>															
Other Fringe Benefits	9,725	\$810	\$810	\$810	\$810	\$810	\$810	\$810	\$810	\$810	\$810	\$810	9,725	-	
Medical Insurance	78,750	\$6,563	\$6,563	\$6,563	\$6,563	\$6,563	\$6,563	\$6,563	\$6,563	\$6,563	\$6,563	\$6,563	78,750	-	
Dental Insurance	6,125	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510	6,125	(0)	
Vision Insurance	3,938	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328	3,938	-	
TCRS Certified Legacy	99,876	\$8,323	\$8,323	\$8,323	\$8,323	\$8,323	\$8,323	\$8,323	\$8,323	\$8,323	\$8,323	\$8,323	99,876	(0)	
TCRS Certified Hybrid	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
TCRS Classified Legacy	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
TCRS Classified Hybrid	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
Other Classified Retirement	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
Other Retirement	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	
<b>Total Employer Benefits &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>292,260</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>292,260</b>	<b>(0)</b>	
Operating Expenses															
Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1
2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24
Total Budget	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total	AR/AP	
<b>Contracted Services</b>															
Professional Development	8,750	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	\$729	8,750	(0)	Professional Development
Financial Services	80,000	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	\$6,667	80,000	-	Financial Services
Audit Services	11,000	\$917	\$917	\$917	\$917	\$917	\$917	\$917	\$917	\$917	\$917	\$917	11,000	0	Audit Services
Legal Fees	5,000	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	\$417	5,000	-	Legal Fees
Copier Lease and Usage	4,740	\$395	\$395	\$395	\$395	\$395	\$395	\$395	\$395	\$395	\$395	\$395	4,740	-	Copier Lease and Usage
Internet and Phone Service	18,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	18,000	-	Internet and Phone Service
Call Phone Service	5,400	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$450	5,400	-	Call Phone Service
Payroll Services	6,000	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	6,000	-	Payroll Services
Health Services	8,100	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	8,100	-	Health Services
Transportation	80,190	\$6,683	\$6,683	\$6,683	\$6,683	\$6,683	\$6,683	\$6,683	\$6,683	\$6,683	\$6,683	\$6,683	80,190	-	Transportation
IT Services	30,000	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	30,000	-	IT Services
Contracted SPED Services	24,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	24,000	-	Contracted SPED Services
Insurance	20,000	\$1,667	\$1,667	\$1,667	\$1,667	\$1,667	\$1,667	\$1,667	\$1,667	\$1,667	\$1,667	\$1,667	20,000	-	Insurance
Postal Charges	2,400	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	2,400	-	Postal Charges
Bank Charges	600	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	600	-	Bank Charges
<b>Supplies &amp; Materials</b>															
Textbooks and Instructional Supplies	20,250	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	\$1,688	20,250	-	Textbooks and Instructional Supplies
Education Software	4,050	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	4,050	-	Education Software
Student Supplies	16,200	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	16,200	-	Student Supplies
Faculty Supplies	4,375	\$365	\$365	\$365	\$365	\$365	\$365	\$365	\$365	\$365	\$365	\$365	4,375	(0)	Faculty Supplies
Library Books	4,050	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	\$338	4,050	-	Library Books
Testing & Evaluation	8,100	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	\$675	8,100	-	Testing & Evaluation
Student Laptops	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Student Laptops
Faculty Laptops	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Faculty Laptops
Office Supplies	2,188	\$182	\$182	\$182	\$182	\$182	\$182	\$182	\$182	\$182	\$182	\$182	2,188	(0)	Office Supplies
Printing Paper	4,050</														

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 YEAR 1 CASH FLOW - PAGE 3 OF 3

	237,000	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	237,000		
<b>Facility Related Expenses</b>																
Rent	237,000	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$19,750	237,000	-	Rent
Utilities	31,600	\$2,633	\$2,633	\$2,633	\$2,633	\$2,633	\$2,633	\$2,633	\$2,633	\$2,633	\$2,633	\$2,633	\$2,633	31,600	0	Utilities
Custodial	48,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	48,000	-	Custodial
Waste	7,800	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$650	7,800	-	Waste
Faculty Furniture	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Faculty Furniture
Student Furniture	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Student Furniture
Internet/Network Equipment	19,200	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	19,200	-	Internet/Network Equipment
Other Equipment	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other Equipment
Building Decorum	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Building Decorum
Tenant Improvements	43,700	\$3,642	\$3,642	\$3,642	\$3,642	\$3,642	\$3,642	\$3,642	\$3,642	\$3,642	\$3,642	\$3,642	\$3,642	43,700	0	Tenant Improvements
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
Other	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	Other
<b>Other Charges</b>																
Staff Recruitment	1,200	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	1,200	-	Staff Recruitment
Student Recruitment & Community	16,200	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	16,200	-	Student Recruitment & Community Engagement
Parent & Staff Meetings	2,000	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	\$167	2,000	(0)	Parent Meetings
Authorizer Fee	35,000	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	\$2,917	35,000	(0)	Staff Meetings
Meals Provided to Students	89,000	\$7,417	\$7,417	\$7,417	\$7,417	\$7,417	\$7,417	\$7,417	\$7,417	\$7,417	\$7,417	\$7,417	\$7,417	89,000	(0)	Other
<b>Debt Service</b>																
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>916,223</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>76,352</b>	<b>916,223</b>	<b>(0)</b>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,180,982</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>181,749</b>	<b>2,180,982</b>	<b>(0)</b>	

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 YEARS 2-5 BUDGET - PAGE 1 OF 2 -

