TN Department of Education | Charter Schools

Amended Application for a Public CharterSchool

Opening in the 2022-23 School Year

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Nameof proposed school: Rutherford Collegiate Prep

Projected year of school opening: 2022-23

Charter authorizer for proposed school: Rutherford County Schools

Sponsor: ReThink Forward, Inc.

The sponsor is a not-for-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status: Yes

Model or focus of proposed school: General Academics

City or geographic community for proposed school: Northwest Rutherford County

Name of primary contact person (this person should serve as the contact for follow up, interviews, and notices regarding this application): Dr. Dan Boone

Primary Contact mailingaddress: 1831 12th Avenue South, Suite 188, Nashville, TN 37203

PrimaryContactworktelephone:833-738-4165 **Primary Contact mobile telephone:** 954-519-4000

Primary Contact email address: dan.boone@rethinkforward.org

Names,currentemployment,androlesofall peopleonschooldesign team, including school leader (add lines as needed):

Full name	Current employer and job title	Position with proposed school
Dr. Dan Boone	President, Trevecca Nazarene University	Chair, Governing Board
Thomas Lee	Member in Charge Nashville Office Frost Brown Todd	Secretary, Governing Board
Rebecca Dinda	Retired Principal, Leadership Consultant	Treasurer, Governing Board
Sharon Smith	Chief of Federal Programs for the Tennessee Department of Education	Director, Governing Board

Does the proposed school intend to contract or partner w/ a charter management organization? Yes
If yes,identifytheCMOorother partner organization: Noble Education Initiative

Does this applicant have charter school applications under consideration by any other authorizer(s)? No
If yes, complete the table below, adding lines as needed:

State	Authorizer	Proposed School Name	Application Due Date	Decision Date	Proposed opening year

Indicate Applicant Type:

☑ **New-Start Applicant (Category1)**
☐ **Existing TN Operator Proposing New Focus/Grade (Category 2)**
☐ **Existing non-TN Operator (Category 2)**
☐ **Existing TN Operator Proposing to Replicate (Category 3)**
☐ **Existing Operator of ASD School Exiting the ASD (Category 4)**

ASSURANCES

As the authorized representative of the sponsor, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for Rutherford Collegiate Prep 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 of1973;
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.

Dan Boone

Signature

Dan Boone

Printed Name of Authorized Representative

Chair, ReThink Forward

Title of Authorized Representative

Executive Summary

In three pages or less, provide a narrative 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 mission of Rutherford Collegiate Prep (RCP) is to provide a personalized, engaged, supported, and challenging environment that will strengthen students academically, socially, and emotionally. Students will leave RCP with the skills and mindset necessary to not only face reality but create improvements for the next generation. Our vision is to inspire and equip a generation of self-directed critical thinkers to influence the world around them.

RCP will serve Kindergarten – Grade 8 beginning with Kindergarten – Grade 5 in the first year. By Year 4, RCP will enroll 725 students through Grade 8, and by Year 6 will enroll 770 students at full capacity.

RCP's educational philosophy reflects a commitment to improved teacher efficacy, meaningful collaboration among all stakeholders, and a learning community that attends to students' social-emotional and academic needs. Our core values reflect ideas that will drive day-to-day practices, and will be taught, celebrated, and modeled by all stakeholders. Our leadership team and staff will work to ensure students are provided with the necessary support and learning experiences that lead to each student's achievement of Tennessee Academic Standards (TAS) in Kindergarten – Grade 8. RCP's academic plan works in support of these efforts and contributes toward making our mission a reality.

RCP's academic plan empowers all staff as facilitators of each student's success. Our Kindergarten – Grade 8 plan includes a focus on data-driven, standards-based instruction, development of student social and emotional learning (SEL) skills, and career exploration. Implementation of our academic plan will be driven by Noble Education Initiative's (NEI) Continuous Improvement Model (CIM). The model is designed around four elements: *Planning, Standards-Based Instruction, Assessment, and Responsive Teaching.* Planning includes the development of resources that equip teachers with TAS-aligned curriculum and assessments and provide a roadmap for planning effective instruction. Teachers will use teaching guides to ensure their instruction is based on the TAS. Assessment provides a bridge between teaching and learning and drives instruction. Responsive Teaching is considered at both the school-wide and classroom levels based on the results of formative assessment data. We are confident effective use of the NEI CIM will provide all students, including special populations, the impactful instruction and targeted support necessary to meet or exceed student expectations.

RCP's professional development (PD) activities will be focused on needs as determined by school data and goals. Our PD plan is intended to maximize time and ensure effectiveness in the development of teacher efficacy to meet student needs. Our plan is based on four components that collectively support improved implementation of the academic plan: *Professional Learning Goals, Professional Learning Activities, Essential Resources, and Progress Summary*.

In further support of our mission, RCP's school layout is considered a vehicle for inspiring creativity, accommodating collaboration, and providing teachers the space flexibility they need to meet individual and small-group student needs. RCP classrooms will be designed around the learning community model, which redefines the traditional classroom setting and serves to empower each staff member as a facilitator for every student's success. Each grade-level community will work together and hone collaboration skills by utilizing one large space centered in the community that can accommodate all students, as well as smaller, modular rooms for individualized and small-group instruction. In addition to grade-level communities, RCP will also

feature a large, open atrium with a three-story staircase in its center that serves as an open learning space, innovative furniture design, reading and studying nooks, and an indoor play area.

- **The geographic and population considerations of the school environment**

An area in northwest Rutherford County serves as the anticipated location for RCP. We will draw students between the ages of 5 – 14 in Kindergarten – Grade 8 attending schools in northwest Rutherford County. RCP expects the majority of its students to be drawn from northwest Rutherford County. We will strive to serve a diverse population of students. The school will serve primarily minority students. Based on the average of all schools profiled (shown in Table 1) within northwest Rutherford County, RCP anticipates serving the following student population at capacity:

- Students: 770
- White: 43%
- Black: 22%
- Hispanic: 25%
- Minority Total: 56%
- Free and Reduced Lunch Recipients (FRL): 3%
- English Learners (EL): 12%
- Special Education (SPED): 9%

Please note that these demographic estimates are being provided for projection purposes only. These projections are not intended to be an exact representation of the school's eventual student population, nor should they be taken as a guarantee or a strict enrollment target to which the school will adhere. RCP will be a school of choice, and pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-113, we shall enroll any eligible student who submits a timely application and participates in the lottery process, if necessary. RCP will admit students of any race, color, nationality and ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender, and therefore cannot guarantee nor control the demographic makeup of its student population.

- **The challenges particular to those considerations; and**

As shown in Table 1, the average 2018-19 Academic Achievement score earned on the Tennessee State Report Card for all schools serving grades Kindergarten – Grade 8 within northwest Rutherford County was a 3.0. More specifically, only eight of the 17 schools within northwest Rutherford County earned an Academic Achievement score of 3.0 or better while four earned below a 2.5 and two earned below a 2.0.

Enrollment in the schools throughout Rutherford County has increased by approximately 2.5% each year. Currently, there are approximately 14,355 students enrolled in schools throughout northwest Rutherford County. Since 2006, the district has built nine new elementary and middle schools and added seven additions for schools serving grades Kindergarten – Grade 8 in order to meet increased enrollment demands, which shows a need for additional high-quality school options and the potential for overcrowding.

- **The applicant team's capacity to successfully open and operate a high-quality school given the above consideration.**

The governing board, ReThink Forward, Inc. (ReThink), is comprised of four members holding officer titles, two of whom possess decades of educational leadership experience in public schools, charter schools, and post-secondary education. These board members have managed all aspects of their schools, including financial, human resources, academics, operations, and governing board relations.

As President of Trevecca Nazarene University, Dr. Dan Boone (Board Chair) is involved in all aspects of the university's operations, overseeing the successful development, implementation, and fidelity of school-wide policies and procedures, similar to the duties he will execute as Board Chair for ReThink.

Mr. Lee possesses three decades of experience as a lobbyist, attorney, litigator, winning campaign strategist, university educator, and Emmy-award-winning journalist. This diverse portfolio of experience will aid in his duties as ReThink's Secretary and ensure that the board maintains strong relationships with political leaders for both the state and local community.

Throughout her career, Ms. Rebecca Dinda (Board Treasurer) has managed all aspects of school operations, ranging from curriculum and education model implementation and development to financial management and budget projection oversight. She has an extremely successful track record as a school leader working in a high-needs community and overcoming the challenge of educating at-risk students. Ms. Dinda's extensive experience in educational leadership and rare talent for achieving equality in education is an invaluable asset to both ReThink and RCP.

Dr. Sharon D. Smith currently serves as a Director for the ReThink board. She has extensive experience in federal, state, and private grant programs and fiscal compliance, as well as policy development. She is currently employed as the Chief of Federal Programs for the Tennessee Department of Education in Nashville, TN. Dr. Smith has provided effective leadership and training in the facilitation of grant proposal review/submission, award negotiation/acceptance, budget development and management, and ensuring adherence to institutional policies, federal and state regulations, and sponsor guidelines. Additionally, her broad knowledge and experience in grants/contracts administration includes work in the area of pre-award administration, post-award administration, financial management, proposal/grants development training, and compliance.

NEI and ReThink recognize the importance of charter school governance and will put systems in place to ensure the charter school meets rigorous academic, financial, and organizational priorities. This will include a board training and governance process that borrows from national best practices and includes on-the-ground training so that the governing board can fulfill its duties under state law. This training will ensure that the board possesses sufficient expertise in areas necessary for the success of the school, including academics, facilities, special needs, financial management, legal compliance, community relations, and other related work. This can only be accomplished through a rigorous training program designed by experts, and ReThink and NEI are committed to doing that. As such, NEI will secure the services of Andrew Broy to help lead and oversee the governance training of the board. Mr. Broy currently serves as the president of the Illinois network of charter schools, a statewide membership and advocacy organization that serves the 148 charter schools in the state of Illinois. Mr. Broy brings a level of expertise and insight that will ensure ReThink's success in governing RCP. Additionally, TCA 49-13-111 (o) requires the governing board to participate in at least one board training per year that is certified by the Tennessee Charter School Center, and ReThink Forward will comply with this requirement.

RCP's governing board members have extensive experience working with schools composed of diverse student populations, including English Learners, and understand the interventions and supports that must be in place for students and their families. We also understand the complexities of children living in poverty and based on this knowledge and successful experience, we will ensure RCP reflects a comprehensive approach to educating students.

SECTION 1: ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

1.1 School Mission and Vision

In this section:

(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. The school's mission statement provides the foundation for the entire application.

Rutherford Collegiate Prep's (RCP) mission is to provide a personalized, engaged, supported, and challenging environment that will strengthen students academically, socially, and emotionally. Students will leave RCP with the skills and mindset necessary to not only face reality but create improvements for the next generation.

(b) Describe the vision of the proposed school and how the vision will help achieve the school's mission.

RCP's vision is to inspire and equip a generation of self-directed critical thinkers to influence the world around them. Our mission provides the roadmap to ensuring all students are equipped as critical thinkers and primed to lead efforts they are passionate about in the world.

Furthermore, the core beliefs of RCP include:

1. **We believe in teaching and supporting the whole child.** The successful pursuit of academic excellence for all our students involves a whole child philosophy that respects intellectual, social, and emotional learning and growth. Students, starting in kindergarten and extending through Grade 8, will learn and develop their social-emotional skills of self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.
2. **We believe in failing *forward*.** It is a core belief in the RCP community that great ability is developed over time, through hard work, effective feedback, and through experiencing and learning from failure. Failure is a natural part of the teaching and learning process. We all learn from mistakes, in school and in life.
3. **We believe in the power of Collective Teacher Efficacy to change lives.** According to John Hattie's 2018 list of factors related to student achievement,[1] Collective Teacher Efficacy is again at the top of the list with an effect size of 1.57. Collective Teacher Efficacy is the collective belief of the entire staff of a school in *their belief* to positively affect students.
4. **We believe in a *decision-driven* data culture.** Too many schools waste valuable instructional time and resources collecting data they either do not need or misunderstand its value. This will not be the case at RCP. With a strong assessment plan, built on a solid teaching and learning roadmap of the Tennessee Academic Standards (TAS), RCP will collect data with a clear purpose in mind.
5. **We believe that leaders model the practices they want to permeate classrooms**. At RCP, school leaders will talk the talk and walk the walk. As the instructional leaders, school administrators will consistently *monitor* every aspect of our proven Continuous Improvement Model (CIM) for quality.
6. **We believe that when students are significantly behind, they must exceed expected growth**. A year's worth of growth for a year's worth of learning works for students who are achieving at or above grade-level. However, for students who are significantly behind, simply meeting expected growth (i.e., annual growth) is not enough.
7. **We believe reading and writing are life changing.** We recognize that reading and writing are passports to achievement in many other curricular areas, and literacy education plays an important role in moving people out of poverty toward greater self-sufficiency post-graduation.

8. **We believe in the power of collaboration and teamwork, but equally value independent learning by fostering student ownership of learning**. A common theme throughout our community experience will be how to develop autonomous, self-directed, high-achieving individuals while simultaneously developing students who are skilled in learning and working in productive teams around shared goals.
9. **We believe great schools enroll families, not just students.** It is a belief at RCP that the most successful schools enroll families into their program, not simply students. We recognize that parent involvement in education is crucial.

From these philosophical beliefs, the following six Core Values will be taught, celebrated, and modeled. The Core Values are concepts that all members of the RCP community will strive for – teachers, leaders, students, and families.

1. **Excellence** – We value striving for excellence every day; we know that excellence is the result of intentional planning and deliberate practice.
2. **The Power of We** – We value collaboration and teamwork to accomplish shared goals. Together, we learn, do, and achieve MORE.
3. **The Power of Me** – We value the contributions of every member of the learning community and want all to develop the academic and social-emotional skills to be their best selves.
4. **Focused, Continuous Improvement** – We focus on our strengths and opportunities for improvement. We get smarter and smarter through hard work, taking risks and learning from failure; we value the small, persistent steps that it takes to be great; we know that greatness in anything is the result of continual, intentional planning and practice over long periods of time.
5. **Student Ownership & Choice** – We value the power of student ownership so that all learners in our community can be self-directed, life-long learners. We value student choice, so they learn how to chart their own path in school and in life.
6. **Family** – We deeply value making RCP a second "home" in the community where teachers, leaders, students, and families feel safe, supported, and loved.

(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(a).

RCP's engaging, challenging, and personalized school environment will help improve learning for all students and support closing the achievement gap between high and low students in Rutherford County. Through implementation of our education model, community engagement plan, and continuous improvement cycle, all of which are central to realizing our mission, we will support each student in attaining proficiency on state assessments and provide meaningful opportunities for parent(s)/guardian(s) to engage with, and add to, the school environment.

(d) Describe how the mission and vision of the proposed school addresses any priorities set by the authorizer.

RCP's vison and mission reflect strong alignment with Rutherford County Schools' (RCS) commitment to ensuring that every student is provided a foundation of knowledge, transferable skills, and character necessary to excel in higher education, work, and life and will empower today's students to grasp tomorrow's opportunities. Our academic plan, detailed further in the application, is mission- focused and based on a model of continuous improvement. Our plan integrates several of RCS' values such as creating relevant learning experiences, providing equitable educational opportunities for all students, and effectively collaborating with stakeholders. Additionally, our focus on daily social and emotional learning (SEL) experiences and personalization supports RCS' whole child philosophy.

Our education model, which will guide implementation of our academic program, also demonstrates congruence with the RCP strategic framework. Similar to RCP, we will prioritize consistent improvement in academic performance, invest in the development and growth of our people, create strong partnerships with

families and the community and ensure operational excellence and efficiency. RCP's approach to teaching and learning will be driven by our education model. The education model will guide our goals and help us monitor our progress toward successful realization of our mission and vision.

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

RCP will create an educational environment where students are explicitly taught how to take control of their own success. To foster a learning environment focused on personalized learning and challenging students, each student will understand their academic starting point, set goals for growth and understand what is necessary to reach them. Thereby, RCP students will be invested in their own success and will meaningfully participate in the development of their learning paths. Closing achievement gaps will take place continually and not be a once- a-year conversation. Through the use of the NEI Continuous Improvement Model (CIM), RCP will be focused on data-driven, standards-based instruction throughout the year so end-of-year data will just confirm what we already know about student learning.

Our students will know how they learn best and how to best help themselves. Students will be confident, self-directed learners who know that failure is a part of the learning process. Students will demonstrate rich vocabularies when they speak and write. All students will see themselves as part of a school community where what they think, say, do, and feel matters.

In order to establish a personalized, engaged, and supportive learning environment, RCP classrooms will be designed around the learning community model. This model redefines the traditional classroom setting. Learning communities will be centered around a larger space that will accommodate all students within a single grade-level. When needed, pivot walls can cordon off smaller spaces for individualized or flexible small-group instruction within the learning community. These spaces will help promote collaboration and family. RCP learning communities will be places where students will often be the ones directing the learning for themselves and each other under the supervision and guidance of certified teachers and instructional aides. It will be clear to visitors that students are engaged in acquiring new knowledge and practicing previously acquired learning. When learning, students will often be seen working in teams experiencing "productive struggle." The teacher will prompt students' thinking or direct them to resources to best help themselves. At RCP, students will be engaged in rich conversations, learning in small groups, completing real-world tasks, and using technology as a resource to research, learn new content, practice skills, publish their work, network, and more.

To support students socially and emotionally, students will be immersed in daily SEL through explicit instruction on SEL competencies. Because our curriculum is framed in SEL, these skills will be taught, practiced, and learned simultaneously with the academic standards. To prepare students to influence the world around them, they will develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to manage their own emotions, set and achieve positive goals, show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and become responsible decision-makers.

Although students will have voice and choice in their learning, teachers will provide direct instruction when appropriate. Directed by a lead teacher, students will have daily access to a wealth of adult expertise. In elementary grades, students will be taught by certified teachers and instructional aides to help with small-group instruction and small-group pull-outs. In middle school, students will have access to subject-certified teachers as well as instructional aides to help all students navigate the challenges of adolescence. With a clear understanding of what the Tennessee Academic Standards (TAS) require at progressive levels of performance, instructional staff will clearly communicate learning so students can define quality as they are learning instead of after it occurs.

Teachers and students alike will be assessment literate. They will know how to use the assessment process to evaluate and support learning. Teachers will be skilled in collecting the right evidence, at the right levels, in the

right amounts, for each student. This will allow them to be accurate, yet efficient, with their time. You will see upper elementary and middle school students using tools like assessment blueprints to focus their learning and practice. You will see students reviewing the work in their portfolios to reflect on their own progress over time.

Finally, RCP will be a learning community for entire families. With potential university and college partnerships, families will be taking advantage of a wealth of services. From free tutoring to opportunities to experience what college is like, students at RCP will know their futures are full of possibilities,and they will know that their dreams are within reach. Learning will no longer be confined to the four walls of the classroom. Success will be realized for all. Students will leave RCP with the skills and mindset necessary tonot only face reality but create improvements for the next generation

(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 model we have created for RCP dramatically redefines the traditional classroom and learning environment. It is organized around learning communities that can be larger groups, but also very quickly broken out into smaller units to ensure individualized learning and maximum flexibility for both students and teachers. This approach, along with our Continuous Improvement Model (CIM), allows our students to know and embrace their own learning style while allowing teachers to utilize the learning strengths of each student to maximize learning potential, close achievement gaps, and steer student gains to new heights.

Additional innovations include our attention to the whole child, including families. Our network of university partners will allow RCP to offer services that include free tutoring, college visits, and exposure to subjects and classes beyond classroom walls, allowing our students experiences and exposure to the expansive world outside their immediate area.

RCP's fully resourced classrooms, each with a lead teacher and instructional aides who can very quickly respond to individual student needs, are not only innovative, but will result in students who are engaged and invested in their own learning.

1.2 Enrollment Summary

In this section:

(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.

An area in northwest Rutherford County serves as the anticipated location for RCP. We will draw students between the ages of 5 – 14 in Kindergarten – Grade 8 attending schools in northwest Rutherford County. This area was chosen after conducting a thorough analysis using Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) mapping software, which is based on current census data and future projections, as well as an evaluation of adequate facilities and existing school options.

In order to accurately project RCP's anticipated demographics, we created a statistical profile of all public schools serving grades Kindergarten – Grade 8 throughout northwest Rutherford County.

Table 1

School Name	2018-19 Academic Achievement Score	White	Black	Hispanic	Minority Total	FRL	EL	SPED
Brown's Chapel Elementary School	3.6	68%	17%	12%	33%	2%	6%	10%
Stewart Creek Elementary School	4	75%	12%	9%	26%	1%	5%	12%
Stewart Creek Middle School	3.5	75%	11%	9%	25%	2%	2%	7%
Stewartsboro Elementary	2.9	66%	15%	17%	34%	3%	8%	14%
Rocky Fork Middle School	3.5	52%	24%	18%	48%	4%	5%	10%
Rock Springs Middle School	2.4	43%	27%	24%	57%	3%	8%	9%
Rock Spring Elementary	3.7	51%	24%	16%	49%	2%	16%	8%
Smyrna Elementary	2	26%	11%	54%	74%	4%	31%	8%
John Colemon Elementary	3	34%	22%	38%	66%	3%	3%	15%
Cedar Grove Elementary	3.5	42%	20%	32%	58%	3%	20%	9%
Roy L Waldron Elementary	2.1	26%	30%	40%	74%	4%	25%	10%
LaVergne Middle School	2.7	23%	35%	40%	78%	4%	10%	9%
LaVergne Lake Elementary School	2.1	29%	36%	32%	71%	3%	24%	10%
David Youree Elementary	2.7	34%	33%	27%	66%	4%	17%	10%
Smyrna Primary	1.9	42%	24%	21%	58%	5%	17%	11%
Smyrna Middle School	1.8	34%	19%	40%	66%	2%	12%	9%
Thurman Francis Arts Academy/Magnet School for the Arts	4	73%	15%	7%	66%	0%	0%	2%
Local School Average	***3***	***43%***	***22%***	***25%***	***56%***	***3%***	***12%***	***9%***

Please note that the information in Table 1 was taken from the most current data available (2018-19) on the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) online database.

(b) Provide a rationale for selecting the community where the proposed school will locate.

Part of the strength of our application is the location of RCP, which will drive the school's continued investment in this particular area of Rutherford County. Locating RCP in one of the fastest growing areas in Tennessee was a deliberate choice. We also want to provide a new, high-performing school in an area of Rutherford County desperate for more quality school options, as there are currently no charter schools in this area, severely limiting families' educational options.

According to current census data and future projections available through Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) mapping software, Rutherford County is currently the fifth most populous county in Tennessee with a population of over 315,000. RCS currently serves over 46,000 total students.

More specifically, 17,395 school-aged children (5 – 14) live within northwest Rutherford County. The 470 students budgeted in Year 1 amount to 2.7% of the total number of potential students enrolling in grades Kindergarten – Grade 8, and the final number of budgeted students (770) represents 4.4% of the same area. Furthermore, the total population within northwest Rutherford County is expected to grow by 2.37% annually between 2020 and 2025, which more than triple that of the national average and more than double that of the Tennessee average. In addition, the northwest Rutherford community currently has an average household size of 2.82. This figure indicates that a large portion of the population is likely comprised of families with school-aged children.

(c) Discuss the academic performance and enrollment trends of existing schools in that community.

As shown in Table 1, the average 2018-19 Academic Achievement score earned on the Tennessee State Report Card for all schools serving grades Kindergarten – Grade 8 within northwest Rutherford County was a 3.0. More specifically, only eight of the 17 schools within northwest Rutherford County earned an Academic Achievement score of 3.0 or better while four earned below a 2.5 and two earned below a 2.0.

Tables 2 and 3 below show state assessment data for the public schools serving grades Kindergarten – Grade 8 in northwest Rutherford County (local schools) compared to that of the RCS as a whole and the Tennessee state average.

Table 2

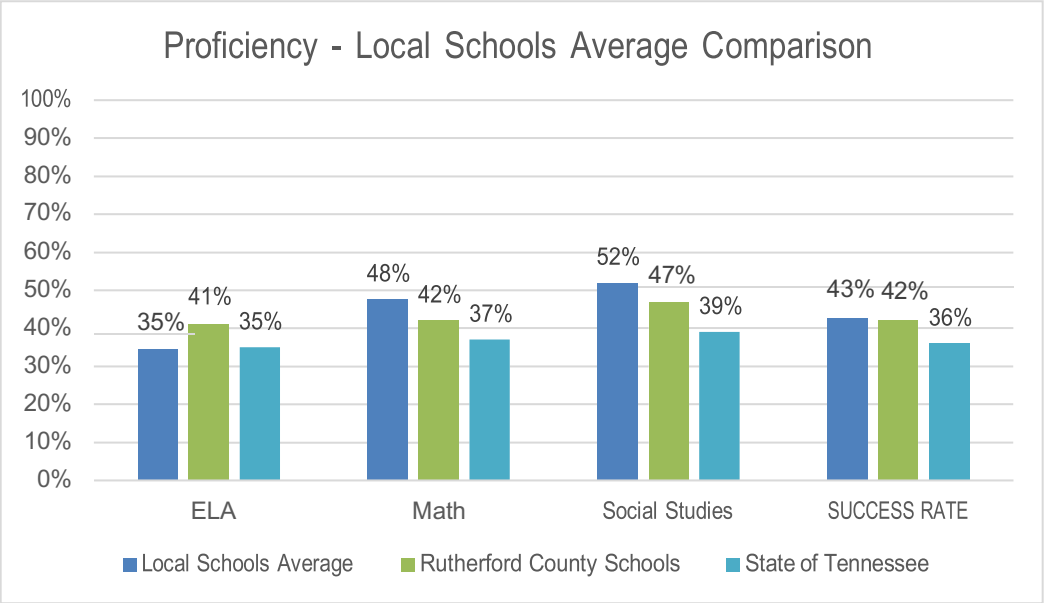


Table 2 above compares Academic Achievement for the 2018-19 school year, which measures the percentage of students performing on-grade-level on state assessments. The data shows that the local schools' average overall achievement was on par with RCS as a whole. However, the local schools' average achievement in ELA was significantly lower than both the RCS and on par with the Tennessee state average.

Table 3

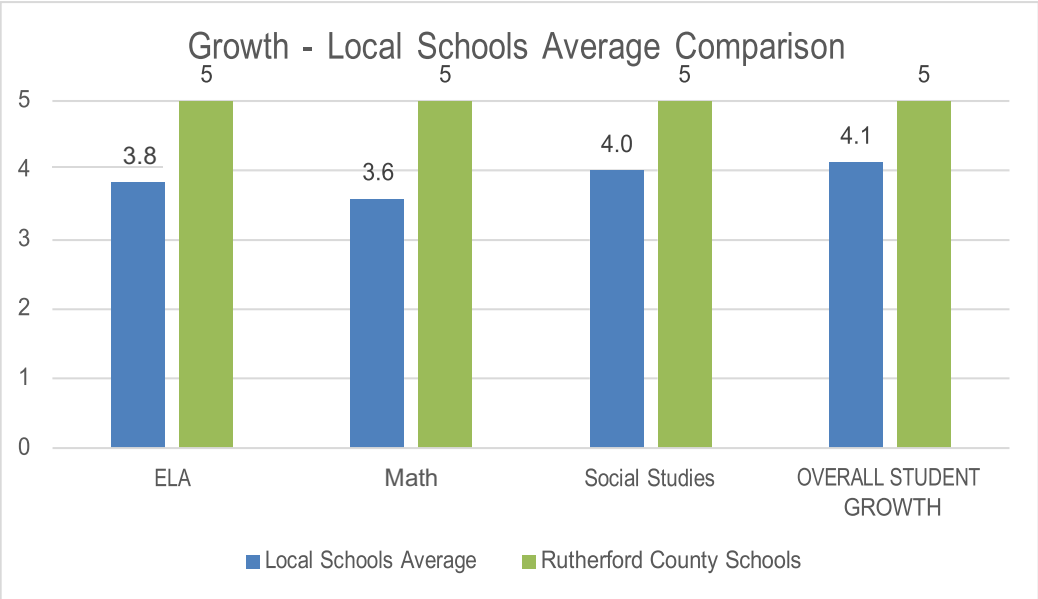


Table 3 above compares the average Academic Growth Indicator score for the 2018-19 school year, which measures individual student growth using the value-added model known as the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). State-level data for the Academic Growth Indicator score was not available for 2018-19. This data shows that the local schools score much lower than the RCS average in all growth categories.

Enrollment in the schools throughout Rutherford County has increased by approximately 2.5% each year. Currently, there are approximately 14,355 students enrolled in schools throughout northwest Rutherford County. Since 2006, the district has built nine new elementary and middle schools and added seven additions for schools serving grades Kindergarten – Grade 8 in order to meet increased enrollment demands, which shows a need for additional high-quality school options and the potential for overcrowding. The district also intends to build five new elementary and middle schools between 2021 and 2024, which also shows a need to meet increased enrollment demand. Please note that this data was gleaned from the District's 2019 Fact Book and Annual report. There are currently no charter schools located within northwest Rutherford County, and this severely limits families' ability to choose high quality school options for their children.

The local area's academic data indicates that students attending schools in northwest Rutherford County are underperforming the Rutherford County average in ELA achievement and all growth categories. RCP will provide families with an additional quality school option, help raise academic achievement levels in the community, and assist in staving off the negative impact that future population growth may have on capacity utilization within the local schools.

(d) Describe the specific population of students the proposed school intends to serve.

RCP expects the majority of its students to be drawn from northwest Rutherford County. We will strive to serve a diverse population of students. The school will serve primarily minority students. Based on the average

of all schools profiled (shown in Table 1) within northwest Rutherford County, RCP anticipates serving the following student population at capacity:

- Students: 770
- White: 43%
- Black: 22%
- Hispanic: 25%
- Minority Total: 56%
- Free and Reduced Lunch Recipients (FRL): 3%
- English Learners (EL): 12%
- Special Education (SPED): 9%

Please note that these demographic estimates are being provided for projection purposes only. These projections are not intended to be an exact representation of the school's eventual student population, nor should they be taken as a guarantee or a strict enrollment target to which the school will adhere. RCP will be a school of choice, and pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-113, we shall enroll any eligible student who submits a timely application and participates in the lottery process, if necessary. RCP will admit students of any race, color, nationality and ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender, and therefore cannot guarantee nor control the demographic makeup of its student population.

(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?

Since there are currently no charter schools located in northwest Rutherford County, RCP would immediately differentiate itself from existing schools by simply being a charter school and providing parents with an additional high-quality school option apart from their designated district schools. The model we have created for RCP dramatically redefines the traditional classroom and learning environment. It is organized around learning communities that can be larger groups, but also very quickly broken out into smaller units to ensure individualized learning and maximum flexibility for both students and teachers. This approach, along with our Continuous Improvement Model (CIM), allows our students to know and embrace their own learning style while allowing teachers to utilize the learning strengths of each student to maximize learning potential, close achievement gaps, and steer student gains to new heights. It is important to note that the CIM is specifically designed to increase academic achievement, specifically academic growth, among all student populations. This is of significant interest in northern Rutherford County considering that the schools in this area are underperforming the Rutherford County Schools average in all student growth categories.

Additional innovations include our attention to the whole child, including families. Our network of university partners will allow RCP to offer services that include free tutoring, college visits, and exposure to subjects and classes beyond classroom walls, allowing our students experiences and exposure to the expansive world outside their immediate area.

RCP's fully resourced classrooms, each with a lead teacher and instructional aides who can very quickly respond to individual student needs, are not only innovative, but will result in students who are engaged and invested in their own learning.

(f) If you are an existing operator, describe

- **Any enrollment practices, processes, and policies of the proposed school that will differ from your existing school(s); and**

Since ReThink is submitting this application as a new operator, this question is not applicable.

(g) how the community for the proposed school is similar and/or

different from the current community that you serve.

Since ReThink does not currently have a school, this question is not applicable.

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

Number of Students

Table 4

Grade-level	Year 1 2022	Year 2 2023	Year 3 2024	Year 4 2025	Year 5 2026	At Capacity 2027
Kindergarten	80	100	100	100	100	100
1	80	80	100	100	100	100
2	80	80	80	100	100	100
3	80	80	80	80	100	100
4	75	75	75	75	75	100
5	75	75	75	75	75	100
6	0	75	75	75	75	75
7	0	0	60	60	60	60
8	0	0	0	60	60	60
Totals	**470**	**565**	**645**	**725**	**745**	**770**

Table 5

Anticipated Demographics	% of Economically Disadvantaged Students	% of Students with Disabilities	% of English Learners
White: 43% Black: 22% Hispanic: 25%	3%	9%	12%

These enrollment projections were built on the expectation of natural attrition experienced in most schools. However, we emphasize that all students who enroll have a guaranteed seat for the entire grade levels offered at the school.

1.3 Academic Focus and Plan

In this section:

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

(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.

(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.

(i) For existing operators only: describe any key academic plan features for the proposed school that will differ from the operator'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.

OVERVIEW

RCP's Academic Focus and Plan will be presented in the following order:

- Academic Focus
- Noble Education Initiative's (NEI) Continuous Improvement Model (CIM) – The Foundation of the Academic Plan
  The model illustrates:
  - The alignment of curriculum, assessment, and instruction to Tennessee's Academic Standards, highlighting the Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC), teaching guides that intentionally sequence, pace, prioritize, and spiral the TAS for the year at progressive levels of performance.
  - The use of classroom (short-cycle) formative assessments to drive instruction.
  - Monthly school-wide (medium-cycle) formative assessment used to drive instruction.
  - The responsive teaching cycle that occurs at the classroom level and school-level.
  - How RCP will remediate academic underperformance of taught grade-level standards using flexible grouping during a committed daily time period called "Success Block."
  - How a student-centered approach will foster individualized attention within the standards-based curriculum.
  - The role of leadership to ensure fidelity of implementation.
- Educational Philosophy: RCP's Core Beliefs and Values
- Basic Learning Environment and Class Size
- Curriculum and Materials

- Balanced Literacy Plan
- Writing Rubrics
- Portfolios and Personalized Learning Plans
- Social and Emotional Learning
- Career Exploration & CTE Certification for Middle School
- Middle School Civics

- Classroom Instruction: Goals/Measures, Methods and Strategies
- Blended Learning
- Research Supporting the Academic Plan
- How Curriculum and Instruction are Well-Suited for the Target Population
- Methods of Differentiation, including RTI[2] Plans

Academic Focus
The academic focus of RCP is general academics in Kindergarten – Grade 8. We acknowledge the Tennessee Academic Standards (TAS) as the common set of expectations of what students will know and be proficient on, on or before the end of each grade-level, in each subject area.

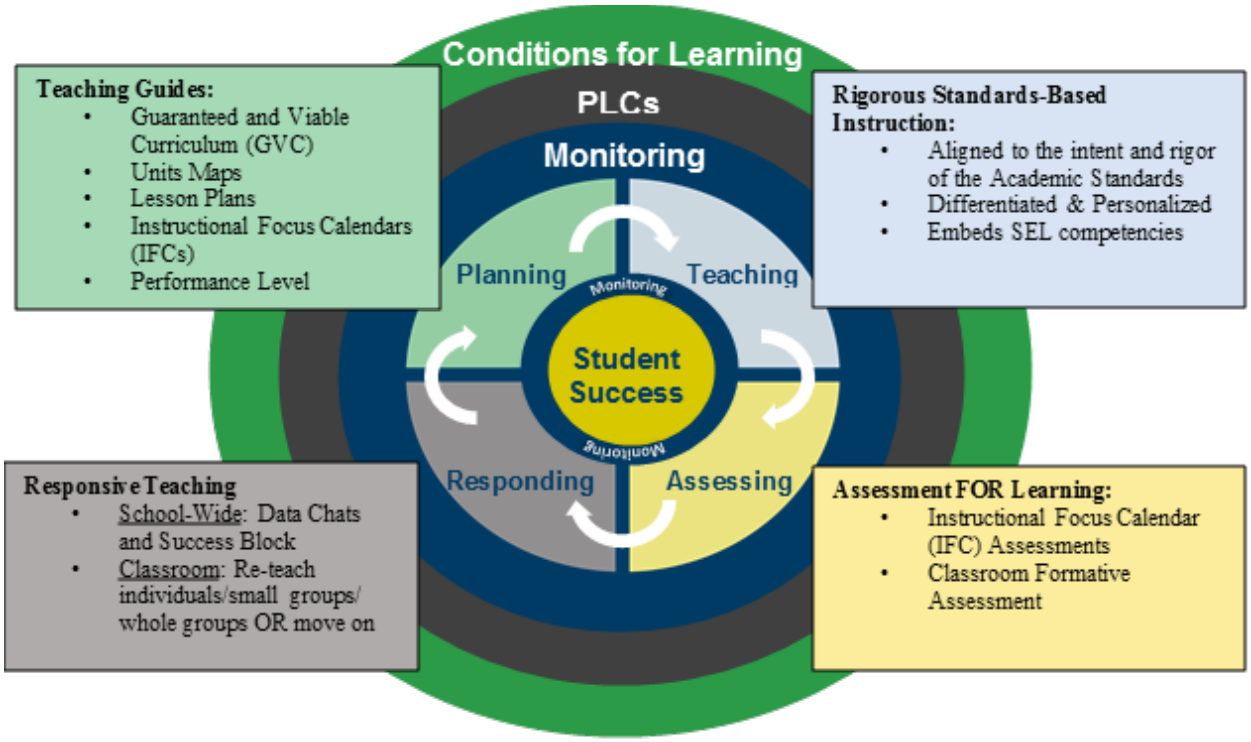
ACADEMIC PLAN

Noble Education Initiative (NEI's) Continuous Improvement Model
RCP's academic plan is built on NEI's Continuous Improvement Model (CIM). The purpose of this model is to drive each student to mastery of the Tennessee Academic Standards. The model takes a school-wide approach to student learning where every staff member is responsible for the learning of every child. The CIM is based on a combination of work by Patricia Davenport in *Closing the Achievement Gap* and an instructional philosophy developed after extensive study of instructional practice, grounded in over 35 years of Dr. Robert J. Marzano's research. Its structure enables administrators and teachers to better understand, explain, and predict the elements needed to ensure student academic success (Marzano)[1]. On behalf of ReThink, Rebecca Dinda will oversee NEI's efforts to support RCP in closing achievement gaps to ensure student success. Ms. Dinda has been a public educator in Connecticut and Florida for the last 21 years and has extensive experience as a school principal, leading Downtown Miami Charter School's effort to attain the status of a high-performing charter school in the state of Florida despite serving an extremely high-risk student population. The school maintained its high performing designation each year Ms. Dinda served as principal, due in large part to its success in closing achievement gaps.

Noble Education Initiative, the Charter Management Operator (CMO) chosen by ReThink Forward to manage RCP, has successfully implemented the Continuous Improvement Model. Evidence of implementation and success in closing the achievement gap within a new school is evident at Emma Donnan Elementary School, located in Indiana. Emma Donnan Elementary School opened in the 2015-2016 school year, earning a "D." After NEI began managing the school in 2016, Emma Donnan improved to an "A" in both the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years. More specifically, Emma Donnan Elementary School increased its points earned for growth on the School Report Card by 28 points and 68 points in ELA and math, respectively, when comparing 2017-18 performance to its initial year (2015-16). In the 2018-19 school year, Indiana transitioned to the iLearn assessment for grades 3 – 8. Emma Donnan Elementary School averaged 21% proficiency on the ELA portion of the exam in grades 3 – 6, and 30% proficiency in the Math portion. Emma Donnan Elementary School maintained its "A" grade for the 2018-19 school year. This data can be found on the Indiana Department of Education database via https://www.doe.in.gov.

NEI's Continuous Improvement Model

[1] Robert Marzano (2001), Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement



The NEI Continuous Improvement Model (CIM) focuses on student performance through the alignment of planning, instruction, assessment, and support efforts school wide. The process encourages the collaboration among teachers, students, and support staff required to effectively implement the academic plan in a manner that supports a high-level of data-driven instruction. The process incorporates the responsive teaching cycle which leads to improved academic achievement.