Tennessee Nature Academy New Charter School Application Budget Template Year 2 Through 5 Budget							
Revenue Assumptions							
	Year 1 2023-24	Year 2 2024-25	Year 3 2025-26	Year 4 2026-27	Year 5 2027-28		
Annual Revenue Increase	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%		
Cumulative Increase	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%		
Assumption Notes							
<b>State Revenues</b>	<b>Assumption</b>					<b>Assumption Notes</b>	
Basic Education Program	\$12,200	1,976,400	\$2,964,600	\$3,952,800	\$5,050,800	\$5,148,800	Rate is based on prior year per pupil per BEP for Davidson County.
BEP Transportation Component	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	Included in the BEP Above
BEP Capital Outlay	\$200	32,400	\$48,600	\$64,800	\$82,800	\$100,800	Rate is based on prior year per pupil.
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
<b>Federal Revenues</b>							
Title I	\$463	75,006	\$112,509	\$150,012	\$191,682	\$233,352	Rate is based on the estimated number of students in Davidson County (81,876) divided by total funding for the county.
Title II	\$45	7,290	\$10,935	\$14,580	\$18,630	\$22,680	Rate is based on the estimated number of students in Davidson County (81,876) divided by total funding for the county.
Title III	\$27	1,971	\$2,943	\$3,942	\$5,022	\$6,129	Funding is based on Davidson County Title III Allocations to get the per pupil amount for each ELL student
NSLP	\$534	86,503	\$129,755	\$173,006	\$221,063	\$269,120	50% Free and 15% Reduce with 95% attendance, 35 percent paying with 80% eating lunch and 40% eating breakfast.
E-Rate	\$0	15,360	\$15,667	\$15,981	\$16,300	\$16,626	80% Internet covered through ERATE
CSP Startup Grant	\$0	233,333	\$233,333	\$0	\$0	\$0	Will Apply - funds Allocated over 3 years. Estimated at \$700K
IDEA	\$1,522	36,528	\$54,792	\$74,578	\$94,364	\$115,672	Rate is based 15% of the estimated number of students in Davidson County (12,900) divided by total funding for the county
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
<b>School Activity Revenues</b>							
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
<b>Fundraising &amp; Philanthropy</b>							
Charter Growth Fund	\$116,667	116,667	\$116,667	\$0	\$0	\$0	Spread over three years generally \$250-\$600K, Estimated - \$350K
Charter School Expansion Grant	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
NOV	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	Fundraising goal
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>2,611,458</b>	<b>3,719,801</b>	<b>4,479,699</b>	<b>5,710,661</b>	<b>6,943,180</b>		
Compensation							
	Year 1 2023-24	Year 2 2024-25	Year 3 2025-26	Year 4 2026-27	Year 5 2027-28		
Assumption Notes							
<b>Administrative Staff</b>							
Principal/School Leader	90,000	137,700	187,272	286,526	292,257	Executive Director, MS Principal, HS Principal includes 2% inflator in the out years	
Assistant Principal	-	-	-	68,979	70,358	Ms Assistant Principal includes 2% inflator in the out years	
Special Education Coordinator	-	66,300	135,252	137,957	211,074		
Deans, Directors	170,000	173,400	265,302	270,608	276,020	Chief Academic Officer, Community Engagement Director, Director of Human Resources includes 2% inflator in the out years	
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	-	-	88,434	-	92,027	HS Principal in Residency, Outdoor Experiences Coordinator includes 2% inflator in the out years	
<b>Total Administrative Compensation</b>	<b>260,000</b>	<b>377,400</b>	<b>676,260</b>	<b>764,070</b>	<b>941,716</b>		
<b>Instructional Staff</b>							
Teachers	307,500	522,750	639,846	815,804	1,054,018	Standard Curriculum based Teachers includes 2% inflator in the out years	
Special Education Teachers	165,000	252,450	343,332	437,748	535,804	ELL & Sped Teachers includes 2% inflator in the out years	
Educational Assistants/Aides	-	-	-	-	-		
Elective Teachers	102,500	156,825	213,282	489,482	665,696	MS and HS curriculum based Elective teachers includes 2% inflator in the out years	
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	-	-	-	-	-		
<b>Total Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>575,000</b>	<b>932,025</b>	<b>1,196,460</b>	<b>1,743,034</b>	<b>2,255,518</b>		
<b>Non-Instructional Staff</b>							
Clerical Staff	25,000	25,500	26,010	53,060	54,122	Front office Staff includes 2% inflator in the out years	
Custodial Staff	-	-	-	-	-		
Operations	70,000	71,400	72,828	148,568	151,541	MS Director of Operations & HS Director of Operations includes 2% inflator in the out years	
Social Workers/Counseling	-	51,000	52,020	106,121	108,243	MS Social Workers & HS Social Workers includes 2% inflator in the out years	
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	35,000	71,400	72,828	111,427	151,541	MS Nurse & HS Nurse includes 2% inflator in the out years	
<b>Total Non-Instructional Compensation</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>219,300</b>	<b>223,686</b>	<b>419,177</b>	<b>465,446</b>		
Summer School Program Stipends	7,500	10,000	24,000	28,500	34,000	Summer School Stipends	
Other Compensation	-	-	-	-	-		
Other Compensation	-	-	-	-	-		
Other Compensation	-	-	-	-	-		
<b>Total Compensation</b>	<b>972,500</b>	<b>1,538,725</b>	<b>2,120,406</b>	<b>2,954,781</b>	<b>3,696,680</b>		

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
YEARS 2-5 BUDGET - PAGE 2 OF 2

Employer Benefits & Taxes							
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28		
Social Security		60,295	95,401	131,465	183,196	229,194	6.2% of Gross Total Salaries 2% inflator in the out years
Medicare		14,101	22,312	30,746	42,844	53,602	1.45% of Gross Total Salaries 2% inflator in the out years
State Unemployment		19,450	30,775	42,408	59,096	73,934	Estimated State Unemployment at 2% of Total Salaries 2% inflator in the out years
Disability/Life Insurance		-	-	-	-	-	
Workers Compensation Insurance		9,725	15,387	21,204	29,548	36,967	1% estimated of Total Salaries 2% inflator in the out years
Other Fringe Benefits		-	-	-	-	-	
Medical Insurance		78,750	126,225	168,545	241,160	301,999	Estimated at \$4500 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears 2% inflator in the out years
Dental Insurance		6,125	6,248	6,372	6,500	6,630	Estimated at \$350 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears 2% inflator in the out years
Vision Insurance		3,938	4,016	4,097	4,179	4,262	Estimated at \$225 annual expense with ER Cost at 75% per FTE with an estimated 3% inflator in outyears 2% inflator in the out years
TCRS Certified Legacy		99,876	158,027	217,766	303,456	379,649	Estimated 10.27% of Total Salaries 2% inflator in the out years
TCRS Certified Hybrid		-	-	-	-	-	
TCRS Classified Legacy		-	-	-	-	-	
TCRS Classified Hybrid		-	-	-	-	-	
Other Classified Retirement		-	-	-	-	-	
Other Retirement		-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Total Employer Benefits &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>292,260</b>	<b>458,390</b>	<b>622,603</b>	<b>869,978</b>	<b>1,086,236</b>		

Operating Expenses						
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	
Annual Expense Increase	0.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	
Cumulative Increase	100.00%	102.00%	104.04%	106.12%	108.24%	