Responsive Teaching Cycle. (Plan, Teach, Assess, Respond)

1. **Planning**
    a. Key to the planning process is the **Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC)** which is comprised of a year-long plan for standards-based instruction at each grade-level.
    b. Using the GVC, **Teaching Guides** accurately and intentionally define the teaching and learning roadmap for teachers.
    c. The combination of the GVC and Teaching Guides form the foundation for the responsive teaching cycle that occurs *daily* in classrooms and *monthly* school wide.
    d. Common planning among grade-level staff through Professionalized Learning Communities (PLCs)

2. **Teaching (Rigorous Standards-Based Instruction)**
    a. Instruction aligned to the intent and rigor of the Tennessee Academic Standards.
    b. Instruction is differentiated and personalized based on each student's needs.
    c. SEL competencies are embedded within each unit of instruction.

3. **Assessment** drives instruction; it serves as the bridge between teaching and learning in the responsive teaching cycle. Formative assessments are analyzed to determine student progress toward mastery of TAS. Additionally, baseline data is analyzed and used to help all staff understand where individual

students, cohorts of students, and grade-levels are "entering the learning," identifying prior learning gaps and areas of strength.

4. **Responsive teaching (Decision-Making)** is the result of classroom and school-wide formative assessment data.

School leadership ensures the **fidelity of implementation** by:

- Creating **conditions for learning (Safe and Orderly Environment)**
- Establishing and supporting **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)**
- Consistently **monitoring** all aspects of the model for quality

(1) PLANNING

a. Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC)
   - The GVC ensures steady academic progress as students build their knowledge and skills from one year to the next to master state standards. The GVC is primarily a combination of factors that have strong correlations with academic achievement: "opportunity to learn" and "time," which address the extent to which the curriculum is "guaranteed" (Marzano). After clear guidance is given to teachers regarding the content to be mastered in specific courses through the different teaching guides and at specific grade-levels, NEI and RCP's administration will monitor learning so that the academic content necessary for achievement within each grade is not disregarded or replaced.

b. Teaching Guides
   - In order to ensure the GVC is implemented, there are several important teaching guides that will equip teachers with the resources they need to ensure all curriculum, assessment, and instruction are aligned to the intent and rigor of the TAS. These guides include Performance Level Descriptors (PLD), an Instructional Focus Calendar (IFC), Unit Maps, and Lesson Plans. Through the use of the Instructional Focus Calendar, teachers will have a clear learning roadmap of the TAS for English language arts and mathematics that will serve as the foundation of all teaching and learning. To ensure the students are progressing toward mastery of the Tennessee Academic Standards, teachers will use **Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs).** PLDs are high-level rubrics that describe progressive levels of mastery for an entire period of learning, such as a unit, a quarter, or an entire year.

Performance Level Descriptors *outline the knowledge, skills, and practices that students perform at any given level of achievement in each content area at each grade-level. They indicate if students are academically prepared to engage successfully in further studies in each content area, the next grade's material and, eventually, at the high school level to verify that they are college and career ready.*

Unlike rubrics that are created only for summative purposes, all descriptors are written in concrete, objective language, making PLDs strong evaluative and formative tools.

With this kind of clarity of what the standards look and sound like on the road to mastery, we can provide instruction to meet students where they are. Furthermore, we can assess, and even *grade*, the standards accurately and efficiently.

Consider the following Tennessee Grade 3 reading standard for literature:

- ***3.RL.KID.3*** *Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.*

It builds upon this Grade 2 reading standard for literature:

- ***2.RL.KID.3*** *Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.*

The Grade 3 standard, 3.RL.KID.3, also builds upon what students learned about characterization in Grade 1. However, what is "new" in Grade 3 is explaining the consequences of characters' actions. What is "new learning" needs to be crystal clear so teachers know when they are revisiting learning versus when they are introducing new content or a new skill.

These two standards also bring to light the importance of defining the standards beyond the words on the page. What does it mean to describe a character in Grades 1, 2, and 3? Using PLDs as the backbone for teaching and learning clarifies standards for everyone.

Table 6 illustrates two sample rows of a PLD for the Grade 3 standard above:

Table 6

Standard or Learning Goal	Mastery 5	4	Intermediate 3	2	Novice 1
Students will describe characters in a story.	With stories at the high end of the Grades 2 – 3 text complexity band: • Describe characters by what they think, do, say, and feel using grade-level adjectives and adverbs. • Identify *explicit text details* to support descriptions.		With stories within the Grades 2 – 3 text complexity band: • Describe characters by what they think, do, say, and feel. • Match explicit text details to a description of a character.		With stories within the Grades 2 – 3 text complexity band: • Describe characters by what they look like (e.g., tall, brown hair, etc.). • Describe characters by what they do (actions) and say (speech). • Provide key details from the story to support descriptions *when prompted.*
Students will explain how character's actions contribute to the sequence of events, or plot, of the story.	With stories at the high end of the Grades 2 – 3 text complexity band: • Explain how a character's actions (what a character does) impacts the overall plot of the story. • Identify *explicit text details* to support explanations.		With stories within the Grades 2 – 3 text complexity band: • Classify choices made by characters. • Explain how a character's actions (what a character does) impacts what happens next in a story.		With stories within the Grades 2 – 3 text complexity band: • Explain what characters "do next" when something big happens in a story, like facing a challenge.

Building PLDs of the standards demonstrates the connections among standards and illustrates clearly which standards, or elements of the standards, should be fused together for learning.

<u>Other considerations:</u>

- In the PLD sample above, the content for the two rows could be combined into a single row. There is

not one right answer for designing PLDs. The goal is to provide clarity on the standards.

- Every standard will not be defined across a continuum. With some standards, you either know it or you don't.
- Many standards will not be on a row by themselves. The strength of the standards is when they are fused together for a strong structure.
- In the sample above, notice how standards from other strands are also integrated.
- In the primary grades or with at-risk readers in upper grades, a row of a PLD may repeat several times over the year, but what changes is the text complexity for which the learning is applied. The sample above shows how a row could be used all year. However, "mastery," or where we expect a student to be at mid-year, might be at intermediate performance.
- Notice how novice performance does not define incompetence. Rather novice performance describes where we "expect" a student who is on grade-level to *enter* the learning.
- Notice how mastery performance does not define perfection. A student who demonstrates mastery is achieving the standard at its full intent. The student is able to demonstrate the "new" learning of the standard.
- Intermediate performance can be the most difficult to define. Intermediate performance describes those "early wins" students typically have as they learn the new content or skill.
- Although only three performance categories are defined in the example given, the PLD format allows for six levels of feedback. If a student is achieving at level 1 and can do even part of level 3, he is performing at level 2. If a student is performing at level 3 and can do even part of level 5, he is performing at level 4. And if a student's performance is not on the PLD, their performance can be found in another PLD.
- Only three performance categories are defined because once you begin to define more, evaluative language ultimately slips in.
- The performance criteria, the descriptive language that populates the cells of the rubric, become the "I can" statements, or learning targets, that define the larger learning goal.
- Although we want all of our students to "own" the academic and domain language of the standards, converting some of this language into student-friendly terms may be required for young learners, English Learners, and/or students with limited vocabularies. We want to ensure that all students clearly understand the intended learning.
- When PLDs are shared across grade-levels, teachers possess the learning roadmap for students who are behind and for students who are ready to go beyond grade-level standards.

Instructional Focus Calendars (IFCs)

IFCs map out access and pacing of all TAS over the course of the school year and ensure the implementation of the GVC through the process outlined in *Understanding by Design*[2]. The GVC provides the specific learning outcomes within each standard and was created in three stages: 1) identifying desired results, 2) determining acceptable evidence, and 3) planning learning experiences and instruction. Through PLCs, teachers continue this process. Understanding by Design supports teachers working within the standards-driven curriculum to clarify learning goals, devise assessments that reveal student understanding, and craft effective and engaging learning activities aligned with real-world experiences that prepare students to achieve mastery ofthe TAS for ELA and Math. The Understanding by Design process allows educators to center the curriculumand assessments by establishing goals (content standards, course or program objectives, learning outcomes),big ideas (what specific understandings about the big ideas are desired), essential questions (what provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning), and authentic performance tasks (the type(s) of performance tasks that demonstrate the desired understandings). Use of the IFC enables educators to provide the targeted student population with optimal learning opportunities based on their individual needs. The standards are ordered and grouped in a particular way, and there are essential questions and objectives

[2] Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (2005), Understanding by Design

provided to target instruction. Sample resources, lesson ideas, and item specifications are included on the curriculum map to provide further guidance.

When planning for the year, teachers study the curriculum map and the test specifications in order to have an understanding of what students are expected to learn. For each unit, pacing guides are provided; however, teachers have the flexibility to adjust pacing according to their students' current levels.

The PLDs described above will ensure students are learning, *and practicing with*, the right content, at the right levels, at the right time. The calendars begin at the start of the year and guarantee that all standards assessed by required state testing will be taught and mastered prior to the test. The calendar also establishes dates for the monthly IFC Assessment (i.e., *medium-cycle* formative assessment) to ensure adequate time is allocated to essential standards and enough time is provided for instruction in between assessment periods. Additionally, in the two months prior to state testing, priority standards will be revisited to ensure *mastery retention*.

This does not mean learning stops when state testing begins. In fact, the opposite will be true. Following state testing, students will close out the year engaged in learning at their highest level of performance on the PLD in all subject areas. Moreover, students will have opportunities to reflect on and share their learning with others.

Unit Maps will contain big ideas and provide further information about the standards, including how and why they are fused together as well as common misconceptions students have as they learn particular standards. The Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies as defined by CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) will be intentionally embedded. Please see Attachment U as an example of an Instructional Focus Calendar/Unit Map

Teachers will teach and assess 10 units of instruction with each unit containing clusters of standards that are logically sequenced. Guided by the PLD, it will be clear for teachers and students how they are progressing through the standards from novice to mastery. In elementary grades, science and social studies standards will be embedded in the ELA Unit Maps. In middle school, each class will have its own IFC, Unit Maps, and daily lessons. Additionally, each unit of instruction will be taught within the frame of a *single* **SEL** competency, and the assignments and activities within that unit will be leveraged to ensure that students are learning SEL competencies along with TAS.

From the Unit Maps, teachers will create **Lesson Plans**, clarifying exactly which learning target(s), and at what level of performance, students should be learning each day. Lesson plans provide the instructional focus. In most lessons, teaching will be scaffolded to reach the full intent and rigor of the standards unless the scaffolding unfolds over a longer period of time. Students will apply SEL skills as a seamless part of instruction. Also included within each lesson plan will be the intentional use of classroom formative assessment where teachers assess for learning and plan, in advance, how they will respond to the data in real time.

(2) TEACHING (RIGOROUS STANDARDS-BASED INSTRUCTION)

a. Instruction Aligned to the Intent and Rigor of the Tennessee Academic Standards

Use of the GVC map enables educators to provide the targeted student population with optimal learning opportunities based on their individual needs. The standards are ordered and grouped in a particular way, and there are essential questions and objectives provided to target instruction. Sample resources, lesson ideas, and item specifications are included on the curriculum map to provide further guidance. When planning for the year, teachers will study the GVC map and the test specifications in order to have an understanding of what students are expected to learn. For each unit, pacing guides are provided; however, teachers have the flexibility to adjust pacing according to their student's current levels.

Teachers will use multiple engaging, research-based instructional strategies, as it is our mission to provide a

personalized, data-driven learning environment. Teachers will implement Dr. Marzano's 13 high-probability instructional strategies, which research shows yield the most academic gains across all grade-levels when employed consistently. These strategies are used in all grade-levels, but instruction will vary by increasing expectations and complexity as the grade-levels progress.

In order to ensure students are progressing at the expected rate of growth and teachers are teaching the TAS at the intended level of rigor, teachers are guided by the PLDs. By focusing on the PLDs, it will be clear for teachers and students how they are progressing through the standards from novice to mastery. With the kind of clarity that the PLDs provide by breaking down standards so teachers and students see what the standards look, and sound like on the road to mastery, we can provide instruction to meet students where they are. Teaching will be scaffolded to reach the full intent and rigor of the standards.

b. Instruction is Differentiated and Personalized Based on Each Student's Needs

Each student has a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP), which includes student data and student-initiated goals for the school year. The PLP also outlines the action steps necessary to accomplish goals and involves ongoing collaboration between the teacher, student, parent, and other staff involved with the student's academic achievement. Throughout the PLP process, teachers build the capacity of students to understand their data, make good decisions as learners, and follow through with expectations. Throughout the year, the PLP serves as a vehicle for teacher-student data chats, which supports students in conducting their own parent-student data conferences and encourages a growth mindset.

With the NEI Continuous Improvement Model, we will regularly evaluate student performance to personalize and target instruction to each student's needs, helping them reach their academic potential. This data-driven cycle of assessment, analysis, and action is critical for increasing student achievement and is the top priority for school-wide improvement. Regular assessments will verify whether students have successfully acquired crucial skills, mastered grade-level content, and are challenged to think critically. Students are provided opportunities to participate in engaging and critical thinking learning activities, such as those outlined in Project-Based Learning (PBL), to build collaboration and communication skills as well as content knowledge.

c. SEL Competencies Will be Embedded Within Each Unit Map

Embedded Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies are intended to build engagement while addressing student needs that impact behavior and academics. Research findings indicate that students engaged in SEL demonstrate significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance that reflects an 11-percentage-point gain in achievement[3]. RCP may implement a comprehensive SEL program, and will integrate SEL-focused activities within lesson plans that provides a focus on building the following:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-management
3. Social awareness
4. Relationship skills
5. Responsible decision-making

As stated earlier, each unit of instruction will be taught within the frame of a single SEL competency, such as Self-Awareness. The assignments and activities within that unit will be leveraged to ensure that students are learning SEL competencies along with TAS.

[3] Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. (2011), The Impact Of Enhancing Students' Social And Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis Of School-Based Universal Interventions. Child Development, 82, 405-432.

(3) **ASSESSMENT**

Baseline data will serve as a starting point for instruction. It will identify the need for behavioral intervention plans and allow for shifts in instruction that help every student achieve progress. It will also aid in proper selection of skill acquisition activities and allow educators to determine appropriate interventions with a degree of accuracy that increases likelihood of student success.

All available baseline data of current students (i.e., high-stakes assessment data, results from the universal screener (i-Ready Diagnostic), other diagnostic data, attendance data, etc.) will be to be used to guide instruction and create student groupings from the outset of the school year.

Each unit of instruction will begin with a pretest of the standards taught within the unit. The purpose of the pre-assessment is to measure where each student is "entering" the learning. With the PLD used to guide assessment, are students able to complete the novice learning with success? If so, they are right where they need to be. If the novice-level learning is too easy, can students tackle intermediate-level work? If the novice work is too challenging, are there elements of the novice work they can handle?

Instructional Focus Calendar Assessments

IFC assessments will measure the taught curriculum of the grade-level standards and show where each student is "exiting" the learning for the unit. These common assessments measure grade-level standards at progressive levels of performance, but do not exceed grade-level standards nor dip into standards from previous grade-levels. They are administered in core subject areas 10 times a year.

The results of the assessment show each student's current level of mastery of the tested grade-level standards: novice (low), intermediate (medium), and mastery (high). Results are presented this way because the test is designed using a PLD and an assessment blueprint to ensure that teachers can collect the range of evidence needed to confirm each student's current level of performance of the taught grade-level standards.

With a blueprint in hand, construction of IFC Assessments occurs in two ways: in large part, they are administered and generated by an item bank like i-Ready's Standards Mastery; on other occasions, teachers will work together to develop the common assessment. If a vendor assessment like i-Ready is used, results will be visible on their platform. If the assessment is teacher-created, however, teachers will score the results and store them in a spreadsheet.

With a continual stream of evidence provided by classroom formative assessment throughout the unit, the IFC Assessment should only confirm what we already know. Immediately following the IFC Assessment, teachers will conduct data chats in their PLC to plan for a school-wide response to the data. The results of the IFC Assessments will determine the "Success Block" student groupings for approximately the next four weeks. The groups will be based on student need. Some students will have shown mastery and need extension activities and some students will need remediation of the grade-level standards. (Responsive Teaching)

The effective use of a classroom formative assessment (i.e., short-cycle formative assessment) will be critical. Built within daily lessons, teachers will intentionally assess to see if students are on track. So, within each lesson plan, teachers will share the learning target with students. The teacher might share the learning target to start the lesson, or the teacher might engage students in content first, having students "discover" the target. Students will know the success criteria before they engage in practice. Then, at some point in the lesson, the teachers will assess all students. In order for the teacher to take immediate formative action, the teacher will already have a plan for how to respond to the data collected. International assessment expert Dr. Dylan Wiliam calls this "building plan B into plan A." Only when teachers can respond appropriately in real time can we attempt to close the daily achievement gap.[4]

[4] The LSI Dylan Wiliam Center. (2019). Retrieved from https://www.dylanwiliamcenter.com

(4) RESPONSIVE TEACHING

As previously noted, the responsive teaching cycle will occur at both the school and classroom level.

a. School-Wide Responsive Teaching

At the school-level, immediately following IFC Assessments, teachers will meet in their PLCs with a school administrator and instructional coach for a Data Chat. Based on student mastery of the standards, teachers will use the assessment data to organize students into either intervention or enrichment for a school-wide Success Block (described further below) that will take place each day for 30 minutes.

Success Block

RCP will implement Success Block, a dedicated 30-minute period in the school day for students to receive standards-aligned remediation and enrichment sessions. Success Block supports the school's mission of providing a personalized, engaging and challenging learning environment through data-driven instruction within a culture of high expectations and achievement. Success Block is based on Patricia Davenport's 8-Step Process for Continuous Improvement, a proven approach to aligning resources toward student performance that encourages collaboration among teachers, students, and instructional staff. After each instructional cycle, made up of approximately 20 instructional days and based on the Continuous Improvement Model's Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC), teachers administer common monthly unit assessments. Student mastery data is then analyzed during monthly PLC data chats to determine instructional groupings and the focus for the next series of Success Block sessions. School leadership will participate in summer training sessions related to the 8-Step Process for Continuous Improvement and receive ongoing support through NEI's school support and professional development team to facilitate effective planning for the daily 30-minute, school-wide Success Block and ensure instructional resources are maximized. RCP's Success Block will be instrumental in providing the extra time necessary for students to make gains in learning and nurture individual strengths, while increasing professional collaboration among staff members. With the added combination of RTI2, tutoring, and push-in and pull-out supports, students are provided with the necessary support to ensure they are successful in meeting and exceeding grade-level standards.

b. Classroom Responsive Teaching

At the classroom-level, immediately following the all-response formative check for understanding that occurs at a hinge-point in the lesson, teachers will respond to the data in real time. Planned for in the lesson plan, the teacher will respond with either individual re-teaching for a few students at a convenient time during the period/block, whole-group re-teaching if most students are off-track, small-group re-teaching if students demonstrate a need for differentiated support, or the teacher may "move on" if most of the class is on track.

Data Chats are critical in the school improvement process as they support responsive teaching both school-wide and in the classroom. They occur as one of the PLC team meetings immediately following the IFC Assessment. Teachers analyze the data to determine the support that each child needs based on the IFC Assessment results. Using the PLD, teachers will easily identify how to best cluster students for either intervention or enrichment. Our Data Chats are conducted in teams because we take a "school-wide" response to the data with every staff member vested in the achievement and growth of every student.

Leadership—Ensuring Fidelity of Implementation

To ensure the fidelity of implementation of NEI's CIM, school leadership will establish and support conditions for learning and PLCs. They will also monitor every aspect of the continuous improvement model for quality.

Leadership will:

- Conduct weekly classroom walk-throughs of core instructional classes
- Conduct daily walk-throughs of Success Block

- Lead PLC data chats
- Review lesson plans to ensure Instructional Focus Calendars with corresponding common assessments are followed.

Conditions for Learning
At RCP, leaders will create, with staff, a school community that is safe, supportive, challenging, and socially and emotionally nurturing. Students at RCP will be physically and emotionally safe, helping them be academically engaged and willing to take risks, knowing they have multiple chances to learn something new. This is vital because students need safe and supportive learning environments to succeed in school. These needs are particularly great for children who are vulnerable, such as those who face the adversities of poverty or the challenge of a disability. Students will also be challenged with high expectations while receiving differentiated support to ensure growth and achievement. Students will be taught how to set long- and short-term goals, as well as action plans to meet their goals. Moreover, RCP will take a nested approach to Tennessee's academic standards delivered within a consistent and strong frame of social and emotional support where students are as important as standards.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
To support our mission to strengthen students academically, teachers will participate in weekly PLCs. During PLCs, teachers will be grouped together by grade-level or subject area, as appropriate, for collaborative planning. Teachers will share ideas for the same grade-level standards. In each PLC, teachers will deliver a 5-minute mini-lesson for a single standard for the upcoming week. Agendas will be provided to teachers in advance, outlining the major standards for the upcoming week so teachers know the standard they will be presenting to their peers. The teachers will then discuss all the mini lessons, leaving the meeting with multiple ways to effectively teach the upcoming standards. In this way, teachers will be better prepared for upcoming lessons while gaining a deeper understanding of the standards themselves. Additionally, resources and materials will be shared among teachers. Once a month, the PLC meeting time will be used to conduct a data chat following the IFC Assessment.

Monitoring
Monitoring relates to the instructional processes and practices monitored to ensure curriculum and instruction is focused, data-driven, and effective. This is evidenced by classroom walkthroughs, data chats, and the setting of expectations and accountability for rigorous standards-based instruction by school leadership.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

In order to achieve our mission, vision, and goals, the following Core Beliefs and Values will be the driving force of the RCP community.

Core Beliefs
We believe in teaching and supporting the whole child. The successful pursuit of academic excellence for all our students involves a whole child philosophy that respects intellectual, social, and emotional learning and growth. Students, starting in Kindergarten and extending through Grade 8, will learn and develop their social-emotional skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These core competencies, as defined by The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), will be embedded as a seamless part of RCP's curriculum. Throughout the year, students will actively explore concepts in personal growth, while gaining skills in critical thinking and interpersonal interactions. As children progress through the year, parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive information about how they can support this learning and growth at home, helping them engage their own children in self-discovery as they learn to apply these skills. By focusing on SEL school-wide, RCP will teach students the skills needed to face the reality of the world around them (i.e., how to handle the pressures of social media) by increasing their self-esteem and communication and interpersonal skills.

We believe in failing forward. It is a core belief in the RCP community that great ability is developed over time,

through hard work, effective feedback, and experiencing and learning from failure. Failure is a natural part of the teaching and learning process. We all learn from mistakes, in school and in life. At RCP, making mistakes will be expected in the learning process. This is will be true for both the students and the adults who servethem. Learning involves taking risks, and we will build a learning community of innovative risk-takers whodon't live in their comfort zones. Our teachers will build a classroom culture where risk-taking is encouraged, modeled by their implementation of new techniques and best practices, showing students that not everythingalways works out exactly as planned, proving that we can rebound from any situation. Knowing how to rebound from failure matters because too many students believe they need to succeed immediately, and this viewpoint can be debilitating for a learner. By modeling persistence and teaching positive self-talk, we will change the way students think and act when faced with a challenge. Our continuous improvement model allows for multiplechances for students to learn and practice, supporting them every step of the way.

By teaching students how to fail forward, we will help them develop what world-renowned Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck calls a "growth mindset:" the belief that intelligence is not fixed and can be developed. Research shows that a growth mindset is a comparably strong predictor of achievement and that it exhibits a positive relationship across all of the socioeconomic strata in the country.[5] Even more, they assert that "…students from lower-income families were less likely to hold a growth mindset than their wealthier peers, but those who did hold a growth mindset were appreciably buffered against the deleterious effects of poverty on achievement: students in the lowest 10th percentile of family income who exhibited a growth mindset showed academic performance as high as that of fixed mindset students from the 80th income percentile. These results suggest that students' mindsets may temper or exacerbate the effects of economic disadvantage on a systemic level."[6]

We believe in the power of Collective Teacher Efficacy to change lives. According to John Hattie's 2018 list of factors related to student achievement,[7] Collective Teacher Efficacy is at the top of the list with an effect size of 1.57. Collective Teacher Efficacy is the collective belief of the entire staff of a school in their belief to positively affect students. In other words, if the staff believes that what they do makes a difference, then they will, in fact, make a difference. This "what we do makes a difference" belief gets at the heart of our chosen model for continuous improvement. The RCP staff shares responsibility for all students with an "all hands-on deck" responsive teaching model that occurs at both the classroom- and school-level. At RCP, this model affords teachers the opportunity to see minute-by-minute, day-by-day, month-by-month, and year-by-year, that students are making significant learning gains based on their collaborative planning and continuous response to evidence of learning. Teachers will be helping students:

- Achieve at high levels
- Develop and apply social-emotional skills
- Take ownership of their learning, developing their own self-efficacy

We believe in a decision-driven data culture. Too many schools waste valuable instructional time and resources collecting data they either do not need or do not value This will not be the case at RCP. With a strong assessment plan, built on a solid teaching and GVC mapped to the TAS, RCP will collect data with a clear purpose in mind. Applying the same principles that make large-scale assessment data valid and reliable, we will use tools (i.e., PLDs, assessment blueprints, etc.) that ensure we collect the right evidence, at the right levels, at the right time, in the right amounts, knowing exactly, in advance, what we plan to do with those results. This will be true for both classroom and school-level assessments. At RCP, assessment will be the bridge between teaching and learning, but the bridge will be one that assessment-literate teachers navigate accurately and efficiently, buying back valuable instructional time while still being equipped with the information they need to make sound

[5] Claro, S., Paunesku, D., & Dweck, C. (2016). Growth mindset tempers the effects of poverty on academic achievement. *Proceedings of The National Academy of Sciences*, *113*(31), 8664-8668. doi: 10.1073/ pnas.1608207113

[6] Claro, S., Paunesku, D., & Dweck, C. (2016). Growth mindset tempers the effects of poverty on academic achievement. *Proceedings of The National Academy of Sciences*, *113*(31), 8664-8668. doi: 10.1073/ pnas.1608207113

[7] Visible Learning. (2019). Retrieved from https://visible-learning.org

instructional decisions.

We believe that leaders model the practices they want to permeate classrooms. At RCP, school leaders will talk the talk and walk the walk. As the instructional leaders, school administrators will consistently monitor every aspect of our proven CIM for quality. The CIM is not something that will be shared at the start of year and then stored on a shelf as leaders gravitate to every passing educational trend. Rather, it will be "how we do school" at RCP. We plan. We teach. We assess. We respond. We do this with standards-aligned teaching guides, differentiated instruction, sound assessment practices, and intentionally planned responses that meet the diverse needs of all students. This responsive teaching cycle will occur school-wide every month, but leaders also will support teachers in applying this responsive cycle in every lesson. When this happens with fidelity, daily achievement gaps are closed, ensuring strong Tier I instruction for all.

Equally important, school administrators will model through leadership strategies that support student ownership of learning, including but not limited to: how to share goals and success criteria, provide effective feedback, analyze data to plan next steps in learning, and track and communicate progress with others.

We believe that when students are significantly behind, they must exceed expected growth. A year's worth of growth for a year's worth of learning works for students who are achieving at or above grade-level. However, for students who are significantly behind, simply meeting expected growth (i.e., annual growth) is not enough. We intend to maximize instructional minutes to accommodate interventions and enrichment opportunities by exceeding the state required instructional minutes. At RCP, we have selected a resource (i.e., i-Ready Diagnostic) because it equips leaders and teachers with information about setting Typical Growth as well as Stretch Growth goals. This provides educators with detailed information about students' learning gaps in previous standards that are gap closing priorities in order for students to be able to access new learning. By setting ambitious yet attainable Stretch Growth goals that we continually monitor throughout the year, we will be vigilant in helping students grow enough in the learning progression to achieve mastery of priority grade-level standards.

We believe reading and writing are life changing. We recognize that reading and writing are passports to achievement in many other curricular areas, and literacy education plays an important role in moving people out of poverty toward greater self-sufficiency post-graduation. We will operate under the belief that helping all students become strong readers and writers is the highest academic priority. Through our balanced literacy plan, we will be a community of readers and writers where even our older students are read aloud to with teachers modeling their own thinking and exposing students to rich texts and language. Staff members will help students not only develop strong literacy skills, but also learn how to find enjoyment in reading. We know that:

- In 2007, 21% of poor children ages three to six, nationally, were able to recognize all 26 letters of the alphabet, compared with 35% living above the poverty level. For the same year, 46% of poor children were able to write their name, compared with 64% of their more affluent peers.[8]
- Economically disadvantaged children hear 30,000,000 fewer words by age 3 than their more affluent peers. This is known as the "30 million-word gap."[9]
- Children who do not read on level by the end of Grade 3 have only a 1 in 8 chance of ever catching up and are 4 times more likely to drop out of school.[10]
- Children and teenagers who read for pleasure on a daily or weekly basis score better on reading and writing tests than infrequent or non-readers.[11]

We believe in the power of collaboration and teamwork, but equally value independent learning by fostering

[8] Child Trends-Data Bank. (2016)."Early School Readiness: Differences by Poverty Status."
[9]Baker Fink, J., Bean, G., Irishkov, A., Khumawala, M., Snyder Bangs, A., & Kupchella, A. (2014). *Houston's Literacy Crisis: A Blueprint for Community Action*. Houston: Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation.
[10]Baker Fink, J., Bean, G., Irishkov, A., Khumawala, M., Snyder Bangs, A., & Kupchella, A. (2014). *Houston's Literacy Crisis: A Blueprint for Community Action*. Houston: Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation.
[11]CLiF Newsletters. (2019). Retrieved from http://clifonline.org

student ownership of learning. A common theme throughout our community experience will be how to develop autonomous, self-directed, high-achieving individuals while simultaneously developing students who are skilled in learning and working in productive teams around shared goals. As evidenced by the instructional models that will be used in classrooms, students at RCP will engage in learning and practice both in teams and on their own. When students engage in team learning (i.e., cooperative learning, project-based learning, etc.), they will learn how to use group norms and other learning tools to tackle rigorous, relevant tasks. Team learning will provide students the opportunity to apply their SEL skills, often reflecting on their interactions with their peers. Another important component of team learning, however, is individual accountability. And for students to be accountable, they need to be independent learners and thinkers who know how they learn best and how to help themselves. This will be accomplished by teaching all students, even our youngest learners, how to take ownership of their own learning. By knowing the success criteria for every learning target at the outset of learning, our students will develop an eye for quality. From there, they will be taught how to recruit and act upon effective feedback, self-assess accurately, and track, reflect on, and share their learning with others.

We believe great schools enroll families, not just students. It is a belief at RCP that the most successful schools enroll families into their program, not simply students. We recognize that parent involvement in education is crucial. In fact, "regardless of family income or background, students whose parent(s)/guardian(s) are involved in their schooling are more likely to have higher grades and test scores, attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school."[12]

In order to help ensure our mission, we understand and look forward to partnering with each family and finding ways to help them succeed in and outside of school. In partnership with local colleges and universities and other community partners, we will seek services that respond to each family's' needs and appropriately coach them in key areas that will help them in best supporting their student's, and their families', success. We also recognize that students and staff spend a significant amount of their time at school. RCP will be a family and referred to as second "home" for all. At home, you are safe, supported, and loved. Great academic outcomes can only be accomplished when students feel just as safe, supported, and loved at their school.

Core Values

From these philosophical beliefs, the following six Core Values will be taught, celebrated, and modeled. The Core Values are concepts that all members of the RCP community will strive for – teachers, leaders, students, and families.

1. Excellence – We value striving for excellence every day; we know that excellence is the result of intentional planning and deliberate practice.
2. The Power of We – We value collaboration and teamwork to accomplish shared goals. Together, we learn, do, and achieve MORE.
3. The Power of Me – We value the contributions of every member of the learning community and want all to develop the academic and social-emotional skills to be their best selves.
4. Focused, Continuous Improvement – We focus on our strengths and opportunities for improvement. We get smarter and smarter through hard work, taking risks and learning from failure; we value the small, persistent steps that it takes to be great; we know that greatness in anything is the result of continual, intentional planning and practice over long periods of time.
5. Student Ownership & Choice – We value the power of student ownership so that all learners in our community can be self-directed, life-long learners. We value student choice, so they learn how to chart their own path in school and in life.
6. Family – We deeply value making RCP a second "home" in the community where teachers, leaders, students, and families feel safe, supported, and loved.

[12] Henderson, A.T., and K.L. Mapp. 2002. A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement. National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

BASIC LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CLASS SIZE

Curriculum and Basic Learning Environment

The basic learning environment is classroom-based. The curriculum is the general education curriculum nested within the CASEL SEL 5-component frame.[13] Grade-level standards will be grouped so that learning is scaffolded into a ten-month frame of learning. As part of NEI's school support plan, members of NEI's National Team and Tennessee State team will actively engage in training and mentoring RCP's school leadership and teachers. This support team will be key contributors in training and supporting RCP regarding the core content of the education model, the implementation and the monitoring of the continuous improvement model, and the fundamental principles of establishing, implementing, and maintaining strong school operations. The State Team will also provide support to RCP that will ensure compliance in service to special populations, such as English Learners, Students with Disabilities, and students who are performing below grade level and require interventions. This training and support will be provided prior to school opening and will continue once RCP opens to ensure that these core programs and processes are implemented and followed at the school-level with fidelity.

Class Size and Structure

All of our grade-levels will be set up in learning communities. There will be one learning community for each grade-level, with 9 communities in total beginning in year 3, once we are a full Kindergarten – Grade 8 school. The structure of the community is not the traditional classroom structure. All adults in each learning community share responsibility to all the students in the community. RCP will meet the class size requirements outlined by Tennessee law 49-1-104 by ensuring each community does not exceed the class size average of 1 certified teacher to 20 students in grades Kindergarten – Grade 3; in Grades 4 – 6 the average will be 1 certified teacher per 25 students; and in Grades 7 – 8 the average will be 1 certified teacher per 30 students. Adults in each learning community include certified lead teachers, additional certified teachers, and additional instructional aides who can assist in facilitating small-groups in ELA and math, and provide behavior supports and interventions. RCP's learning community model includes multiple certified teachers in each grade-level community, where one of the teachers is a lead teacher who has demonstrated his or her effectiveness by meeting and/or exceeding expected growth with previous cohorts of students. The lead teacher will direct other certified teachers and instructional aides who will serve as additional adult expertise in the learning community. A number of certified teachers (including elective teachers) and specialists will work across more than one learning community based on students' academic, social, and emotional needs as well as the number of students in each learning community at any given point in time.

Teachers in middle school, if necessary, may be on a rotation schedule to teach multiple grade levels and/or multiple subjects in alignment with their areas of expertise and certifications. For example, ELA and math teachers may teach students in both Grades 7 and 8, while teachers in Grades 5 and 6 may teach multiple subjects within their grade-level learning communities.

Through the learning community model, we can support students with a smaller student to adult ratio and provide more opportunities more often for students to connect with adults and feel supported for academics and SEL.

Since it is anticipated that students will perform at various levels, each community will be organized to accommodate differentiated instruction, including teacher-led small-group work and blended learning mobile workstations.

To create a future-ready environment that supports the vision of RCP to inspire and equip a generation of self-directed critical thinkers to influence the world around them, RCP will identify and acquire innovative furniture

[13] L DePaoli, Jennifer & Bridgeland, John & N Atwell, Matthew. (2017). Ready to Lead. Castel & Civic Enterprises & Hart Research Associates. PDF.

and materials that are designed to stimulate learning and create classroom cohesiveness. Examples include standing desks, flexible seating design, and maker spaces. Professional Development will be provided to support teachers in leveraging these tools to positively affect student learning.

RCP will also integrate tools, technology, software, and structures in communities to enhance the learning environment by focusing on the development of 21st century learning skills. Technology expands the learning environment beyond the classroom and helps cultivate interest in global issues through exploration and virtual field trips. The development of a technology-rich environment and infusion of 21st century learning skills directly supports RCP's vision to ensure all students are equipped as critical thinkers and prompted to lead efforts that they are passionate about in the world.

Within each community, resources will be maximized. Both fiction and nonfiction electronic and print resources will be available to enable students to read appropriately leveled books. With the integration of technology, all students have increased targeted access to curricular resources, assessments, technology-based intervention, and enrichment-enhancing differentiation. For example, RCP will be equipped with Instructional Flat Panels and accompanying learning software, which will increase student interaction and engagement in direct instruction, small-group activities, and student collaboration.

Classroom Environment

At RCP, we believe that a classroom environment can set the stage for learning. A review of the World Economic Forum's predicted that the top 2030 jobs illustrate the need for students to develop three key skill sets: (1) Technological Skills, (2) Social-Emotional Skills, and (3) Higher-Cognitive Skills. We envision RCP will serve as a model for future-focused learning environments and consider the intentional design instrumental to the delivery of our academic programming and fulfillment of our mission. The flexible nature of our physical learning environment allows for multiple areas where space can be combined into larger areas instead of traditional classroom layouts. This allows for creating multiple differentiated learning opportunities throughout the day and across the building. Learning spaces will have built in flexibility for individualized learning with stations that contain a combination of blended learning, virtual learning, face-to-face small-group instruction, whole class or independent work. Retractable walls allow for this flexibility to maximize individualized/personalized learning environments. Additional details regarding RCPs classroom/facility design will be provided in the facility section.

In order to support our struggling readers and English Learner (EL) students, our learning communities will be print-rich, which will provide students with a foundation for literacy in the classroom, giving students opportunities to "learn from the walls." Within the learning community, clear behavior expectations and classroom management procedures posted in each community will help develop the learning environment and support the use of an agenda to protect instructional time. The agenda will serve to focus teaching and learning and facilitate daily active participation as students learn to connect the daily learning focus with their personal learning goals. To further deepen learning, anchor charts generated during instruction that reflect step-by-step processes for taught material will be posted to serve as a reminder of instructional focus areas.

Various simultaneous learning experiences will occur, such as teachers working with a small-group of students on a targeted skill, students on digital devices receiving remedial or enrichment practice, groups of students working cooperatively on a challenge-based project, or students working independently on leveled tasks. Structured procedures and behavior expectations are developed and monitored by each learning community to minimize distractions and ensure productive workspaces.

The Mobile Classroom

ReThink's partnership with NEI will also allow RCP to leverage NEI's expertise in adapting to the current challenges facing schools in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure that instruction continues in the event of mandated shutdowns or if families choose to keep their children at home once schools reopen, NEI and ReThink have adopted an innovative approach of establishing Mobile Classrooms across their network of

schools.

ReThink and NEI's vision is to break down the walls of the classroom to provide a high-quality education to every student, regardless of physical location. Mobile students will be able to access a live stream of the physical classroom and will actively participate in classroom learning via a video conference platform. This will allow students to participate in class remotely from home, or from separate rooms within the school building if COVID-19 guidelines necessitate the grouping of smaller numbers of students. To achieve this vision, ReThink and NEI intend to equip classrooms with a Mobile Classroom kit that will contain state-of-the-art technological tools needed to reach students throughout the school building or at home.

The Mobile Classroom kit will include:

1. A smart camera that provides 360-degree video and audio coverage of the classroom and allows the teacher to stream work from the whiteboard to students attending class off campus.
2. An additional monitor to maximize teacher desktop space.
3. Full suites of office and creative software.
4. A wireless headset for the teacher, which will allow him/her to move freely around the physical Classroom while also interacting with students attending class off campus.
5. All connecting cords and adapters needed to make the elements of the Mobile Classroom kit work together.

ReThink and NEI are determined to open and operate schools that offer choice within choice, and will explore the possibility of extending the use of the Mobile Classroom beyond a response to COVID-19 guidelines and mandates. This long-term approach would allow families the choice of having their children receive instruction via a fully mobile setting, a blended-learning model, or within a traditional brick-and-mortar environment.