Contracted Services							
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28		
Professional Development	\$500	8,750	\$14,025	\$18,727	\$26,796	\$33,555	Estimated at \$500 per FTE with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Financial Services	\$0	80,000	\$81,600	\$62,424	\$63,672	\$64,946	Contracted Services per quote to include Finance and HR services in YR1 with outyears increased based on preliminary Contract with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Audit Services	\$11,000	11,000	\$11,220	\$11,444	\$11,673	\$11,907	Estimate cost for the Audit based on Trends with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Legal Fees	\$0	5,000	\$5,100	\$5,202	\$5,306	\$5,412	Estimated at \$5,000 additional legal fees for the first year with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Copy/ Lease and Usage	\$0	4,740	\$7,207	\$9,742	\$12,537	\$15,411	\$750 per copier, 1 copier per 100 students with an additional \$20 usage fee per student with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Internet and Phone Service	\$0	18,000	\$18,360	\$18,727	\$19,102	\$19,484	Estimate of \$1,500 per month with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Cell Phone Service	\$150	5,400	\$8,262	\$14,982	\$17,132	\$21,432	\$150 per Admin Staff per month with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Payroll Services	\$500	6,000	\$6,120	\$6,242	\$6,367	\$6,495	Estimated at \$500 per month with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Health Services	\$50	8,100	\$12,393	\$16,854	\$21,967	\$27,277	\$50 per student with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Transportation	\$275	80,190	\$122,691	\$166,859	\$217,473	\$270,045	\$275 per day for 181 school days at 50% ridership with a max of 50 students per bus with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
IT Services	\$2,500	30,000	\$30,600	\$31,212	\$31,836	\$32,473	\$250 per month contracted rate with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Contracted SPED Services	\$1,000	24,000	\$36,720	\$50,980	\$65,796	\$82,265	\$2000 per Sped student for Sped Services with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Insurance	\$0	20,000	\$20,400	\$20,808	\$21,224	\$21,649	D&O, General Property, Accident, Etc with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Postal Charges	\$200	2,400	\$2,448	\$2,497	\$2,547	\$2,598	\$200 per month with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Bank Charges	\$50	600	\$612	\$624	\$637	\$649	\$50 Per month with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years

Supplies & Materials							
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28		
Textbooks and Instructional Supplies	\$250	20,250	\$61,965	\$82,620	\$105,570	\$128,520	\$50 per student after year 1 with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Education Software	\$50	4,050	\$12,393	\$16,854	\$21,967	\$27,277	\$250 per student after year 1 with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Student Supplies	\$100	16,200	\$24,786	\$33,709	\$43,934	\$54,555	\$100 per student with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Library Books	\$250	4,375	\$7,013	\$9,364	\$13,398	\$16,778	\$250 per FTE with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Testing & Evaluation	\$50	8,100	\$12,393	\$16,854	\$21,967	\$27,277	\$50 per student with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Student Laptops	\$350	-	\$0	\$0	\$18,900	\$0	\$350 1 to Class Sets (54) budgeted for in pre-opening, with an additional set added for the high school with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Faculty Laptops	\$900	-	\$9,180	\$7,959	\$13,849	\$11,203	\$900 per computer for each FTE with Software budgeted for in pre-opening with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Office Supplies	\$125	2,188	\$3,506	\$4,682	\$6,699	\$8,389	\$125 per FTE with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Printing Paper	\$25	4,050	\$6,197	\$8,262	\$10,557	\$12,852	\$25 per student with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Marketing Materials	\$50	8,100	\$12,393	\$16,524	\$21,114	\$25,704	\$50 per additional student in the following year with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Student Uniforms	\$20	3,240	\$4,957	\$6,610	\$8,446	\$10,282	\$20 per student with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Gifts & Awards - Students	\$10	1,620	\$2,479	\$3,305	\$4,223	\$5,141	\$10 per Student with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Gifts & Awards - Teachers and Staff	\$200	3,500	\$5,610.00	\$7,490.88	\$10,718.20	\$13,422.16	\$200 per FTE with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Health Supplies	\$10	1,620	\$2,479	\$3,305	\$4,223	\$5,141	\$10 per Student with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years

Facility Related Expenses							
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28		
Rent	\$0	237,000	\$282,000	\$352,000	\$437,000	\$507,000	75 psf per child plus common space at \$15 psf for lease in Yr 1-5 with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Utilities	\$0	31,600	\$37,600	\$46,933	\$58,267	\$67,600	\$2 per square ft with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Custodial	\$0	48,000	\$61,200	\$74,909	\$89,141	\$103,913	Assumes 2 contracted custodians @ \$15 per hour for 8 hours a day for 200 days with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Waste	\$650	7,800	\$7,956	\$8,115	\$8,277	\$8,443	Assumes \$650 per month based on trends with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Faculty Furniture	\$500	-	\$5,100	\$4,422	\$7,694	\$6,224	Purchased Furniture in the Preopening year with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Student Furniture	\$250	-	\$20,655	\$21,068	\$23,877	\$24,355	Purchased Furniture in the Preopening year with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Internet/Network Equipment	\$1,600	19,200	\$19,584	\$19,976	\$20,376	\$20,783	\$1600 per month with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Other Equipment	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Building Decorum	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Tenant Improvements	\$2	43,700	\$4,590	\$27,283	\$9,020	\$27,577	Assumes \$1.50 per sq foot for updates and an additional \$20,000 for Nature Classrooms when added in years 1,3, & 5 with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

Other Charges							
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28		
Staff Recruitment	\$0	1,200	1,224	1,248	1,273	1,299	Staff will be mainly recruited in start up with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Student Recruitment & Community Engagement	\$100	16,200	16,524	16,854	17,192	17,535	\$100 per student for continued recruitment for the years out with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Parent & Staff Meetings	\$200	2,000	2,040	2,081	2,122	2,165	\$200 per meeting assuming 10 meetings per year with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Authorizer Fee	\$0	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	Estimated at 3% per pupil funding or Cap of \$35,000 with an estimated 2% inflator in the out years
Meals Provided to Students	\$549	89,000	133,500	178,000	227,444	276,889	Estimate of \$549 per student for the cost of school food

Debt Service							
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28		
Other	\$0	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	\$0	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	\$0	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	\$0	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	\$0	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	\$0	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>916,223</b>	<b>1,176,277</b>	<b>1,451,180</b>	<b>1,777,355</b>	<b>2,074,560</b>		
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,180,982</b>	<b>3,173,392</b>	<b>4,194,189</b>	<b>5,602,114</b>	<b>6,857,476</b>		