Curriculum and Materials

As defined in one of our Belief Statements – *a belief that literacy skills are life-changing and serve as passports to achievement in other curricular areas* – developing strong readers and writers is at the center of our curriculum. Our K-3 learners will receive foundational literacy skills instruction with a phonics-based approach:

- Step 1: Phonological Awareness
- Step 2: Phonics and Word Recognition
- Step 3: Fluency

Although students move towards a balanced literacy approach, students will receive systematic phonics instruction in dedicated time blocks to ensure that all students reach the critical third grade reading milestone. Using a state approved universal reading screener in tandem with on-demand writing prompts and other language and fluency probes, teachers will be equipped with a continuous chain of evidence to support strong literacy instruction that meets the needs of all students.

As defined in RCP's CIM, high-quality teaching guides will clearly articulate the sequence, pacing, priority, and spiraling of the TAS. All curricular materials that are selected at RCP will both align to the intent and rigor ofthe standards AND provide coverage of all elements of the standards. The use of PLDs ensures accurate alignment and complete coverage.

We will use texts and materials in alignment with waivers outlined in section 2.10 of this application to provideour students a rigorous, differentiated, standards-based curriculum. The following table illustrates the type of resources our leadership team will adopt at RCP. However, we recognize that the Tennessee Academic Standards may change, and as such, our instructional materials may change to meet any new standard requirements. With the school scheduled to open in the 2022-23 school year, we plan to select the best resources and materials available.

Curriculum Utilized in Course Progression

Table 7

Course	Curriculum	Descriptor	Rationale
Math	Curriculum Associates	Classroom curriculum will follow Curriculum Associates Ready books	Excellent math curriculum, provides assistance in identifying remediation needs
	i-Ready	Supplemental tool with blended learning opportunities	Excellent alignment with TAS, used for personalized remediation and extension
Reading	Fundations K-3	Classroom reading foundational curriculum will follow Fundations®	Highly structured foundational reading curriculum using engaging,

		program	multisensory techniques.
	Lexia Core 5	Supplemental with blended learning opportunities	Personalized remediation and extension
	Ready	Classroom reading curriculum will follow the Ready program	Standard-aligned curriculum that includes scaffolds and assistance in identifying remediation and extension needs
	i-Ready	Supplemental with blended learning opportunities	Excellent alignment with TAS, used for personalized remediation and extension
Science Grades 3 – 8	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Tennessee Science	Classroom curriculum will follow HMH Tennessee Science	Excellent science curriculum, approved by the Tennessee textbook review board
Social Studies Grades 3 – 8	Gallopade International, Inc.	Classroom curriculum will follow Gallopade International, Inc.	Excellent social studies curriculum, approved by the Tennessee textbook review board

Other Key Resources: Balanced Literacy Plan, Writing Rubrics, Portfolios, and Personalized Learning Plans

Writing Rubrics. Balanced literacy is a philosophical orientation that assumes that reading and writing achievement are developed through instruction and support in multiple environments using various approaches that differ by level of teacher support and child control.[14] As part of our balanced literacy plan and structured reading and writing workshop time, RCP will incorporate the use of strong descriptive rubrics to plan instruction and assess student writing. Using Tennessee's writing rubrics as a base, we will clarify any evaluative terms found in the state writing rubrics in concrete, objective language. We will make clear distinctions between grade-levels. We will intentionally incorporate specific writing techniques that students will learn to apply in each grade-level.

Portfolios. Our students will track their progress over time using a portfolio. The purpose of the portfolio will be to track growth in four areas; knowledge, skills and attitudes, teamwork, and career. The portfolio will include evidence of productive struggle, failure, success, and change. What will be important is that learners recognize growth whenever it occurs and can discern the reasons for the growth. The goal of the growth portfolio will be for learners to see their own changes over time and, in turn, share their "growth journey" with others.

At the end of the year, students will select their "best work" samples. This will allow students to see how achievement is often the result of their capacity to self-assess, set goals, and work overtime.

Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs). PLPs will be plans that live inside students' portfolios to help students track their learning and goals, and allow for self-reflection, goal setting, and action planning. They will include:

- Student information
- Student profile
- Individual student goals and action steps
- Learning expectations
- Transition

[14] Frey, B., Lee, S., Tollefson, N., Pass, L., and Massengill, D. (2005) Balanced Literacy in an Urban School District. Journal of Educational Research

PLPs, as described above, are designed to track individual strengths, weaknesses, and cumulative progress in attaining a year's worth of learning. The PLP empowers students to develop learning goals and track their own progress, fostering a stronger sense of student ownership. Baseline achievement levels are incorporated into each student's PLP as a starting point for determining future rates of academic progress. Students and parents are able to consider areas of mastery and deficiency based upon data reports, which provide details regardingskills that have been mastered, need to be remediated, or are ready to be learned next. Students set personalgoals each quarter that are confirmed by teachers, and teachers post formative data to support student goalsetting. Additionally, students are guided in developing the skills to conduct their own PLP conferences withparents, which take place at a minimum of twice annually.

Other Integral Components of RCP's Curriculum: SEL and Career Exploration and Middle School Civics
Social and Emotional Learning. A key aspect of our standards-based curriculum is the integration of SEL strategies and activities within instructional units in order to develop student intrapersonal, interpersonal and cognitive skills alongside academic standards. Teachers flexibly employ a variety of strategies, such as cooperative learning groups, project-based learning, and goal setting, to best fit student SEL needs in the planning and delivery of standards-based lessons.

CASEL has identified five core competencies that can be taught across any discipline and are critically important for the long-term success of students in today's economy. The competencies that we will work to actively develop are listed below.

1. Self-Awareness: Students will experience the ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mindset."
2. Self-Management: Students will experience the ability to successfully regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations — effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself in order to set and work toward personal and academic goals.
3. Social-Awareness: Students will experience the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. They will learn to understand social-norms and ethical-norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.
4. Relationship Skills: Students will experience the ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed will be developed.
5. Responsible Decision-Making: Students will experience the ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms through the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.

Career Exploration and CTE Certification for Middle School. Tennessee Governor Bill Lee announced his legislative initiative to expand access to vocational and technical training for students who are approaching college or a career. The Governor's Investment in Vocational Education (GIVE) supports regional partnerships among schools, industry, and technical colleges to develop more work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities.

GIVE calls for high school to look different in Tennessee; therefore, middle school and even elementary school needs to look different, too. In order to prepare students to be college and career ready, we will create personalized, rigorous learning experiences that combine the TAS and social-emotional skills while continually engaging students in career exploration. It is our goal to ensure that our students are prepared for the future they want after high school, whether it be successfully starting college or entering the workforce.

Our students will explore career options at every turn. In Kindergarten through Grade 4, students will rotate through enrichment classes, including technology, art, music, physical education, and Spanish. Embedded in

our curriculum maps, even our youngest learners will explore careers that align to topics under study, engaging in activities such as:

- "Picture This." Students bring in pictures of people performing jobs that interest them. Then, working in teams, students put the pictures of people forming similar jobs in groups, coming up with words or phrases that describe how the work is similar.
- "Dress for Your Future." Students come to school dressed as a job that interests them.
- "Colleges and Technical Schools in Our State." Using a map of Tennessee, the teacher marks the locations of two and four-year colleges as well as other schools that provide job training. As careers/jobs are discussed, students mark the schools that provide the required preparation.

We will continue to build on career exploration through middle school. Research has identified middle school as a time when students can benefit the most from career exploration, a process of building self-awareness, learning about potential careers, and developing a plan for reaching future goals.15 Career exploration engages middle school students at a time when they are at a higher risk for disengaging from learning due to challenges in forming identity, coping with puberty and navigating new environments.

Our middle school students will select major and minor areas of interest which will drive the CTE cluster choice of classes. These courses help students identify careers of interest and develop employability skills that will serve them in further education and the workplace. According to a study that compared CTE and non-CTE students as they transitioned into postsecondary education, CTE students are significantly more likely than their peers to say that they developed a clear career goal as well as problem-solving, critical-thinking, communication, time management, and work-related skills.[16]

This portfolio and PLP will help students identify personal strengths related to potential career choices. The collection can be developed over several years, beginning in middle school and continuing throughout high school. The process of selecting pieces over time empowers young people to make appropriate educational choices leading toward meaningful careers.

Middle School Civics

We believe that preparing people to become knowledgeable and proactive members of a democratic society requires that they receive proper instruction in civics. Civics education will be included as an important part of our middle school curriculum, teaching our middle school students:

1. How their government works at the federal, state and local levels. Our students will learn about the three branches of government and how they work together to pass and enforce laws. Moreover, they will learn about our systems of checks and balances.
2. The rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Our students will learn about the power of citizens to shape government and that elected officials should ideally represent the values and interests of the people who vote for them.
3. That voting is an important duty of every citizen. We want our students to know how to make informed voting decisions. This will be a direct application of the kind of responsible (informed) decision making that is a school-wide focus through SEL. Learning about voting also reinforces the skill of separating fact from fiction as students study campaigns and elections.
4. The limitations of government. Our students will learn about the Constitutional rights guaranteed to them in the Bill of Right as Americans. They also will learn about the other 17 amendments and why the Constitution puts limits on government, giving power to the people.

Our students will engage in learning about civics through a mix of direct instruction and project-based learning

[15] Hughes, K. L., & Karp, M. J. M. (2004). School-based Career Development: A Synthesis of the Literature

[16] Lekes, N., Bragg, D. D., Loeb, J. W., Oleksiw, C. A., Marszalek, J., Brooks-LaRaviere, M., Hood, L.K. (2007). CTE Pathway Programs, Academic Performance and the Transition to College and Career. St. Paul, MN: National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, University of Minnesota.

(PBL). With direct instruction students will receive explicit instruction on critical content of the TAS for social studies in politics, government and/or civics.

Then students will apply their learning through PBL. This will allow our students the opportunity to practice being good citizens. Through PBL students will engage in projects where they work with each other to develop policy solutions around problems that matter to citizens (at the local, state, and federal level), particularly problems that relate to limits of power, rights of citizens, the power of voting, etc. This will be accomplished by researching problems, understanding multiple viewpoints on them, and working with peers to put their solution into action.

This combination of direct instruction and PBL will prepare our students for success on the TNReady Civics Assessment while affording students the opportunity to experience for themselves how their voice and actions matter.

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION: GOALS/MEASURES, METHODS, AND STRATEGIES

The following goals in Table 8 below will be used to ensure that our instructional priorities are implemented with fidelity.

Table 8

Instructional Goals	Data Sources/Benchmarks
Students will learn through rigorous, standards-aligned instructional practices that are grade, subject, and student appropriate.	Classroom walkthroughs, IFC Assessments, classroom assessments, and student work
By the first month of year one, 100% of RCP students will be fully engaged in daily SEL.	Unit maps, lesson plans, and classroom walkthroughs
Students will accurately and regularly use the academic and domain language of the standards in their speaking and writing.	Classroom walkthroughs and student writing samples from on-demand (timed) prompts
Over the course of the school year, our students will improve the quality of their writing as well as their writing stamina.	Multiple writing samples from on-demand prompts to review quality over time
By the end of the first semester of year two, 100% of students will have an individual portfolio and PLP.	Portfolios/PLPs
Students will learn to use group norms and assigned roles when working in teams (i.e., cooperative learning) by the start of the second grading period.	Classroom walkthroughs and teacher anecdotal records
Students will learn to self-assess their own work with increasing accuracy.	Student work and portfolios
Students will learn to recruit and act upon feedback to improve their work.	Student work, portfolios and teacher anecdotal records
Grade 8 students will earn 1 CTE credential. CTE courses may include: • Career Exploration • Introduction to Agriculture • Keyboarding • Computer Applications • Introduction to Health Science • STEM Designers • Introduction to Social Health	Portfolio

Instructional Methods and Strategies

How we decide to teach is important for all learners, especially for students with disabilities, students from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and students who are performing significantly below grade-level. For these students, it is vital that we maximize their opportunities to learn by using instructional strategies that correspond to their unique learning needs. That said, the key to success in diverse classrooms is selecting and implementing powerful instructional methods that simultaneously address a variety of different learning needs.

At the core, we will take a student-centered approach to learning. In our classrooms, teachers will be an authority figure, but students will play an equally active role in the learning process.

The teacher's primary role is to coach and facilitate student learning, and to measure student learning through the method of assessment that most accurately and efficiently measures the intended learning. In our student-centered classrooms, assessment serves as the bridge between teaching and learning as learning is continuously measured during instruction.

Teachers will use a variety of instructional methods (shown in photo below) to meet the needs of their students, the subjects they teach, and even their own teaching expertise.

Teachers will utilize Marzano's High Probability Instructional Research-based Strategies (listed below) that will provide students with a learning opportunity that is academically rigorous, challenging, innovative, and focused on individual student learning needs. These strategies can be implemented across subject levels and throughout a lesson in various ways, as described below. The strategies have been proven by research to yield positive results in student learning (Marzano). As new research is released and updated, PD and teaching strategies will be continuously updated to meet the needs of students.

Table 9

Category (Percentile Gain Yielded)	Applications
Tracking Student Progress and Using Scoring Scales (34)	Determine current level of performance; Identify achievement goals and establish a rate of progress; Track progress visually; Adjust instruction to improve learning; Provide more intensive instruction to re-teach the material if goals are not being met
Setting Goals/Objectives	Set a core goal, and let students personalize it; Make sure goals are achievable;

Category (Percentile Gain Yielded)	Applications
(25)	Teachers help with strategies to achieve goals; Teachers and students monitor progress and celebrate success
Building Vocabulary (20)	Provide deliberate instruction, including direct and small-group instruction to accelerate students' vocabulary development; Facilitate active engagement before, during, and after lessons beyond definition knowledge; Implement a comprehensive program for students to be able to understand complex texts, engage deeply with content area concepts, and participate in academic discussions
Identifying Similarities and Differences (20)	Teacher-directed activities focus on identifying specific items; Student-directed activities encourage variation and broaden understanding; Includes activities that involve comparing and classifying, analogies and metaphors, graphic organizers, etc.
Interactive Games (20)	Use in addition to effective teaching; Define the objectives of the game to set a purpose; Should be challenging, but not frustrating; Can foster teamwork and social interaction; Provides opportunities for success and positive reinforcement
Summarizing (19)	Requires analysis of text to determine what's important; Students use key words and phrases while summarizing content; Students constantly refine their work to determine the most essential and relevant information
Note Taking (17)	Use teacher-prepared models/templates to teach basic principles and expectations; Give time to practice notetaking and provide feedback on the skills; Students become familiar with content, jot down main ideas, and write down questions
Nonlinguistic Representations (17)	Incorporate words and images to represent relationships; Use physical models, dramatization, and movement to represent information; Have students explain their rationale and meaning behind the nonlinguistic representation
Student Discussion/Chunking (17)	Set expectations for classroom discussions and try in small-groups first; Use a variety of techniques, having students take notes throughout the discussion and segment the discussion to check for understanding; Organize content into small, related segments that are more manageable for understanding in daily lessons
Homework (15)	Establish and communicate a homework policy; Provide specific feedback on all assigned homework and vary the way the feedback is delivered
Practice (14)	Ask questions that require students to process and rehearse the material; Give feedback on the practice while circulating and monitoring work; Provide additional explanations and several examples; Cooperative learning is an effective strategy to utilize practice
Effort and Recognition (14)	Personalize recognition and give praise for individual accomplishments; Provide suggestions to help students improve if they are struggling, then praise the improvements
Graphic Organizers (13)	Use various types to expose students to information before they learn it; Examples include maps, diagrams, timelines, clusters, flowcharts, and structures

Student-Centered Learning

Based on Marzano's research and categories of instructional elements to guide instruction, students will be the designers of their own learning in order to obtain a deeper level of understanding. Teachers will use various Marzano strategies that focus on students developing autonomy in processing, evaluating, analyzing, and demonstrating knowledge. Instructional strategies are organized by 43 elements and are focused on empowering students as active participants in the classroom. By shifting away from a teacher-directed approach, students learn to carry the bulk of the work of learning as teachers take the position of guide. Teacher planning for student-centered learning will be guided by the following three categories and ten instructional elements:

1. Feedback
    - Providing and Communicating Clear Learning Goals – The teacher provides students with scales and rubrics, continually tracks student progress, and makes a concerted effort to celebrate student success.
    - Using Assessments – The teacher uses both informal whole class assessments and formal assessments of individual students.

2. Content
    - Conducting Direct Instruction Lessons – The teacher chunks content for instructional delivery, provides processing content, as well as recording and representing content.
    - Conducting Practicing and Deepening Lesson – The teacher employs structured practice sessions, provides for opportunities to examine similarities and differences, and examines errors in reasoning.
    - Conducting Knowledge Application Lessons – The teacher engages students in cognitively complex tasks and provides students with resources and guidance that give them opportunities for generating and defending claims.
    - Using Strategies that Appear in All Types of Lessons – The teacher uses previewing strategies, highlights critical information, and provides opportunities to review content, revise knowledge, reflect on learning, assign purposeful homework, elaborate on information, and organize students to interact.

3. Context
    - Using Engagement Strategies – The teacher notices and reacts when students are not engaged, increases response rates, uses physical movement, maintains a lively pace, demonstrates intensity and enthusiasm, presents unusual information, employs friendly controversy, uses academic games, provides opportunities for students to talk about themselves, and motivates and inspires students.
    - Implementing Rules and Procedures – The teacher establishes rules and procedures, organizes the physical layout of the classroom, demonstrates "withitness" and acknowledges adherence or lack of adherence to rules and procedures.
    - Building Relationships – The teacher uses verbal and nonverbal behaviors that communicate caring for students, display an understanding of students' backgrounds and interests, and display objectivity and control. The teacher demonstrates value and respect for reluctant learners, asks in-depth questions of reluctant learners, and probes incorrect answers with reluctant learners.

Direct Instruction

All students at RCP will receive direct instruction. With this method students are not blamed for their failure to learn as teachers are responsible for student learning. This instructional approach will be used because it is guided by two important principles:

1. All children can learn if we teach them carefully and intentionally.
2. All teachers can be successful when given effective programs and instructional delivery techniques.

As such, teachers at RCP will be provided with the most effective programs and given the ability to implement proven instructional techniques. Teachers will have the opportunity to collaboratively plan lessons from clearly articulated curriculum materials (i.e., RCP's Teaching Guides) that are built upon sound learning progressions. Furthermore, teachers at RCP will receive ongoing support by leadership, outside experts, and their peers.

Direct instruction is not to be confused with didactic teacher-led talking from the front. According to Hattie,[17]

[17] Visible Learning. (2019). Retrieved from https://visible-learning.org

there are seven major steps in Direct Instruction.

Table 10

Hattie's Seven Major Steps in Direct Instruction
1. Teacher defines the learning outcomes/targets
2. Teacher defines performance criteria
3. Teacher defines specific engagement activities
4. Teacher presents the lesson including input, modeling, and checking for understanding
5. Students engage in guided practice with teacher-delivered feedback
6. Teacher closes the lesson, reviewing and clarifying the key points to ensure that they will be applied by the student
7. Students engage in independent practice on a repeated schedule

Blended Learning

Blended learning is a style of classroom teaching in which a student learns, at least in part, through online delivery of content and instruction, with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace. Within blended learning, teachers utilize research-based best practices for teaching and learning, including the integration of technology into the instructional program. Blended learning options will include:

- Rotation model: Students receive instruction from the teacher, participate in centers or independent work, and then complete similar activities on an online software program.
- À la carte model: Students take an online course with an online teacher of record, but still attend school in a brick-and-mortar setting. The course is taken while physically at the school.
- Individualized Learning: Students use programs that move at their pace to develop reading or math skills. They start with an online diagnostic assessment, then are placed within a track. They read passages, answer questions, receive tutorials, solve problems, and move through the program as they progress through their pathway. The teacher monitors use and progress, and the program adjusts according to student performance.
- Flipped learning: Teachers can use this within a course for all students or for those who need enrichment. Students watch a video or tutorial online on the weekend, the night before, or a day before to be exposed to a concept and develop an understanding on their own. Students then meet with the

teacher to extend learning and practice. For students who do not have access to technology at home we will provide multiple opportunities for students to use computers before school, during lunch and after school.

Instructional Software

RCP may use the following instructional software programs in blended learning models as a starting point and conduct ongoing software reviews to determine new, effective programs for implementation: Lexia Strategies, Mathia, and i-Ready. The targeted use of instructional software is tied to the effectiveness of the school's implementation of curriculum and delivery of instruction. When used appropriately, instructional software programs provide rigorous lessons, remediate academic gaps, and provide enrichment opportunities. Instructional software provides adaptive learning while motivating students to learn through immediate personal feedback and celebrations of success.

Differentiated Instruction

The school will follow the belief that differentiated instruction is: 1) a teacher's response to student needs, 2) the recognition of students' varying background knowledge and preferences, 3) student-centered, 4) instruction that addresses students' differences, and 5) a blend of whole-group and small-group instruction. Students will benefit through the use of innovative, differentiated instructional methods, which will utilize research-based instructional strategies and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to enhance students' opportunity to learn the specific skills identified.

Small-group instruction is utilized in different subjects to support the needs of students who are struggling with the content, as well as students who are above grade-level and need more challenging tasks. Teachers can differentiate in three ways: 1) the content students are learning, 2) the process by which the material is being taught, and 3) the product that is developed to demonstrate learning[18]. Teachers will consider the students' readiness for learning, their interest, and their learning profiles when making decisions about appropriate differentiation. Examples of differentiation include:

- Whole-group: A teacher may assign a task to the students yet differentiate the final product students need to create.
- Small-group: Each day, the small-group that meets with the teacher is based on particular skill gaps of the students (i.e., all students that need more instruction for converting fractions to decimals). As other groups work in centers, their assignments are differentiated within the overarching center topic.
- Technology: RCP will utilize various technology resources to ensure students are using programs that meet their instructional needs. Teachers can differentiate by assigning content that the students still need practice with, based on i-Ready data, interim benchmark assessments, or class assessment data, and then monitor students' performance on those skills.

RCP will ensure differentiated instruction occurs in the classroom by implementing centers within the balanced literacy block and math block. See Table 11 for an example of a balanced literacy block (150 minutes). During the guided reading section of the literacy block students will rotate through centers that are differentiated based on the needs of each student.

Found here is an example that demonstrates how station rotation will be used in a balanced literacy block (150 minutes) in our primary grades that includes social studies and science content:

[18] Carol Tomlinson (1999), How to Differentiate Instruction in Academically Diverse Classrooms, 3rd Edition

Table 11

Time	Balanced Literacy Block			
10 minutes	Shared Reading			
60 minutes (Broken Down Below)	Guided Reading and Centers (station rotation)			
	Yellow Group	Green Group	Blue Group	Red Group
(15 minutes)	Teacher (Lead Teacher)	Instructional Aide or additional teacher	Instructional Aide or additional teacher	Computer
(15 minutes)	Computer	Teacher (Lead Teacher)	Instructional Aide or additional teacher	Instructional Aide or additional teacher
(15 minutes)	Instructional Aide or additional teacher	Computer	Teacher (Lead) Teacher)	Instructional Aide or additional teacher
(15 minutes)	Instructional Aide or additional teacher	Instructional Aide or additional teacher	Computer	Teacher (Lead Teacher)
10 minutes	"Read aloud"			
10 minutes	Word Work/Phonics			
10 minutes	Reading Workshop Mini-Lesson			
20 minutes	Independent Reading			
10 minutes	Writing Workshop Mini-Lesson			
20 minutes	Independent Writing			

During station rotation, the instructional aide or additional certified teacher will provide small-group, differentiated instruction. Another instructional aide or additional certified teacher will support students as they engage with the instructional software at the computer station.

In Grades 3 through 8, the device to student ratio is 1:1, with each student having access to a device that is assigned to them, like a textbook. The devices will be available to students at school as well as at home. Because of this access, students, in addition to participating in blended learning through the model above, will focus on the technology opportunities that are evident in the most effective learning environments for them. In these environments, students use technology as a way to get to a place of higher order thinking and creating, with technology being used to enhance research, support suppositions, create original student works, and collaborate and connect with others in an educational way. Technology will allow students more autonomy in their learning journey, as well as provide them with additional supports for learning.

In Grades 3 and 4, students also will be engaged in a balanced literacy block like the one described above. However, since each student will have his or her own device, technology will be used during station rotation as well as other times throughout the entire school day as appropriate, depending on the standards being learned. This will provide all students additional visual and auditory supports for learning.

As described above, in Grades 5 – 8, teachers will use the devices to support and extend learning in each of the subject-areas as appropriate. Moreover, as we prepare our middle school students to truly be self-directed learners, the devices provide an excellent resource for students to set goals, track their progress and share their learning with others.

Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Project-Based Learning (PBL) allows students to use 21st century technology while working in collaborative groups to tackle real-world issues surrounding their school, families, community, or global concerns. PBL

allows teachers to work with students on making connections between the standards reflected in the GVC and issues within the school, family setting, community, or on the world stage.
PBL will be utilized following the five stages outlined below:

1. Creating the Big Picture or Idea: Students work with the teacher on scanning the news to look for a global issue. An essential question is created to make the connection between the Big Idea and how it impacts the students themselves.
2. Setting up the Foundation for a Solution: Students begin researching the issue and creating guiding questions and guiding activities to assist in narrowing down potential solutions to the challenge.
3. Identifying a Viable Solution: Students identify one viable solution to develop and implement based on the results of their research from their guiding questions and activities.
4. Implementation and Results: Students monitor their measurable outcomes and timelines from their research to capture all the results showing whether the solution is realistic and attainable or if another solution with more favorable outcomes should be considered.
5. Publishing: Students document their results using 21st century technology skills. The presentation includes the challenge, solution, and results, along with any personal reflections on information learned.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a strategy combining teamwork with individual and group accountability, allowing students of different ability levels to work jointly to improve their understanding of a subject. Within formal cooperative learning, teachers strategically group students to complete an assignment, designating roles so all students are held accountable for providing input and ownership of their learning. For an informal cooperative learning opportunity, teachers will have students participate in focused discussions and utilize turn-and-talks, think-pair-shares, and other purposeful student-to-student accountable talk strategies. The following elements are present when effective cooperative learning opportunities are planned:

- Positive Interdependence: Group cohesiveness comes about when each group member understands they are required to complete their part of the work and ensure others do as well.
- Individual Student Accountability: Group members understand they are individually accountable for their contributions to the group.
- Face-to-Face Interaction: Interpersonal and small-group skills needed to manage group interactions and behaviors are taught (active listening, accountable talk, sharing resources, taking turns, etc.).
- Social Skills: Group members listen to each other, exchange ideas, offer explanations and encouragement, provide constructive feedback, and help each other with resources.
- Group Processing: Group members process their work through reflecting on what they have done well and what they will need to do to achieve the group's goals.

All students at RCP will engage in cooperative learning where students work together to accomplish shared learning goals. Teams of students engage in a variety of learning activities to improve their own understanding of the intended learning. Each member of the team is not only responsible for learning what is taught, but also for helping teammates learn. It is in cooperative learning where students will have the opportunity to apply their SEL skills in authentic ways.

Research by Johnson & Johnson[19] indicates that cooperative learning, when compared with competitive and individual learning, typically results in:

- Higher achievement
- More caring, supportive, and committed relationships
- Greater health, social competence, and self-esteem

At RCP, we recognize that simply putting students in groups is not enough. For the benefits of cooperative

[19] Johnson, D., & Johnson, R. (2000). Cooperative learning, values, and culturally plural classrooms. In M. Leicester, C. Modgil, & S. Modgil (Eds.), Classroom issues: Practice, pedagogy and curriculum. Palmer Press: London.

learning to be realized, teachers will do the following when structuring student teams:

- Establish positive interdependence among group members
- Facilitate positive interaction
- Encourage individual accountability
- Explicitly teach the appropriate social skills
- Encourage teams to reflect on both the processes involved in completing the task and interacting with their peers

At RCP, teachers will structure groups (shown in photo below) so that the key components likely to facilitate successful cooperation are evident and promote interaction among students. Research indicates that students rarely provide quality explanations or engage in high-level discourse unless they are taught to do so.[20]

Classroom Formative Assessment

An assessment or assessment item is not formative or summative; rather, it is the purpose, or use of the results that determines the distinction. At RCP, teachers will regularly assess for both summative and formative purposes. When the main purpose is to make a judgement and/or assign and report grades, the purpose will be summative. However, when our purpose is to *inform* instructional decisions, the purpose will be formative.

Our focus with formative assessment will be to answer, "From where we are going, how do we close the gap?"

Assessment expert Dylan Wiliam, PhD defines formative assessment as "*the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers, to make decisions about next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decision they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited.*"[21]

[20] King, A. (2002). Structuring peer interaction to promote high-level cognitive processing. Theory into Practice, 41, 33-40. http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4101_6

[21] Wiliam, D. & Leahy, S. (2015). Embedding formative assessment. West Palm Beach, FL: Learning Sciences International.

Classroom formative assessment is so vital to student success because it has the greatest impact on both student engagement and classroom practice because the response to the evidence or data occurs in real time.

Wiliam offers five strategies for the classroom formative assessment process:

- Strategy 1: Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions
- Strategy 2: Engineering effective discussions, tasks, and activities that elicit evidence of learning
- Strategy 3: Providing feedback that moves learning forward
- Strategy 4: Activating students as learning resources for one another
- Strategy 5: Activating students as owners of their own learning

Teachers at RCP will implement techniques that relate to each of the strategies, and those techniques will vary across subjects and grade-levels as appropriate. Each will also be adapted as needed to meet the needs of special populations of students.

Found in Table 12 is a sampling of the formative assessment techniques that will occur across all classrooms.[22] Notice how strategies 4 and 5 directly relate to RCP's instructional goals. Each of these techniques will be adapted to meet the needs of learners of all age levels and subgroups.

Teachers will receive professional development on additional techniques to add to their own teaching toolbox on each of the five strategies as their understanding and application of effective formative assessment deepens.

Table 12

Wiliams' 5 Classroom Strategies for Assessments
Strategy 1: Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions *(At RCP, we will refer to learning intentions as learning targets)* Before teachers can elicit evidence of learning, give effective feedback, and engage learners as resources for one another and as owners of their own learning, they **must be clear about the intended learning and communicate it with students.** **Learning targets**, also often referred to as learning intentions or objectives, are what we want students to know and be able to do. Learning targets come directly from the TAS through the process of deconstructing or unpacking the standards. What is critical in this step is to discern the 'new expectation' of the standard. This after all is the 'intended' learning in a particular grade or course. **Success criteria** are the steps or features of the learning target that they use to judge whether it has been achieved. **Sample Strategy 1 Techniques** • Share the learning target at the start, middle, or end of the lesson. • Use two or more samples of anonymous work to communicate quality. • Differentiate success criteria, not learning targets.
Strategy 2: Engineering effective discussions, tasks, and activities that elicit evidence of learning To maximize instructional time, teachers must find out what students already know, even from the most reluctant learners. Fortunately, there are many practical techniques they can use to gather better evidence about what their students are able to do, so they can make informed instructional decisions.

[22] Wiliam, D. & Leahy, S. (2015). Embedding formative assessment. West Palm Beach, FL: Learning Sciences International.

Sample Strategy 2 Techniques • Implement "no hands up" except to ask a question. • Provide question shells for students to devise questions. • Give a real-time test. • Use all student response systems regularly. • Devise a hinge question to check on learning part way through a lesson.
Strategy 3: Providing feedback that moves learning forward When we assess our students, we frequently find out it is not what we wanted them to learn; therefore, we need to provide feedback to get the learners back on track. **Sample Strategy 3 Techniques** • Focus feedback on what's next, not what's past. • Ensure that feedback is more work for the recipient than the donor. • Build time into lessons for students to respond to feedback.
Strategy 4: Activating students as learning resources for one another Engaging students in assessing the work of their peers is more than a time-saving device for teachers. Implemented properly, it can substantially raise student achievement, both for those who get help from their peers, and peers who provide the help. **Sample Strategy 4 Techniques** • Start with class assessment of anonymous work. • Move to paired, not group assessment. • Agree on ground rules for peer assessment. • Provide sentence starters for peer feedback.
Strategy 5: Activating students as owners of their own learning To become leaders of their own learning, students must develop the skills to self-manage. Self-management skills allow students to identify the conditions in which they best function. Self-awareness and self-management are key components of the SEL framework that are integrated throughout the unit maps. **Sample Strategy 5 Techniques** • Focus self-assessment on improvement. • Use plus-minus-interesting. • Emphasize that effort increases ability.

Using Instructional and Assessment Strategies in Our Learning Communities
In our learning communities, these instructional strategies will work in concert with each other, often overlapping in purpose.

Below is an example of the powerful strategies that might be operationalized in a typical lesson across grade-levels and subject areas to increase student achievement.

1. Direct Instruction (DI)
2. Flexible, Small-Group Instruction (SGI)
3. Cooperative Learning (CL)
4. Classroom Formative Assessment (CFA)

After each of the following examples, you will see a "Key" that will resemble "(DI, Steps 1 – 3; CFA, Strategy 1)." In this "Key" example, DI (Direct Instruction) is the instructional strategy and steps 1-3 are from Hattie's Seven Major Steps for Direct Instruction (Table 10) which are 1. Teacher defines the learning outcomes/targets

2. Teacher defines performance criteria 3. Teacher defines specific engagement activities. The type of assessment is CFA (Classroom Formative Assessment) using **Strategy 1: Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions** from Wiliams' Five Classroom Strategies for Assessments (Table 12).

- Teacher activates students' prior knowledge of the lesson's learning target(s) and shares the learning target(s) and performance criteria with students. Students engage in the content by classifying anonymous work samples at progressive levels of performance. (DI, Steps 1 – 3; CFA, Strategy 1)
- Teacher models the new learning for students, even having students provide feedback to ensure they understand the intent of the learning target. (DI, Strategy 4)
- Teacher then has students learn in teams, experiencing productive struggle as they tackle the most difficult aspects of the new learning target(s). Using team norms and their SEL skills, they work together to make sure all team members are able to meet the performance criteria (i.e., success criteria) of the learning target. (CL; CFA, Strategy 4)
- As students learn together, the teacher checks for understanding of all students. (CFA, Strategy 2)
- Seeing that a few students share a common misconception around one of the success criteria of the learning target, the teacher pulls those students into a small-group to close that gap. (SGI)
- As the teacher leads the small-group, the remaining students engage in independent practice around the learning target, using the performance criteria (i.e., the success criteria) to guide their work. (DI, Step 7; CFA, Strategy 5)
- Elementary – Teacher closes the lesson by asking each student to share one new thing they learned in the lesson. (DI, Step 6)
- Middle School – Teacher closes the lesson by reviewing key points and using the success criteria to differentiate "homework" for students based on what practice they need to advance their learning. (DI, Step 6; CFA, Strategies 1 and 3)

Writing and Vocabulary Instruction

In addition to these instructional models, RCP will also have a school-wide intentional approach to writing and vocabulary instruction. Students at every grade-level will receive explicit writing instruction where they practice applying specific techniques. We will build student stamina by increasing the amount of writing they engage in daily, weekly, monthly, and across the course of the entire year. Writing, itself, helps students better communicate with others and it helps them organize and clarify their own thinking. Students will learn how to apply the writing process and writing will be assessed through regular on-demand (timed) writing prompts.

Vocabulary

Helping our students develop a strong command of the academic and domain language of the standards will be a top priority. Students with weak vocabulary knowledge struggle when reading, writing, and with overall academic performance. Using structured "wait time" strategies like *think, write, pair, share* will help students ensure that grade appropriate vocabulary is included in their response before speaking. Since written and verbal response are so connected, we will intentionally use strategies like this to help students practice using words correctly so they can own the words for themselves. Teachers will utilize SIOP methodology to meet the needs of EL in-vocabulary acquisition.

RESEARCH SUPPORTING ACADEMIC PLAN

Extensive research supports every aspect of RCP's Academic Plan which is designed to close achievement gaps and accelerate learning for every child entrusted in our care.

Table 13 provides an overview of key research and expert thinking that shapes RCP's academic plan to ensure academic improvement for all students.

Academic Plan Research Overview

Table 13

Approach, Method, Strategy, or Practice	Research & Expert Thinking
NEI's Continuous Improvement Model (CIM)	NEI's CIM is based on a combination of work by Pat Davenport in *Closing the Achievement Gap* and an instructional philosophy developed after extensive study of instructional practice and grounded in over 35 years of Dr. Robert J. Marzano's research. [23]Recap of Pat Davenport's findings • The principal sets the example and the tone for instructional excellence by defining the school vision, managing instruction and curriculum, and promoting a positive school climate. • The school staff believes all students can attain mastery of the core curriculum and expects them to do so. • The staff accepts responsibility for all students. They believe the school controls enough of the variables to assure that all students do learn. • Students have a safe environment in which to learn. The adults work in a collaborative, cooperative environment. • Student academic progress is measured frequently through assessments, using results to improve teaching and support student learning. Key component from Dr. Robert Marzano's Work: Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC) (Marzano). • Comprised of a year-long plan for standards-based instruction at each grade-level. • Ensures steady academic progress as students build their knowledge and skills from one year to the next to master state standards. It is a combination of factors that have strong correlations with academic achievement: "opportunity to learn" and "time," which address the extent to which the curriculum is "guaranteed" (Marzano).
High-Yield Instructional Strategies	Adapted from *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement* by Robert Marzano. Dr. Marzano and his colleagues identified the top high-yield instructional strategies through a meta-analysis of over 100 independent studies. They determined that the following strategies have the greatest positive affect on student achievement for all students, in all subject areas, at all grade-levels. The 13 high-yield instructional strategies are:

[23] Davenport, P. and Anderson, G. (2002). Closing the Achievement Gap. Houston, TX: American Productivity Quality Center.

	1. Tracking Student Progress and Using Scoring Scales 2. Setting Goals/Objectives 3. Building Vocabulary 4. Identifying Similarities and Differences 5. Interactive Games 6. Summarizing 7. Note Taking 8. Nonlinguistic Representations 9. Student Discussion/Chunking 10. Homework 11. Practice 12. Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition 13. Graphic Organizers
Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs)	Assessment experts like those who design the ACT assert the following about PLDs: • Essential in setting standards as they are used to determine threshold evidence for each performance category; • Used to inform item development; • Provide a framework for differentiated instruction; • Identify target performance levels for individual students or groups of students; and • Track student growth along the proficiency continuum.
Assessment • **Formative Assessment** • **Pre-Assessment**	<u>Formative Assessment</u> Dylan Wiliam, PhD, a leading authority on the use of assessment to improve education, and his colleague, Paul Black, offer this inclusive definition of formative assessment: to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited.[24] It was Wiliam and Black who actually spurred the worldwide interest in formative assessment when they published two studies focused on classroom assessment in the late 1990s. They presented evidence from their research review, a meta-analysis, in which they conclude that student gains in learning triggered by formative assessment are amongst the largest ever reported for educational interventions. In fact, they assert "… that improved formative assessment helps low achievers more than other students and so reduces the range of achievement while raising achievement overall."[25] <u>Pre-Assessment</u>

[24] Wiliam, D. & Leahy, S. (2015). Embedding formative assessment. West Palm Beach, FL: Learning Sciences International.
[25] Black, P. & Wiliam, D. "Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment," Phi Delta Kappa, October 1998, pp. 1 – 13.

	Research evidence shows pre-assessment used to assess prerequisite learning (novice performance on a PLD) is beneficial if teachers use the results to help students master specific prerequisite knowledge and skills. Measuring pre-requisite learning will be the primary purpose of pre-assessment at RCP.
Direct Instruction	Research that supports direct instruction dates back to the 1960s. Direct instruction is proven to be an effective approach for students with diverse learning needs, language backgrounds, and students of all ages. In fact, direct instruction is used successfully with preschoolers to adults including gifted students, average learners, and those who struggle academically. Recent studies in reading and math show that when students from disadvantaged backgrounds continue to receive high-quality direct instruction over time, particularly after Grade 4 and on, high levels of achievement are maintained and even increased.[26]
Cooperative Learning	Research by Johnson & Johnson[27] indicates that cooperative learning, when compared with competitive and individual learning, typically results in: • Higher achievement • More caring, supportive, and committed relationships • Greater health, social competence, and self-esteem
Vocabulary	As noted by education professor Vicki Jacobs in her eBook, *Vocabulary: The Foundation of Literacy,* researchers Bromley (2007) and Graves (2008) found that vocabulary knowledge accounts for much of a student's verbal aptitude. In fact, a student's verbal prowess is a strong predictor of Kindergarten – Grade 12 academic achievement. Bromley noted that 70–80% of reading comprehension is due to one's vocabulary knowledge.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)	Research supporting the social and emotional frame for the curriculum was gathered from CASEL.[28] The following is a recap of the research-based findings of studies on SEL:
	• An extensive body of research demonstrates that education that promotes SEL gets overall, positive academic results.
	• Teachers in all academic areas can effectively teach SEL.
	• SEL benefits students for months to even years to come.
	  ○ Students exposed to SEL in school outperform their peers on a number of indicators: positive social behaviors and attitudes, skills like empathy and teamwork, and academics.
	  ○ Students exposed to SEL in school have fewer conduct problems, less emotional distress, and lower drug use.