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
SUMMARY - PAGE 1 OF 1

Tennessee Nature Academy New Charter School Application Budget Template Year 0 & Years 1 through 5 Summary						
Revenue Assumptions						
	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
<b>Starting Fund Balance</b>		211,701	642,177	1,188,585	1,474,095	1,582,642
State Revenues	-	2,008,800	3,013,200	4,017,600	5,133,600	6,249,600
Federal Revenues	233,333	455,991	559,934	432,099	547,061	663,580
School Activity Revenues	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fundraising & Philanthropy	572,840	146,667	146,667	30,000	30,000	30,000
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>806,173</b>	<b>2,611,458</b>	<b>3,719,801</b>	<b>4,479,699</b>	<b>5,710,661</b>	<b>6,943,180</b>
Staffing	300,000	972,500	1,538,725	2,120,406	2,954,781	3,696,680
Employer Benefits & Taxes	80,523	292,260	458,390	622,603	869,978	1,086,236
Contracted Services	64,550	304,180	377,758	437,325	524,124	615,598
Supplies & Materials	70,600	81,343	171,546	225,966	316,547	360,179
Facility-Related Expenses	49,250	387,300	438,685	554,706	653,652	765,895
Other Charges	29,550	143,400	188,288	233,184	283,032	332,888
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>594,473</b>	<b>2,180,982</b>	<b>3,173,392</b>	<b>4,194,189</b>	<b>5,602,114</b>	<b>6,857,476</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>211,701</b>	<b>430,476</b>	<b>546,409</b>	<b>285,509</b>	<b>108,547</b>	<b>85,704</b>
<b>Ending Fund Balance</b>	211,701	642,177	1,188,585	1,474,095	1,582,642	1,668,346

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 FACILITY ASSUMPTIONS - PAGE 1 OF 1

Tennessee Nature Academy Community School Capacity, Space, and Expense Projection					
	1	2	3	4	5
	SY23-24	SY24-25	SY25-26	SY26-27	SY27-26
<b>Enrollment Capacity</b>					
K					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5	81	81	81	81	81
6	81	81	81	81	81
7		81	81	81	81
8		0	81	81	81
9		0	0	90	90
10		0	0	0	90
11		0	0	0	0
12					
<b>Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>504</b>
<b>Space Program Summary</b>					
Traditional Classrooms	6	9	12	15	18
Classrooms @ 750 sf	4,500	6,750	9,000	11,250	13,500
Supplemental Space @ 1 per 6 traditional classrooms - includes nature classrooms @ 850 sf	850	850	1,700	1,700	2,550
Sped/breakout @ 400 sf per 4 traditional classrooms	800	800	1,200	1,600	2,000
Multi Purpose/Physical education/Dining	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Nature/Media center	-	-	-	-	-
Administrative offices	1,000	1,000	1,000	2,000	2,000
Teacher workspace	600	600	600	1,000	1,000
Warming Kitchen	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,200	1,200
Storage/tech	600	600	600	600	600
<b>Total net sf</b>	<b>11,850</b>	<b>14,100</b>	<b>17,600</b>	<b>21,850</b>	<b>25,350</b>
Efficiency factor (bathrooms, corridors, etc.)	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
<b>Gross sf</b>	<b>15,800</b>	<b>18,800</b>	<b>23,467</b>	<b>29,133</b>	<b>33,800</b>
<i>per student</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>67</i>
<i>total classrooms incl. sped</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>26</i>
<b>Facility Cost Assumptions</b>					
<i>Temporary/intermediate site:</i>					
Lease expense @ ~\$15 psf	237,000	282,000	352,000	437,000	507,000
<i>per student</i>	<i>1,463</i>	<i>1,160</i>	<i>1,086</i>	<i>1,056</i>	<i>1,006</i>

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 BEP CALCULATION - PAGE 1 OF 2

<b>Davidson County Schools</b>			
<b>Per Pupil Funding for Achievement School District and Charter Schools</b>			
<b>Using Local and State Revenues from General Purpose Fund</b>			
		fiscal year	
		<b>2019-20</b>	
<b><u>Local Revenue</u><sup>1</sup></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Actual Amount</u></b>	
40110-40163	County Property Taxes	\$	372,615,200
40210	Local Option Sales Tax	\$	328,535,100
40220-40290	Other County Local Option Taxes	\$	25,251,300
40320-40390	Statutory Local Taxes	\$	770,900
40610-40650	City/SSD Property Taxes	\$	-
41110-41590	Licenses and Permits	\$	60,000
44110	Investment Income	\$	1,600,000
49810	n	\$	-
		\$	-
72310-599	Property Tax Refund (MDHA)		
	<b>Total Local Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>728,832,500</b>
<b><u>State Revenue</u><sup>1</sup></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Actual Amount</u></b>	
46511	BEP	\$	286,369,000
46810-46851	Other State Revenues		
	<b>Total State Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>286,369,000</b>
	<b>Total State and Local Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,015,201,500</b>
	<b>Prior Year ADM<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>81,876</b>
	<b>Per Pupil Funding for Achievement School District, if applicable</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>12,399</b>

ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1)  
 BEP CALCULATION - PAGE 2 OF 2

<b>Funding for Charter Schools that provide Transportation</b>		<b>Actual Amount</b>
Total State and Local Revenue		\$ 1,015,201,500
Less: BEP Capital Outlay, State Funded Portion		\$ (16,344,244)
Adjusted State and Local Revenue		\$ 998,857,257
Prior Year ADM <sup>2</sup>		\$ 81,876
<b>Per Pupil Funding for Charter Schools Providing Transportation</b>		<b>\$ 12,200</b>

-199.6215

<b>Funding for Charter Schools that do not provide Transportation</b>		<b>Actual Amount</b>
Total State and Local Revenue		\$ 1,015,201,500
Less: BEP Capital Outlay, State Funded Portion		\$ (16,344,244)
Less: Transportation (72710)		\$ (7,055,349)
Adjusted State and Local Revenue		\$ 991,801,908
Prior Year ADM <sup>2</sup>		\$ 81,876
<b>Per Pupil Funding for Charter Schools Not Providing Transportation</b>		<b>\$ 12,113</b>

<sup>1</sup> Include revenues from all revenue accounts in the noted range

<sup>2</sup> Weighted Average of Periods 2, 3, 6, 7

**Instructions for Payments and Adjustments**  
 Pay in equal installments (plus/minus adjustments) ten months a year (no payments in July and May)  
**October, February, and June:** Adjust to Current Year ADMs for ASD, Charters, and LEA--same weighting applies  
**June:** Use Actual Revenues for Current Fiscal Year, rather than Budgeted Revenues--BEP should include January insurance increase as well as Growth