[26] Stockard, J. (2010). Promoting Reading Achievement and Countering the 'Fourth-Grade Slump': The Impact of Direct Instruction on Reading Achievement in Fifth Grade, Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 15 (August, 2010): 218-240.
Stockard, J. (2010). Improving Elementary Level Mathematics Achievement in a Large Urban District: The Effects of Direct Instruction, Journal of Direct Instruction, 10 (Winter, 2010): 1-16.
[27] Johnson, D., & Johnson, R. (2000). Cooperative learning, values, and culturally plural classrooms. In M. Leicester, C. Modgil, & S. Modgil (Eds.), Classroom issues: Practice, pedagogy and curriculum. Palmer Press: London.
[28] CASEL - CASEL. (2019). Retrieved from https://casel.org

	○ Students who participate in evidence-based SEL programs showed an 11 percentile-point gain in academic achievement compared to students who did not participate in SEL programs. ○ Students who participated in evidence-based SEL programs showed improved behavior, an increased ability to manage stress and depression, and better attitudes about themselves, others, and school. • SEL competencies are critically important for the long-term success of all student's in today's economy.[29]
Blended Learning	Bibin Zheng, an assistant professor of counseling, educational psychology, and special education at Michigan State University, and her colleagues analyzed 15 years' worth of research on 1:1 laptop programs. They found that, on average, 1:1 programs had a statistically significant impact on student test scores in English language arts, writing, math, and science.[30]

Additionally, many factors within our academic plan align with the 2018 list of factors related to student achievement outlined by John Hattie in his research on Visible Learning. Factors with a significant effect sizes of .70 or better that are embedded within our academic plan are listed in Table 14.[31]

Visible Learning in the Academic Plan

Table 14

Factor	Effect Size	Relationship to RCP's Academic Plan
Collective teacher efficacy: the collective belief of teachers in their ability to positively affect students…believing you can make a difference	1.57	At RCP, supportive structures and processes for students and teachers alike, will clearly "show" teachers that what they are doing is improving student learning. Collective teacher efficacy is at the heart of our educational philosophy.
Self-reported grades: the accuracy of children to predict how they will perform	1.33	With clarity on the progressive levels of performance, consistent use of formative assessment to track student learning, and the use of student self-assessment, all students at RCP will be shown how to better predict their own performance.
Teacher estimates of achievement: the accuracy of teachers' knowledge of students in their classes	1.29	Knowing the academic, social, and emotional needs of our students is the foundation of everything we do at RCP. At RCP, educators will use this knowledge to plan, measure, and adjust all teaching and learning experiences.
Cognitive task analysis: a type of task analysis aimed at understanding tasks that require a lot of cognitive activity from the	1.29	From the outset of learning, students at RCP will understand the differences in student work from novice to mastery. This will serve as the base for students to engage in cognitive task analysis when

[29] L DePaoli, Jennifer & Bridgeland, John & N. Atwell, Matthew. (2017). Ready to Lead. Castel & Civic Enterprises & Hart Research Associates. PDF.
[30] Doran, Leo & Harold, Benjamin. (2016, May 18). 1-to-1 Laptop Initiativges Boost Student Scores, Study Finds.
[31] Visible Learning. (2019). Retrieved from https://visible-learning.org

Factor	Effect Size	Relationship to RCP's Academic Plan
user, such as decision-making, problem-solving, memory, attention and judgement		working in student teams (cooperative learning) with rigorous, relevant tasks.
Response to Intervention (RTI[2]): an educational approach that provides early, systematic assistance to children who are struggling in one or many areas of their learning	1.29	At RCP, RTI[1] will serve as another intentional safeguard that doesn't wait for children to fail before intervening. Being a charter school, we have an extended school day, so offering a continuum of services is planned for when building the school schedule. (See School Schedule found in Section 1.8.)
Strategy to integrate prior knowledge: students actively connect new learning with what they already know about the content or use it to clarify faulty assumptions they currently hold	.93	As part of lesson plan design, teachers will activate students' prior learning with the purpose of integrating prior knowledge into what is currently being taught.
Self-efficacy: an individual's belief in their innate ability to achieve goals	.92	With an intentional focus on SEL, explicitly teaching student ownership strategies, and organizing learning to meet students where they "enter" the learning, students at RCP will gain a belief in their ability to achieve because learning gains, even partial mastery gains, will be recognized and celebrated.
Classroom discussion: a method of teaching, that involves the entire class in a discussion	.82	Students at RCP will regularly engage in classroom discussion as part of direct instruction. Using well-prepared questions and prompts, students will engage in rich discourse and apply their SEL skills. During class discussions, students all will practice applying the academic and domain language of the standards.
Teacher clarity: the importance to clearly communicate the intentions of the lessons and the success criteria.	.75	At RCP, teachers will clearly communicate the learning target with success criteria so that students know where they are going, know where they are, and how to close the gap.
Feedback: Feedback on task, process and self-regulation level is far more effective than on the self-level	.70	Teachers at RCP will learn how to provide feedback that *moves learning forward*. For instance, as students engage in cooperative team learning, teachers will provide feedback that helps students take next steps and help themselves.

WHY THE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES ARE WELL-SUITED FOR TARGET POPULATION

RCP will serve a diverse student population. Based on area demographics, we expect the majority of the students to live in high poverty communities, identify as African American or another minority group, and have a higher-than-average number of students identified as English Learner. Additionally, we anticipate serving a

higher-than-average number of students requiring SPED services and needing additional educational services.

As a result, RCP's academic framework is designed to meet students where they are, create a realistic and structured growth plan for each student, and incorporate a proven SEL skills program that will ensure our students' success. This is also the reason that RCP will connect with parent(s)/guardian(s) and the community to help build support for students outside of school and the school day.

As shared at the beginning of the academic plan, all teaching and learning in our school will be driven by our Continuous Improvement Model (CIM) which is a responsive teaching model (Plan, Teach, Assess, Respond). This cycle occurs *monthly* at the school level and *daily* at the classroom level. At the school level (medium-cycle formative assessment), the CIM is supported by extensive research to close achievement gaps with its all hands-on deck approach where every staff member shares responsibility for student learning. Success Block will provide dedicated time each day to provide intervention or enrichment around grade-level standards that were taught and assessed by the IFC assessment.

At the classroom level, this same responsive teaching cycle is evident in the instructional methods that were intentionally selected to best serve the target student population at RCP. Working in concert with each other and often overlapping in purpose, the use of direct instruction, small-group instruction, and classroom formative assessment allow us to close the gap *daily*. As described in the table above, decades of research on classroom formative assessment strategies show that when implemented with fidelity, all students make significant gains in their learning, with the greatest gains for low achievers. Moreover, direct and small-group instruction will best serve our students' needs because they provide *explicit* instruction where teachers purposely check for understanding and make purposeful planned adjustments based on evidence collected.

Teachers will use multiple engaging, research-based instructional strategies, as it is our mission to provide a student-centered learning environment. Teachers will implement Dr. Marzano's 13 high-probability instructional strategies which research shows yield the most academic gains across all grade-levels when employed consistently. These strategies are used in all grade-levels, but instruction will vary by increasing expectations and complexity as the grade-levels progress.

Instructional methods are dependent on the needs of the individual student. Teachers will adapt lessons to meet the needs of all learners through differentiating the content, process taught, and assessment type. Instruction will include leveled texts and resources for students on, above, and below grade-level.

1.4 Academic Performance Standards

In this section:

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

(b) Describe the process for setting, monitoring, and revising academic achievement goals.

Aligned to our mission and vision, we will establish performance-based educational goals and objectives designed to focus all stakeholders on student academic achievement. With rigorous academic goals, individual student goal-setting (through student Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs), and parental support of academic growth, we will ensure continually improving student outcomes.

Kindergarten through Grade 8

Students in Kindergarten – Grade 8 will be assessed using interim formative assessments which measure achievement and growth in ELA and mathematics and will be aligned to the Tennessee Academic Standards (TAS). Rutherford Collegiate Prep (RCP) will utilize the nationally normed i-Ready Diagnostic assessment for all students in Kindergarten – Grade 8. These computer-based assessments are adaptive and consistently measure both student achievement and growth. After each fall administration, all students receive year-end typical growth targets. These targets are used systemically for goal setting.

Goal: Collectively, students in Kindergarten – Grade 8 will exceed national growth norms. This occurs when the median Progress to Annual Typical Growth exceeds 100% in reading and math.

All students with fall and spring scores will be included in i-Ready's **End of Year View** calculations of "*Progress to Annual Typical Growth (Median)*."

Grades 3 – 8

Goal-setting in Grades 3 – 8 will be aligned to Tennessee's School Accountability Designations and school grade calculus. Subsequent changes to the accountability framework or calculations will prompt a revisionto RCP's goals in the affected year(s). Per the current accountability framework, each Kindergarten – Grade 8 school evaluates individual student success and effectiveness of the curricula by their performance on the state assessments and state alternative assessments. The individual student performance data is then combined to measure RCP's annual progress across four key indicators of success and two student populations—All Students and Historically Underserved Student Groups culminating in a school letter grade and designation.

Our goals will be adjusted accordingly if the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) revises the school accountability framework after submission of this application. We understand and will be dedicated to ensuring that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and will continually strive for academic excellence on challenging state academic standards and the state assessments.

School's Goals

Currently, the state evaluates Kindergarten – Grade 8 buildings across four indicators of success—Achievement, Growth, Chronically Out of School, and Progress on English Language Assessments. Therefore, to maintain a level of transparency with our students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and the community at large, we will align goals to publicly available data that is calculated for all students and student groups and published annually by the TDOE. If the state implements a new assessment or method of calculating a school grade indicator, we will treat the initial year as a baseline and make meaningful and rigorous targets going forward.

Our minimum goal requirements and the methodology to calculate these targets are detailed below for each of the four key indicators of success. These S.M.A.R.T. goals follow the Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO)

and double AMO calculations outlined in Tennessee's approved ESSA plan—decreasing half the percent of students whose performance does not meet the standard over the course of eight years or four years, respectively. In year one of the charter, we aim to establish a baseline that meets or exceeds the performance of demographically similar local schools on all four key indicators of the School Report Card.

Student Achievement

Specific: On the state assessments each year (TCAP, EOC and TCAP-Alternative Assessment[36]), RCP will see a significant increase in the Success Rate, the percentage of students scoring "On Track" or "Mastered."

Measurable: Annual ELA and mathematics scores for students in Grades 3 – 8 will meet the **AMO target** to reduce the percentage of students who did NOT score "On Track" or "Mastered" relative to the previous year's assessment scores (if available), or meet or exceed the absolute performance of local demographically similar schools.[37] If the prior year's assessment scores are not available for the demographically similar schools, district scores will be used. When district end of course assessment scores are not available for comparable grade- levels, then 80% will be used as the estimated baseline success rate. If the success rate on any assessment is at or above 90% in any prior year, we will increase said rate by 1%, or meet or exceed the performance of local demographically similar schools. In years where the state implements a new assessment, scores from the first administration will establish a new baseline for measuring this AMO target. Assessment scores in Year 2 will be the initial comparison to the baseline results.

Student Growth

Specific: On the state TVAAS, we will see a minimum level 3 growth in year 1, with the expectation the school will achieve level 4 and 5 growth in subsequent years.

Measurable: RCPs TVAAS growth scores will improve by an increment at least equal to the growth scores or exceed the median performance of local demographically similar schools. In years where the state implements a new assessment or growth calculation, performance from the first growth comparison year will establish a new baseline for measuring this goal. Growth scores after Year 2 will be the initial comparison to the baseline results.

Chronically Out of School

Specific: We will significantly reduce the percent of students classified as Chronically Absent, annually.

Measurable: The percent of students classified as chronically absent will decrease at a rate that meets **the double AMO target**—decrease by half the percent of students classified as chronically absent in four years.

English Language Proficiency

Specific: On the WIDA ACCESS assessments each year[38], we will see a significant increase in the percent of students meeting growth standards.

Measurable: Annual WIDA ACCESS scores for students will meet an AMO target to reduce the percentage of students who did NOT meet growth standards relative to the previous year's growth (if available) or meet or exceed the absolute performance of local demographically similar schools.[39] If the prior year's assessment scores are not available for the demographically similar schools, district scores will be used.

Attainable: Our students will have access to high-quality teachers and the appropriate programmatic, financial, and human resources to drive performance improvements.

Relevant: Goals are relevant to our mission, highlighting the importance of student success, academic rigor focused on growth and continuous improvement.

Time Bound: Goals will be evaluated and assessed annually after the release of state accountability results in the spring or following fall. If needed, the establishment of a baseline will occur after the administration of any new state assessment, calculation or accountability framework, as appropriate.

The goal-setting procedures described above represent a comprehensive list of performance targets aligned to the 2019 Accountability Protocol for schools. Baseline values on each indicator will be established at the endof each academic year, and as needed when new assessments or new calculations arise. Table 16 below represents an application of the goal-setting procedures to a *sample* of our local area schools' 2018-19 performance data.[40] Achievement, Growth, Chronically Out of School, and English Language Proficiency Assessment indicators are benchmarked from the local schools' 2018-19 school grade performance. Goals in Year 2 and beyond are based on meeting or exceeding the baseline achieved in Year 1 (or the year prior), with the goal of meeting the annual or double AMO targeted improvements or exceeding local schools' performance.

Table 16

	Baseline		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
Category	All Students	Student Groups	All Students	Student Groups	All Students	Student Groups	All Students	Student Groups	All Students	Student Groups	All Students	Student Groups
Achievement	45%	31%	50%	36%	55%	41%	60%	46%	65%	51%	70%	56%
Growth	3.8	4.1	3.9	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.1	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.6
Chronically out of School	7%	8%	5%	7%	4%	6%	3%	4%	2%	3%	0%	1%
ELPA	59%	53%	62%	56%	65%	59%	68%	62%	71%	65%	74%	68%
Points	3.0		3.1		3.2		3.3		3.4		3.5	

Our teachers will use i-Ready Diagnostic fall administration results, previous school data, and other new pre-assessment data to set Typical Growth and Stretch Growth for their students. The goal will always be to meet students where they are in their learning and grow them as far as possible in the learning progression. Goals will be set for individual students, cohorts, and entire grade-levels. For students who are achieving at or above grade-level to start the year, i-Ready Stretch Growth goals will reflect more than one year of growth with the ultimate goal of students reaching Above Grade-level placement. And for students who are achieving below grade-level, i-ready Stretch Growth goals reflect more than one year of growth with the goal of reaching grade-level in 1 – 3 years, depending on their initial placement.

Please note the following about the i-Ready Diagnostic:

- **Typical Growth** marks the annual growth (from fall to spring) for an average student taking the i-Ready Diagnostic. It is based on the observed growth and performance of the millions of students nationwide who have taken the i-Ready Diagnostic. Typical Growth is therefore a descriptive measure of growth; it is not intended to serve as a recommendation for sufficient growth, but it does offer a useful reference point to identify students who are lagging or surpassing median growth. Normative performance: 50% of students.
- **Stretch Growth** sets an ambitious but attainable goal for student growth. The targets for Stretch Growth were set based on observations of the growth of a national sample of students who started at each placement level and achieved grade-level proficiency over time. For students placing below grade-level, achieving Stretch Growth is a path to an "on Grade-Level, Mid" placement. For students who are already on grade-level at the beginning of the year, Stretch Growth provides a target for attaining or maintaining an "On Grade-Level, Late" or "Above Grade-Level" placement. *Stretch Growth is designed to put each student on a path toward grade-level proficiency. For many students, that path is expected to span from one to three years.* Normative performance: 33% of students.

Beginning with the fall administration of i-Ready Diagnostic within the first two weeks of school, data will be collected that gives the complete picture of student learning in reading and math, including the following for each student:

- Current level of performance in each tested domain. And because i-Ready Diagnostic is an adaptive assessment, the data reflects if a child is achieving above, at, or below grade-level. For example, a Grade 4 student, might be performing at a Grade 3 level in phonics, a Grade 4 level in vocabulary, and a Grade 3 level in comprehension of informational text.
- Suggested Typical Growth and Stretch Growth targets.
- List of student's academic strengths and gaps.
- Suggested next steps in instruction.

Setting ambitious, yet attainable, growth goals for all students will drive our process for meeting both academic achievement and growth goals for every child. Using available historical data, as well as fall testing data, will allow us to plan any immediate remediation needed around priority learning gaps.

Both growth and achievement will be monitored throughout the entire school year. Within each of the 10 units of instruction, students will be taught and assessed on grade-level standards.

Each unit will begin with a pre-assessment of the prerequisite knowledge and skills—the novice level of the PLD. This will allow us to know if students are demonstrating readiness or need some gaps closed. Throughout the unit, a continual stream of evidence will be collected and acted upon daily. At the close of each unit, all students will take an IFC Assessment. As a critical part of our continuous improvement process, PLCs will meet immediately following the common assessment to review the results. Student data will be disaggregated to identify students who met mastery of standards, those who need additional tutorials, and those who need remediation. For students who have not mastered the standards, they are placed into a Success Block focusing on the standards that have not yet been mastered, where they receive extra support and re-teaching in a timeapart from regular class time. Students who achieve mastery on the IFC Assessment receive enrichment during Success Block.

Another way achievement and growth goals are monitored throughout the year is through the mid-year administration of the i-Ready Diagnostic. This way we can see if students, cohorts, and grade-levels are on track to meet their growth goals. We can also see if previous gaps in performance have been partially or completely closed. If a student has made higher gains than expected by mid-year, higher goals are set for the end of the year. Students, on the other hand, not meeting growth goals at mid-year are given additional supports for their learning.

School-wide goals will be set using the academic and social emotional goals created by individual students, cohorts, and entire grade-levels. School-wide goals will be adjusted based on state assessment results. Additionally, the school will annually set and monitor goals using a dashboard in other operational and academic categories, such as: teacher attendance, teacher attrition, student attendance, student attrition, instructional software goals, vocabulary goals, discipline data, teacher walk-throughs, etc.

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

Table 17

Steps	Explanation
Conduct a needs assessment	Conduct a needs assessment that includes the following: • Disaggregate data to evaluate specific area of academic weakness for students and student groups, including but not limited to data from state assessments, i-Ready Diagnostics, and IFC assessments. • Review student performance relative to teacher instructional performance.

	• Use TDOE's Diagnostic Tool(s) for identified subgroups that have failed to meet state and/or district expectations to conduct root cause analysis of student performance. This includes:
	  o An in-depth and thorough description of the progress and challenges faced at the school level for the any identified student groups
	  o A robust explanation of the reasons for the progress and challenges faced that are within the school's control
	  o A thorough reflection on prior year strategies that may or may not have contributed (positively or negatively) to school outcomes

Write a corrective plan	Write a corrective plan that includes the following:
	• **Goals**: Using the results of the needs assessment, establish measurable goals (i.e., with data sources) that address key areas identified in the needs assessment. Identify who specifically will monitor each goal and when.
	• **Strategies**: Develop strategies aligned to goals.
	  o Ensure that strategies show a thoroughly detailed and logical connection to the identified goal(s) and are appropriately named.
	  o Describe strategies in explicit details, noting how the strategy will lead to changes that will improve outcomes for the identified student group(s).
	• **Action Steps**: Identify one or more action steps for each strategy.
	  o Write action steps that show a thoroughly detailed connection to the strategies and make sure action steps are appropriately named and clearly state the focus of the action.
	  o Develop descriptions of the action steps that provide explicit detail regarding the actions to be taken, including as appropriate: what the action is and its purpose, when and how often the action will occur, and how it will be completed to impact the identified student group.

Implement a corrective plan	**Take action!** • Have pre-determined stakeholders monitor the plan for compliance and quality. • Collect evidence of success (i.e., evidence of accomplished goals).

We will strive to maintain an academic level for students well above state and/or district academic achievement expectations. We will assess our student data comparatively with that of state and/or district expectations with each new set of data. This will be done with each i-Ready Diagnostic and IFC assessment administration so that timely adjustments can be made as appropriate. With the Diagnostic, mid-year adjustments will be made. And with the IFC assessments, adjustments will be made every 3 – 4 weeks, providing either remediation or enrichment for every student.

As the final comparison data will come from student academic achievement and growth on the end of year state assessments, comparing our data to the state and/or district expectations using specifically the three i-Ready Diagnostic administrations per year (that gives a complete picture of growth and performance), will allow us greater opportunity to ensure expectations are met or exceeded.

If the state and/or district finds that we have failed to meet state and/or district expectations, we will use the data points for each areas of academic miss as a baseline on which to create a corrective action plan. If a corrective action plan is needed, RCP will follow the steps presented in the proceeding table, making use of the school improvement resources provided by the TDOE, specifically the resource guide designed to create a focused and specific plan of improvement to address low-performing student groups.

The corrective plan will be shared with the state and/or district for approval. Data collected to monitor the effectiveness of the plan will be shared in a timely manner with the state and/or district.

(d) Describe the proposed school's approach to helping remediate students' academic underperformance, including plans for Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) that aligns with Tennessee guidelines.

METHODS OF DIFFERENTIATION, INCLUDING RTI² PLANS

Differentiated instruction helps students access core instruction (Tier I). Differentiated instruction is guided by principles of differentiation: environment, quality curriculum, assessment that informs teaching and learning, instruction that responds to student variance, and leading students and managing routines.

Teachers at RCP will differentiate instruction by adjusting content, process, product, and/or environment.

Some examples include:

- **Cooperative learning**: When students engage in cooperative learning, the teacher will differentiate the learning in several ways. One way is to allocate different roles to members of the student team according to their different skills and strengths. This gives students a way to add value and gain confidence as they work to achieve shared learning goals with their peers. Additionally, with cooperative learning the teacher might differentiate the level of rigor of the tasks assigned to different teams. For example, students will be grouped based on their performance and assigned tasks that are aligned to the PLC they are ready to extend on.
- **Digital resources**: Differentiation will also occur during blended learning. Students will receive targeted instruction specific to individual needs.
- **Verbal support**: Based on students' command of language, teachers will adapt their verbal explanations to support different academic levels and language proficiency. This will be critical during classroom questioning and classroom discussions. This is about more than vocabulary usage; it is also about differentiating sentence structures as well.
- **Student goal setting**: Students at RCP will be taught how to set meaningful learning goals with action plans. Some goals will be long term, like the Typical Growth and Stretch Growth goals (described in the Assessment Plan). Other goals will be short term goals where students see the immediate impact of their plans on their own learning.
- **Student Choice**: At RCP, teachers will differentiate by providing student choice as appropriate. At a school-wide level, students will have choice when they select a career path to study as they enter middle school.

In our learning communities, strategies like these will work in concert with each other, often overlapping in purpose. Teachers will use them as needed to meet the individual and cohort needs of their students. For example, a teacher might use verbal support with her English Learners or any student with weak language skills. Similarly, student goal setting will not be one size fits all. Teachers will help each student set meaningful goals with action plans that best support where they are in the learning progression and move them forward. Often this will be accomplished by having all students working toward achieving the same learning target, but differentiating the success criteria:

- All students work toward the common, grade-level learning target: *Students will describe how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution*.
- Students, however, depending on their readiness, may be in different places in terms of which success criteria of the learning target they are working to achieve:
  - I can classify characters as static or dynamic.
  - I can describe how characters respond to events throughout the story/drama, citing examples of their thoughts, actions, speech, and motivations.
  - I can describe how characters change by the end of the story/drama (e.g., more or less caring/trusting/etc.), citing examples of their thoughts, actions, speech, and motivations.

School-based professional development will be provided within the **three-week** preservice training in year one (**two-week** preservice in subsequent years) and during the ongoing PLC time.

Because differentiation is contingent upon sound assessment practices, professional development centered around assessment will take place consistently throughout the year. This begins within the back-to-school professional development days in which teachers will participate in two units of training on data and assessment. One unit of training will focus on understanding the purpose and use of the state and school assessments and *formative assessment techniques*. The second unit of training focuses on utilizing data to make instructional decisions, including understanding state and diagnostic data points, placing students in Success Block based on assessment data, *differentiating within the classroom*, and planning for and utilizing data-driven centers.

Teachers will also receive a minimum of one hour of professional development each week, through multiple platforms, including but not limited to in-person and online learning opportunities. This differentiated professional development may include data analysis and planning. The instructional coach will be responsible for identifying weekly professional development for teachers and staff in conjunction with the principal based on weekly walkthrough, evaluative, and student-level data.

Professional development may be led by school employees. For instance, the instructional coach may deliver a professional development session to improve teachers' abilities to conduct an item analysis or write questions at varying depths of knowledge. Teachers identified as exemplar in areas based on student achievement will be given the opportunity to lead professional development. This may be through the weekly professional development, classroom observation, or modeling. Professional development may also be coordinated to bring in outside experts to develop teachers and administrators.

Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI^2)

RCP's RTI^2 framework will be critical to supporting children in becoming "ready" students as defined by the TDOE. The TDOE defines a "READY STUDENT" **as a student who has strong academic and technical content knowledge and skills, is ready for postsecondary and career, and has developed the social and emotional skills necessary to be a productive member of our state's economy.**

RTI^2 helps educators understand where students are, and through a multi-tiered system of support, assists them in moving forward. The framework integrates TAS, assessment, early intervention, and accountability for all students. This constant system of support enables students to persist on the path to readiness.

The RTI^2 framework represents a continuum of intervention services in which general education and special populations work collaboratively to meet the needs of all students. This includes shared knowledge and commitment to the RTI^2 framework, its function as a process of improving educational outcomes for all students, and its importance to the department to meet requirements related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

RTI^2 is a process focused on prevention and early intervention that uses multiple sources of data for instruction, appreciation, intervention, and transition between tiers. Assessment is a key component of the RTI^2 framework. Data derived from ongoing assessment, including the Universal screening process, informs data-based decision-making. All students must participate in the universal screening process to identify those students who may need additional support and/or other types of instruction. RCP will use i-Ready Diagnostic or a similar nationally normed, skills based universal screener, as part of the universal screening process.

A program such as i-Ready will be used for Tier 1, and 2, and 3 instruction. i-Ready serves multiple roles in the RTI^2 process. First, the diagnostic is used as the universal screener and the i-Ready program as an instructional resource. i-Ready is used for Reading and Math RTI^2 instruction. It consists of two major components, Diagnostic and Instruction. The Reading Diagnostic is a skills-based, adaptive universal screener that provides

detailed prescriptive reporting in phonological awareness, phonics, high frequency words, vocabulary, comprehension literary text and informational text. Each student receives a Lexile score, nationally normed percentile as well as a typical growth measure (one academic year) and stretch growth measure (path to proficiency or advanced proficiency). i-Ready Diagnostic is highly correlated to TN Ready and yields a TN Ready Predictive Proficiency Report. i-Ready provides a list of "Can Do's" for each student that are correlated to the TAS and a list of "Next Steps for Instruction" for teachers. Generic lesson plans, "Tools for Instruction" are provided. Students are placed in up to five instructional groups within a class with "Next Steps" and "Tools for Instruction" for the teacher as well.

Two additional assessments provided with i-Ready are Standards Mastery and Progress Monitoring. Standards Mastery provides a Form A and Form B assessment for every Tennessee academic standard with an item analysis per student for each question missed. Instruction is an individualized digital student path created by Diagnostic results. These highly engaging research-based activities are personalized even within the lesson level. Teachers monitor in real-time student pass rate and time accrued. Each i-Ready lesson is correlated to the appropriate Tennessee academic standard(s)

A program such as Lexia Core 5 will be used for Tier 2 and 3 instruction. Lexia Core 5 will be utilized because it is a technology-based, personalized reading program that provides explicit and systematic learning in six areas of reading instruction and delivers criterion- and norm-referenced performance data without interrupting the flow of instruction. Lexia Core 5 provides a truly adaptive and individualized learning experience that enables students of all abilities to advance their reading skills in the areas of phonological awareness, phonics, structural analysis, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. This research-proven approach accelerates reading skill development, predicts students' year-end performance, and provides teachers with data-driven action plans to help differentiate instruction.

A program such as MATH 180® will be used for Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction. MATH 180® is a blended-learning intervention program that builds students' confidence and competence in mathematics while providing teachers with comprehensive support. Through a combination of personalized software and teacher-facilitated instruction, students accelerate swiftly and successfully toward grade-level curriculum. MATH 180® is available in two courses. Designed for students who lack numerical understanding and reasoning skills, Course I focuses on key foundational concepts that enable students to make connections while learning to think algebraically. The Course II curriculum transitions students to pre-algebra with an emphasis on building proportional reasoning with rates, ratios, linear relationships, and functions.

For tier 3 instruction, we will use a program such as The Wilson Reading System® (WRS). WRS is a multisensory structured language education (MSLE) program with associated certification training that is based on phonological-coding research, Orton-Gillingham principles, and 30 years of experience in the field. As a highly-structured remedial program that directly teaches the structure of English, it is appropriate for students with a language-based learning disability such as dyslexia, as well as for those who have been unsuccessful with other teaching strategies.

The overriding goal of WRS is for students to independently read grade-level narrative and informational text with ease and understanding. Other instructional goals include accurate and speedy word recognition; spelling and proofreading proficiency; increased vocabulary, background knowledge, and listening comprehensions skills; and reading of connected text with fluency and expression.

WRS follows a 10-part lesson plan divided into three blocks. Block 1 emphasizes word study/foundational reading skills. Block 2 emphasizes spelling/foundational writing skills. Block 3 emphasizes fluency and comprehension. One full lesson consists of all three blocks (20-30 minutes per block to complete) and a minimum of two full lessons per week should be taught. Depending on the student and intensity of instruction, it may take 2-3 years to complete all 12 Steps. Instruction can be presented 1:1 (45 minutes: four – five times/week, or 60 – 90 minutes: two – five times/week); or in a small group (40 – 60 minutes: four – five

times/week, or 75 – 90 minutes: two – five times/ week).

Tier I
For Tier 1 instruction, we will utilize an instructional resource such as i-Ready. When Tier I instruction is functioning well, it should meet the needs of 80 – 85% of the student population. The path to readiness begins in the regular classroom where students receive differentiated, high-quality, research-based core instruction. Instructional decisions will be driven by ongoing formative assessment, and teachers, through collaborative team planning and other professional development and coaching, will receive the support they need to provide high-quality core instruction for all students.

To evaluate the impact of core instruction on student learning, data will be gathered and interpreted from multiple measures, including but not limited to: i-Ready Diagnostics (winter and spring administrations), IFC assessments, classroom assessments (summative and formative), student portfolios, student self-assessments, classroom observation data, and if available, past TCAP assessments. Data mined from these measures will be used to inform core instruction, indicating the need for re-teaching or instructional modifications. The school team will meet to determine which students are making adequate progress and at which students are not making adequate progress so proper plans can be put in place.

Tier II
For Tier 2 instruction, we will utilize instructional resources such as i-Ready, Lexia Core 5, and MATH 180®. Tier II is in addition to the instruction provided in Tier I and **should meet the needs of 10 – 15% of students**. At RCP, students who score below the designated cut score on the universal screener (i-Ready Diagnostic) will receive intense intervention in Tier II. These cut scores are based on national norms and identify students who are at risk. As a guideline, we will identify students below the 25th percentile as "at-risk." Students who exceed grade-level expectations will be considered "advanced."

Unlike the Tier I framework, Tier II interventions will focus on a specific skill deficiency. **Once the skill deficiency is identified, students will receive the recommended thirty minutes of research-based instructional interventions from highly trained certified personnel each day within a group of five – six students who are working on the same skill.** Instructional interventions will be differentiated, scaffolded, and targeted based on the specific skill deficiency of the student**.** Tier II interventions will consist of tools such as Ready Teacher Toolbox, to provide students the supports in the skill deficit.

Once Tier II interventions begin, progress monitoring will occur through a computer-based skills assessment every five instructional days to gather 10 – 15 data points. When a student consistently demonstrates mastery of the skill, he or she will be moved to another group to support any other skill deficiencies or will be removed from Tier II once all deficiencies are eliminated. If a student does not make adequate progress, the Tier II intervention will be revised, implemented, and monitored until another 10 – 15 data points are gathered to determine a move to another tier. The changes made to the tier may be increasing frequency of intervention sessions, change of intervention, change of intervention provider, or change of time of day when the intervention is delivered. Teachers will create a Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) which describes the current level of the students based on data from their assessments, the targeted interventions needed, the frequency in which the interventions will be administered, and the expected outcome or goal of the intervention. Parents, teachers, and administrators sign the PMP and the team reconvenes at least quarterly to monitor progress and review the plan. Teachers provide more frequent updates through parent conferences, informal conversations, and graded assignments.

Tier III
For Tier 3 instruction, we will utilize instructional resources such as i-Ready, Lexia Core 5, MATH 180®, and the Wilson Reading System®. Tier III addresses 3 – 5% of students who have received Tier I instruction and Tier II interventions and continue to show marked difficulty in acquiring necessary reading, mathematics, and/or writing skill(s). It could also include students who are 1.5 to 2 years behind or are below the 10th

percentile on the universal screener, who will require the most intensive interventions immediately.

Tier III interventions will be unique to the students' skill deficiency. The research-based intervention tools that will be utilized to address the skills are FCRR and Ready Teacher Toolbox. Tier III students will be provided forty to sixty minutes of intervention, depending on the grade-level and subject area, daily. The Tier III interventions will occur with highly trained certified personnel in a group of 3 or fewer students (Kindergarten – Grade 5) or a group of 6 or fewer students (Grades 6 – 8).

If a student does not show adequate progress on a specific skill, there must be at least four data points from the computer-based skills assessment before a change in the intervention is made. This intervention also will focus on a specific skill deficiency using research-based instruction. Progress monitoring will occur through the computer-based skills assessment every five instructional days of Tier III. If the student continues to not make significant progress, a special education referral may be considered.

Students who are automatically placed in Tier III, 1.5 to 2 years behind or below the 10th percentile on the universal screener will be allowed adequate amount of time to respond to the intervention before a referral for special education is made. The goal of placing students in Tier III immediately is to increase the intensity of the intervention, not shorten the duration of the intervention period.

Table 15 illustrates the alignment between the student experience, teacher instruction/practice, and RCP's RTI^2 Matrix. All students will take the universal screener, currently planned to be the i-Ready diagnostic.

Table 15

Student Experience	Teacher Instruction/Practice	RCP's RTI^2 Matrix
Tier I (Core Instruction): Meets the needs of 80 – 85 % of students		
General Education Classroom	Teachers will use IFCs, Unit Maps, and focused lesson plans to provide all students access to (and priority coverage of) the TAS. Teachers will use research-based instructional models proven to support special populations to teach and assess the standards AND social-emotional skills.	School-based professional development will be provided within the **three-week** preservice training in year one (**two-week** preservice in subsequent years) and during the ongoing PLC time.
Formative Assessment (Short-Cycle Formative Assessment)	Teachers will plan minute-by-minute and day-by-day formative assessment that includes how they will respond to data in real time, closing daily achievement gaps on grade-level standards. Teachers will create their own items and/or use an item bank, aligning all items to the TAS.	Data from daily formative assessment will be reviewed in team planning and **weekly** data analysis in PLC meeting.
Instructional Focus Calendar Assessments (Medium-Cycle Formative Assessment)	Teachers will assess all students on *taught* grade-level standards for each of the 10 units.	**Monthly**, during *data chats*, part of the PLC structure, grade-level/subject teams will analyze data and form intervention and enrichment groups. School-level data teams will

		ensure that monthly IFC Assessment data correlates with i-Ready Diagnostic data.
Success Block	Teachers will provide daily differentiated instruction (intervention and/or enrichment) based on the IFC assessment data. Groups will be flexible each monthly cycle to meet student needs.	Success Block will occur **30 minutes daily**.
i-Ready Diagnostic (Long-Cycle Formative Assessment)	Teachers will administer the i-Ready Diagnostic in the fall, winter, and spring to measure student performance and growth relative to the TAS. Teachers will use the data to set and monitor growth goals (i.e., Typical Growth goals and Stretch Growth goals).	**Fall/Winter/Spring**: School-level data team will ensure that all curriculum, instruction, and assessment are meeting the needs of all student populations.
Student Portfolios	Teachers will help students assess and track their own progress through the use of portfolios. Portfolios will also be used for self-reflection and for students to communicate about their learning with others.	**Throughout the year**, students will have data from multiple measures as well as work samples that represent their progress over time.
Blended Learning	In the regular class setting, teachers will provide targeted instruction based on student diagnostic needs through instructional software.	**Weekly** monitoring of student progress will occur.
School Break Enrichment Camps	RCP will provide academic enrichment camps during posted school breaks (i.e., winter and spring break).	**Multi-day** enrichment will be provided free of charge.
Office Hours	Teachers will provide after school instructional support on a posted schedule for free four days each week.	**Daily** academic support will be provided by teachers.
After School Tutoring	Tutoring sessions will be offered free of charge, targeted to diagnosed skill deficits. Teachers will employ different teaching protocols and use different resources than those found in core instruction.	After school tutoring will be provided **4 days a week** for an **hour** a day.
After School Bonus Hour Tutoring	Tutoring sessions will be offered free of charge, targeted to current instructional performance with additional instructional/software support.	Bonus tutoring will be provided **4 days a week** for an additional **one hour** a day.
Saturday School	Licensed teachers and instructional support staff will provide targeted instruction.	Saturday school will occur **twice a month**.
Tier II: Meets the needs of 10 – 15% of students		
Tier II Instruction	Small-group instruction that is focused	**30 minutes** of interventions

	on a specific skill deficiency. Instruction will utilize research-based instructional interventions from certified, highly-trained personnel each day within a group of no more than five – six students who are working on the same skill.	provided **daily** within the school day.
Progress Monitoring	Progress monitoring will occur to produce data points to determine the progress a student is making.	Will occur every **five instructional days** using a **computer-based skills assessment**.
Tier III: Meets the needs of 3 – 5% of students		
Tier III Instruction	Small-group instruction that is focused on a specific skill deficiency. Instruction will utilize research-based instructional interventions from certified, highly-trained personnel each day within a group of no more than 3 students who are working on the same skill.	**40-60 minutes** of interventions provided **daily** within the school day, depending on subject area and grade-level.
Progress Monitoring	Progress monitoring will occur to produce data points to determine the progress a student is making.	Will occur every **five instructional days** using a **computer-based skills assessment**.

Please see below for instructional minutes for Tier 1 core instruction.

ELA Instructional Minutes

- Kindergarten – Grade 5: 120 – 150 instructional minutes for the ELA block with 90 minutes of uninterrupted time.
- Grade 6 – 8: Minimum of 90-minute double block ELA class daily.

Math Instructional Minutes

- Kindergarten – Grade 1: Minimum of 65 minutes
- Grade 2: Minimum of 75 minutes
- Grades 3 – 5: Minimum of 90 minutes

(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.

Goals for Student Attendance:

- Year 1: Achieve 90% daily attendance, based on the average over the school year.
- Achieve 95% daily attendance by third year of operation with reduction in absentees by 10% annually.