## ATTACHMENT N: PLANNING AND BUDGET WORKSHEET (SECTION 3.1) FEDERAL ALLOCATIONS CALCULATION - PAGE 1 OF 1

Note: Based on estimated student count in Davidson of 86,000 students

Line Item Number	Grant	Consolidated									Total	
		Title I-A	Title I-A Neglected	Title I-C	Title I-D LEA	Title II-A	Title III	ESEA Con. Admin	IDEA, Part B	IDEA Preschool		
105 - Supervisor / Director		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	475,000.00	0.00	475,000.00
116 - Teachers		12,650,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,945,036.00	0.00	19,595,036.00
123 - Guidance Personnel		375,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	375,000.00
124 - Psychological Personnel		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,024,716.00	0.00	1,024,716.00
135 - Assessment Personnel		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	306,460.00	0.00	306,460.00
162 - Clerical Personnel		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	74,612.00	0.00	74,612.00
163 - Educational Assistants		1,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,516,710.00	189,600.00	3,706,310.00
189 - Other Salaries & Wages		3,674,447.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,750,000.00	1,285,784.00	550,000.00	75,900.00	75,900.00	2,475.00	7,338,606.50
195 - Certified Substitute Teachers		100,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	0.00	120,000.00
196 - In-Service Training		250,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	30,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	0.00	17,000.00	0.00	347,000.00
201 - Social Security		1,240,374.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	122,000.00	125,000.00	38,000.00	716,788.11	0.00	11,755.20	2,253,918.21
204 - State Retirement		1,457,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	180,000.00	200,000.00	36,000.00	921,729.43	0.00	0.00	2,794,729.43
206 - Life Insurance		23,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	2,000.00	3,500.00	32,242.50	0.00	1,200.00	66,942.50
207 - Medical Insurance		2,056,540.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	311,194.58	241,410.49	72,900.00	2,200,122.87	0.00	105,911.34	5,048,080.13
208 - Dental Insurance		21,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,000.00	2,000.00	5,000.00	44,220.00	0.00	13,200.00	89,920.00
210 - Unemployment Compensation		65,271.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10,000.00	3,500.00	5,000.00	48,686.40	0.00	1,512.00	133,969.40
211 - Local Retirement		186,444.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	0.00	25,000.00	305,769.13	0.00	23,396.64	545,610.52
212 - Employer Medicare		265,506.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	25,000.00	21,272.00	10,000.00	171,144.00	0.00	2,749.20	495,671.61
307 - Communication		250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
308 - Consultants		3,000,000.00	0.00	74,232.30	0.00	505,600.00	75,000.00	75,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,729,832.30
312 - Contracts with Private Agencies		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,433,132.97	0.00	56,944.62	1,490,077.59
313 - Contracts with Parents		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,056.70	0.00	0.00	5,056.70
355 - Travel		55,075.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00	2,000.00	30,000.00	17,530.31	0.00	0.00	119,605.31
399 - Other Contracted Services		5,036,804.59	268,288.16	0.00	177,852.17	0.00	30,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,512,944.92
429 - Instructional Supplies & Materials		2,947,654.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	36,571.63	0.00	65,000.00	0.00	0.00	3,049,225.96
499 - Other Supplies and Materials		272,350.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	512,581.70	32,999.84	75,000.00	58,000.00	0.00	0.00	950,912.45
504 - Indirect Cost		616,766.76	0.00	0.00	5,586.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	622,352.93
524 - In-Service / Staff Development		1,011,000.00	11,138.84	0.00	6,500.00	174,948.46	70,000.00	50,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,343,588.30
599 - Other Charges		355,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00	65,000.00	621,812.58	0.00	0.00	1,056,812.58
722 - Regular Instruction Equipment		1,250,000.00	30,600.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,280,600.00
790 - Other Equipment		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,000.00
131 - Medical Personnel		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	25,000.00	0.00	0.00	25,000.00
171 - Speech Pathologist		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	347,600.00	0.00	0.00	347,600.00
590 - Transfers Out		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	123,000.00	0.00	0.00	123,000.00
725 - Special Education Equipment		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	30,000.00	0.00	0.00	30,000.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>37,909,987.00</b>	<b>310,028.00</b>	<b>74,232.30</b>	<b>189,938.34</b>	<b>3,665,304.74</b>	<b>2,194,537.96</b>	<b>1,050,400.00</b>	<b>18,687,269.00</b>	<b>408,744.00</b>	<b>64,490,441.34</b>	
		463.01701				44.766534	26.803181		1521.5911			

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

(a) How the proposed budget is adequate to ensure the proposed school model can be implemented fully and how it supports your theory of action concerning student achievement;

The most salient feature of the Tennessee Nature Academy budget is the “slow-growth” model – opening the school with only two grades, fifth and sixth, and expanding by one grade per year. This approach ensures the school leadership can focus on the quality of the program implementation in the critical first year of operation, while also building grade level mastery with students from the beginning so they do not ever fall behind grade level performance. The enrollment plan reflected in the budget is the single most important factor supporting Tennessee Nature Academy’s theory of action.

The second most important factor is the type and number of faculty that will be recruited, hired and retained to deliver the nature-based education model unique to Tennessee Nature Academy’s theory of action. We have budgeted \$300/FTE for faculty recruiting, which should be more than sufficient because the slow-growth model also keeps the number of new faculty we need to recruit each year very manageable. Faculty salaries are competitive and reflect an average experience level of 5 years. Our investment in professional development (\$500/FTE) and emphasis on building a school culture of high expectations and high levels of support will also likely enable us to retain more than 80% of our faculty from year to year.

The school will also manage its finances to meet the financial management standards specified in the Tennessee Charter School Performance Framework, specifically:

- Near Term Measures:
  - Maintain a current ratio of >1.1.
  - Maintain at least 30 days of unrestricted cash in the first two years, and at least 60 days thereafter.
  - Maintain ADM enrollment at >95% of the board-approved budget.
  - Remain in compliance with all contracts and any debt agreements.
- Sustainability Measures:
  - Maintain a positive cumulative total margin.
  - Maintain a debt to asset ratio of <0.9.
  - Maintain positive multi-year cash flow.
  - Maintain a debt service coverage ratio of >1.1.

The proposed operating budget is consistent with these standards and will allow the school to build sustainability to ensure the full development of our academic program.

Overall, the slow-growth model, emphasis on teacher quality, and managing our finances prudently and consistently with these targets will all contribute to allocating financial resources in an optimal way to ensure Tennessee Nature Academy meets the academic goals set forth in this application.


(b) An explanation of student enrollment and BEP projections;  
 (c) An explanation of all anticipated funding sources, including grants, state, federal, and local per-pupil eligibility, other government resources, private fundraising, eRate, student fees, donations;

Tennessee Nature Academy’s slow-growth model assumes the school will open with 81 students in

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

each of the grade levels, fifth and sixth. In future years, most students will re-enroll such that the majority of student recruiting will be in fifth grade each year, with an additional entry point at 9th grade (the current middle-high school transition point in MNPS). Because of the strong expected demand for seats at the high school level, we will increase the number of students per grade by 10% to a class size of 90 students starting in ninth grade.

Enrollment Assumptions					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
5th Grade	81	81	81	81	81
6th Grade	81	81	81	81	81
7th Grade	0	81	81	81	81
8th Grade	0	0	81	81	81
9th Grade	0	0	0	90	90
10th Grade	0	0	0	0	90
11th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
12th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>24</b> 	<b>324</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>504</b>
<b>Projected BEP Rate with no inflator</b>	<b>12,200</b>	<b>12,200</b>	<b>12,200</b>	<b>12,200</b>	<b>12,200</b>
<b>Total BEP Funded</b>	<b>1,976,400</b>	<b>2,964,600</b>	<b>3,952,800</b>	<b>5,050,800</b>	<b>6,148,800</b>

Tennessee Nature Academy’s leadership team believes its conservative enrollment targets are achievable based on the market catchment it is targeting, which continues to experience significant annual enrollment growth despite steady enrollment district-wide.

Funding Sources
<b>State Revenue</b>
Basic Education Program
Basic Education Program- Capital Outlay
<b>Federal Revenue</b>
Title I
Title II
Title III

ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

NSLP
E-Rate
IDEA
CSP Startup Grant
<b>Grants and Fundraising</b>
Charter School Growth Fund
New Schools Venture Fund
School Fundraising

The source of recurring school funding is the Basic Education Program (BEP), which is projected at \$12,200 per pupil in our opening year. This level of BEP funding is not inflated over the five year projection, despite historical increases that have averaged more than 2% per year - this is a very conservative assumption based on the post-COVID funding environment. If a 2% inflator was assumed based on less than prior year trends it would generate a fund balance increase of over \$1.1MM in Year 5.

Based on the experience of other Nashville charter schools, our budget assumes an average of \$463 per student in Title I funding for 50% of the students, \$1,522 per student in IDEA funding for 15% of the students and \$27 per student in Title III funding for 45% of the students being ELL. The budget assumptions are based on the district’s total funding allocation divided by the ADM used to calculate the BEP (81,876).

Tennessee Nature Academy has built relationships with several national and local foundations who have demonstrated an interest in our diverse-by-design, nature-based charter school model and its potential for improving educational outcomes for students in Nashville. Our budget includes a very conservative \$30,000 fundraising assumption from these and other sources, and if we are able to secure additional funding it would be used for additional start-up, staffing expenditures and enhancing the program.

We have not budgeted for student activity fees, as any such fees would be managed in a restricted account to be used only for student activities directly related to the specific activity.

(d) An explanation of all anticipated expenditures including those identified in Section 3.1(d);

Below is an explanation of assumptions regarding the anticipated significant expenditures for Tennessee Nature Academy:

ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

- **Salaries and Benefits:**

- Salaries and Benefits account for 62% of total expenses. In Year 0 we plan to hire a Chief Academic Officer, Executive Officer, Director of Operations, and Director of Community Engagement. In future years we will grow the administrative and increase the instructional staff proportionately with enrollment increases focusing on teacher quality for academic success.
- Benefits include FICA, state unemployment, workers compensation, employer paid health insurance and TCRS retirement at a total of 21% of total compensation.
- See Table Below for staffing chart. The number of special education teachers is higher than a typical school because of the high percentage of special education students we anticipate. The Other Administrative position in Year 3 is a high school principal resident, and in Year 5 is an Outdoor Experiences Coordinator.

	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
<b>Administrative Staff</b>						
Principal/School Leader	1.00	1.00	1.50	2.00	4.00	4.00
Special Education Coordinator	0.00	0.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	3.00
Deans, Directors	0.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Other (Specify in Assumptions)	2.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00
<b>Total Administrative FTE</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>4.50</b>	<b>8.00</b>	<b>9.00</b>	<b>11.00</b>
<b>Instructional Staff</b>						
Teachers		6.00	10.00	12.00	15.00	19.00
Special Education Teachers		4.00	6.00	8.00	10.00	12.00
Educational Assistants/Aides		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Elective Teachers		2.00	3.00	4.00	9.00	12.00
<b>Total Instructional FTE</b>		<b>12.00</b>	<b>19.00</b>	<b>24.00</b>	<b>34.00</b>	<b>43.00</b>
<b>Non-Instructional Staff</b>						
Clerical Staff		1.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00
Operations	0.5	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00
Social Workers/Counseling		0.50	2.00	2.00	3.50	4.00
<b>Total Non-Instructional FTE</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>8.50</b>	<b>10.00</b>
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>17.50</b>	<b>27.50</b>	<b>37.00</b>	<b>51.50</b>	<b>64.00</b>

- **Contracted Services:**

- Professional Development - The school has budgeted \$500 per employee.
- Financial Services - The school will contract out a back-office provider providing finance and human resource services, until year 3. After year 3, they will only contract out finance due to a hiring of the Director of Human Resources. The school has identified several providers that have experience serving charter schools.

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

- Audit Services - Estimated budget of \$11K in year 1 based on trends with an inflator in out years.
  - Copier Lease and Usage - The school has budgeted \$750 per copier assuming 1 copier per 100 kids and \$20 per student for additional copy expense.
  - Transportation - The school has budgeted \$275 per bus per day for 181 days assuming 50% ridership with a max of 50 kids per bus.
  - IT Services - The school has budgeted \$2.5K per month for contracted services with annual inflation of 2%.
  - Contracted SPED Services - The school has budgeted \$1K per every SPED student with an estimated SPED population of 15% for outsourced support.
  - Insurance - The school has budgeted \$20K per annum to include general liability, D&O, accidental, property and other policies.
- **Supplies and Materials:**
    - Textbooks and Instructional Supplies - The school has budgeted \$250 per student to purchase instructional materials, curriculum supplies, textbooks, etc. Year 1 Textbooks and supplies were pre-purchased in pre-opening due to a grant funding.
    - Student Supplies - The school has budgeted \$100 per student.
    - Student Laptops - The school has budgeted \$350 per Chromebook for the purchase of 1 class set that includes a total of 54 Chromebooks. An additional set is planned to be purchased in year 4 with the addition of the high school.
    - Faculty laptops - The school has budgeted \$900 per FTE.
- **Facility Related Expenses:**
    - Rent - The school has budgeted \$15 per square foot based on a space plan developed in conjunction with an educational facility planner. This rate is reasonable based on the experience of other charter schools using incubator space. The square footage is 16K in year 1 growing to 34K sf by year 5.
    - Utilities - The school has budgeted \$2 per square feet.
    - Custodial - The school has budgeted \$48K in year 1 assuming contracted custodial services increasing year over year per the enrollment increase.
    - Faculty Furniture - The school has budgeted \$500 per new FTE for the purchase of faculty furniture with majority of the faculty furniture being purchased in pre-opening due to a grant received instead of year 1.
    - Student Furniture - The school has budgeted \$250 per new student for the purchase of student desks/furniture with majority of the student furniture being purchased in pre-opening due to a grant received instead of year 1.
    - Tenant Improvements - The school has budgeted \$1.50 per square foot for building maintenance assuming lease in year 1 – 5. This includes an additional \$20K for additional nature-based classrooms in Years 1, 3, and 5, which includes accommodations to ensure compliance with any ADA and building code requirements.