Tennessee law requires children ages six through 17 attend school, but the primary rationale for high-quality attendance data is the relationship between student attendance and student achievement. Teacher effectiveness is the strongest school-related predictor of student success but chronic student absence reduces even the best teacher's ability to provide learning opportunities.[41] Students who attend school regularly have been shown to achieve at higher levels than students who miss a lot of school. In fact, one study looking at young children

found that absenteeism in kindergarten was associated with negative first grade outcomes such as greater absenteeism in subsequent years and lower achievement in reading, math, and general knowledge.[42]

In order to meet our attendance goal of 95%, we have developed procedures to ensure high rates of attendance.

First and foremost, we will plan educational experiences that meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of every child. Our student-centered approach will engage students with instruction that meets them where they are and puts them on a track for success. Our positive culture, intentional CIM, and the effective use of RTI[2] ensure that we intervene with students before they fall too far yet makes *failing forward;* something we all experience as we learn and try new things.

We will provide students with a wealth of adult expertise to meet their needs. From lead teachers to specific specialists to student teacher, students will be surrounded by positive role models who care about their success and well-being.

One of our strategies is to make sure that every student participates in activities at school. With many options to choose from, we will identify any student who is not active in their school community and get them involved. We want every RCP student to feel connected at school beyond the learning community. Some options for involvement include school service organizations like safety patrol or student government, and after-school clubs and sports such as National Junior Honor Society and soccer.

When students do miss school, we will use the following procedures:

- When a student is absent from school, parent(s)/guardian(s) are required to call the office prior to the start of the school day. More than three days of consecutive absences are considered excessive, except in cases of extended illness or extremely unusual circumstances. Days of suspension for disciplinary reasons will not be counted toward the three-day total.
- An absence may be excused for the following reasons:
  - Personal illness requiring a physician's statement
  - Death in the immediate family
  - Court appearance required by legal authorities
  - Religious holidays (request verification)
  - Absences due to school-related field trips, rehearsals, competitions, etc.
  - Medical and dental appointments (make every effort to schedule after school)
  - Other emergency or unusual circumstances as approved by a building administrator
- When a student's absenteeism becomes problematic or excessive, teachers and/or administrators will contact parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss solutions and put a plan in place to immediately improve attendance. If attendance issues would continue, administrators may refer students to the Tennessee Child Protective Services depending on the circumstances. A letter, in that case, would be sent to parent(s)/guardian(s) before any such action is taken.
- We will also enforce additional consequences for truancy. Truant students will have a loss of privileges which may include extracurricular events, dances, and/or athletic eligibility. We will adhere to the truancy policy as provided by RCS.
- The school attendance personnel will attend all district attendance and truancy information sessions and will monitor and report truancy through the district or state as appropriate.

(f) Explain how students will matriculate through the proposed school (i.e., promotion/retention policies).

Promotion and Retention

Our use of a research-based, data-driven education model provides the structure and accountability necessary for the continuous monitoring and analysis of the academic program. The data is used to ensure students are

on track to master the required standards. This data is analyzed during weekly data chats to determine action steps to help students improve or make adjustments in school-wide initiatives.

Students are expected to meet adequate levels of performance in reading, writing, mathematics, and science for each grade-level. These levels of performance are used to identify students who must receive remediation and may be retained. No student may be assigned to a grade-level based solely on age, or other factors that constitute social promotion.

We will follow all state-mandated guidelines for retention. Other factors that may be considered to determine if promotion requirements have been met may include the following:

1. Previous retention history
2. State assessment data
3. Formative assessment data
4. Current goals and objectives on the student's PLP
5. Current goals and objectives on the student's IEP
6. Current goals and objectives on the student's ILP
7. Social/emotional behavior
8. Attendance
9. Placement and a possible change in the current placement
10. Grades
11. Current accommodations/modifications/services

The teacher, parent(s)/guardian(s), and principal will work together to ensure that a Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) is in place to prevent retention during the school year. Students in Grades 3 – 8 take end-of-year state assessments in reading, math, and science in order to provide more evidence for evaluating student performance. Grade 3 students who do not pass the end-of-grade assessment for reading are subject to additional requirements under state legislation. The ultimate decision for promotion or retention is made by the principal.

Middle school students in Grades 5 – 8 will follow state guidelines for promotion and earning credits in ELA, math, science, and social studies in order to be promoted to high school. Students in Grades 5 through 7 who fail to master course standards will be provided opportunities to remediate.

Unless a special education student is on an alternative curriculum per the student's IEP, that student is held to the same policies in effect for general education.

(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.

Exit Standards

Exit standards will address both cognitive and affective domains. In terms of cognitive exit standards, students will show mastery on state standards. The evidence for this mastery will come from student performance on TNReady. In addition to performance, students will also show growth. The growth component will be measured by TNReady growth and the skills-based interim assessment, i-Ready. RCP understands that EL students may not be retained solely on the lack of language acquisition.

For affective exit standards, students will demonstrate affective growth under the auspices of the SEL model. This model will gauge student improvement in five areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. Student growth in these SEL domains will be tracked in students' portfolios.

1.5 Phase-In/Turnaround Planning (only for applicants proposing a conversion)

Since RCP is not a conversation school, this section is not applicable.

1.6 High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness (high schools only)

Since RCP is not a conversation school, this section is not applicable.

1.7 Assessments

Charter school students must take the same State-mandated assessments as students in other public schools. Charter schools also administer internal assessments. In this section:

(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.

Assessment is the bridge between teaching and learning. The two primary Kindergarten – Grade 8 interim assessments at Rutherford Collegiate Prep (RCP) include the i-Ready Diagnostic and IFC Assessments. Both assessments measure the Tennessee Academic Standards (TAS), but they present different insights into student learning. Please note that RCP reserves the right to implement a different formative assessment comparable to i-Ready, if necessary, to meet the needs of the school and its students.

i-Ready Diagnostic

Table 18

Correlation between i-Ready Diagnostic and TNReady
Curriculum and Associates, in partnership with the Educational Research Institute of America (ERIA), conducted a large-scale study on the relationship between i-Ready Diagnostic and the TNReady. The research found a high correlation between i-Ready Diagnostic and TNReady. **i-Ready was also shown to accurately predict end-of-year proficiency rates.**

i-Ready Diagnostic is an *adaptive* assessment designed to provide teachers with actionable insight into student needs. It offers a complete picture of student performance and growth of the TAS in reading and math. Although there is no specific measure used for social studies and science, empirical studies in the *Journal of Education Research* show a strong correlation between literacy skills and success in social studies and science.

The i-Ready experience begins with students taking the online diagnostic assessment. Then, i-Ready compiles information by individual student, student cohort, and entire school in an accessible dashboard. The ease of data access allows school leaders and teachers to review both student proficiency and student growth by teacher. Based on diagnostic results, i-Ready reports provide detailed information on student performance by domain, clear instructional recommendations, including a personalized instructional path, and aggregate data for spotting trends across groups of students.

Table 19

i-Ready Diagnostic Performance Reporting Categories (Domains)	
Reading	**Math**
Phonological Awareness	Number and Operations
Phonics	Algebra and Algebraic Thinking
High-Frequency Words	Measurement and Data
Vocabulary	Geometry

As a measure of performance and growth, our students will take the i-Ready Diagnostic three times per year as outlined below:

- Within the first two weeks of school (fall)
- Just before winter break
- At the end of the school year (spring)

Because of the frequency of their occurrence, assessment expert Dylan Wiliam, PhD. would identify i-Ready Diagnostic as *long-cycle* formative assessment.

Instructional Focus Calendar (IFC) Assessments
IFC Assessments are post-unit common assessments that measure the *taught curriculum* of the grade-level standards, the TAS. Unlike the i-Ready Diagnostic, these assessments are not adaptive. Rather they assess grade-level standards at progressive levels of performance, but do not exceed the grade-level standard nor dip into standards from previous grade-levels.

They are administered in subject areas 10 times a year as each IFC is divided into 10 units. Because of the frequency of their occurrence, assessment expert Dylan Wiliam, PhD. would identify monthly assessments as *medium-cycle* formative assessments.

The results of the assessment show each student's current level of mastery of the tested grade-level standards: novice (low), intermediate (medium), and mastery (high). Results are presented this way because the test is designed using a PLD and an assessment blueprint. This way teachers ensure that they collect the range of evidence needed to confirm each student's current level of performance of the taught grade-level standards.

With a blueprint in hand, construction of IFC Assessments occurs in two ways: in large part, IFC Assessments are administered and generated by an item bank like i-Ready's Standards Mastery; on other occasions, teachers will work together to develop the IFC Assessment. If a vendor assessment like i-Ready is used, results will be visible on their platform. If the assessment is teacher-created, however, teachers will score the assessments and store results in a spreadsheet.

Each assessment will be adjusted as necessary for age appropriateness in terms of length, number of assessed standards, and format of assessment.

Performance Goals

Classroom Formative Assessment + Instructional Focus Calendar Assessments + i-Ready Diagnostics
= A System of No Surprises, A System of SUCCESS!

Short-Cycle Formative Assessment
For all grade-levels, the daily use of ongoing **classroom formative assessment** will have the greatest impact on student learning because it immediately impacts classroom practice and student engagement. In this way, achievement gaps are closed *within* lessons because teachers pre-plan for common misconceptions students may have during the lesson.

Medium-Cycle Formative Assessment
For all grade-levels, because the IFC Assessments are administered more *frequently* than the i-Ready Diagnostic, we are able to respond to the data more often, allowing us to plan for re-teaching and/or enrichment opportunities to keep all students on track to meet their growth goals.

Long-Cycle Formative Assessment
Although state testing is not required in Kindergarten – Grade 2, we will still use the i-Ready Diagnostic to monitor both performance and growth. For Kindergarten – Grade 2, students will show proficiency relative to

state-required content and skills (the TAS) assessed by the i-Ready Diagnostic. For Grades 1 – 2, i-Ready Diagnostic also will be used to evaluate student growth on state-required content and skills. The data generated will facilitate analysis of individual student data, cohort data, and school-level data. These analyses will inform instruction and classroom assessment design.

For Grades 3 – 8, RCP has goals for proficiency and a high bar for growth on state assessments. i-Ready Diagnostic will guide the goal setting process and as well as the monitoring of these goals. As noted, i-Ready Diagnostic provides information on student growth and performance of the TAS. Growth and performance data will be evaluated at the individual student, cohort, and school-level. These data, in turn, will inform instruction and assessment design used to advance student learning.

Cycles of Formative Assessment[32]

Table 20

	Short-Cycle	Medium-Cycle	Long-Cycle
Span	Within and between lessons	Within and between instructional units	Across teaching units or terms of the year
Length	Day-by-day or minute-by-minute	One to four weeks	Four weeks to one year
Impact	Classroom practice; student engagement	Improved, student-involved assessment; teacher reflection on the effectiveness of instruction	Student monitoring; curriculum alignment

TNReady Assessments

With a continual stream of evidence to measure and inform instruction, the state assessment should confirm what we already know about every child's performance and progress.

Administered in the spring, TNReady assessments will serve as a measure of end-of-year student achievement and growth.

The administrators and teachers at RCP will use the results each year, and throughout the **term of the charter agreement**, to evaluate the following:

- The overall effectiveness of curriculum, assessment, and instruction to meet the needs of all students, particularly special populations of students
- The effectiveness of our balanced assessment system to diagnose, inform, measure, confirm, and *predict* learning
- The impact of curriculum and instruction on each tested subgroup
- The trend data
- The comparison of our school in achievement and growth to neighboring schools, the district (RCS), the state, and even "similar" schools that demonstrate high performance in other Tennessee districts

Table 21 below shows a comprehensive list of school-level and state assessments to be administered at RCP.

Table 21

Assessment	Grades	Purpose/Use
KEI – Kindergarten Entry Inventory	Kindergarten	Measure incoming Kindergarten readiness relative to benchmarks Use results to plan instruction for students and student groups

[32] Wiliam, D. & Leahy, S. (2015). *Embedding formative assessment*. West Palm Beach, FL: Learning Sciences International.

Assessment	Grades	Purpose/Use
i-Ready Diagnostic	Kindergarten – Grade 8	Serve as universal screener Measure student performance and growth by individual student, cohort, or grade-level and by domain Measure whether each student, each cohort, and each grade-level are performing on par with the time of year and grade-level Diagnose academic strengths and weaknesses by domain Use results to plan instruction, interventions, and enrichment
Instructional Focus Calendar Assessments	Kindergarten – Grade 8	Measure achievement of taught standards for students and groups of students Measure efficacy of instruction *Once a second cohort is taught and assessed through the same unit, growth can be measured (i.e., We will know entry and exit points of learning for "similar" student groups across the PLD.)*
TCAP (Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program)	Grades 3 – 8	Assess true student understanding and not just basic memorization and test-taking skills Measure student understanding of the TAS
Civics Assessment	Grades 4 – 8	Measure student understanding of the TAS for Social Studies in civics *Per state law (T.C.A. § 49-6-1028), all districts must ensure that a project-based civics assessment is given at least once in Grades 4–8. Our students will take this assessment in middle school.*
TCAP End of Course	MS students taking HS credit classes	Measure student understanding of the TAS
MTCAP- Alt	Grades 3 – 8	Measure science and social studies for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities Measure how much a student grows over the course of the year
MSAA (Multi-State Alternative Assessment)	Grades 3 – 8	Measure ELA and math for students in Grades 3–8 with the most significant cognitive disabilities Measure how much a student grows academically over the course of a school year
WIDA Access Placement Test (W-APT)	Kindergarten	Identify language proficiency level of Kindergarten students Use to determine appropriate level of EL services a student will receive
WIDA Screener	Grades 1 – 8	Identify language proficiency level of students in Grades 1– 8 Use to determine appropriate level of EL services a student will receive

Assessment	Grades	Purpose/Use
WIDA ACCESS 2.0	Kindergarten – Grade 8	Measure English proficiency of ELs in four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing
Naglieri Ability Test®, Second Edition (NNAT2)	Kindergarten – Grade 2	Identify gifted screener
Cognitive Abilities Test ™ (CogAT®)	Grades 4 – 6	Identify gifted screener

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

Building Testing Coordination
Testing is an important part of any educational organization and, to be effective, it necessitates a team effort. As a result, testing coordination at RCP will be driven by a school administrator and involve input from administrators, instructional coaches, and lead teachers; moreover, teachers and staff who specifically oversee sub-groups of students (e.g., EL and SPED) will also provide their input. This input will contribute to a team-generated plan that is carried out by the school administration, instructional coaches, and teachers. The school administrator overseeing building testing coordination will be the responsible party to know and understand building testing coordination, attend state and/or district testing coordination meetings, and communicate with the state and/or district about building testing. The school administrator overseeing building testing coordination will be responsible for ensuring that all testing accommodations are met.

The **school administrator (i.e., building principal)** is ultimately responsible for the proper collection, analysis, storage, and use of academic and nonacademic data. It is his or her responsibility to ensure that data is accurately and efficiently used to drive the mission, vision, and Academic Plan of the school *forward*.

Although the information gleaned from i-Ready Diagnostic and IFC Assessments will play a significant role in our continuous improvement process, other academic and non-academic data will be analyzed throughout the year as well.

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

Collecting and Analyzing Student Academic Data
The primary school-level assessments, i-Ready Diagnostic and IFC Assessments, are both administered by the classroom teachers and followed by ***data chats to analyze the data and plan next steps***. Please note that RCP reserves the right to implement a different formative assessment comparable to i-Ready, if necessary, to meet the needs of the school and its students. Data chats are a critical step in our school improvement process. Our data chats are conducted in teams because we take a school-wide response to the data with every staff member vested in the achievement and growth of every student.

Data chats, scheduled meetings within the regular PLC structure, will follow a set process to analyze student data and plan next steps for instruction. The questions that guide each analysis, however, will be crafted to align to particular use of each data point, and driven by the time of year each assessment is administered.

i-Ready Diagnostic
Fall Administration. The results of the diagnostic at the start of the year provide valuable information about where students are entering the learning for the year because information is provided about student performance in each tested domain. Because i-Ready Diagnostic is an adaptive assessment, the data reflects if

a child is achieving above, at, or below grade-level. For example, a Grade 4 student might be performing at a Grade 3 level in phonics, a Grade 4 level in vocabulary, and a Grade 3 level in comprehension of informational text. The information allows us to answer questions such as:

- Are students (i.e., individual students, subgroups of students, etc.) significantly behind with many standards? Is so, which ones? How far?
- Are students on track with some standards and behind with others?
- Are students right where they need to be?

This fall administration provides valuable information to maximize the Success Block immediately.

Setting Growth Targets. At RCP, teachers will use i-Ready Diagnostic fall administration results, previous school data, and other new pre-assessment data to set Typical Growth and Stretch Growth goals for their students. The goal will always be to meet students where they are in their learning and grow them as far aspossible in the learning progression. Goals will be set for individual students, cohorts, and entire grade-levels. For students who are achieving at or above grade-level to start the year, Stretch Growth goals will reflect 1.5 years of growth. And for students who are achieving below grade-level, Stretch Growth goals will reflect 2 years of growth.

Please note the following about the i-Ready Diagnostic:

- **Typical Growth** marks the annual growth (from fall to spring) for an average student taking the i-Ready Diagnostic. It is based on the observed growth and performance of the millions of students nationwide who have taken the i-Ready Diagnostic. Typical Growth is therefore a descriptive measure of growth; it is not intended to serve as a recommendation for sufficient growth, but it does offer a useful reference point to identify students who are lagging or surpassing median growth.
- **Stretch Growth** sets an ambitious but attainable goal for student growth. The targets for Stretch Growth were set based on observations of the growth of a national sample of students who started at each placement level and achieved grade-level proficiency over time. For students placing below grade-level, achieving Stretch Growth is a path to an "On Grade-Level, Mid" placement. For students who are already on grade-level at the beginning of the year, Stretch Growth provides a target for attaining or maintaining an "On Grade-Level, Late" or "Above Grade-Level" placement.

Winter Administration. The results of the mid-year diagnostic provide another measure of how students are progressing. Combined with other data sources, we are able to pinpoint within the vertical progression of the TAS, exactly where students are, showing us the impact of both interventions and of classroom instruction:

- Have previous gaps in performance been partially or completely closed?
- Is core classroom instruction as effective as possible for individual and subgroups of students?
- Do we need to make any mid-year adjustments in curriculum?

With significant time before testing, we will be able to adjust intervention plans as needed.

The data gleaned from the mid-year administration allows us to see if students, cohorts, and grade-levels are on track to meet their growth goals. If a student has made higher gains than expected by mid-year, higher goals are set for the end of the year. Students not meeting growth goals at mid-year, are given additional supports for their learning.

Spring Administration. The end of the year i-Ready Diagnostic will allow us to measure current levels of achievement of the TAS and growth from the start to end of the school year for students,cohorts, and entire grade-levels.

With each administration, we know whether each student, each cohort, and each grade-level are performing on par based on the time of year. Moreover, i-Ready Diagnostic provides valuable information to inform the RTI² process and instructional grouping recommendations.

Instructional Focus Calendar Assessments
Once data is compiled and disaggregated, PLCs meet to review the data (i.e., data chats) by cohort and subgroup. They ask questions, such as:

- Does this data confirm the classroom data (i.e., formative and summative) we have collected throughout the unit?
- Were there any surprises? Did some students perform better than we thought they would? Did other students underperform?
- Did our high-achieving students *master* even the most challenging standards tested? If not, why not?
- Did our low-achieving students achieve the novice-level and intermediate-level items?
- What gains in learning did each student make throughout the unit?

Ultimately, the results of the IFC Assessment are used to organize Success Block, where students either receive further instruction on unmastered standards or enrichment if all standards are achieved on the initial assessment.

Reporting Data to the School Community
Students will receive **progress reports** at the midpoint of each quarter. The progress report will communicate to parent(s)/guardian(s) how their students are progressing with TAS being taught and assessed for the quarter as well as their progress with the SEL competencies. Included on the progress report is evidence gleaned from both practice and graded assignments/assessments. This way parent(s)/guardian(s) can see the how their children are progressing over the course of each unit. When the IFC Assessment occurs within aninterim marking period, those scores are included on the report as well.

Report cards, like progress reports, include both practice and graded assignments. It will be communicated that practice, although vital to student learning, is not calculated into final grades. It is our intent to not have first attempts, or even second attempts, in learning count against students. Grades are reflective of most recent evidence of learning. Report cards are given at the end of each quarter.

Scores and other valuable data from i-Ready Diagnostics, IFC Assessments, and other classroom assessments will be shared with students and parent(s)/guardian(s) as they are completed, scored, and printed.

High-level performance data, like data from interim assessments and state-testing, will also be shared with the school's **governing board** throughout the school year.

Moreover, end-of-year state assessment data will be shared with the community at-large through our **Quality Profile** that displays our data around achievement and growth as well as other measures. Our Quality Profile will be sent home to all parent(s)/guardian(s); it will also live on our school website.

Collection and Analysis of Student Academic Data. Whether data is stored in a spreadsheet created by a teacher, in an interim assessment platform, or on a state-level database, it is important that this information be compiled into a central location. Data that is accessible and centralized can be analyzed more effectively andefficiently to improve student achievement.

Collecting Data

- Instructional Focus Calendar Assessments will be administered by teachers. If i-Ready Standards Mastery items are used, the data will be available in the form of reports in the i-Ready platform. If teachers develop the items, the data will be organized in a spreadsheet.
- i-Ready Diagnostics will be administered by teachers. Data will be available in the form of reports in the i-Ready platform.
- Non-Academic data such as discipline data, attendance data, and survey data will be collected and analyzed by school administrators and others as appropriate.

Analyzing Data

Professional Learning Communities

The members of the grade-level/subject PLC include:

- Teachers;
- Instructional coaches; and
- A building administrator (i.e., principal or assistant principal).

The PLC will analyze data (primarily from the IFC Assessment and the i-Ready Diagnostics) to:

1. Plan appropriate re-teaching or enrichment of the taught grade-level standards (i.e., create small student groups for Success Block).
2. Set and monitor growth goals (i.e., Typical Growth and Stretch Growth goals).
3. Identify and monitor students who need intensive intervention outside of Success Block.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of core classroom instruction and assessment in meeting the needs of **all** students.
5. Differentiate small-group instruction in the learning community.
6. Help students set personal goals within their PLP.

School-Level Data Team

The members of the school-level data team include:

- A school administrator
- Instructional coaches
- Teachers
- Staff who specifically oversee special populations (i.e., SPED, EL, and gifted learners)

The school-level data team will meet before the start of the year, periodically throughout the year, and at the end of the year. In addition to interim assessment data, they will also analyze other available data, including the state assessment results.

The school-level data team will analyze data to:

1. Review and monitor the growth goals set for subgroups and grade-levels
2. Review the alignment between IFC Assessments and i-Ready Diagnostic results AND state assessment results
3. Evaluate the impact of curriculum and instruction on students, particularly special populations
4. Evaluate the impact of non-academic factors on student achievement and student engagement
5. Differentiate professional learning
6. Set new strategic goals, measurable objectives, and leading strategies for continuous improvement

Data Analysis Examples of Academic and non-Academic Data at RCP

Table 22

Data	Data Analysis Examples
Instructional Focus Calendar Assessments	• Descriptive Statistics • Cohort Trends • Sub-Group Trends • Performance/Growth and Discipline Infraction Correlation • Item Analysis • DOK (Depth of Knowledge Analysis)
i-Ready Diagnostics	• Descriptive Statistics • Cohort Trends • Sub-Group Trends • Performance/Growth and Discipline Infraction Correlation • Performance/Growth and Attendance Correlation • i-Ready Diagnostic and State Assessment Correlation
State Assessments	• Descriptive Statistics • Cohort Trends • Sub-Group Trends • Performance/Growth and Discipline Infraction Correlation • Performance/Growth and Attendance Correlation • i-Ready Diagnostic and State Assessment Correlation
Survey Data	• Descriptive Statistics • Statistical Tests for Differences and Similarities by Category

The above data will be included in recurring reports. These reports will include the quantitative data, and they also will provide a narrative explanation that seeks to elucidate and interpret the data for classroom teachers.

Storing and Displaying Data

Collected and analyzed data will be housed digitally. This digital data wall will contain visual representations of all collected data. The visual representations will be updated in tandem with new data. One section will house data relative to the IFC Assessments. Another will show i-Ready Diagnostic results, and a final section will display state assessment results.

Digital data walls will be accessed through a QR code displayed on the classroom wall. Each QR code can be scanned by a device with a camera and the data will then be displayed on that device. Below is an example of a digital data QR code. Below is an active example which can be accessed by a digital device.

Leading and Coordinating Professional Development based upon Data

Professional development centered around assessments will take place consistently throughout the year. This begins within the back-to-school professional development days in which teachers will participate in two units

of training on data and assessments. One unit of training will focus on understanding the purpose and use of the state and school assessments and formative assessment techniques. The second unit of training focuses on utilizing data to make instructional decisions, including understanding state and diagnostic data points, placing students in Success Block based on assessment data, differentiating within the classroom, and planning for and utilize data-driven centers.

Teachers will also receive a minimum of one hour of professional development each week, through multiple platforms, including but not limited to in-person and online learning opportunities. This differentiated professional development, may include data analysis and planning. The instructional coach will be responsible for identifying weekly professional development for teachers and staff in conjunction with the principal based on weekly walkthrough, evaluative, and student-level data.

Professional development may be led by school employees. For instance, the instructional coach may deliver a professional development session to improve teachers' abilities to conduct an item analysis or write questions at varying depths of knowledge. Teachers identified as exemplar in areas based on student achievement will be given the opportunity to lead professional development. This may be through the weekly professional development, classroom observation, or modeling. Professional development may also be coordinated to bring in outside experts to develop teachers and administrators.

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

Training and Support for Analyzing, Interpreting, and Applying Performance Data

During the three-week in-service prior to the beginning of the school year, teachers will receive training on assessments and utilizing student data. This training is not a one-time training. As teachers work in their PLCs, they will continue to learn how to analyze, interpret and develop specific action plans based upon their data. In addition, teachers identified as needing additional support may be assigned differentiated professional development.

For year one, RCP will use the ADDIE needs assessment model[44]. The ADDIE model will be applied to the data to inform learning experiences for teachers and administrators. Applying the ADDIE model, the process for professional development would look like this:

1. Analyze what must be learned based on tenuous data points
2. Design the learning situation for teachers
3. Develop the design for implementation
4. Implement the professional development for teachers
5. Evaluate the learning (e.g., progress monitoring or summative assessment)

1.8 School Calendar and Schedule

In this section:

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

An annual academic calendar for Rutherford Collegiate Prep (RCP) is included as **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.

Instructional Days
Our academic calendar is based on the RCS academic calendar. However, in order to maximize instructional minutes, RCP plans to be in session during RCS's Fall Break, and RCP's school year is extended beyond the RCS school year by one week to meet/exceed the 180-day requirement. This alignment allows parent(s)/guardian(s) with students in multiple schools to effectively manage days students are attending. In the event that students transfer within the school year, having matching start days allows students to minimize the loss of instructional days. We intend to maximize instructional minutes to accommodate interventions and enrichment opportunities by exceeding the required 180 days of instruction, or instructional hour equivalent, with designated days for teacher professional development. This will help RCP meet the needs of all students and accelerate learning in innovative ways in order to support the school's mission.

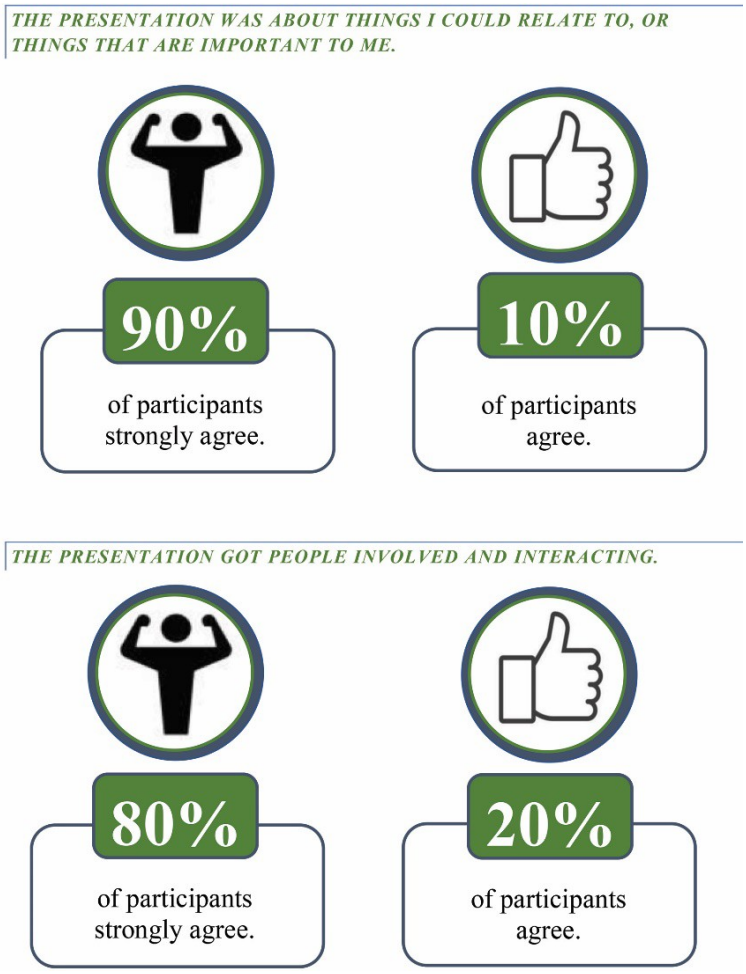
Our use of a structured Instructional Focus Calendar (IFC) designed around Tennessee Academic Standards (TAS), ensures that instructional time is maximized and students receive the necessary lessons to understand the concepts currently tested through TCAP. The IFC lays out the standards that are to be taught to students within 10 units of instruction over the school year and ensures that students are given opportunities to master the standards prior to being tested on them through the state assessments.

Parent & Teacher Conferences
In order to build the relationship between the school and parent(s)/guardian(s), two parent-teacher conferences are included in the school calendar.

Designated Professional Development Days
Since strong teachers are our most valuable resource, ongoing professional learning is a central tenet of RCP. The academic calendar has four, full professional development days built into the school year. These are in addition to weekly professional development time designated every Wednesday afternoon. Teachers will receive one hour of professional development each week. This professional development will be based on the analyses of multiple sources of data. Special focus and attention will be placed on student-level data specific to what students need to know, are able to demonstrate, and is explicitly linked to the effect on student learning. Additionally, every teacher will have a minimum of one walkthrough per week. This data will be used to determine professional development. We value professional development and feel that this is an area we can have great impact on closing the achievement gap for our students. The scheduled professional development time will be used to support teacher growth and development. These professional development days will be differentiated based on teacher need.

Professional development days are for the purpose of increasing opportunities for teachers to develop their craft and enhance their skills in the field. Professional development opportunities will be focused on topics that align with our mission of building a rigorous student-centered, data-driven learning environment, such as data-driven instruction, setting goals and tracking progress, critical thinking skills, and using technology to support learning within the classroom.

"Our weekly PD has allowed me to understand how to better check in with my students during the class so that I know when they need more support." S.S., teacher



We have also included 15 days of teacher training before the school year opens in year one and ten days in subsequent years. This training will be done in a 10-unit training format. Because our school will be integrating SEL standards in all classes, our Back-to-School Training will model full integration of the CASEL model. Research done by The Aspen Institute showed that when schools fully implement SEL into the Kindergarten – Grade 12 curriculum, academic achievement and performance is improved.[33] Furthermore, this same research showed that students were more engaged in school and, as a result, were more likely to graduate from high school and pursue some postsecondary endeavor. Because we believe that SEL needs to be a part of how we work with families and the community, it will play a role in the fabric of every part of the school. This fabric includes explicit and intentional instruction and rethinking school design and culture.[34]

According to CASEL, there are five core competencies in the SEL framework: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making. These will serve as the core units for our fifteen days of pre-planning training.

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[33] CASEL - CASEL. (2019). Retrieved from https://casel.org

[34] L DePaoli, Jennifer & Bridgeland, John & N Atwell, Matthew. (2017). Ready to Lead. Castel & Civic Enterprises & Hart Research Associates. PDF.

Kindergarten – Grade 8 School Hours
Kindergarten – Grade 2: 7:45 – 3:00
Grades 3 – 8: 7:45 – 3:30

Example of a Daily Kindergarten – Grade 2 Schedule

Table 23

Time	Activity
7:00 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.	Breakfast
7:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.	Success Period/RTI Block*
8:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Literacy Block**
10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Science Lab / Social Studies
11:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Recess
11:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Lunch
12:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.	Math Block
1:45 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	RTI² Block
2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Exploratory Wheel

* If additional RTI² time is needed for Tier III interventions
Additional RTI² minutes are built into the Math Block and Success Block.
**Students will have snack time during Literacy Block

Example of a Grade 3 – 5 Schedule

Table 24

Time	Activity
7:00 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.	Breakfast
7:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.	Success Period/RTI Block*
8:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Literacy Block**
10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	RTI² Block
10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Science Lab / Science
11:15 a.m. – 11:45	Social Studies
11:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Lunch
12:15 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.	Recess
12:45 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Math Block
2:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	RTI² Block
2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Exploratory Wheel

* If additional RTI² time is needed for Tier III interventions
Additional RTI² minutes are built into the Math Block and Success Block.
**Students will have snack time during Literacy Block

Example of a Daily Grade 6 – 8 Schedule

Table 25

	Time	Activity
Arrival	7:00 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.	Breakfast
Success Period	7:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.	**Success Block
1st period	8:18 a.m. – 9:03 a.m.	Literacy Block
2nd period	9:06 a.m. – 9:51 a.m.	
3rd period	9:54 a.m. – 10:39 a.m.	Science
4th period	10:42 a.m. – 11:27 a.m.	Social Studies
Lunch	11:30 a.m. – 11:57 a.m.	Lunch

5th period	12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.	Math Block
6th period	12:48 p.m. – 1:33 p.m.	
7th period	1:36 p.m. – 2:21 p.m.	CTE/Elective Classes or *Intensive
8th period	2:24 p.m. – 3:09p.m.	Writing/Elective or *Intensive
SEL Time	3:09 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	SEL/Advisory Period

*Intensive classes are for RTI² Intervention Time (Math or Reading)

** If additional minutes are needed for RTI² Tier III Interventions, there are minutes built into Success Block.

Table 26

Core Instructional Minutes by Day for Elementary School Students (Grades Kindergarten – 2)	
Daily Minutes	**Activity**
150 Minutes	ELA Block with Science and Social Studies Content
90 Minutes	Math Block
30 Minutes	Social Studies/Science Lab (Hands-On Application of Content Taught During ELA Block (Either Science or Social Studies)
30 Minutes	Remediation Time in Success Block
30 Minutes	RTI² Students who need additional minutes for Tier III interventions will receive those instructional minutes during the literacy or math block as appropriate or during designated RTI² blocks.

Table 27

Core Instructional Minutes by Day for Students (Grades 3 – 5)	
Daily Minutes	**Activity**
120 Minutes	ELA Block with Science and Social Studies Content
90 Minutes	Math Block
30 Minutes	Social Studies
30 Minutes	Science/Science Lab (Hands-On Application of Content Taught During ELA Block)
30 Minutes	Remediation Time in Success Block
30 Minutes	RTI² Students who need additional minutes for Tier III interventions will receive those instructional minutes during the literacy or math block as appropriate or during designated RTI² blocks.

Table 28

Core Instructional Minutes by Day for Grades 6 – 8	
Daily Minutes	**Activity**
90 minutes	Literacy Block
45 Minutes	Writing/Elective or Intensive Classes
90 Minutes	Math Block
45 Minutes	Science
45 Minutes	Social Studies

Table 29

Core Instructional Minutes by Week for Elementary School Students	
Weekly Minutes	**Activity**
750 Minutes	ELA
450 Minutes	Math
150 Minutes	Science/Social Studies
150 Minutes	Remediation Time in Success Block

150 Minutes	RTI[2]

Table 30

Core Instructional Minutes by Week for Middle School Students	
Weekly Minutes	**Activity**
450 Minutes	ELA
450 Minutes	Math
225 Minutes	Writing/Intensive Classes
225 Minutes	Science
225 Minutes	Social Studies
225 Minutes	Career Exploration
150 Minutes	Remediation or Enrichment in Success Block

RCP has built time into the daily schedule for RTI[2]. Please see Tables 23, 24, and 25. In Grades K – 2, there is a 150-minute ELA Block and a 90-minute math block. In addition, there is a 30-minute SUCCESS period which can be used for RTI[2] if needed and an additional 30-minute RTI[2] period built into the daily schedule. The math block also has an additional 30 minutes built in for RTI[2].

In Grades 3 – 5, there is a 30-minute SUCCESS period which can be used for RTI[2] if needed, and two additional 30-minute RTI[2] periods built into the daily schedule. This is all in addition to the 120-minute ELA block and the 90-minute math block.

In Grades 6 – 8, each ELA and math block have an additional 30 minutes for a total of 90 minutes built in. This additional 30 minutes can be used for RTI[2]. In addition to this time, there is a 30-minute SUCCESS period every day that can be used for RTI[2] if needed.

(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.

Research informs us that there is an instructional difference between annual growth for students who are on grade-level, and catch-up growth for students that are below or significantly below grade-level[35]. Addressing literacy and reading for those who are multiple years behind grade-level is not a single year process. In fact, it is only after 2 – 3 years of comprehensive reading instruction of more than 200 minutes per day that students begin to cross the threshold of grade-level performance (50th percentile). With this in mind, we developed a schedule that optimizes instructional minutes.

Our school day is longer than traditional public school days. In both the elementary and middle school schedules we have multiple remediation opportunities built into the schedule. We start the day with a 30-minute Success Block which focuses on remediating or enriching standards that were taught in the previous unit. These students are re-grouped every three to four weeks based on IFC Assessments. We also have built an additional 30 minutes into the Math block for Math RTI[2] and we have a designated 30 minutes built into the schedule every day for ELA RTI[2].

(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.

RCP will incorporate a variety of before-school and after-school co-curriculars to support and enhance

[35] Nancy Kerr and Paul Rosier, Annual Growth for all Student (2007)

academic, social, and emotional growth throughout the school year.

After-school enrichments are taught by school personnel or contracted after-school providers. Enrichments can be offered at no cost to students or on a fee basis. For fee-based enrichments, the personnel offering the enrichment will set the price per quarter for the enrichment, set the number of days for the enrichment each week, and set the start and end times within the after-school enrichment parameters set by the school. Most enrichment activities meet once per week for a nine-week period, for 1 hour or 1.5 hours. If a staff member is the person offering and teaching the enrichment, they set the price and receive a portion of the money from the fees paid. Outside vendors set a price for students and receive a portion of the set amount. The school collects the other portion of the student fees paid. For students who cannot afford to participate in a "for-fee" afterschool club, RCP will solicit sponsorships so all students can participate.

(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?

After-school tutoring will begin as soon as the data is available from the first i-Ready Diagnostic. We will begin after school tutoring by week three and start Saturday tutoring at the beginning of September. After-school clubs and activities will be announced by week three. The clubs and activities will be driven by student and teacher interest. Other value-added programs will be incorporated, as needed, to assist families with poverty-related or other needs. Such programs may include a food bank, technology training, job fairs, speaker series, etc.

Tutoring will be offered one day per week for ELA and one day per week for Math for students in Kindergarten and Grade 1. Students in Grade 2 will be offered tutoring two days per week for ELA and one day per week for Math. For Grades 3 – 8, students will be offered tutoring two days per week for ELA and two days per week for Math. Tutoring period is immediately after school and runs for a period of one hour each day. Tutoring begins at 3:45 p.m. and ends at 4:45 p.m.

Students will be identified for tutoring based on i-Ready Diagnostic. Data from the i-Ready Diagnostic, which is administered within the first two weeks of the school year, will drive the tutoring groups for the first semester. Students falling in the band between 1.5 years behind grade-level to "At Grade-Level" for ELA and/or Math will be offered this free tutoring service. Classroom teachers and tutors will provide this service.

Students unable to attend tutoring will be given additional opportunities to receive support through targeted small-group instruction during the school day.

Student growth data gathered through comparison of August i-Ready Diagnostic and December i-Ready Diagnostic will be used to monitor the effectiveness of tutoring groups and will determine which students will be offered tutoring for the second semester. Those students showing "On Grade-Level" at the time of the i-Ready Diagnostic will be exited from tutoring.

Tutoring groups will be smaller than the student to adult ratio of 15 to 1. We will offer as many tutoring groups as needed to meet the needs of the students fitting the criteria for tutoring and wanting to use this opportunity.

1.9 Special Populations

In this section:

(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?

(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).

(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.

(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.

(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.

OVERVIEW

Everything RCP will do is intentionally designed with the mission of meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of every child we serve, including special populations and at-risk students. This includes: the design and implementation of curriculum, assessment, and instruction, innovative use of team teaching and adult expertise, use of Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs) for ALL students, the structures and school improvement procedures used every day, and the physical design of the school.

Rutherford Collegiate Prep (RCP) will provide Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to all students with disabilities in accordance with all state and federal special education guidelines and regulations as provided in the Individuals with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. RCP will implement identification, evaluation, placement, and due process procedures as guided by the Special Education Framework from the TDOE and RCS.

RCP's comprehensive plan for how we will serve students with special needs, including but not limited to those students with federally recognized disabilities, students with Section 504 Plans, English Learners, students identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of dropping out, will be presented in the following order:

- Founding Team Member's Experience with Special Populations
- Staffing Plan
- Support Strategies for Staff
- How the Daily Schedule Supports Special Populations
- Special Education
  - Identification Methods
  - Handling Overidentification and Misidentification
  - Instructional Programs and Practices; Access to General Education Curriculum
  - Monitoring and Evaluating Special Education
  - Students with Section 504 Plans
- English Learners, in accordance with State Board Policy 3.207
  - Identification Methods (Avoiding misidentification)
  - Instructional Programs and Practices; Access to General Education Curriculum
  - Plans for Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)
  - Monitoring and Evaluating EL Services (Including exiting plan)
- At-Risk Students
  - Identification Methods (Academic and behavioral processes)
  - Students Performing Below Grade-Level: Programs and Strategies for Meeting Learning Needs
- Gifted Students
  - Identification Methods
  - Instructional Programs, Practices, and Strategies
- Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI^2)

Founding Team Members' Experience with Special Populations

Rebecca Dinda currently serves as the ReThink's Treasurer. Ms. Dinda holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Miami and a Master of Science in Counselor Education from Florida International University. She also has a 6th Year Certificate in Educational Leadership from Central Connecticut State University. Ms. Dinda has been a public educator in Connecticut and Florida for the last 21 years. Throughout her illustrious career as a leader in education, she advocated for high expectations for educators to ensure equality in our education systems. Ms. Dinda's experiences as Guidance Teacher, School Counselor, Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, and Director of Education serving school populations of SPED, EL, and high numbers of students at-risk for academic failure, makes her an invaluable asset to both ReThink and RCP.

In addition to Ms. Dinda, RCP will recruit an instructional leader (i.e., Principal), who is knowledgeable of the placement and service delivery of students with special needs, to lead all teaching and learning at RCP. In addition, the leader will intentionally recruit and hire other school leaders, teachers, and support staff who share this expertise to be founding school team members.

STAFFING PLAN

Special Education Coordinator
Our special education program will be led by a certified Special Education Coordinator, who is directly responsible for ensuring that RCP is in compliance with all applicable special education laws and requirements.

Student Services Coordinator
Our Student Services Coordinator will be responsible for the creation, services, monitoring, and evaluation of Section 504 Plans as well as the implementation of the RTI^2 Framework.

EL Coordinator
Our EL Coordinator will be responsible for the evaluation, services, and monitoring of EL. This includes the development, monitoring, and evaluation of English Learners' Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).

Special Education Teachers
We will employ licensed teachers (i.e., practitioner and professional) who will serve students meeting the eligibility criteria for special education, as specified in students' IEPs. Based on the enrollment of students with disabilities, RCP will recruit, hire, and train the appropriate number of SPED teachers and SPED aides to adhere to the federal and state guidelines for class size and caseload, ensuring all necessary IEP services are being implemented.

Other Staff Supporting Special Populations
We will employ licensed or endorsed gifted teachers who will participate in staff development opportunities with the state and with district schools so that guidelines and procedures established by the district are implemented and followed. Additional services such as speech, language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy will be provided through a contracted vendor.

The budget assumes $1,000 per projected SPED student for contracted services in Year 1, as well as two SPED teachers at an average annual salary of $47,000, to accommodate approximately 43 SPED students. In Year 2, the staffing matrix includes three SPED teachers to serve approximately 51 SPED students. By Year 5, the budget allocates a total of $226,228 for approximately 67 SPED students, which includes expenses for three SPED teachers and contracted SPED services. By year 5, this equates to an annual expense of approximately $3,376 per SPED student. However, the assumed number of SPED students is just a projection, and the budget will be adjusted as necessary to accommodate RCP's actual student population once known. This would include increasing or decreasing associated SPED costs and staffing depending on the number of SPED students enrolled in the school.

Teachers of English Learners will be endorsed to support English Learners, implementing additional research-based strategies to support English language proficiency while receiving ongoing professional development and support.

Roles
Special education teachers will coordinate the direct instruction and inclusion of SPED students. Learning community teachers will be informed of their responsibilities for their students by the SPED Coordinator. The SPED Coordinator is also responsible for training general education teachers, other SPED teachers, and/or the Principal on how to successfully meet those responsibilities and to implement any modifications or accommodations in their classes in accordance with students' Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

Support Strategies for Staff
We will provide a comprehensive professional development program for teachers on data systems, compliance, reporting, and implementation of necessary special education services. We will participate in any available local and state content meetings for SPED services to foster clear communication and implementation of necessary services. Moreover, to ensure the effective implementation of the RTI^2 process and continuous improvement

of interventions provided, ongoing professional development for all staff will be conducted by internal staff or external consultants.

HOW THE DAILY SCHEDULE SUPPORTS SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Our daily schedule is designed to meet the needs of special populations. The following elements of RCP's schedule provide students with the structures needed to serve students' needs:

- Extended school day
- Limited transition time
- Extended learning time for English language arts and mathematics
- Success Block

Extended School Day

Operating with an extended school day, we provide our students additional instructional minutes. This is especially important for students who are significantly performing below grade-level. Research states that students far below average need additional time to catch up to their peers who are on grade-level. This is called catch up growth. Annual growth is the growth made by students each year they are in school and on grade-level. We understand the difference. The only way to catch up a child who is multiple years behind is to maximize instructional minutes (Fielding, Kerr & Rosier 2007).

Limited Transition Time

The physical design of the building affords our schedule to limit the number of class transitions that occur throughout the day. With grade-levels each in their own community, transitions will occur within the class setting, allowing teachers to maximize instructional minutes.

Extended Learning Time for English Language Arts and Mathematics

We know what a valuable commodity time is for reading and math instruction. Due to the critical importance of reading for all other school outcomes, there is extensive research about how much and what types of reading instruction are most effective. The National Reading Panel Report (2000) summarized available research about reading instruction and documented that teachers must cover five key aspects of reading at all grade-levels:

1. Phonemic awareness
2. Phonics
3. Fluency
4. Vocabulary
5. Comprehension

The NRP report, however, did not state *how much time* is needed for such instruction each day, but other organizations have provided such guidance for different grade-levels. Importantly, students with reading difficulties will need more instructional time each day.

Beyond scheduling additional time, we recognize how critical it is for teachers to know how to organize the instruction so that it includes activities related to all five areas of reading. The amount of time needed for each area changes as students become stronger readers, but some amount of time for each area is needed at all grade-levels. An important aspect of organizing reading instruction is balancing large-group, small-group, and individual learning activities. Our block schedule allows us to accomplish this.

Success Block

For 30 minutes each day, students receive either targeted intervention or enrichment based on their mastery of grade-level standards as evidenced on the IFC Assessment.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Identification Methods

As part of our plan to identify students with special needs, we will work in conjunction with local and statewide resources to identify, locate, and evaluate children who need services. We will follow the SPED Guidelines and Standards that require using RTI^2 to determine the eligibility of students to receive SPED services for the category of Specific Learning Disability. All other referrals for SPED will go through the Child Find process. RCP's RTI^2 Framework is a multi-tiered approach to providing services and interventions to our students at increasing levels of intensity based on progress monitoring and data analysis, which is aligned with Federal and State of Tennessee laws.

We will fully implement TDOE's RTI^2 Framework. This will ensure all students achieve learning gains. We will use a process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention, consistent with the comprehensive evaluation procedures. Pursuant to the TDOE's RTI^2 Framework, "A student who does not show growth in response to an appropriate intervention that is delivered with fidelity in Tier III may be eligible for the most intensive services available, special education services." For more on RCP's plans for RTI^2 that aligns to Tennessee guidelines, please refer to Section 1.3.

When general education interventions have been implemented through the RTI^2 Framework, with indications that a student should be considered for SPED eligibility, a group of qualified personnel, the student supportteam, will consider if the nature or severity of the student's areas of concern makes the general education intervention procedures unsuitable in addressing the immediate needs of the student.

The determination whether a student demonstrates a need for specially designed instruction and related services and meets the eligibility criteria must be made by the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and a group of qualified professionals (i.e., the student support team), which must include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- The student's general education teacher; if the student does not have a general education teacher, a general education teacher qualified to teach a student of his or her chronological age
- At least one person qualified to conduct and interpret the individual diagnostic examinations of students, including, but not limited to, a school psychologist, speech-language pathologist, or reading specialist (i.e., with state reading license or endorsement)
- The LEA administrator of exceptional student education or designee
- The LEA administrator of SPED or designee

We will document the student's data in order to demonstrate that the student was provided well-delivered scientific, research-based instruction and interventions addressing the identified area(s) of concern and delivered by qualified personnel in general education settings.

If a parent(s)/guardian(s) requests that the school conduct an initial evaluation prior to the completion of the general education interventions, we will obtain consent to conduct the evaluation and complete the general education interventions concurrently with the evaluation. Prior to the determination of the student's eligibility, we will provide the parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notice of its refusal to conduct the evaluation. We will ensure that the initial evaluations of students suspected of having a disability are completed within 60 days (cumulative) of which the student is in attendance after the school's receipt of the parental consent for evaluation.

We are aware that the 60-day timeline for evaluation does not apply if:

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the student for the evaluation, and/or
- A student enrolls in another school after the timeline has begun and prior to a determination by the student's previous school district as to whether the student has a disability

RCP is responsible for ensuring that knowledgeable evaluation specialists conduct evaluations for students suspected of having a disability. Examiners will be qualified in the professional's field and will have received adequate training and knowledge on how to administer the particular assessment instrument as required by TDOE.

Documentation of the interventions used within the RTI² Framework are then reviewed to evaluate if the strategies were successful. If the strategies were effective, our personnel will monitor the student on a monthly basis to ensure mastery is occurring. If the interventions are unsuccessful, an additional set of interventions will be deployed for another three weeks. Review of these interventions will then be conducted. Once a struggling student is unsuccessful in Tier II and must be moved to Tier III, the student support team will meet with grade-level teachers, the special education coordinator, and the student's family to design appropriate interventions for Tier III. While this is a successful model for most students, that will vary among students. If, after the extensive interventions of Tier II and Tier III, the student needs additional supports, the student support team will meet to determine if referral to a school psychologist and more extensive testing is in order. All federal andstate safeguards will be observed, and the student's family will be involved at every step as testing proceeds andan IEP is developed if it is necessary.

After a psychologist concludes a formal evaluation of the student, results are given to an IEP team for evaluation. An IEP team will be comprised of the minimum:

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child
- A general education teacher
- The special education teacher
- An LEA representative
- An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results (i.e., school psychologist)
- When appropriate, a school counselor or student services coordinator
- When appropriate, the child

The IEP team will determine a student's eligibility for SPED services based on the results of the psychologist's testing. Placement of the student in special education services will be designed in the student's least restrictive environment. The IEP team will:

- Make placement decisions and ensure that the individual instructional needs of the SPED student are reflected in the student's IEP
- Review placement decisions annually at the IEP review meeting
- Ensure accurate placement occurs for the student based on that student's IEP and FAPE guidelines
- Review and evaluate student records of all students coming from another state to determine their eligibility status for SPED services. Services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. Services will be provided through contracts with an appropriate agency if necessary or a school staff member will be employed having the appropriate license in that exceptionality.

Procedural safeguards are in place to ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents(s)/legal guardian(s) are protected. Although the goal should always be to resolve disputes at the local level, sometimes situations require the assistance of persons not directly involved with the issues at hand. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) who file an administrative complaint, request mediation, or request a due process hearing, must submit their requests to TDOE's division of special populations.

IDEA requires schools to provide parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of a child with a disability a notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards available under the IDEA and U.S. Department of Education and Tennessee laws and regulations.

A copy of the safeguards notice must be given to parent(s)/legal guardian(s) annually or when one of the

following takes place:

1. Upon initial referral or parent(s)/legal guardian(s) request for evaluation
2. Upon receipt of the first state complaint and upon receipt of the first due process complaint in a school year
    a. When a decision is made to take a disciplinary action that constitutes a change of placement
    b. Upon parent request

This procedural safeguard's notice includes a full explanation of all of the procedural safeguards available under IDEA, including, but not limited to:

- Unilaterally placed children at private school at public expense
- State complaint procedures
- Consent for evaluation
- Procedural safeguards in Subpart E of the Part B regulations
- Confidentiality of information provisions in Subpart F

Per 34 C.F.R. §300.29 (2012), native language –when used with an individual who has Limited English proficiency (LEP)—means the following:

1. The language normally used by that person, or, in the case of a child, the language normally used by the child's parent(s)/legal guardian(s)
2. In all direct contact with a child (including the evaluation of the child), the language normally used by the child in the home or learning environment

For a reason of deaf and blindness, or for a person with no written language, the mode of communication is what the person normally uses (i.e., sign language, Braille, or oral communication). If a student who is blind or deaf chooses to attend RCP, the appropriate staff will be hired that can design an appropriate learning plan and ensure its implementation.

Through the continuous implementation of the RTI^2 Framework with fidelity, overidentification and misidentification will be minimized. A universal screener from TDOE's approved list, i-Ready Diagnostic, will be used to identify students who need additional learning opportunities and academic interventions in order to achieve required benchmarks. After the initial screening assessment, those students who are identified as low-performing or possess skill gaps will receive intervention in accordance with their skill level. The problem-solving method designed to inform the development of interventions, and integrated data collection/assessment system to inform decisions at each tier of service delivery will mitigate the over-emphasis of need and focus on the success of the student.

Instructional Programs and Practices; Access to General Education Curriculum

We will ensure to the maximum extent appropriate that students with disabilities will be educated in the **least restrictive environment (LRE)**. The IEP team, consisting of, at a minimum: one special education teacher, one general education teacher, one parent/guardian or other representative, and any additional stakeholders with information that will help the team determine the LRE which will also include the services and supports needed for the student with a disability. The IEP team will determine the educational placement for the student with a disability, and this placement will be based on the student's IEP.

If the IEP team determines that the grade-level learning community (i.e., the regular education setting) is not the LRE for a student, pull-out/resource classes will be used. Resource classes will be scheduled per students' IEP goals. The goals of those services will be to: provide content and skills instruction for students with disabilities, to provide students with strategies in order for them to be successful in their regular "classroom" setting, and/or to provide behavioral or SEL supports for students who struggle and give them strategies for success within the grade-level learning community.

Student IEPs and 504s define and explain the supports students need within the grade-level learning community in order to meet their annual goals. Teachers will understand and implement the services, modifications, and/or accommodations identified in the student plans. The student services coordinator and SPED coordinator, along with school administrators, will monitor the implementation of services outlined in student plans as well as the effectiveness of services in helping students meet their IEP goals. If the IEP team determines that the IEP goals are either too ambitious, or too easily obtained, the team will call an additional IEP meeting to revise those goals based on the data gathered and analyzed. RCP will continuously monitor and update goals in order to maximize students' chances for success. They will also provide teachers professional development to ensure that all services, modifications, and/or accommodations are implemented as intended.

Monitoring and Evaluating Special Education

To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness our SPED services (i.e., students with disabilities are making progress with their IEP goals AND demonstrating growth and achievement of the TAS) and to determine the need for potential changes in our program, we will evaluate the progressive growth of students with disabilities on standardized and non-standardized assessments in comparison to that of non-disabled students. We also will track students with disabilities longitudinally throughout their time at RCP to determine if specific services, or even particular staff members, produce larger learning gains with certain subgroups of students.

Students with Section 504 Plans

We will adhere to all obligations under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), and Section 504 that requires schools receiving federal funds to provide students with disabilities appropriate educational services designed to meet their individual needs to the same extent as the needs of nondisabled students. Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. We will immediately evaluate and identify any students protected under Section 504. This includes any students determined to:

- Have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities
- Have a record of such impairment
- Be regarded as having such impairment

The Student Services Coordinator will serve as the Section 504 coordinator to ensure that the legal rights of students with 504 Plans are met and that their special needs are effectively served. The process for identifying and developing plans for students with 504 Plans is the same as described above for IEP students. Monitoring of 504 Plans will be overseen by the Student Services Coordinator.

ENGLISH LEARNERS (ELs), IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATE BOARD POLICY 3.207

Our EL program's mission is to successfully prepare and equip bilingual, bicultural, and bi-literate students to meet the needs of their global community. RCP's program for EL students prepares and successfully equips EL students to fully participate, engage, and lead in their global community without a language barrier. To support our mission of providing a student-centered, data-driven learning environment, we will equip them with targeted instructional supports necessary to achieve mastery of the Tennessee Academic Standards as measured by the W-APT and Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) for ELs 2.0. A structured English immersion methodology will be used at RCP to fulfill this goal. This strategy has been shown to demonstrate the best results with EL students. In order to promote both literacy and proficiency, the EL program is not only tailored to each student's English proficiency level, but it also complies with state and federal requirements by providing ELs with English language development instruction that is both age and grade appropriate. ELs will be in a climate that promotes listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

Students in the EL program will receive comprehensible instruction from EL certified/endorsed instructional staff, in accordance with the policies and procedures of the state, including compliance with all applicable laws including Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) and the federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974. We will actively recruit certified teachers with an EL endorsement from Rutherford

County, throughout Tennessee, and also in states that share reciprocity with Tennessee. We will work with the RCS Office of English Learners to ensure that we are following the correct and most current methods of calculating the appropriate ratio of EL students to EL-certified teachers. We will also ensure that we consistently follow the guidance provided through the Tennessee Office of English Learners. In addition, RCP's budget will be updated annually and will reflect any necessary changes to staffing that need to be made in order to comply with ratio requirements.

Identification Methods (Avoiding Misidentification)
EL students will be identified in the initial assessments administered upon enrollment and through a Home Language Survey. Students will be selected to take the assessment if they are foreign-born or do not speak English in the home. RCP will follow the district's EL plan to ensure students are assessed in a timely manner. The EL designee at the school will be responsible for administering EL program reading/writing assessments: Kindergarten W-APT, or the WIDA Screener, Grades 1 – 12. The EL Coordinator will contact parents, test the students, grade the assessments, and record the data. If a student is tested and determined to be limited English proficient, the student will be tested annually. Once the assessment results are collected, an instructional plan for students who qualify will be created, including the integration of scaffolding methods to address the EL student and setting goals for achieving mastery of the NC English Language Proficiency Standards.

As prescribed by law, intervention that facilitates growth in English mastery while promoting content knowledge will be administered. To support literacy and proficiency, the EL program provides English language development instruction that is age and grade appropriate and tailored to the student's English proficiency level. The EL program will be conducted in a climate that not only stimulates listening, speaking, and reading, but also writing. EL students are offered instructional services through an English Immersion program mainstream/inclusion instructional delivery model. Instruction is supported through the use of EL instructional strategies. In addition, the curriculum, textbooks, and other instructional materials used by EL students will be comparable to those used by their non-EL counterparts. Supplemental text and materials are also provided.

Mainstream/Inclusion instruction is provided to EL students equal in amount, sequence, and scope to the instruction provided to non-EL students at the same grade-levels, while also including specific accommodations and modifications to the curriculum. The PLP is used to show the areas of success and growth that the student maintains. The EL strategies are documented in the teacher's lesson plan, as well as in the student's PLP and EL folder. EL students have the added benefit of the schools use of differentiated, individualized instruction.

The ACCESS 2.0 is administered yearly to assess EL students' language proficiency. Once a student reaches proficiency in all four language domains of the assessment, as determined by the TDOE, he or she exits the program. The student's academic progress is regularly monitored after exiting from the EL program. Documentation, including the monitoring form and tool, is placed in the student's EL file. The language arts teacher will indicate if the student is making appropriate progress or if an EL committee meeting needs to be held. During the EL committee meeting, recommendations regarding the student's progress, including placing the student back into the EL program, can be made.

Tennessee law requires students who test at certain levels be instructed at least one hour daily by a teacher who is a licensed EL teacher. RCP intends to hire one teacher per grade-level who is EL certified. Through potential partnerships with local universities, we will work with any of the teaching staff who are not EL Certified to become licensed EL teachers. Students who test at the pre-functional, beginner, or intermediate levels will receive direct EL service from a licensed EL teacher for at least one hour daily at RCP. The staff members who go through the EL program will do this through required staff development delivered in a blended learning model, with content delivered through a learning management system and with practical application in the school.

Instructional Programs and Practices; Access to General Education Curriculum
All ELs will receive the same academic content as those students who are native English speakers. ELs will

receive comprehensible instruction for the core curriculum so that they can make academic progress comparable to that of native English speakers. RCP will offer instructional services via a Mainstream/Inclusion instructional delivery model. Mainstream/Inclusion instruction provided to ELs is equal in amount, sequence, and scope to the instruction provided to the non-ELs at the same grade-levels, while also including specific accommodations and modifications to the curriculum. General education teachers of ELs will include Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) language strategies in planning for lessons, assignments, and instructional groups to reduce barriers and to assist in full participation. We will create the most accepting cultural atmosphere possible, such that students of all backgrounds and languages feel welcome and valued.

Please see the table below for a summary of SIOP strategies used in planning by general education teachers.

Table 31

Component	Features
Lesson Preparation	1. Clearly defined content objectives for students 2. Clearly defined language objectives for students 3. Content concepts appropriate for age and educational background 4. Supplementary materials used to a high degree making the lessons clear and meaningful, for example, graphs, models, and visuals. 5. Adaptation off content to all levels of student proficiency 6. Meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts, for example, surveys and letter writing.
Building Background	7. Concepts explicitly link to student's' background experiences 8. Links explicitly made between past learning and new concepts 9. Key vocabulary emphasized, for example, written, repeated, and highlighted
Comprehensible Input	10. Speech appropriate for student's' proficiency level, for example, slower rate and enunciation, and simple sentences for beginners 11. Explanation of academic tasks clear 12. Uses a variety of techniques to make content concepts clear, for example, modeling, visuals, hands-on activities, demonstrations, gestures, body language
Strategies	13. Provides ample opportunities for students for use strategies (cognitive, metacognitive, social/affective) 14. Consistent use of scaffolding techniques throughout lessons, assisting and supporting student understanding such as think-aloud 15. Teacher uses a variety of question types, including those that provide higher order thinking skills throughout the lesson.
Interaction	16. Frequent opportunities for interaction and discussion among students and between teacher and students 17. Grouping configurations support language and content objectives for the lesson 18. Consistently provide sufficient wait time for student response 19. Ample opportunities for students to clarify key concepts in their first language
Practice and Application	20. Provides hands-on materials and or manipulative for students to practice using new content knowledge 21. Provides hands-on activities for students to apply content and language knowledge in the classroom 22. Uses activities that integrate all language skills (Reading writing

	listening speaking)
Lesson Delivery	23. Content objectives clearly supported by lesson delivery 24. Language objectives clearly supported by lesson delivery 25. Students engaged approximately 90% to 100% of the period 26. Pacing of the lesson appropriate to the student's ability level
Review and Assessment	27. Comprehensive review of key vocabulary 28. Comprehensive review of key content concepts 29. Regularly provides feedback to students on their output, for example, language, content, work 30. Conducts assessments of student comprehension and learning of all lesson objectives, for example, spot checking, group response throughout the lesson

Pull-out instruction for English Learners will concentrate on increasing basic English skills including vocabulary development, reading, writing, and comprehension. Along with this, RCP will actively recruit teachers who are bilingual so they can communicate with our EL students more effectively.

Instruction will be supported through the use of EL instructional strategies, such as those identified through SIOP, rooted in the concepts of the TAS and WIDA Guiding Principles.

WIDA-guiding principles, such as but not limited to:

- Provide a climate of warmth and caring which nurtures a sense of comfort
- Seat the student close to the front of the room
- Establish a daily routine in the classroom and prepare the students for any changes
- Use as many of the senses (seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting) as possible to present information to students
- Provide ELs guidelines for written work and homework assignments
- Provide alternative instruction whenever the class lessons are extremely difficult for ELs
- Arrange small discussion and talking activities that permit students to practice verbal skills
- Utilize oral techniques, such as cueing, modeling elicitation, and chunking
- Utilize graphic organizers such as webbing and semantic maps
- Include language objectives with daily lessons
- Use manipulatives to help students visualize the math concepts
- Allow students to use computational aids such as number lines, abacus, counters, and computation charts
- Teach math concepts and computation procedures through games and kinesthetic activities
- Give practice in reading word problems by identifying the key words to determine the operation needed to solve the problem
- Utilize the cooperative learning approach in which the student is given the opportunity for peer instructions

Table 32 below outlines a sampling of the **strategies** that will be used to support ELs across our classrooms:

Table 32

Strategy	Putting the Strategy in Action
Use cognates to develop comprehension in English	Read aloud: When you read aloud to your students, ask the ELs to raise their hand when they think they hear a cognate. Stop reading and discuss that cognate. Point out the subtle differences you hear between the two languages. Student reading: As ELs read their texts, ask them to find three or four

Strategy	Putting the Strategy in Action
Cognates are words in two languages that share a similar meaning, spelling, and pronunciation.	cognates and write them on sticky pads. Collect those notes and put them on an OUR COGNATES laminated chart. Before the class ends, read or have students read them to the class. Discuss spellings or sounds that are the same and different between the cognates. Word Sort: Pair students and give each pair a set of cognate cards: one card has the English cognate and the other has the native language cognate.
Help students understand written math problems While *key* words are very important, they are only one part of the process.	Have students learn key terminology prior to attempting to solve mathematical word problems. **Lower Grades** Practice problem solving daily by simply asking more questions. For example: • How many students brought their homework today? • How many more children brought their homework yesterday? Continue to use key terminology daily and put it in context (e.g., less than, more than, difference, times, each, etc.). Show students how easy it might be to misunderstand the problem. **Upper Grades** • If possible, break up the problem into smaller segments. • Allow students to act out the word problems to better comprehend what they are being asked to solve. • Provide manipulatives to help students visualize the problem. • Take field or walking trips to figure out distances, speed, area covered, etc. • Ask students to do surveys, interviews, and hands-on research in real-world situations to figure out percentages, differences, and higher-order math skills.
Implement an effective correction/feedback policy	Focus on one or two concepts at a time when listening to or reading student work. Let students know what you will be focusing on so that they in turn can focus on those particular concepts in the assignment. Circle errors in writing assignments, and have students try to figure out what the mistakes were; scaffold additional support if they struggle.

Plans for Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)
Once assessment results are collected, ELs will work with their teachers on creating and maintaining an ILP to track the students' progress in English language acquisition. The ILP will be used to show the areas of success and growth that the student maintains. It further identifies the type of help needed to equip the student with the ability to achieve high standards of proficiency and to comprehensively communicate in English. When data supports it, ELs will be referred to Tier II of RTI², where the team will meet to discuss interventions and strategies to support the EL's continued academic success. The EL strategies will be documented in the teachers' lesson plan and in the student's ILP. The effectiveness of these EL strategies will be determined by the teachers' observations, administrative classroom walk-throughs, teacher data chats, and collaborative monitoring visits.

Monitoring and Evaluating EL Services (Including exit plans)
To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness our EL services (i.e., ELs are making progress in the acquisition of the English language AND demonstrating growth and achievement of the TAS) and to determine the need for

potential changes in our program, we will evaluate the progressive growth of ELs on standardized and non-standardized assessments in comparison to that of non-ELs. We will track students longitudinally throughout their time at RCP to determine if there is significant difference in the academic achievement of students who were once classified EL and non-ELs as measured by standardized and non-standardized assessments. We will track how many students are declassified as EL as well as the number of years students require EL services.

EL students will be exited consistent with state policy. As an EL reaches high levels of English proficiency, determining when they are ready to exit from ESL services becomes an important discussion and decision. It is imperative to ensure that ELs have attained a degree of English proficiency that will allow them to achieve academic success—without direct ESL support—at levels comparable to their native English-speaking peers. Classroom accommodations may still be needed during the four transitional years. Exiting from ESL service is based on a student's proficiency in all areas of language—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This proficiency should be measured using a variety of criteria and documented to support the decision to exit the student from ESL services. WIDA scores must also support the decision to exit a student. English proficiency is based on attaining fluent English proficient on the summative, spring WIDA ACCESS for ELs 2.0 assessment. **ELs must obtain both a composite score of 4.2 and a literacy score of 4.0 on the ACCESS to exit ESL services.**

Students who exit ESL direct services shall move to transition status for four (4) school years. Students in the first and second years of transition are referred to as T1 and T2 respectively. During this transition period, students must be monitored and served as needed. Students in the third and fourth years of transition are referred to as T3 and T4 respectively. During this transition period, ESL service is not required; however, T3 and T4 students will be included in the EL subgroup with T1 and T2 students for accountability purposes.

Transitional ELs are considered proficient and may be mainstreamed in the general education setting with careful monitoring for two (2) years. Should a transitional student begin to have difficulty in classes, he or she shall receive meaningful ESL support immediately. Accommodations and modifications should be utilized to support the EL student. If a student was exited from ESL by another state, the exit shall stand as valid.

AT-RISK STUDENTS

Identification Methods (Academic and Behavioral Processes)

We believe that all students described above can be considered at-risk students. The systems, strategies, and supports described in this section will be used to give these students equitable access to our curriculum, and to ensure they feel engaged in their educations and positive about their futures.

A few additional school-wide systems will be utilized to identify students who are not within the special populations described above but are still considered at-risk. This includes economically disadvantaged students as well as students with excessive absences for any number of reasons. The following systems will be used:

Monitoring of Personalized Learning Plans, Portfolios, and Growth Goals

Teachers will regularly monitor the growth of their students through their PLPs, their Portfolios, and their Growth Goals (i.e., Typical Growth and Stretch Growth Goals) to make sure that students are not only making gains in their learning, but that students' personal reflections about their work and how they see themselves are both positive. Certified teachers and instructional aides in the learning community will each be responsible for the monitoring of a group of PLPs. The lead teacher, however, will take responsibility for monitoring the group of students most at-risk. At a minimum, all PLPs will be reviewed at the end of each quarter before sending home report cards. For at-risk students, the lead teacher will review PLPs at least twice a quarter, prior to progress reports and report cards. Teachers in the learning community will intervene with students *immediately* if evidence shows that either growth gains or how students feel about learning are stagnant or moving in the wrong direction.

Daily Attendance Tracking
Students who are chronically absent will be closely tracked and individual meetings will be held with student, parent/guardian, teacher, and school leadership. Plans to improve attendance will include both positive and negative consequences (i.e., attending all Saturday school dates and/or getting public recognition for perfect monthly attendance).

Students Performing Below Grade-Level: Programs and Strategies for Meeting Learning Needs
Our culture will be one of community where all students have a sense of belonging as part of their class, part of a school group, and part of the greater school community. Early in the year, we will identify any student who is not involved in an activity and help them find an activity that aligns with their interests and/or aspirations. Explicit instruction of social-emotional skills also will equip students with the skills they may be lacking that are hindering them from engaging with their peers inside and outside of the classroom setting in productive and appropriate ways. Additionally, our students identified as at-risk of dropping out will be assigned mentor teachers who will connect with them during the school day, during advisory block. The mentor teacher will be a teacher that the student does not have for an academic class, so that the mentor can be seen as a consistent student advocate and not just an academic teacher. Mentor teachers will be encouraged to attend professional development tied to creating strong relationships with students and empowering them with life skills.

GIFTED STUDENTS

Identification Methods
TDOE's definition for Intellectually Gifted:

"Intellectually Gifted" means a child whose intellectual abilities, creativity, and potential for achievement are so outstanding that the child's needs exceed differentiated general education programming, adversely affects educational performance, and requires specifically designed instruction or support services. Children from all populations (e.g., all cultural, racial, and ethnic groups, English Learners, all economic strata, twice- exceptional, etc.) can be found to possess these abilities. Children identified as intellectually gifted are exempted from the discipline procedures at 34 C.F.R. §300.530-537. Children with a dual diagnosis that includes intellectually gifted must be considered as children with a disability and may not be exempted from the discipline procedures at 34 C.F.R. §300.530-537.

We will follow the identification procedures outlined by TDOE after the characteristics identified in the Intellectually Gifted definition above are present.

Evaluation Procedures
A comprehensive evaluation performed by a multidisciplinary team using a variety of sources of information that are sensitive to cultural, linguistic, and environmental factors or sensory impairments to include the following:

1. Review of multiple criteria and multiple assessment measures in the procedures followed for:
    a. Systematic Child Find and Individual Screening:
        i. Systematic child-find for students who are potentially gifted (e.g., a review of school wide and/or grade-level screening data, teacher checklists, state assessment data, etc.)
        ii. Individual screening for students whose needs exceed differentiated general education programing in the areas of educational performance and creativity/characteristics of giftedness
        iii. A team review of individual screening results to determine the need for referral for comprehensive assessment
2. Assessment through a multi-modal identification, to include multiple sources of information that provide a collection of evidence measuring the following:
    a. Individual evaluation of cognition or intellectual ability with scores at the 94th percentile or above with consideration of the standard error of measure within the 90th percent confidence level. When assessing traditionally underrepresented youth, consider alternate cognitive measures that reduce potential cultural and linguistic bias (i.e., nonverbal assessments, general

ability index).
   b. Educational performance.
   c. Creativity and/or Characteristics of giftedness (e.g., leadership, motivation, social-emotional functioning).
3. Documentation, including observation and/or assessment, of how Intellectual Giftedness adversely affects the child's educational performance in his/her learning environment. Some examples are the gifted student is far ahead of the curriculum; his/her reading level requires much different approach to literature and their classroom behavior. These behaviors support the need for specialized instruction and related services (i.e., to include academic and/or nonacademic areas).

Evaluation Participants
Information shall be gathered from the following persons in the evaluation of Intellectual Giftedness:
1. The parent
2. The child's referring teacher, or a general classroom teacher qualified to teach a child of his/her age who is familiar with the student (with a child of less than school age, an individual qualified to teach a child of his/her age, who is familiar with the child); and when appropriate, in collaboration with the EL teacher, when the child is an English Learner
3. A licensed special education teacher and/or a licensed teacher who meets the employment standards in gifted education
4. A licensed school psychologist, licensed psychologist, licensed psychological examiner (under the direct supervision of a licensed psychologist), licensed senior psychological examiner, or licensed psychiatrist
5. Other professional personnel, as indicated
6. At least one of the evaluation participants above must be trained in the characteristics of gifted children

Instructional Programs, Practices, and Strategies

Educational Plans (EPs).
Students who have been identified and qualify for a Gifted Education Program each have an EP written yearly which includes a statement of the present levels of educational performance of the child, a statement of goals, including measurable short-term instructional objectives, criteria, a statement of the specific services to be provided to the child, and appropriate objectives, criteria, and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining whether the objectives are being achieved.

Development of the EP will build parent/school relationships, provide a forum for discussing student needs beyond the general curriculum, facilitating changes in instruction and classes, and determining appropriate service options. The EP is reviewed during the year to determine if a goal has been met and/and or should be rewritten. An effective Gifted Education Program will focus on writing goals that are high, but achievable, continuously reviewed, create with student and parent input, evaluated for successful completion, and build on each student's strengths and weaknesses.

Using Data to Plan Instruction
To meet the needs of our gifted students, teachers will analyze unit pre-assessment data, daily formative assessment data, IFC Assessment results, and i-Ready Diagnostic results of our gifted population. We will ask:
- Where are gifted students "entering the learning" with each unit? Can they demonstrate the intermediate criteria or even some of the mastery criteria of the standards prior to instruction? If so, what adjustments are being made at the outset of instruction?
- Are gifted students achieving the general curriculum at a faster pace than their peers?
- Are our gifted learners consistently achieving full mastery of all standards?

Moreover, when pre-assessing or completing an activity, we will have our gifted students answer the most challenging or difficult items/tasks first. This way if students are successful, the teacher can skip the part of the curriculum that students have mastered, allowing them to spend their time learning and practicing new content.

We recognize that gifted students often need less grade-level work, faster-paced lessons, deeper and more advanced content, and opportunities to work with other gifted students. For gifted students ahead of pace or easily demonstrating mastery of grade-level standards with minimal support, teachers will plan for appropriate acceleration or enrichment opportunities that extend beyond the general education standards.

For middle school students, tracking enrollment and successful completion of high school math and Spanish classes while still in middle school will also be used as a measure of effectiveness. This data will be used to revise our curriculum, when needed, to further motivate, challenge, and prepare our gifted students.

Although our gifted students will spend the majority of the instructional day in the general education setting, we will support our gifted students in meeting their EP goals by using:

- Flexible, small-group instruction
- Student choice
- Success Block
- Station rotation during blended learning

Flexible, Small-Group Instruction

Based on the ongoing collection of data gleaned from daily planned formative assessment, teachers will form homogeneous groups in the classroom to address gaps in understanding or to provide enrichment of daily learning targets *within* lessons. Gifted students, like their classmates, with benefit from tailored instruction that addresses their misunderstandings or enriches the content or skill being learned.

Student Choice

Providing students "choice boards" for showing their understanding of the learning target(s) will be a regular practice. This strategy will allow teachers to plan for challenging tasks that align to the interests and needs of gifted students as well as for any student who demonstrates readiness.

Success Block

The 30 minutes of Success Block provides another structure in the school day to meet the needs of gifted students. It will be the expectation that gifted students achieve mastery of the grade-level standards on the IFC Assessment, allowing for dedicated time each day to cluster gifted students together.

Station Rotation During Blended Learning

During station rotation, gifted students will be engaged in activities that are appropriate to their current level of achievement. Through the use of technology, they will be able to engage in activities including but not limited to:

- Accelerating through content at a faster pace
- Engaging in games in simulations that encourage decision-making, particularly in social settings
- Creating student-authored books
- Accessing literature and nonfiction texts at their current reading level
- Participating in online discussion forms to provide students more opportunities to think more deeply

RESPONSE TO INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION (RTI²)

Process and Procedures for RTI²

The process of RTI² is a joint effort by general and special education. At RCP, a RTI² team will be formed including the principal or his/her designee, learning community teachers, EL coordinator, SPED coordinator, and any other staff as seen necessary. This team will meet every four – five weeks to ensure fidelity of the instruction and interventions, as well as make data-based decisions pertaining to student placement in interventions.

All Kindergarten – Grade 8 students will be administered the i-Ready diagnostic, as part of the universal screening process, at the beginning of each school year. The RTI² team will use and analyze the results from the universal screener to identify students who are at-risk and need enrichment. As a guideline, students who are below the 25th percentile will be considered at-risk for Tier II and below the 10th percentile to immediately receive interventions for Tier III.

Based on the overall data from the universal screener, the RTI² team will make data-based decision making to inform and drive instructional decisions in Tier I. Our RTI² team will develop plans, based on the results, for students who are making adequate progress and for those not making sufficient growth.

For Tier I, all data will be considered when making instructional decisions for students. If a student is not making adequate progress in Tier I, another data-based decision will be made to determine if additional support through Tier II and/or Tier III interventions are necessary.