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

- **Other Charges:**

- Student Recruitment - The school has budgeted \$100 per student.
- Parent and Staff Meetings - The school has budgeted \$200 per meeting assuming 10 meetings per year. This includes translation services to engage with families that speak a language TNA families cannot translate internally.
- Authorizer Fee -The school has budgeted \$35K per year for the authorizer fee.

(e) The systems, processes, and policies by which the proposed school will manage accounting, purchasing, payroll, and audits. Include any draft policies on financial controls;

### **Accounting**

Tennessee Nature Academy will use QuickBooks as its accounting platform because of its flexibility and familiarity to most accounting users. Tennessee Nature Academy will use a chart of accounts that is consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), non-profit accounting best practices, and any unique Tennessee Department of Education requirements. By using these standard account codes, Tennessee Nature Academy will be able to export its financial data from its accounting system and report it accurately and in the proper format for quarterly and annual submissions. The selected finance provider will have extensive experience reporting consistently with GAAP and providing financial information to authorizers and other government authorities in the required format.

The finance team will perform a series of reconciliations, including monthly bank account reconciliations, throughout the year to ensure that employees are being paid their agreed upon amounts, that amounts paid are consistent with forecasted expenditures, that all payments to vendors are fully recorded in the school's accounting system and that all cash receipts are both recorded and consistent with amounts owed to it by state, federal, and local sources. The finance team will keep track of expenditures that meet its capitalization thresholds, and will perform periodic inventories to ensure that the school has proper control over these physical assets. The finance team will also conduct a mid-year internal audit to ensure accurate accounting and adherence to the school's adopted fiscal policies.

There will be a segregation of duties to ensure effective internal controls. In general, the approval function, the accounting/reconciling function, and the asset custody function will be separated among the finance team members. A specific example of segregation of duties implemented by the school is that the person who approves purchases will not be the person who issues the vendor payments, and the person who issues the payments will not be the person who performs the monthly bank reconciliation. In the unusual situation when there are functions that cannot be separated, a detailed supervisory review of related activities will be required as a compensating control activity.

### **Purchasing**

The board will approve a table specifying purchasing and payment authority thresholds as part of its Fiscal Policies and Procedures (FPP) manual, a draft of which is included in Executive Director up to \$25,000, with board approval required for anything above \$25,000. The purchase order, receiving, and disbursement procedure are also specified in the FPP.

Tennessee Nature Academy will solicit at least three bids for all purchases as a best practice, but for all purchases that meet the threshold specified in the FPP. 4<sup>th</sup> Sector also provided the school with a Google-forms based system to track approvals and upload bid documentation for audit purposes.

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

### Payroll

Tennessee Nature Academy will use a third-party payroll processing platform such as Paycor, Paychex or Paylocity to ensure compliance with payroll regulations. The Office Manager will maintain a time-tracking system for hours worked and paid time off. Payroll changes will be approved by the Executive Director using a Personnel Action Form (PAF). Based on the time tracking reports and any PAFs, the finance team will prepare the payroll for approval and submission by the Executive Director. The finance team will conduct monthly payroll reconciliations to ensure proper deductions, tax withholdings and payments.

### Audits

The board will select and hire an independent financial auditor as specified in (f) below. The key areas of financial risk that will be subject to an independent audit opinion include general financial statements, federal programs, and federal program compliance with laws and regulations.

(f) How the proposed school will provide an independent annual audit of school-level operations and comply with other federal or state accounting and/or reporting requirements;

The board will solicit proposals from qualified independent financial auditors with experience auditing charter schools and non-profit organizations. The Board will review the proposals and make a selection in the fall of the school's first year of operation.

The finance team will assist in preparing workpapers for on-site testing by auditors, prepare all requested accounting-related audit schedules, and support the Board Treasurer in responding to any comments raised in any management letter. The audit scope may include a federal grant audit.

(g) The different roles and responsibilities of the proposed school's administration and governing board for school finances;

The roles and responsibilities of the school's administration and governing board are outlined below in the three key areas of managing the school's finances: budget approval and management, fiscal policies and procedures, and monthly financial reviews.

### Budget Approval and Management

A critical financial management practice of Tennessee Nature Academy will be the budget approval and management process. The board will review and approve the school's annual budget each year. In late January each year, the finance team will meet with the school leader to review potential enrollment, staffing, and funding scenarios, and discuss any new program initiatives the school leader and/or school leadership team are considering. The budget model used by 4<sup>th</sup> Sector is comprehensive, allowing for person by person budgeting and detailed non-personnel projections. Based on the school leadership input, along with historical accounting data, the finance team will prepare draft budgets for review by the school leader. The finance team will continue to work with the school leader on different scenarios in order to optimize spending on school priorities. The agreed upon budget will be presented to the board finance committee for review. The finance team will then make appropriate adjustments based on input from the board finance committee, and present a final version to the board, for the board's

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

approval and adoption in May or June. All actions to adopt, finalize, amend and implement the budget will be discussed and approved in publicly-noticed Open Meetings.

After the budget is adopted, the finance team will meet monthly with the Executive Director to review actual accounting data, any revenue and expense changes that have occurred, and update its forecast model for the balance of the year. In the event the forecast is worse than the budget, the finance team will work with the principal to identify expense reductions (e.g., non-personnel expense reductions that are least critical to academic performance, non-replacement of any open positions, staff reductions, and use of contingency) that would re-balance the forecast. As part of this process, school educational priorities are always taken into account to minimize any negative educational effects from a budget shortfall. In the event that the forecast is better than the budget, the finance team will work with the school leader to determine if the additional resources should be re-deployed on current year priorities or saved for future years. 4<sup>th</sup> Sector's finance team has extensive experience supporting school leaders in this process, having conducted hundreds of such monthly budget reviews over many years.

The board will then receive a standard monthly financial reporting package that will include a financial dashboard (that included income statement, balance sheet, enrollment and staffing indicators), a contextual narrative summary of the school's finances, a year to date budget vs. actual comparison, a revised forecast for the balance of the year, a balance sheet and monthly cash flow projection. This financial package will be reviewed in detail by the board treasurer or finance committee prior to each monthly board meeting. Any proposed actions to re-balance the operating budget will be reviewed and discussed with the board finance committee.

### **Fiscal Policies and Procedures**

The Fiscal Policies and Procedures (FPP) manual included in Attachment F7 is based on existing charter school best practices, and is a draft that is subject to review and approval by the finance committee and full board. The policies cover such areas as Internal Controls, Revenue, Purchasing, Payroll, Property and Equipment, Debt, IRS Form 990 Preparation and Filing, Insurance, Record Retention, Fraud and Misappropriation, and Whistleblower Policy. As discussed above, the board will review and establish appropriate thresholds for contract or purchase approval, check signing authority, bank account opening requirements, and asset capitalization.