When Tier I instruction is functioning well, it should meet the needs of 80 – 85% of the student population. The path to readiness begins in the regular classroom where students receive differentiated, research-based core instruction. Instructional decisions will be driven by ongoing formative assessment, and teachers, through collaborative team planning and other professional development and coaching, will receive the support they need to provide high-quality core instruction for all students.

To evaluate the impact of core instruction on student learning, data will be gathered and interpreted from multiple measures, including but not limited to: i-Ready Diagnostics (winter and spring administrations), IFC assessments, classroom assessments (summative and formative), student portfolios, student self-assessments, classroom observation data, and if available, past TCAP assessments. Data mined from these measures will be used to inform core instruction, indicating the need for re-teaching or instructional modifications.

If a student scores below the 25th percentile on the universal screener, they will be given a skills-based screener to identify the area(s) in which they may be struggling. Our RTI² team will collaborate to determine the appropriate intervention for the student. In addition to Tier I, the research-based intervention will occur 30 minutes daily in a group of no more than five – six students.

Every five instructional days, progress monitoring will occur through a computer-based skills assessment through a program like EasyCBM in order to gather 10 – 15 data points. The classroom teacher will maintain the progress monitoring data using a rate of improvement (ROI) to determine if adequate progress is being made. After four data points have been collected, if the student is not making adequate progress, a change in intervention may be considered.

After collecting 10 – 15 data points through progress monitoring, our RTI² team will meet to analyze data, measure the effectiveness of interventions, and check student progress toward his/her goal(s). If the student has made progress, the team will either move them out of Tier II or create an intervention related to another skill deficiency. If the student is not making progress, a change in intervention will be considered. When the change of intervention has occurred, another 10 – 15 data points through progress monitoring must occur, be documented, and reviewed by the RTI² team to determine if a Tier III intervention is needed.

If a student scores below the 10th percentile on the universal screener, is 1.5 to 2 years behind, or did not demonstrate adequate progress with Tier II interventions, a Tier III research-based intervention will be created by the RTI² team. In addition to Tier I, the student will receive 40 – 60 minutes of intervention, depending on the grade-level and subject area, daily in a group of no more than three students (Kindergarten – Grade 5) orsix students (Grades 6 – 8).

Every five instructional days, progress monitoring will occur through a computer-based skills assessment, in order to gather 10 – 15 data points. The learning community teacher will maintain the progress monitoring data using a rate of improvement (ROI) to determine if adequate progress is being made. After four data points have been collected, if the student is not making adequate progress, a change in intervention may be considered.

After collecting 10 – 15 data points through progress monitoring, our RTI² team will meet to analyze data, measure the effectiveness of interventions, and check student progress toward his/her goal(s). If the student has made progress, the team will move them out of Tier III. If the student is not making progress, a change in intervention will be considered. When the change of intervention has occurred, another 10 – 15 data points through progress monitoring must occur, be documented, and reviewed by the RTI² team to consider if a special education referral should be made.

1.10 School Culture and Discipline

In this section:

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

Attachment B contains the student handbook and forms that will be provided to students and families. Included in this handbook is the Student Discipline Policy.

(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.

The development of a healthy and nurturing school culture that reflects our belief that all children, inclusive of all races and income levels, can succeed and contribute positively to their community is key.

Our vision is to inspire and equip a generation of self-directed critical thinkers to influence the world around them. We are committed to a culture of restoration, responsiveness, and leadership. Students, parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers, school leaders, and the community will work together, so that all students can develop improved academic achievement, character, and career readiness. Our integration of SEL into every aspect of the school is key to creating a challenging educational environment that is secure, engaging, and supportive. SEL will provide the foundation for our students to have academic success.

(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.

(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.

Students and teachers will work cooperatively to enhance student capacity by integrating social emotional skills, attitudes, and behaviors to deal effectively and ethically with daily tasks and challenges. The establishment and growth of this positive school culture is inclusive for all stakeholders, including all learners, special populations (disabilities, special needs, ELs, and at-risk of academic failure), staff, parent(s)/guardian(s), and community stakeholders.

We will engage in positive, restorative practices. School administrative staff will include a trained Restorative Justice Peacekeeper, who will lead restorative meetings and work to develop peer-mediation groups. Under appropriate circumstances (non-violent and non-threatening behavior), the Restorative Justice model can be used to address conflict holistically and solve problems needed to repair harm done and assign responsibilityby talking through the problem. Restorative, peaceful practices empower students to resolve conflicts on their own and in a one-on-one setting or small-group. All staff members will be trained to hold restorative chats.These chats are quick, private conversations with a student to identify the root problem behaviors that canquickly be solved so that learning can begin again.

We will bring students together in peer-mediated small-groups to talk, ask questions, and air their grievances. The goal is to bring affected parties together, making amends, and reintegrating students back into the learning community. These peer-mediated small-groups will be scheduled as-needed during the advisory period, at the end of the day. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in advance of student participation in peer-mediation.

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

RCP's student discipline policy has been included as part of **Attachment B**.

(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 non-discretionary) 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;**
- **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.**

We will always maintain a secure learning environment. Our discipline plan **(Attachment B)** is rooted in equipping students, teachers, and all other members of the school community with the tools needed to secure an optimal teaching and learning environment, thus enhancing the opportunity for exemplary academic achievement and personal development.

Our Code of Conduct serves as the guide for discipline, suspension, dismissal, and recommendation for expulsion. Copies of the Student Code of Conduct will be distributed to each student and parent/guardian at the beginning of the school year and will be available electronically. Additional school specific procedures will be published in the student handbook **(Attachment B)**.

Teachers will attend summer PD sessions prior to the start of the school year. Parts of the professional development sessions are designed with a focus on understanding the school-wide discipline plan, the Student Code of Conduct, classroom management, and the components of the school culture.

In order to ensure integration of SEL throughout the school culture, teachers will be supported and given adequate SEL training including the following units in our back-to-school PD:

Table 33

Unit of Professional Development	Integration in School Culture and Climate
Self-Awareness: The ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior.	Developing self-awareness practices that are embedded with school culture and community, including how to facilitate restorative chats.
Self-Management: The ability to successfully regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations - effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself.	Teaching and learning self-management strategies that can be shared with school community members.
Social-Awareness: The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures.	Developing opportunities for students and staff members to learn about the diverse communities where students come from.
Relationship Skills: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups.	Teaching and learning relationship skills strategies necessary for a strong community – including meeting students at the door and learning students' names

	within the first few days of school, learning information about students.
Responsible Decision-Making: The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms.	Learn how to embed responsible decision-making into daily lessons.

New teachers participate in an annual New Teacher Induction session as well as in various sessions offered throughout the school year. These supplemental sessions are primarily designed to assist with classroom management. Throughout the year, new teachers have a network of support through our PLCs. Mentor teachers provide support and training including opportunities to share best practices. Mid-year teacher hires will engage in professional development embedded within their orientation to ensure that all teachers are fully trained and knowledgeable of the school culture and the SEL framework.

Students will be engaged in the following ways:

- Student Orientation Days – Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students will be introduced to the culture and expectations of the school through grade-level specific immersive experiences prior to the first days of school. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students will imitate a student's day by experiencing their schedule, meeting the faculty and staff in their environments, developing goals, and establishing their learning environments.
- Open House – We will host an Open House to celebrate the school year beginning, provide essential components of the student/parent experience (i.e., materials, after school enrichment sign up, uniform purchase, agenda book purchases, after care, etc.).

The first month of school each year engages students in the culture and procedures of sustainable, positive, and restorative school community. These include:

- Routines and Procedures
- Personal Mission Statement
- Class Mission Statement
- Student Roles and Responsibilities
- Safety and Security
- School-Wide Lessons In Character and Values Shared Language

Culture: Special Populations

The establishment and growth of this positive school culture is inclusive for all stakeholders, including all learners, special populations (disabilities, special needs, ELs, and at-risk of academic failure), staff, parent(s)/guardian(s), and community stakeholders. While restorative practices create inclusive environments where all students can feel connected and engaged, the Dean, or Principal designee year one, will coordinate with SPED and EL team members to ensure that the needs of students are met. This allows for the Dean, orother PeaceKeeper, to plan for and be aware of any specific needs of peer-mediation or peace circle participants. By following the school culture methodology outlined below, we are committed to meeting the needs of all students.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

The ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mindset."

- Identifying emotions
- Accurate self-perception
- Recognizing strengths
- Self-confidence

- Self-efficacy

Restorative Practices
Restorative, peaceful practices (shown in photo below) empower students to resolve conflicts on their own and in a one-on-one setting or small-groups. It is a growing practice at schools around the country. Essentially, the ideal is to bring students together in peer-mediated small-groups to talk, ask questions, and air their grievances. The goal is to bring affected parties together, making amends, and reintegrating students back into the classroom or community. After year one, the Dean (**see Appendix G for job description**) will serve as a trained Restorative Justice Peacekeeper, and as such will be responsible for disseminating the discipline policy to stakeholders. During year 1, the assistant principal or school designee will serve as the Peacekeeper.

Personalized Learning Plans (Portfolio)
Every child completes a PLP in cooperation with a teacher and the parent/guardian. Quarterly student-led conferences review the performance.

1.11 Recruitment and Enrollment

In this section:

(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.

Please see **Attachment D**.

(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?

Marketing efforts for Rutherford Collegiate Prep (RCP) will begin in spring 2021 and focus on educating the local community about our new school and highlighting its socially and emotionally supportive learning space. Community awareness efforts will focus on the northwest Rutherford County area. NEI and ReThink will begin holding annual community panel discussions to engage the community regarding RCP and broad education topics.

~~RCP will survey surveyed potential parent(s)/guardian(s) in the northwest Rutherford County area via email and online. The survey will be available in English and Spanish and will survey families interested in a new school serving Kindergarten – Grade 8 the identified area. Questions will include, but are not limited to:~~

- ~~Are you completely happy with the elementary and middle school options in Rutherford County?~~
- ~~Would you support another school opening in Rutherford County, serving grades K-8?~~
- ~~If a new school were to open in Rutherford County, what would it offer in order to best service the community?~~
- ~~How many school-aged children do you have?~~
- ~~We will be distributing an online petition to gather additional support for a new, high-quality school option in northwest Rutherford County.~~

RCP surveyed potential parent(s)/guardian(s) in the Rutherford area via Facebook.

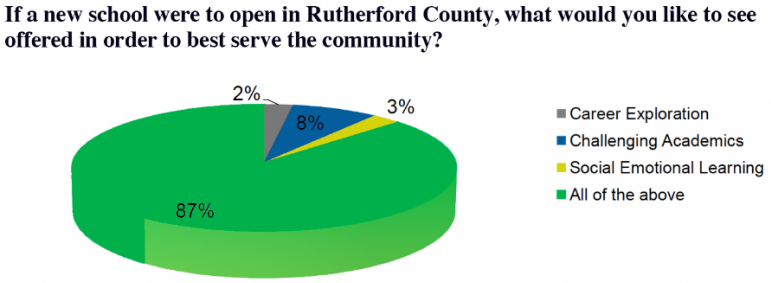
The survey included four questions.

- Are you satisfied with the elementary and middle school options in Rutherford County?
- Would you support a new, tuition-free public charter school opening in Rutherford County?
- If a new school were to open in Rutherford County, what would you like to see offered in order to best serve the community?
- How many school-aged children do you have?

Survey Highlights
114 Responses
205 school-age children estimated living in respondent households
1,798 Clicks
32,119 Reached
105,590 Impressions

The survey was available from August 3 through August 18, 2021. Of the 114 respondents surveyed, 98% say they would support a new, tuition-free public school opening in Rutherford County.

More specifically, 87% respondents expressed interest in a school that features Career Exploration, Challenging Academics, Social Emotional Learning.



68% of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the current school options in Rutherford County.

See ATTACHMENT E: Letters of Support/MOUs/Contracts from the Community for a list of respondents

The responses from the petition will help drive the lead generation process as part of the targeted marketing campaign (described below).

NEI's community engagement director will increase efforts to effectively target partnerships with local northwest Rutherford County area businesses and community groups and increase awareness efforts that reach households with students aged 5 – 14. Ongoing community engagement strategies may include:

1. Neighborhood Canvassing – One of the most effective methods for meeting potential families is engaging them in face-to-face discussions in their community. As such, we are employing a grassroots style, door-to-door marketing strategy in targeted areas. We have and will continue to distribute flyers and other information to businesses, childcare centers, places of worship, and households. These efforts will direct community members to school information events, our website, and social media page. We have identified specific areas that will help ensure our application pool reflects the diversity of the community that we intend to serve.
2. Community Awareness Meetings – We will hold approximately one large event per month prior to open enrollment. Meetings will be open to the public both online and in public locations such as libraries, churches, local universities, and community centers. Parent(s)/guardian(s), families, and community members will be invited to learn more about RCP and our mission in order to build a strong, diverse group of supporters.
3. Business Partnership Meetings – We will also host community business partner meetings to meet and introduce RCP to the local businesses surrounding the identified school area.
4. Community/Family Events – We will identify community festivals and parenting and family events in which to sponsor and participate. Community and family event sponsorship is an excellent vehicle through which RCP can disseminate information about the school and increase awareness.
5. Online Marketing – Email, social media campaigns, search engine marketing (SEM) and sponsored ads will be used to inform parent(s)/guardian(s) and community members about our school and to drive traffic to our online/community events and the school website. ReThink, in partnership with NEI, has built a database of interested families and supporters of RCP through the dissemination of survey and community engagement/canvassing efforts. Responses will be used to influence the enrollment/recruitment marketing strategy for the initial enrollment period.

6. Targeted Marketing
   - Direct Mail: We will send direct mail to all households in the identified area with students entering Kindergarten to Grade 5 communication will include information regarding the Education Model, as well as details for future community events being held throughout the community.

- Media: We will use various local media outlets to disseminate information to families and supporters regarding upcoming community events including, but not limited to, radio advertisements.
- Social Media: We will launch a targeted social media campaign that will be designed to highlight the aspects that differentiate RCP and make the school a unique and attractive option for prospective students. We will leverage online lead generation in order to reach different "groups" of parents, and use the information garnered from those leads (such as age, location, number of children, school interests, non-negotiables, etc.) to create different ad "personas." These personas will be designed to pique the interests of particular ad groups in order to create inbound marketing for RCP. For example, one ad persona may be designed to target parents that send their children to private schools. Through lead generation, we will determine the reasons why those parents send their children to private schools and design ads that highlight those aspects in RCP, thereby drawing them back into the public sector.

(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.

ReThink recognizes the importance of marketing and recruiting to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students of Rutherford County, specifically the northeastern area, in order to recruit a student population reflective of the community in which RCP will be located.

Recruitment marketing efforts will begin two months before the first Open Enrollment period and continue until RCP is fully enrolled. Our marketing message will focus on enrollment and application guidance as well as highlighting our socially and emotionally supportive learning space. RCP will conduct a three-phase marketing campaign: Identification, Awareness, and Recruitment.

Phase I: Identification
First, RCP will identify the anticipated population as outlined in the Charter Contract. Second, RCP will identify the anticipated area in which to conduct recruitment based on a thorough analysis and compliance with the Charter Contract.
Some of the indicators that are used to identify a recruitment area include:

1. Community demographics
2. Local school capacity
3. Local school academic performance
4. Performing scientific surveys for interest areas (e.g., programs, transportation, etc.)

Phase II: Awareness
ReThink and RCP will conduct a broad marketing campaign throughout the identified areas that continues to educate and publicize information to the community about the opportunities and benefits available at RCP. Publications and media clips will be produced as needed to match the demographics of the community.

These efforts may include, but are not be limited to:

1. Local print media
2. A school website accessible via the Internet with email options
3. Distribution of brochures and flyers about RCP and the programs offered
4. Participation in "town hall" type meetings with local organizations
5. Direct mailings and targeted online advertisements to the community
6. Local television/radio public service announcements
7. Announcements in human resources newsletters for area businesses

Phase III: Recruitment
Recruitment will continue until RCP's enrollment goals are met. At this point of the marketing campaign and continuing with the above efforts, a more extensive, hands-on marketing strategy is implemented.

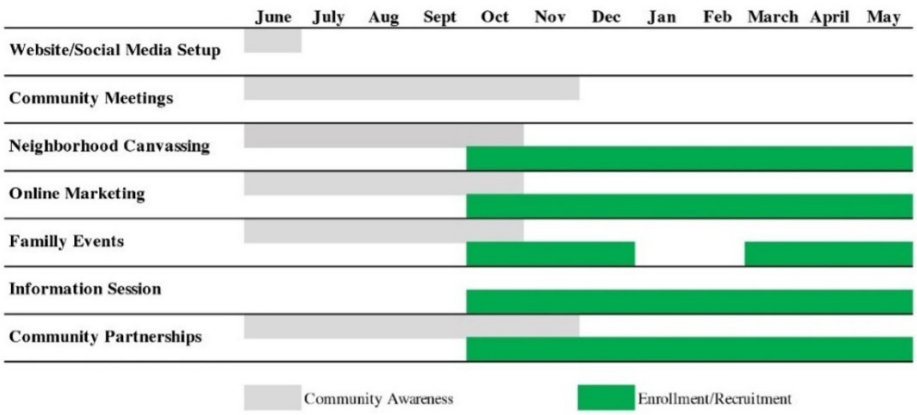
These efforts may include, but are not limited to:

- Continued distribution of brochures and flyers about the school and the programs offered, including neighborhood canvassing
- Continued presentations/information sessions to the local community, neighborhood clubs, libraries, and other organizations (online and in-person)
- Continued partnerships with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Display signs and flyers throughout the immediate and surrounding communities
- Open houses and information sessions at the school location and online
- Advertisements through local businesses
- Participation in targeted community events
- Appropriate sponsorships of community activities

Please see Table 34 below for a sample timeline of proposed community engagement and student recruitment activities.

Table 34

Community Awareness and Enrollment Recruitment Marketing



Open Enrollment period is November through January. We will admit students of any race, color, nationality and ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender. Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-113, we shall enroll an eligible student who submits a timely application unless the number of applications exceed the capacity of a program, class, grade-level, or building. In such cases, all applicants shall have an equal chance of being admitted through a random lottery selection process.

The Open Enrollment period is planned Applications accepted during this period will be given preference. However, applications will be accepted throughout the school year. Enrollment applications will be available online through the student information system (accessible via RCP's website) and in paper form at the school. Our enrollment team will make every effort to allow those with limited technology or internet access to submit applications by offering the ability to utilize the resources available at the school. If an applicant cannot travel to RCP, they will have the option to call the school and allow a staff member to complete an application on their behalf.

If after the application period, RCP is over capacity, preferences will be in accordance with Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-113 for the following populations:

Students enrolled in a charter school that has an articulation agreement with the enrolling public charter school; provided, that the articulation agreement has been approved by the chartering authority

Siblings of students already enrolled in the public charter school

Students residing within the Local Education Agency (LEA) in which the public charter school is located who were enrolled in another public school during the previous school year

Students residing outside the LEA in which the public charter school is located
A public charter school may give an enrollment preference to children of a teacher, sponsor, or member of the governing body of the charter school, not to exceed 10% of total enrollment or 25 students, whichever is less

In addition, students with disabilities and students served in English Learner (EL) programs shall have an equal opportunity for enrollment in RCP. Our enrollment application will not request information regarding disability status or academic performance. Furthermore, RCP's marketing materials will reflect that it is a "tuition-free" public charter school and that it serves all students, including special populations.

Applicants will be tracked and ordered appropriately utilizing RCP's student information system. This method provides an opportunity for all students applying to be admitted while ensuring an orderly management system for achieving enrollment projections across all grade-levels.

If at the end of the Open Enrollment period, there is an over subscription of student applicants for any grade-level, a lottery will be conducted. The number of seats available is determined by the capacity minus the number of students who recommit (after the initial year). This is in compliance with Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-113. The lottery is random, and computer-system generated. The lottery will be conducted for all grades in which the number of applicants exceed the number of available seats. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of students who are selected in the lottery will be notified in writing of their child's acceptance no later than 10 days after the acceptance period deadline and are given a specific timeline to respond with their decision. Once all open seats have been randomly filled, the remaining applicants are placed on a waitlist in order of the lottery results and in accordance with assigned preferences.

Please see Table 35 below for a sample timeline of proposed enrollment activities.

Table 35

Enrollment Schedule	
Open Enrollment	November – January
Application Verification	February
Notification of Lottery	February
Lottery	February
Student enrollment/ Waitlist Notice Sent	February/March
Registration	March – ongoing

(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.

We will be an open enrollment school of choice and will welcome all students that apply. We are committed to enrolling a diverse student population and shall abide by the provisions in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-111 (b) that forbid discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, gender, marital status, ethnicity, or disability. The lottery process, if necessary, is completely random and nondiscriminatory. Our enrollment process will also follow Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-113, which includes enrolling students according to racial/ethnic balance provisions.

We will endeavor to achieve racial/ethnic balance through the comprehensive marketing plan. In order to achieve a racial/ethnic balance reflective of the community it serves or within the racial/ethnic range of other public schools in the district, we will focus our efforts on recruiting students within the northwest Rutherford County Area. This effort includes marketing to underrepresented populations with direct mail, community postings, public service announcements, and the availability of bilingual staff, as well as the methods described below for marketing to "hard- to-reach" populations.

Strategies to market RCP to populations such as economically disadvantaged students, students performing below grade-level, special student populations, and those at risk of academic failure may include, but are not limited to:

1. Production of marketing materials and school applications in languages other than English, such as Spanish and Arabic, as needed to accommodate the needs of the community
2. Availability of bilingual staff to answer questions
3. Enrollment applications in multiple languages on RCP's website
4. Radio public service announcements in multiple languages
5. Posting of information (in appropriate languages for the community) in local public areas (i.e., libraries, grocery stores, YMCA, community centers, etc.)
6. Advertising in magazines and newspapers, including free community publications
7. Distribution of information to local businesses' Human Resources departments
8. Advertising Open House and Information Sessions in a variety of locations and languages throughout the community

(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.

Marketing efforts after school opening will be conducted using the same strategies utilized during start-up. The only difference will be that we will have a recommit period for currently attending students. As such, we will work to maintain relationships with existing families to drive recommitment and the volume of marketing will be smaller in scale than that of the start-up phase, determined based on the student capacity for each grade-level minus the number of recommits. In addition, community engagement events will be an ongoing process throughout the life of the school in order to continue building community partnerships and establishing our local presence.

1.12 Parent and Community Engagement and Support

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?

See Section 1.11

(a) Describe how you will engage parents and community members from the time that the proposed school is approved through the school's opening.

In line with our mission and purpose, which includes developing well-rounded and engaged students, active parental involvement will be required throughout all development stages of the proposed school. From the standpoint of family engagement, the mission and purpose promote well-rounded and engaged students. Active parental participation is essential to the delivery of our educational goals and is key to the success of the overall program.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will participate in volunteer opportunities and are encouraged to volunteer for a minimum of 20 hours per school year (or 30 hours per school year when two or more children from the same family are enrolled). The principal or other designee will verify the completion of volunteer hours and credit hours are applied to the family's account. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive a letter notifying them of their progress toward completion of their volunteer hours each quarter. Volunteer opportunities can be completed at school or at home, thus alleviating potential hardships that may occur as a result of this commitment. Families with time constraints will have the opportunity to meet with school personnel to develop volunteer activities that meet their schedules and needs.

Parental involvement in the student's life and in the support of the school is a committed effort and requires active participation. Furthermore, fulfilment of parental obligations to our students, school, and school staff will further cultivate the sense of community within the school. Annual surveys will be distributed to parent(s)/guardian(s) in order to afford the opportunity to provide valuable input for our further growth, development, and improvement of the life of the school.

As stated in the above response, parent(s)/guardian(s) will participate in volunteer opportunities and are encouraged to volunteer for a minimum of 20 hours per school year (or 30 hours per school year when two or more children from the same family are enrolled).

(b) 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.

See Attachment E

(c) Outline how the proposed school will engage parents and community members in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles).

Included in answer below

(d) 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.

The student information system includes a gradebook portal and supports continuous and meaningful parental involvement in their child's education. This gradebook will become part of the child's portfolio. Parent(s)/guardian(s) have real-time access to their child's gradebook to monitor classroom progress. Daily communication with the teacher is encouraged through use of the agenda book, which students can use to track homework and their daily assignments. Teachers will also send messages to parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding their child's classroom progress.

We encourage a sense of community outside of the classroom. By implementing an online communication platform that will allow teachers, students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and the greater school community to share information, ideas, reminders, and opportunities, connections will be made to foster community engagement. This online platform will allow students and parent(s)/guardian(s) to interact with the classroom teacher and school in a seamless manner by blending social networking tools with traditional school communication tools. The student's portfolio can be used to engage students and parent(s)/guardian(s) in the student's early start to career exploration. Parents/guardians will be provided training at new student orientation sessions prior to school opening, at open houses and as needed during curriculum nights.

Progress Reports and Report Cards are provided to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students quarterly via the student information system. Parent-teacher conference days are pre-scheduled in the school calendar and parent(s)/guardian(s) may schedule additional conferences as needed to discuss student performance and progress toward mastery of grade-level standards. We will also provide opportunities for students to share their work with parent(s)/guardian(s) through student portfolios during specially scheduled conferences. We will offer Curriculum Nights for parent(s)/guardian(s) to attend and learn about various educational topics, such as state assessment information or home-reading strategies to foster more efficient homework practices. We believe that parent involvement in a child's education is vital to the child's success in school, so we will make every effort to actively engage parent(s)/guardian(s) and to keep them informed of their child(ren)'s progress.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified via routine postings on school bulletin boards and reminders sent out through email communication regarding the time and place of governing board meetings. Parent(s)/ guardian(s) will be invited to attend and participate in these meetings. The principal will be present at the governing board meetings to discuss all issues pertaining to RCP and school management. Issues commonly addressed at board meetings include: financial matters, student achievement, i-Ready Diagnostic, institutional focus, personnel matters, facility issues, and/or ancillary services issues.

Operational and governance topics at our school foster parental participation through the topic areas listed below:

- Attendance and participation in governing board meetings that will be open to the public and notification disseminated per Public Records Law. T.C.A. § 8-44-101(a)
- Parent/teacher conferences held to provide a forum for open discussion and to build parent/teacher understanding and support.
- Semi-annual surveys distributed to parents to provide valuable input for our school's further growth, development, and improvement. A parental participatory obligation between the parent, the student, and RCP.

(e) 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.

Upon approval of this charter application, we plan to develop community partnerships that benefit the interests of our school and the community. These community partnerships will boost the integration of public entities that are charged with the welfare of our children (such as schools) and increase the quality of services provided at RCP. As a part of our commitment to providing an engaging and supportive environment, ReThink and NEI have and will continue to schedule quarterly breakfast meetings with local business owners. This will provide a networking opportunity and allow us to develop community partnerships.

Twitter accounts and Facebook pages for RCP have been established to connect with the public, and the school's website is in development. Monthly community information sessions will be held and are intended to familiarize

attendees with RCP. Flyers and direct mail postcards will be sent to the surrounding community to advertise the event as well as advertising through social media.

SECTION 2: OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

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.

ReThink is comprised of three members holding officer titles, two of whom possess decades of educational leadership experience in public schools, charter schools, and post-secondary education. These board members have managed all aspects of their schools, including financial, human resources, academics, operations, and governing board relations. Each ReThink board member is listed in Table 38 at the end of this section.

Dr. Dan Boone currently serves as the ReThink's Chair. Dr. Boone earned a Bachelor of Arts in Religion from TNU in 1974, a Master of Divinity from Nazarene Theological Seminary in 1977, and a Doctor of Ministry from McCormick Theological Seminary in 1996. From 1968 until 1985, Dr. Boone served as a Senior Pastor and Staff Pastor for New Salem Church of the Nazarene, Old Hickory Church of the Nazarene, Overland Park Church of the Nazarene, and Raleigh North Church of the Nazarene. In 1985, he became the Senior Pastor at College Hill Church of the Nazarene, and knew his calling was to work with college students. Dr. Boone enjoyed 20 years of being a pastor to college administrators, faculty, and students. Currently, Dr. Boone continues to fulfill his purpose of working with college students, serving as the President of TNU, a position he has held since 2005.

In addition to his professional career, Dr. Boone also serves on various councils and boards, including Chair of President's Council for the Great Midwest Athletic Conference, Past Chair of the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities, and as a member of the Court of Appeals for the Church of the Nazarene. Dr. Boone is also an accomplished author, boasting over a dozen book publications and two curriculum publications.

As President of TNU, Dr. Boone is involved in all aspects of the university's operations, overseeing the successful development, implementation, and fidelity of school-wide policies and procedures, similar to the duties he will execute as Board Chair for ReThink.

Thomas Lee currently serves as ReThink's Secretary. Mr. Lee received his Bachelor of Science in Journalism from the University of Tennessee in 1991, and his Juris Doctor from Vanderbilt University Law School in 1995. He currently serves as an Attorney for Frost Brown Todd, LLC. As a member of Frost Brown Todd, Mr. Lee practices in the areas of government services and business litigation, concentrating on lobbying and government relations, and providing strategic counsel on managing public policy change on state and local levels. He is also the member-in-charge for the firm's Nashville office. Throughout his time with Frost Brown Todd, Mr. Lee has developed economic incentive packages to attract green jobs to economically struggling communities; authored and successfully lobbied passage of public financing measures supporting downtown high-rise development, each of Tennessee's major league professional sports franchises, and acquisitions of thousands of acres for public land conservation; successfully defended many of the state's largest businesses against costly regulatory and legislative initiatives; and represented the Tennessee Supreme Court and members of the state's judiciary against legislative efforts to force expensive, direct elections of appellate judges.

Mr. Lee also serves as the Managing Principal for Civic Point, where he acts as a lobbyist, political strategist, and fundraiser for candidates of both parties. During his time with Civic Point, he has counseled a multi-state consortium in the development and procurement of a single unemployment benefits system to serve more than 20 million citizens across three states; protected the nation's premium finance industry against predatory legislation; represented clients in billions of dollars of Tennessee procurement matters; created economic incentive packages to attract jobs to economically struggling communities; and authored and successfully lobbied passage of the nation's first state law protecting ticket-buyers and sellers against unlawful "bot" software.

In addition to his professional legal and political career, he is also an Adjunct Professor at Vanderbilt University, where he teaches courses on lobbying, legislation, and public advocacy. Mr. Lee also served as Chair for two Tennessee Bar Association committees (Government Affairs Committee from 2009 – 2011 and President's Commission on the Future of Law-Related Education in Tennessee from 1999 – 2001). He also served on the U.S. Magistrate Selection Committees for the U.S. District Court (Middle District of Tennessee) in 1999 and 2005. Mr. Lee was also senior advisor for policy and communications to the 2006 U.S. Senate campaign of Rep. Harold Ford Jr., and senior advisor to Nashville Mayor Karl Dean's 2007 campaign, who rose from 2% in early polls to victory in eight months.

Mr. Lee possesses three decades of experience as a lobbyist, attorney, litigator, winning campaign strategist, university educator, and Emmy-award-winning journalist. This diverse portfolio of experience will aid in his dutiesas ReThink's Secretary and ensure that the board maintains strong relationships with political leaders for both the state and local community.

Rebecca Dinda currently serves as ReThink's Treasurer. Ms. Dinda holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Miami and a Master of Science in Counselor Education from Florida International University. She also has a 6th Year Certificate in Educational Leadership from Central Connecticut State University. Ms. Dinda has been a public educator in Connecticut and Florida for the last 21 years. Throughout her illustrious career as a leader in education, she advocated for high expectations for educators to ensure equality in our education systems. She began her career in education as a substitute teacher and intern in the Miami Dade Public Schools system. She then returned to her home state of Connecticut as a Guidance Teacher and a School Counselor & Teacher.

After eight years of teaching in Connecticut, Ms. Dinda returned to Miami as an Assistant Principal at Downtown Miami Charter School. Two years later, she became a Director of Education supporting all schools in a charter school network to develop effective practices and ensure improved quality. After missing the direct contact with scholars and parent(s)/guardian(s), Ms. Dinda returned to Downtown Miami Charter School as the Principal. Under Ms. Dinda's leadership, Downtown Miami Charter School was designated as a high-performing charter school in the state of Florida despite serving an extremely high-risk student population, a designation the school maintained each yearMs. Dinda served as Principal. Ms. Dinda currently serves as an Advanced Ed team member for the Kindergarten – Grade 12 school-based accreditation process and was a past Commission Member of the Charter School Appeal Commission (CSAS).

Throughout her career, Ms. Dinda has managed all aspects of school operations, ranging from curriculum and education model implementation and development to financial management and budget projection oversight. She has an extremely successful track record as a school leader working in a high-needs community and overcoming the challenge ofeducating at-risk students. Ms. Dinda's extensive experience in educational leadership and rare talent for achieving equality in education is an invaluable asset to both ReThink and RCP.

Dr. Sharon D. Smith currently serves as a Director for the ReThink board. She has extensive experience in federal, state, and private grant programs and fiscal compliance, as well as policy development. She is currently employed as the Chief of Federal Programs for the Tennessee Department of Education in Nashville, TN. Dr. Smith has provided effective leadership and training in the facilitation of grant proposal review/submission, award negotiation/acceptance, budget development and management, and ensuring adherence to institutional policies, federal and state regulations, and sponsor guidelines. Additionally, her broad knowledge and experience in grants/contracts administration includes work in the area of pre-award administration, post-award administration, financial management, proposal/grants development training, and compliance.

Dr. Smith is a member of the Tennessee Government Leadership Council (TGL) Toastmasters Club, an Advisory Committee Member of Tennessee Association of Federal Programs Administrators (TAFPA), a Grant Reviewer for the Unfunded List. Ms. Smith also volunteers with the Board Leaders of Color Collaborative (BLOCC) and at the Women in STEM (WISTEM) Center.

Dr. Smith earned an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from East Tennessee State University in 2019 and also holds an M.S.C.E. in Counselor Education from the University of West Alabama Livingston. She earned her B.S. in Business Administration from the University of Alabama., Tuscaloosa in 1992.

In addition to their official roles on the board, each member will also fill more informal, ancillary roles based on their areas of expertise and experience. In addition to acting as the board chair and overseeing the development and implementation of all board policies, Dr. Boone will act as the main point of oversight for RCP's day-to-day operations. Dr. Boone also has over a decade of financial experience in managing TNU's expansive school budget. As such, Dr. Boone will be key in overseeing RCP's financial management and budgeting processes. Dr. Boone currently resides in Nashville, and his extensive experience as President of TNU makes him a well-equipped to oversee all facets of day-to-day school operations.

Mr. Lee, given his extensive experience in forging relationships and his current residence in Nashville, will be uniquely positioned to forge RCP's community partnerships. His relationships with individuals in both state and local political circles will allow Mr. Lee to develop RCP's presence locally and statewide, ensuring that the best partnership opportunities are available to the school. In addition, as Member in Charge for Frost Brown Todd, Nashville, he assumes day-to-day financial management responsibilities, and that experience will allow him to assist in overseeing RCP's financial management and budgeting processes.

Ms. Dinda, as a former principal of a school that saw monumental success in educating a predominately underserved student population, will oversee the support provided by NEI to RCP's leadership regarding the development of classroom-level initiatives for closing the achievement gap. Her experience leading teachers at the school-level and working collaboratively to determine which instructional strategies would work best in their classroom will be instrumental in helping support school leadership's efforts to ensure each teacher at RCP is maximizing their resources to close the achievement gap in their classroom. In addition, Ms. Dinda has vast school-level experience managing the start-up, facilities, and human resources aspects of school operations. As such, Ms. Dinda will facilitate governing board oversight of NEI regarding these areas of RCP's operations.

Ms. Smith, given her experience in post- and pre-award grants management, financial management, and overall program compliance, will oversee RCP's grants efforts as well as the school's budgeting and financial oversight processes. In addition, Ms. Smith will broadly oversee both RCP and the governing board's compliance with local, state, and federal guidelines and regulations.

Collectively, ReThink will take on a role akin to a traditional public school board, assuming responsibility for developing and outlining the mission, vision, and values of RCP; developing the appropriate policies to ensure those fundamentals are maintained; and effectively and properly managing public funds. As the charter holder, ReThink will have ultimate authority over, and responsibility for, school operations and shall conduct itself in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

NEI and ReThink recognize the importance of charter school governance and will put systems in place to ensure the charter school meets rigorous academic, financial, and organizational priorities. This will include a board training and governance process that borrows from national best practices and includes on-the-ground training so that the governing board can fulfill its duties under state law. This training will ensure that the board possesses sufficient expertise in areas necessary for the success of the school, including academics, facilities, special needs, financial management, legal compliance, community relations, and other related work. This can only be accomplished through a rigorous training program designed by experts, and ReThink and NEI are committed to doing that. As such, NEI will secure the services of Andrew Broy to help lead and oversee the governance training of the board. Mr. Broy currently serves as the president of the Illinois network of charter schools, a statewide membership and advocacy organization that serves the 148 charter schools in the state of Illinois. Mr. Broy brings a level of expertise and insight that will ensure ReThink's success in governing RCP.

ReThink has entered into a good faith agreement with NEI to assume responsibility and authority for providing charter management services to RCP as the CMO. An executed management contract outlining responsibilities and performance metrics has been developed between ReThink and NEI, and is included as part of **Attachment K**.

In 2019, an independent board contracted with NEI to manage three local schools in Nashville serving Kindergarten – Grade 12 (Knowledge Academy, Knowledge Academy at the Crossings, and Knowledge Academy High School). ReThink has chosen NEI as the CMO for RCP due to their current track record of improving the academic,financial, and operational aspects at Knowledge Academies. Their efforts at these schools affirms that partnering with NEI as the CMO gives ReThink the benefit of having a large support team that possesses decades of experience in education, finance, and school operations. As opposed to appointing a high-level CEO, partnering with NEI provides ReThink with the reassurance that the departure of one individual will not cripple RCP's ability to operate. The partnership with NEI allows RCP to hold individuals more accountable and ensures that one person does not maintain sole control over every aspect of school operations, minimizing the possibility of one individual mishandling public funds, making poor academic decisions, or engaging in conflicts of interest.

NEI will maintain primary responsibility for reporting to ReThink and conducting follow-up action items. The principal will provide monthly status reports to ReThink and participate in all board meetings. These reports, which will be developed by NEI, will include, but not be limited to monthly and quarterly financial updates, parent/staff survey results, assessment data, marketing and enrollment updates, and compliance updates. During board meetings, the principal will present RCP's status report and field any questions.

In order to include all key stakeholders in the life of the school, ReThink and RCP will welcome feedback through active, intentional parent and community engagement through the ASC. The ASC will be made up of the principal, a teacher representative appointed by the principal, one parent whose child is currently enrolled in RCP, and two local community members from Rutherford County-based organizations such as universities, businesses, and community organizations. The goal of the ASC will be to engage key stakeholders on behalf of ReThink, and then to advise ReThink of parent and community perspective on various operational and academic issues, coordinate fundraising, and ensure RCP's strategic and operational integration into the local community.

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

ReThink will develop an Annual Report for RCP that will include relevant metrics on academic performance, financial information, compliance, and parent and community relations. The specific metrics and information included within the Annual Report will be determined during the start-up phase, and may include, but will not be limited to:

- Student assessment data, including performance on state assessments, formative assessments, diagnostic assessments, and classroom assessments
- Financial performance data, including all revenue and expense assumptions, year-end fund balance, cash flows, contingency budgeting, grants utilization, and vendor reviews
- State accountability data, including general academic/curriculum compliance, reporting compliance, compliance with serving special populations, financial compliance, operational compliance, and grants compliance
- Staffing reports, including general turnover/retention data, teacher/administrator evaluation data, and summaries of past/upcoming professional development sessions
- Parent satisfaction, which includes parents survey data, summary of complaints, and summaries of past/upcoming community engagement events
- Facilities updates, including a summary of major maintenance issues and how they were resolved, past renovation projects, and details of any planned renovation projects

The Annual Report will be posted on ReThink and RCP's websites.