### **Monthly Financial Reviews and Reporting**

The Board Treasurer and/or finance committee will meet monthly with the finance team and the Executive Director to review the school's financial records in detail, including the most recent variance report of actual versus budgeted revenues and expenditures, balance sheet information, and cash flow projections. The finance committee can express any concerns they have at this time and make additional report requests as needed to ensure that they are comfortable with the financial information and financial condition of the school. The full board will also review the school's financial statements, including a balance sheet, income summary, detailed statements that compare actual versus budgeted expenses, statement of cash flows, and financial forecast at the monthly board meeting.

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

(h) If there is a plan to outsource any financial management areas such as payroll, benefits, audits, fundraising, accounting, etc., include a statement on how you will choose and oversee the contractors;

Tennessee Nature Academy plans to contract a third-party provider for accounting, financial management and reporting services. Tennessee Nature Academy has been in discussions with 4th Sector Solutions ([www.4thsectorsolutions.com](http://www.4thsectorsolutions.com)), a leading national provider of these services to charter schools, with over 12 years of experience, as well as an experienced local provider in Nashville.

While 4th Sector Solutions or the selected provider will have significant day to day interaction with the Executive Director, it will ultimately report to the board. To ensure the board understands the performance of the finance provider as it relates to compliance with the terms of agreement between 4th Sector and the school with the school and the fiscal requirements annually, an annual review of the provider's performance will be performed by the board Treasurer with input from the school leadership team and other board members. If at any point the terms are not being met the board will create a corrective action plan for the provider to implement. The provider will have 60 days to make the necessary adjustments if they fail to do so the board at its discretion will contract with another provider and terminate the contract with 4th Sector.

Tennessee Nature Academy will likely contract with a third-party payroll processor such as Paycor, Paychex or Paylocity, based on an evaluation of pricing and services.

(i) The level of financial expertise of the proposed school's internal and external team members;

Tennessee Nature Academy does not plan to hire a CFO and will contract with a finance consulting firm such as 4th Sector Solutions or a local Nashville provider to perform financial management services as described previously. Several Tennessee Nature Academy Board members possess the financial expertise to ensure sound strategic financial decision making and oversight of external financial consultants.

**Internal Finance Team:**

As an experienced grant writer, our Executive Director (Roy Jay Renfro) has secured and managed over \$700,000 in private, state, and federal grant funds. As of May 31, 2022, he has successfully managed Tennessee Nature Academy through its first year of operation as the Executive Director. His start-up experience spans beyond Tennessee Nature Academy to include an agribusiness social enterprise that was a 2019 Finalist for The Arthur & Toni Rembe Rock Social Innovation Award. Until a full-time Chief Financial Officer is hired after Year 5, he will be supported by various members of the Board of Directors who are experienced in nonprofit and government finance.

Our Board Chair (Roger Waynick) is a Senior Management Consultant in the Department of Finance and Administration within Tennessee State Government. He understands state budgeting and regularly interacts with the state budget team. He was responsible for the tracking of over 16 billion dollars of direct funding the state received from the CARES Act during the COVID-19 pandemic. Working with state leadership and the budget team he has also supported the planning, management, budgeting, and distribution of 3.75 billion dollars of stimulus funds the state received from the American Rescue Plant Act within state and federal guidelines.

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

Our Board Treasurer (Scott Campbell) is a former charter school High School Principal who understands school-level budgeting priorities and the cadence of how public funds (i.e BEP and Free & Reduced Lunch reimbursements) are disbursed. He meets monthly with our Executive Director to audit our financial safeguards and procedures and review the operating budget.

(j) The proposed school's contingency plans to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than expected;

During the budget approval process, all proposed budgets will include a contingency, which is designed for two purposes: (1) to minimize the effect to the program for negative events such as emergency facility repairs, changes in BEP funding formulas, enrollment shortfalls or unforeseen education needs; and (2) to build a reserve for future emergencies or facility financing needs. The goal of the school is to build reserves over time equal to at least 10% of annual expenses, and in every year exceeding the benchmarks for financial performance established in the Tennessee Charter School Performance Framework and summarized in 3.2(a) above. The school may also seek to over-enroll students at the beginning of the year if possible, to account for any normal attrition or mobility. Once the school has an operating history, budgets are built with attrition assumptions consistent with past practice.

In the event of a revenue shortfall, the school will reduce expenditures first in any discretionary non-personnel expense, second in non-teaching staff, and lastly in faculty. The exception to this process would be in the event the revenue decrease was related to an enrollment shortfall that would allow the school to reduce the number of sections in a grade, in which case the lowest performing faculty members in that grade level would have their position eliminated. Our finance team has created several budget scenarios with reduced enrollment and identified specific reductions to maintain a sustainable budget.

The school has not included an inflator in the BEP funding to stay conservative for any shortfalls. Based on trends the BEP has been increasing year over year. If Tennessee Nature Academy was to use a 2% inflator on BEF funds this would generate an additional \$1.1MM in fund balance by year 5 for a total projected fund balance of \$2.6MM fund balance versus the \$1.5MM fund balance in the proposed budget. Several expenditures have a 2% inflator even though there is no inflation factor on revenue.

(k) The Year 1 cash flow contingency, in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening;

Our Year 1 projection includes an operating surplus (contingency) to provide a cushion against a revenue shortfall.

The Year 1 budget is also highly conservative with respect to fundraising projections, and will likely increase its contingency based on anticipated fundraising commitments.

Further, the school will monitor closely its enrollment interest in its pre-opening year, and track it closely during the six month period prior to opening while hiring and spending decisions are being made, to ensure the overall expense structure aligns with the actual projected enrollment.

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

## ATTACHMENT O: BUDGET NARRATIVE (SECTION 3.2)

Finally, TNA has secured a line of credit in the amount of \$120,000 from Pinnacle Financial Partners.

(1) How one or more high-needs students with disabilities might affect the budget and your plan to meet student needs that might be more than anticipated.

The school budget includes funding to serve students with disabilities, reflecting enrollment estimates of approximately 15% students with disabilities and allocation of two FTE special education teachers for every one grade level. Through our co-teaching model we will prioritize teachers with a special education or EL credential, in order to ensure we adequately meet the needs of all students.

In the event that specific student needs are greater than anticipated, the school will allocate a portion of its projected operating surplus to provide the appropriate student services, and/or redeploy resources from elsewhere in the budget to ensure all student needs are met. In the event that student need is significantly more than anticipated Tennessee Nature Academy intends to work with MNPS in order to secure resources and services to appropriately meet the needs of all learners.