In addition, ReThink will monitor and evaluate NEI's progress in achieving RCP's agreed upon goals using the school's financial, academic, and operational reports, which will be included in both RCP's monthly and annual reports. If there are any recurring shortfalls or perceived distresses in RCP's financial, academic, or operational aspects; then ReThink, RCP, and NEI will work collaboratively and proactively to correct the identified shortfalls and ensure that RCP is in a position to meet its goals in the future.

If ReThink collectively reaches a decision that NEI is not performing satisfactorily as the CMO, then they can choose to terminate the services agreement with NEI through a vote of the board. In this instance, ReThink would secure an agreement with a new CMO or similar entity prior to severing ties with NEI. Once a partnership with a new CMO or similar entity is entered into officially, ReThink would then begin transitioning the duties and responsibilities of NEI to the new entity. This process will ensure that RCP remains fully operational throughout the transition.

Table 36 below illustrates ReThink's internal organizational goals, which will provide metrics upon which they can self-critique. Furthermore, senior team members at NEI will complete a survey that rates ReThink's performance on successful attainment of the goals outlined below in Table 36. It is imperative that ReThink, RCP, and NEI track the progress of these goals, as they will ensure that RCP achieves academic, operational, and financial success.

Table 36

ReThink Goals	Measurable Objective
Properly Manage and Govern RCP	• Operational policies • Academic and financial accountability • Reporting RCP's progress annually to RCS • Policies consistent with RCP's mission • Ensuring RCP's programs and operations are faithful to the terms of the charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements
Oversee Operational Policies	• Adhere to regularly scheduled board meetings in a manner compliant with Open Meeting Laws • Ensure RCP's operations align with operational policies and procedures
Ensure Financial Accountability	• Annually adopt, maintain, and amend (if necessary) the annual operating budget • Create or adopt policies for internal controls • Review and approve financial statements on a consistent basis • Ensure that RCP has contracted with a certified public accountant for the annual financial audit • Review and approve the audit report, including audit findings and recommendations
Accountability for Performance	• Implement required reporting policies for NEI. Review the following performance reports from NEI on a periodic basis (monthly, quarterly, or annually as appropriate): o Financial Reports o School Report (enrollment, withdrawals, staffing, facility issues, and ongoing activities) o Satisfaction Surveys o Strategic Plan o Annual Accountability Report

RCP will use the state approved Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) Administrator Evaluation Model and the Administrator Evaluator Handbook in compliance with State Board Policy 5.201.

Administrator evaluation combines self-reflection, observation, input of school staff, and student data to create a complete picture of the administrator's performance. The effectiveness rating is calculated using a formula that is 50%

qualitative and 50% quantitative. The 50% qualitative portion includes a 35% growth measure (one-year school-wide TVAAS) and a 15% achievement measure.

We will use the TEAM Administrator Evaluation Rubric and the other tools provided by the TEAM model of the TDOE. These tools include the following:

- Teacher Perception Survey
- Administrator Individual Action Plan
- Administrator Evaluation Self-Reflection Tool
- Practices in Administrator Evaluations & Principal Site Visits

(b) **How will the board develop over time? Explain plans for recruiting board members with identified skills and addressing board member attrition.**

Board development and recruitment will be an ongoing process. ReThink recognizes the need for increased membership on its board and will actively search for qualified candidates to consider for board service. Members of ReThink will leverage relationships from their professional careers and charter school involvement in order to search for new board members. Areas of expertise that could enhance board function, such as financial and human resources expertise, have been identified by the board and will be taken into consideration when recruiting new members to ensure that a well-rounded and experienced board is in place to provide the most effective governance for RCP.

New governing board members are nominated by existing members through a nominating committee. ReThink may appoint a nomination committee to consist of no fewer than two governing board members. The nomination committee compiles and submits a slate of candidates to ReThink for the directorships and offices to be filled at the upcoming meeting. These submissions are deemed to be nominations for each person named. Persons are offered a position on the governing board contingent upon a favorable vote of ReThink. NEI and established resources will assist ReThink's nominating committee in refining and executing a thorough board member recruitment process that includes a realistic timeframe for recruiting additional members in time for school opening.

(c) **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.**

Each of ReThink's board members will receive annual board governance training through the Tennessee Charter School Center (TCSC) in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-13-111.

NEI and ReThink recognize the importance of charter school governance and will put systems in place to ensure the charter school meets rigorous academic, financial, and organizational priorities. This will include a board training and governance process that borrows from national best practices and includes on-the-ground training so that the governing board can fulfill its duties under state law.

Many charter school governing boards have difficulty distinguishing between governance responsibilities and management responsibilities. The training mentioned above will allow the board and the management company to understand their respective roles and work together to ensure the health and success of the charter school.

The ultimate goal of any charter school should be ensuring the academic success of the students and families the school serves. To that end, the work of the board and the management company will be centered on the needs of the student population in the community in which the school is located. This will include ensuring that local residents serve on the board and that the board possesses sufficient expertise in areas necessary for the success of the school, including academics, facilities, special needs, financial management, legal compliance, community relations, and related work. This

can only be accomplished through a rigorous training program designed by experts, and ReThink and NEI are committed to doing that.

In particular, NEI will secure the services of Andrew Broy to help lead and oversee the governance training of the board. Mr. Broy currently serves as the president of the Illinois network of charter schools, a statewide membership and advocacy organization that serves the 148 charter schools in the state of Illinois. In that role, Mr. Broy's organization currently trains the boards of all Illinois charter schools under a state legal requirement for annual training of all board members. This includes multi-site campuses, single-site campuses, urban schools, rural schools, and all types of curricular approaches.

In his previous role, Mr. Broy was the lead state authorizer for the state of Georgia for more than five years. In that position, he reviewed all charter applications, made recommendations to the state board on renewals and closures, launched a new state-wide, single-purpose authorizer called the Georgia State Charter School Commission, and was responsible for the oversight and authorization of all charter schools in the state. He has also served on the boards of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and is a current board member of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. As such, Mr. Broy brings a level of expertise and insight that will ensure ReThink's success in governing.

(d) **Describe the circumstances under which complaints will be brought to the board, and the process for addressing them.**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to attend board meetings, which are open to the public and offer an excellent opportunity for parent(s)/guardian(s) to address any issues or concerns they have with RCP. In addition,all parent(s)/guardian(s) will have access to ReThink's website (which provides ReThink's email address) and maycontact ReThink at any time to address any issues or concerns.

ReThink believes in the just, fair, and equitable treatment of ALL students and in providing a learning environment that is free from unfair or discriminatory practices. Procedures for addressing grievances and complaints from students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and teachers, and resolution of discriminatory practices have been established. Below is a summary of ReThink's complaint/grievance policy, which will be in effect for parents/students who attend RCP.

Any individual or group who believes a charter school has violated its charter, the Tennessee Charter Schools Act 2002, or any other law relating to the management or operation of RCP, can bring a complaint to the school's board of trustees (ReThink Forward, Inc.). If the individual making the complaint, after presenting the complaint to ReThink, is unsatisfied with the response, then he or she has the right to present the complaint to the entity which authorized the charter school, Rutherford County Schools (RCS). As the Charter Authorizer, upon being presented with acomplaint, RCS has the right to issue remedial orders when appropriate and necessary. As such, RCS will both receive and review complaints on behalf of its Board of Education and make determinations and issue appropriate remedial orders.

General Requirements

Governance of RCP is the sole province of ReThink. RCS cannot undertake the review of a complaint until the complainant has presented his or her complaint to ReThink, that ReThink has had the opportunity to respond to the complaint, and the complainant has determined that ReThink has not adequately addressed the complaint. All complaints must minimally include the following:

1. The specific nature of the complaint
2. Any employee, officer, representative, volunteer or other individual, or group of individuals involved in the nature of the complaint
3. The date and time in which the nature of the complaint occurred
4. Explicit reference to any applicable law or reference to the School's Charter of which the complainant alleges violation

5. The complainants requested resolution to the complaint

In general, a group or individual should not file with RCS until after ReThink has acted on the complaint and provided a written response to the complainant, and if the complaint alleges a violation of applicable law or ReThink's Charter. ReThink has established a process under which complaints must be reviewed. All school stakeholders have the right to be provided with a copy of that policy upon request.

Complaint Process

1. RCP's policy holds that academic concerns are first discussed with the teacher. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) determines that the academic concern has not been adequately addressed, then the parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a conference with the principal. Non-academic concerns should be discussed first and foremost with the principal or assistant principal.
2. Students or parent(s)/guardian(s) may invoke the grievance process by requesting a conference with the principal to appeal any final decision of school personnel. Requests for conferences must be made in writing within 15 calendar days of the event giving rise to the grievance.
3. The principal or assistant principal will hold the conference within 10 school days of receiving the request. The principal or assistant principal will provide the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) a written decision on the grievance within five days of holding the conference.
4. Within 15 school days following receipt of the principal or assistant principal's decision, the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal the decision to the Charter Management Organization (NEI) hired by ReThink. NEI will review the decision, including any additional written documentation provided by the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), or administrator. NEI will provide the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and administration a written response within 10 school days of receiving the appeal.
5. If the grievance is not resolved through school administration or NEI, the studentor parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal to ReThink within five school days following receipt of the response from NEI. ReThink will review the written documentation and decisions from the administration and NEI, and the Board will then issue a final written decision within 30 school days of receiving the appeal. If the complainant is not satisfied with such a response and is not alleging a violation of applicable law or RCP's Charter, the complaint process ends due to the authority of ReThink to address such complaints.
6. If the complainant either 1) does not receive a written response from ReThink within the timeframe identified above, or 2) is not satisfied with the written response of ReThink and is alleging a violation of applicable law or RCP's Charter, then they shall file the complaint with RCP's authorizer, RCS, at the address listed below:

ReThink will require NEI to provide a complaint report at every board meeting. The report will include the number of complaints, the general category, and a description of the complaint, if needed.

List all current and identified board members and their areas of focus or expertise in the following table, adding rows as needed.

Table 38

Full name	Current job and Employer	Area of Focus/Expertise
Chair: Dr. Dan Boone	President of Trevecca Nazarene University	Higher Education, University Leadership and Management, Adult Education, Community Partnerships
Secretary: Thomas Lee	Member in Charge Nashville Office Frost Brown Todd	Government Services, Business Litigation, Lobbying, and Government Relations, Strategy
Treasurer: Rebecca Dinda	Retired School Administrator	Curriculum and Instruction Design and Implementation, Turnaround Schools, SEL, School Leadership

Director Dr. Sharon Smith	Chief of Federal Programs for the Tennessee Department of Education	Finance, Grants, Federal Programs, Compliance with federal, state, and local guidelines

Please include the following governance documents 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)

Please see **Attachment F**

2.2 Start-Up Plan

(a) Provide a detailed timeline for starting the proposed school, specifying tasks 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.

(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.

The tables below show a detailed start-up plan for RCP, including tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals. Anticipated challenges will be identifying qualified job candidates, on-the-ground community engagement, and facility and temporary office site selection. We will be addressing these issues by leveraging potential partnerships with local colleges and universities, local contacts, and NEI real estate and development partners. In addition, NEI resources will assist ReThink in ensuring that all start-up activities are completed on time and correctly. Please note that this timeline may be adjusted based on the timing of theapplication approval, up to and including deferral of school opening until the 2023-24 school year.

The budget includes an open line of credit in the amount of $300,000 to cover start-up expenses at 8% interest over a three-year term. Please note that since this is an open line of credit, and as such, the school will only pay back the amount of funds borrowed, up to $300,000.

Table 39

Start-Up Plan **Phase I (Upon Approval of the Charter)**			
Timeframe	**Project**	**Notes**	**Responsible**
July – October	• Site Selection and Secure Financing	• Select Site • Apply for Public and Private Grants • Secure Donations	Board and NEI
	• Marketing, Recruiting, and Community Outreach	• Launch Website • Launch Social Media • Form Community Partnerships • Attend Community Events	NEI
	• Staff Recruitment	• Source Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates • Form University Partnerships	Board and NEI
	• Source Contractors for Services Not Provided by Authorizer (Procurement)	• Request proposals for Food Service, Transportation, Special Education Services (Speech, Occupational Therapy, etc.), Maintenance, payroll, Benefits, bank accounts, etc.	NEI

	• Submit for access to RCS systems	• Access to student information system, IEP system, etc.	Board and NEI
	• Staff training	• Customer service, RCS and/or other operational systems	NEI and School Leadership
	• Apply for NSLP Certification	N/A	Board

Table 40

Start-Up Plan Phase II			
Timeframe	**Project**	**Notes**	**Responsible**
November – December	• Marketing, Recruiting, and Community Outreach	• Host Enrollment Information Events • Attend Community Events • Neighborhood Canvassing • Targeted Marketing	NEI
	• Student Enrollment	• Open Application Window	NEI and School Leadership
	• Finalize School Policies	• Uniform, Technology, Bullying, Grievance, Discipline, etc.	Board and NEI
	• Finalize School Handbooks	• Parent/Student, Staff, etc.	Board and NEI
	• Finalize Standard Operating Procedures, Guides, and Manuals	• Enrollment, Finance, HR, Operations, etc.	NEI
	• Staff Recruitment	• Hire Principal and Assistant Principal, Registrar • Source Teachers and Staff Members	NEI
	• Finalize Technology Plan	• Technology requirements determined, RFP process (where appropriate)	NEI and School Leadership
	• Finalize Safety Plan	N/A	NEI and School Leadership
	• Purchase School Systems (or finalize usage agreements)	• Student Information System, Discipline Tracking System, Communication/ Call-Out System, etc.	NEI
	• Curriculum Development	• Finalize Education Software Selection	NEI and School Leadership

		• Finalize Curriculum Resources and Consumables Selection • Build Unit Maps • Build Instructional Focus Calendar	
	• Open School Office	• Secure office space in school facility or temporary office near school location	NEI and School Leadership
	• Staff training	• Customer service, RCS and/or other operational systems	NEI and School Leadership

Table 41

Start-Up Plan Phase III			
Timeframe	**Project**	**Notes**	**Responsible**
January – March	• Marketing, Recruiting, and Community Outreach	• Host Enrollment Information Events • Attend Community Events • Neighborhood Canvassing • Targeted Marketing	NEI and School Leadership
	• Student Enrollment	• Monitor Enrollment Progress • Verify Information • Hold Lottery • Begin Student Registration	NEI and School Leadership
	• Order Technology		NEI and School Leadership
	• Order Curriculum & Resources	• Education Software Contracts/Licenses • Curriculum Resources & Consumables	NEI and School Leadership
	• Staff Recruitment	• Continuing Hiring and Sourcing	NEI and School Leadership
	• School Metrics	• Develop metrics on academic performance, financial information, compliance, and	Board

		parent(s)/guardian(s) and community relations	

Table 42

Start-Up Plan			
Phase IV			
Timeframe	**Project**	**Notes**	**Responsible**
April – May	• Purchase and schedule FF&E	Office furniture	NEI and School Leadership
	• Utilities	Water, electric	NEI
	• Food Service	Health Inspection Training	NEI

Table 43

Start-Up Plan			
Phase V			
Timeframe	**Project**	**Notes**	**Responsible**
June – July	• Uniform Sales	N/A	NEI and School Leadership
	• Back-to-School Events	N/A	NEI and School Leadership
	• New Teacher Training	N/A	NEI and School Leadership
	• Set-up	Classrooms, front office, nurse's office, forms	School Leadership
	• CO for building	N/A	NEI
	• Build Pool of Substitutes	N/A	NEI and School Leadership
	• Student Scheduling	N/A	NEI and School Leadership
	• Staff Move-in	N/A	School Leadership

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, work room/copy room, supplies/storage, teacher work rooms, restrooms, and other spaces.

Rutherford Collegiate Prep (RCP) will occupy a facility that is designed and outfitted to house and serve the needs of a multi-dimensional student population. The facility is currently planned as a three-story building that is approximately 60,000 square feet and will accommodate a logical separation of grade-levels. Kindergarten – Grade 2 will occupy the first floor, Grades 3 – 5 the second floor, and Grades 6 – 8 the third floor.

The first floor will feature a large, open atrium with a three-story staircase in its center. The atrium will serve as an open education space containing flexible seating and furniture, cubby holes in walls where students can study or read, an indoor play area, and a multitude of curriculum and reading materials on bookshelves located throughout the atrium.

The classroom layout will be innovative in that it will feature self-contained, grade-level learning communities. Each grade-level will have its own separate space containing individual rooms with a large, collaborative instructional space in the center; restrooms; a teacher planning room; and a storage room for classroom materials. The intent of this layout is to foster collaborative learning and teaching, and as such, rooms will be separated by flexible partition walls that can be adjusted to meet the needs of each grade-level learning community. It is the intent of RCP that individual rooms will not simply serve as traditional classroom settings, but rather as individual breakout areas for small-group instruction that will be flexible and intuitive in separation. For example, student groups in each room may be broken out by proficiency level, subject, reading level, or RTI^2 tier depending on the instructional focus for that day or week.

The facility layout will include a large, multipurpose room featuring a permanent music stage. The multipurpose

room will serve as both a gymnasium and auditorium area for assemblies. An art lab that contains an open learning space as well as a flexible breakout area will be located on the building's second floor. An open science lab that also contains two breakout areas will be located on the third floor. As mentioned above, each grade-level learning community will have self-contained storage and planning space for teachers. Administrative office space, which includes reception, a clinic area, the principal's office, and a conference room will be located at the front of the building. The school site plan will also include appropriate outdoor recreational areas, designated pick-up and drop-off zones, and parking for staff and visitors.

ReThink does not intend to fund the construction of the facility, but rather enter into a lease agreement with a third-party developer who will construct the facility and make rent payments equal to the cost of servicing the associated debt/lease costs. As such, rent has been included in the budget, the expenditure for which is broken out by year in Table 44 below. For more detailed facility assumptions, please see **Attachment O**.

Table 44

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
$594,111	$746,282	$852,600	$959,059	$986,258

(b) Explain how the above-described facility needs tie to the related items in the proposed school's budget.

Please refer to page seven of **Attachment O** for facilities related expenses.

(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.

It is ReThink's intention to leverage NEI's relationships with seasoned commercial real estate agents and development organizations. NEI has met with four potential construction partners to date, all of whom possess extensive experience in acquisition and management of school facilities ranging in size from 35,000 sq. feet to +100,000 sq. feet, as well as facility renovations, including buildouts of existing structures to complete rebuilds. Our potential partners also specialize in identifying, vetting, and acquiring locations well suited for school facilities within a short timeframe in competitive real estate markets, where securing land and labor requires the ability to navigate in a high-bid environment.

(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.

As stated in Section 1.2 and below in response to Question H, potential Sites for RCP have been identified in northwest Rutherford County. Pending approval of this charter application, RCP will be built using one or a combination of the following sources of financing; developer financing that has been bank approved based upon the developer's financial capability; anticipated average daily membership (ADM) funding; third-party private real estate investor financing; or tax-exempt bond financing. Regardless of the source of funds, RCP will make rent payments for the facility equal to the cost of servicing the associated debt/lease costs. The facility costs line item provided in our budget projections is derived to accommodate the carrying cost for the estimated expenditures presented above. In addition, the financing is typically structured to allow repayment to ramp up along with enrollment growth.

(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.

The facility will meet all applicable Federal and local commercial and life safety codes, as well as Americans with Disabilities Act requirements for schools. Before RCP begins operation, the district will be provided with documentation of ownership or lease of the facility, and certification that the building satisfies all requirements for fire, safety, health, and accessibility for the disabled.

(f) Present a timeline with reasonable assumptions for facility selection, requisition, renovation, state fire marshal and health inspections, and occupation.

Table 45 below outlines the site development project timeline for RCP. Please note that this timeline may be adjusted based on the timing of the application approval, up to and including deferral of school opening until the 2022-23 school year.

Table 45

Site Development Project Timeline	
Phase I Upon Approval of Charter – October	Approval of Charter Application / Contract Services agreement Executed Site Review • Facilities – Use for Programs (e.g., Athletics, Sciences, etc.) • Site Plan – Ingress/Egress, Transportation, Fields, Parking, Signage • Zoning Site Plan Approval Land Development Permit (if applicable)
Phase II October – February	Construction Financing Apply for General Building Permit Finalize Architectural Design Land Development (if applicable)
Phase III February – June	RFP's for Vendors • Services • Furniture, Fixture, and Equipment listing (FF&E) • Technology Facility Lease Executed Construction (Ongoing)
Phase IV June – July	Complete Construction Facility Inspections Certificate of Occupancy Installation of FF&E Staff Move-In First Day of School

(g) Broadly describe a contingency plan, should your facility fall through.

ReThink will closely monitor the site development project timeline through a robust and integrated project plan and status review process. Should an issue with the project timeline arise, forcing the need for a contingency plan, ReThink will explore all possible options for temporarily educating RCP students until the permanent site is ready for occupancy. It is ReThink's intent to open RCP on time without sacrificing the safety and learning needs of RCP's students and families. The project plan and status review process will

inform ReThink of the need for a contingency plan well in advance of RCP's scheduled open date. If a suitable facility is unable to be secured in a reasonable time to open for the 2022 school year, ReThink will submit a request for an additional planning year and open in the 2023-24 school year, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-137.

(h) List any properties you may have already identified as suitable to meet the proposed school's facility needs.

2.4 Personnel/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.

Please see **Attachment G**.

(a) 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 Policy 5.201.

ReThink's minimum selection criteria for the principal is listed below:

- Must have Educational Leadership Certification
- Degree in Education with appropriate school grade background; experience as an educational leader
- Knowledge of the needs of RCP's population
- Ability to work with community agencies and resources
- Experience in working with school boards, board of directors, and advisory boards
- Experience in the start-up of a new school
- Skills in using technology as a tool for learning and monitoring student progress
- Knowledge of curriculum for appropriate grades of student body
- Motivated to establish innovative and creative learning programs
- Dedicated to providing supplementary programs to enhance student learning
- Committed to professional development programs for faculty and school concepts
- Ability to implement staff development and training
- Promoter of positive school climate
- Committed to enabling each student to reach his/her personal best

The search for a school leader will begin in November/December and ReThink intends to have the school leader hired by the end of December. Rebecca Dinda, who has over 21 years of experience as an educator, including being a principal at a Title 1 school, will support ReThink and NEI in identifying the right school leader for RCP's student population.

ReThink will leverage NEI's robust leadership recruiting process called the 3D Leadership Discovery Process. Before a candidate is invited to attend the 3D Leadership Discovery Process, they first go through a phone screening to identify their background and experience and determine if they will be a viable candidate for a school leadership position. This process is used to determine if a candidate would be a good building leader

and is an important component of the interview process. All viable candidates for principal, assistant principal, and dean participate in the one-day 3D Leadership Discovery Process event described below.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Serves as Educational Leader of the School

- Manages the day-to-day operations of the school including, but not limited to, federal and state grants, school volunteers, school substitutes, school fundraising efforts, state testing, instructional coaching, instructional technology, before and after school care and the school tutoring program
- Develops and coordinates educational programs in accordance with school and state standards and guidelines
- Supervises the guidance program to enhance individual student education and development
- Leads school-level planning of processes to ensure development, implementation, and evaluation of all school programs and activities
- Supervises the instructional programs of the school, ensures lesson plans are evaluated and observes classes on a regular basis to encourage the use of a variety of instructional strategies and materials consistent with school guidelines and procedures
- Requests and allocates supplies, equipment and instructional material as required in school guidelines and procedures
- Formulates student personnel policies within school guidelines
- Approves and provides supervision to school student activity programs
- Provides regular opportunities for students to celebrate success in instructional programs and extracurricular activities
- Oversees the career exploration programming and initiative

Serves as Chief Administrator of School

- Plans, organizes, and directs implementation of all school activities
- Works to achieve/sustain 100% of projected student enrollment capacity
- Establishes and promotes high standards and expectations for all students and staff for academic performance and responsibility for behavior
- Maintains a professional rapport with students and staff
- Operates school within approved budget and follows budgetary guidelines
- Delegates authority to responsible personnel to assume responsibility for the school in the absence of the principal
- Tours school frequently to monitor safety, security and effectiveness of school programs
- Plans and directs building maintenance
- Supervises all operations involving the management of the school including school funds, payroll, purchases, inventories and office operations
- Prepares and submits the school's budgetary requests and monitors expenditures
- Prepares or supervises the preparation of reports, records, lists and all other paperwork required or appropriate to the school's administration
- Plans and supervises fire drills, emergency readiness programs and ensures a safe school environment
- Directs preparation and maintenance of class schedules, cumulative records and attendance reports
- Ensures personnel and student records are complete and secure
- Ensures compliance with federal, state, and local regulations and policies
- Communicates with supervisor regularly about the needs, successes, and general operation and performance of the school
- Supervises and establishes schedules and procedures for the supervision of students in non-classroom areas, including before and after school, and student pick-up and drop- off areas
- Completes in a timely fashion all records and reports as requested by NEI
- Manages and administers school workers compensation program
- Oversees all state compliance and reporting

- Oversees compliance with all ethical business office policies and practices including oversight of Federal grants
-

Supervises and Develops Staff

- Motivates staff to achieve school objectives
- Communicates with staff and is responsive to their workplace related needs
- Evaluates performance of staff and provides ongoing performance feedback
- Counsels staff regarding inappropriate behavior or violation of school policies and/or practices
- Adheres to Human Resources policies and practices. Notifies appropriate school personnel of serious employee inappropriate behavior violations
- Maintains a productive and positive employee climate
- Selects and hires school staff, including teachers and school-based support staff
- Ensures annual re-appointment process of staff is completed timely and within budget
-

Communicates with Stakeholders

- Communicates regularly with parents, seeking their support and advice, to create a cooperative relationship to support the students in the school
- Establishes and maintains relationships with colleges, community organizations and other NEI schools to promote the school
- Confers with teachers, students, and parents concerning educational and behavioral issues in school
- Maintains a positive, cooperative, and mutually supportive relationship with school parents, and community
- Confers with Board Members and responds appropriately to issues that arise
- Represents school and NEI at community functions
- Uses effective presentation skills when addressing students, staff, parents, board members, and the community
- Articulates the school's vision, values, and goals and models those values
- Oversees development of community engagement and partnerships including Parent University
- Attends special events held to recognize student achievement, attends school sponsored activities, functions and athletic events
- Promotes school in community

Data Analysis Performance Task
Candidates are provided a mock scenario in which they need to analyze school data as part of a charter contract renewal. Data regarding a school's historical academic performance, demographics, staff turnover, and staff survey questions are provided to the candidate. As part of the school's leadership team, the candidate must assist in summarizing the school's past three years of performance and identifying areas of improvement, then help design an action plan to address the identified challenges. During this activity, the candidate will be required to:

1. Identify two or more areas that require attention and validate their selections.
2. Identify possible causes of the shortfalls that are identified.
3. Develop an action plan/school improvement plan that will address the identified shortfalls.
4. Candidates are then required to present the information to the mock leadership team via an oral presentation and supplemental handouts during the Phase 2 Interview.

Phase 1 Interview
The Phase 1 Interview is conducted by members of the interview team. Examples of roles filled by the interview team may include principals, assistant principals, controller, curriculum specialist, special education director, career & technical education director, state leaders, facilities supervisor, community engagement director, grants & compliance director, athletic director, and teachers. The questions during this interview phase are focused on the candidate's background, vision, knowledge of data, and their potential fit with the school. While waiting to conduct the Phase 2 Interview, candidates are asked to develop career plans and goals, along with what they perceive as the potential advantages and disadvantages of working at RCP. Candidates also complete a Character Survey/Essay.

Based on their survey results or essay, candidates are then asked to answer a series of questions:

1. What are your top two strengths according to the survey?
   a. Do you agree with the results?
   b. If not, what character strengths do you believe to be your top two?
2. What are your bottom two strengths according to the survey?
   a. Do you agree with the results?
   b. If not, what do you believe to be your bottom two-character strengths?
3. How have your top character strengths influenced your leadership style?
4. What challenges have you faced as a leader as a result of your bottom two-character strengths?

Phase 2 Interview
The Phase 2 interview is conducted by 2 – 3 different interview team members. During this interview phase, questions are focused on the candidate's leadership style as well as past challenges and results. The candidate will also present the action plan they developed as part of the Data Analysis Performance Task during the Phase 2 Interview.

Final decisions regarding leadership hiring are made by ReThink. Candidates who participate in the event but do not get hired as RCP's principal may be invited into the pool of approved candidates or be considered fora different administrative role. The governing board is consulted about leadership candidates to support a positive working relationship between the principal and the governing board.

RCP has been approved by the TDOE to use their own teacher evaluation system, TFET.

Administrator evaluation combines self-reflection, observation, input of school staff, and student data to create a complete picture of the administrator's performance. The effectiveness rating is calculated using a formula that is 50% qualitative and 50% quantitative. The 50% qualitative portion includes a 35% growth measure (one-year school-wide TVAAS) and a 15% achievement measure.

We will use the TEAM Administrator Evaluation Rubric and the other tools provided by the TEAM model of the TDOE. These tools include the following:

- Teacher Perception Survey
- Administrator Individual Action Plan
- Administrator Evaluation Self-Reflection Tool
- Practices in Administrator Evaluations & Principal Site Visits

(b) **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.**

Staff at RCP will be employees of ReThink, and ReThink will leverage the expertise and support of NEI to conduct job advertising and personnel management. ReThink will also adopt the NEI employee manual and personnel policies included as **Attachment I**, making any necessary changes to comply with Tennessee state requirements.

ReThink will be an equal opportunity employer and will recruit quality staff throughout the year for job openings using a progressive and innovative recruiting plan. Recruitment will occur locally, state-wide, and nationally through various resources that include:

- RCP's website
- Employee Referral Program: produces a high volume of quality candidates who have a better understanding of the corporate culture and position requirements resulting in lower turnover.
- Search resume databases and scan social networks
- Job Fairs: hold education job fairs to seek teaching professionals
- College Recruiting: identify colleges and universities, both locally and nationally, in order to attract and hire newly graduated teachers
- Online Job Posting Boards: utilize select educational and job recruitment websites to advertise teaching openings
- Conducting outreach in neighboring counties that are experiencing high population growth to minimize the impact of their relocation, such as Rutherford, Wilson, and Shelby counties
- Minority Organizations: work closely with minority referring organizations to help ensure that the workforce is reflective of the diverse community served

NEI will manage job advertising and conduct applicant screening and will refer qualified applicants to the principal and administration to ensure that RCP's leadership staffing needs are met. A consistent process of screening, interviewing, and selecting employees will be essential to RCP's ability to recruit qualified staff. A consistent process ensures that candidates have been provided an equal opportunity to demonstrate and/or articulate their skills and abilities.

As stated in the response to Question C above, all administrative roles (principal, assistant principal, and dean) will be selected using the 3D Leadership Discovery Process.

The comprehensive teacher and staff recruitment effort is focused on identifying certified teachers who come from diverse backgrounds. The process uses a system of intensive screening designed to hire the most qualified applicants. We will be an equal opportunity employer and will recruit quality staff throughout the year for job openings using a progressive and innovative recruitment and selection plan.

A systematic approach to screen applicants will be utilized to ensure that final candidates meet the qualifications for the position. Screeners ask questions of applicants that focus on their abilities, skills, and experiences in an initial screening interview. After year one, this phase will be led by our teacher leaders. As the applicant pool is narrowed, successful applicants advance toward a more in-depth, behavior-based building-level interview process with the school principal and/or interview team.

The selection process is informed by factors identified in applied psychology, such as interview structure and the phrasing of question prompts, and it draws on effective teacher research. Interview protocol focuses onjob-related questions and thus is within the legal bounds of interviewing guidelines. The utilization of research-based interview protocol supports interviewers in distinguishing promising teachers from those with less potential to be effective. The interview process for hiring instructional staff uses a panel or team interviewapproach assembled by the principal. Final candidates progress to an interview with the principal. The interview protocol asks teacher applicants about their past performance and experience. The interviewer or interviewteam uses an anchored rubric to evaluate their responses. According to research, six quality indicators of teacher effectiveness ultimately influence student achievement:

1) Pre-requisites of effective teaching
2) The teacher as a person (i.e., personal attributes)
3) Classroom management and organization
4) Planning for instruction
5) Implementing instruction (i.e., instructional delivery)
6) Monitoring student progress and potential (i.e., student assessment and student expectations)

These quality indicators are explicitly linked to core qualities of effective teachers and allow interviewers to use research-informed questions that relate to core qualities for selecting the best teacher applicants as shown in Table 46 below.

Table 46

Prerequisites of Effective Teaching	Teacher as a Person	Classroom Management and Organization	Planning for Instruction	Instructional Delivery	Assessment
Verbal ability Content knowledge Education coursework Teacher certification Teacher experience	Caring Fairness and respect Interaction with students Enthusiasm Motivation Dedication to teaching Reflective practice	Classroom Management Organization Student Discipline	Importance of instruction Time allocation Teacher expectation Instructional planning	Instructional strategies Content and expectations Complexity Questioning Student engagement	Homework Monitoring of student progress Response to student needs and abilities

The minimum selection criteria for instructional staff is listed below.

- Bachelor's Degree or higher in Education and/or area of specialization in the grades he/she is teaching
- Presents positive teaching evaluation history
- Displays exemplary personal presentation and interpersonal skills
- Demonstrates strong written and oral communication skills
- Literate in computer skills

- Demonstrates in-depth knowledge of subject area
- Understands various teaching methods and learning styles
- Ability to make learning exciting and interactive for students
- Committed to the academic development and character development of each student
- Displays enthusiasm, flexibility, and innovative techniques toward education
- Ability to work effectively with parent(s)/guardian(s), students, resource personnel, and other school-wide groups of individuals

(c) **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?**

Recruitment

All employees must be committed to the high academic standards that will be implemented at RCP. Faculty must be able to work cooperatively and collaboratively with fellow faculty members, parents, community organizations, and the business community. Quality teaching requires energetic, creative, and knowledgeable individuals who possess a desire to make education exciting and to make a difference in the educational experience of each student.

If students are to reach their maximum potential, having a quality teacher working with every student is paramount. ReThink Forward and RCP are committed to recruiting, selecting, inducting, and retaining highly effective teachers. Hiring diverse and talented people who continue to develop skills and increase their value to RCP, to students and community being served is critical, and high-performing educators will be RCP's most important asset. The purpose of the employment procedures and policies is to recruit employees who contribute to RCP in a way that aligns with its student population, academic programming and conduct themselves in a professional manner that is consistent with its cultural values. RCP provides procedural guidelines and support that enhances the likelihood of recruiting highly effective and diverse staff that fit this criteria. The comprehensive recruitment effort is focused on identifying certified teachers who come from diverse backgrounds and uses a system of intensive screening designed to hire the most qualified applicants.

RCP will be an equal opportunity employer and will recruit quality staff throughout the year for job openings using a progressive and innovative recruiting plan. Recruitment occurs locally, state-wide, and nationally through various resources that include:

- RCP's website.
- Online job posting boards and resume database searches such as Indeed, Career Builder, LinkedIn, ZipRecruiter, Handshake, K-12 Jobspot, Career Arc, and ADP applicant tracking systems
- Social media recruitment platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Handshake, and Instagram.
- Job fairs at the national, state, and local level, including the Great Florida Teach-in.
- College recruiting (colleges and universities, both locally and nationally, are identified to attract and hire newly graduated teachers).
- Minority organizations (work in conjunction with minority referring organizations to help ensure that the work force is reflective of the diverse community served).
- The Employee Referral Program (which produces a high volume of quality candidates who have a better understanding of the corporate culture and position requirements resulting in lower turnover).

RCP manages job advertising, conducts applicant screening, and refers qualified applicants to the principal and administration to ensure that RCP's staffing needs are met. Implementing a consistent process of screening, interviewing, and selecting employees will be essential to RCP's ability to continuously recruit qualified staff. A consistent process also ensures that candidates have been provided an equal and fair opportunity to demonstrate and/or articulate their skills and abilities.

Selection

All employees must be committed to the high academic standards that will be implemented at RCP. Faculty must be able to work cooperatively and collaboratively with fellow faculty members, parents, community organizations, and the business community. In order to select final candidates that fit this criteria, research-based data on interviewing and the qualities of effective teachers guide the teacher selection process, which is informed by factors identified in applied psychology, such as interview structure and the phrasing of question prompts.

RCP will employ a systematic approach to screen applicants to ensure that final candidates meet the qualifications for the position. Screeners ask questions of applicants that focus on their abilities, skills, and experiences in an initial screening interview. Then, as the applicant pool is narrowed, successful applicants advance toward a more in-depth, building-level interview with the principal (if identified) and/or interview team.

The utilization of research-based interview protocols support interviewers in distinguishing promising teachers from those with less potential to be effective. The interview process for hiring instructional staff uses a panel or team interview approach assembled by the principal. If the principal has not yet been identified, then the area director will assemble the panel. During the first phase, candidates will be interviewed by RCP's lead teachers. In Year 1, these interviews will be led by lead teachers from schools in the same area or in closest proximity to the school. Final candidates progress to an interview with the principal or area director if the principal has not yet been identified. Questions are consistent throughout each phase and align with the six Teacher Quality Indexes identified in Table 11.3. Interviewers ask a set of questions from a pre-constructed question bank and will vary their selections depending on candidates' varying levels of experience. These questions typically guide interviewers to ask teacher applicants about their past performance and experience using an anchored rubric to evaluate responses.

According to research, six quality indexes of teacher effectiveness ultimately influence student achievement:

1. Pre-requisites of effective teaching
2. The teacher as a person (i.e., personal attributes)
3. Classroom management and organization
4. Planning for instruction
5. Implementing instruction (i.e., instructional delivery)
6. Monitoring student progress and potential (i.e., student assessment and student expectations)

These quality indexes in Table 11.3 below are explicitly linked to core qualities of effective teachers and allow interviewers to use research-informed questions that relate to core qualities for selecting the best teacher applicants.

Table 11.3

Teacher Selection Process					
Prerequisites of Effective Teaching	Teacher as a Person	Classroom Management and Organization	Planning for Instruction	Instructional Delivery	Assessment
· Verbal ability · Content knowledge · Education coursework · Teacher certification · Teacher experience	· Caring · Fairness and respect · Interaction with students · Enthusiasm · Motivation · Dedication to teaching · Reflective practice	· Classroom Management · Organization · Student Discipline	· Importance of instruction · Time allocation · Teacher expectation · Instructional planning	· Instructional strategies · Content and expectations · Complexity · Questioning · Student engagement	· Homework · Monitoring of student progress · Response to student needs and abilities

(d) **Indicate the state-approved evaluation model used for teachers, required by State Board Policy 5.201. Describe the policies and procedures for evaluating staff, providing feedback, and celebrating excellence.**

RCP intends to implement the TDOE's Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) for evaluation of teachers and staff. RCP will implement the evaluation, portfolio, and professional learning prescribed by Tennessee. Teacher evaluation consists of frequent observations and constructive feedback for educators through multiple observations and pre- and post-conferences. Using the indicators of the TEAM rubric, educators work together to identify what is working well in the classroom (area of reinforcement), where there is room for improvement (area of refinement), and options for professional development to support continued growth.

Additional teacher support tools may also include:

- Daily walk-through tool for core instruction
- Daily walk-through tool for success period
- Teacher growth plans

The purpose of our professional development plan is to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and to directly align this plan with our mission and vision. Professional development is a multi-faceted, information-based process that is strategically planned to provide individual and school solutions to targeted areas in need of improvement or strengthening. Our professional development program is intentionally designed to build skills and capacities for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing learning. We believe that sound and practical professional development programs are positive links to establishing effective instructional practices that will enhance the knowledge of curriculum content, design, and delivery.

Research in the field of education and professional development has revealed a series of characteristics and practices observed in exemplary programs. These principles focus attention and resources on professional development strategies for improving student learning and achievement. In addition, there are a variety of conditions that are salient when implementing sound and effective professional development programs. As such, professional development at RCP will:

- Reflect a commitment to ongoing and continuous professional development that is based on the analysis of multiple sources of data.
- Ensure that content of professional development focuses on what students need to know and be able to do and is explicitly linked to the effect on student learning.

- Make certain that content of professional development will provide opportunities to gain an understanding of the theory underlying the knowledge (context) and skills being learned.
- Support the implementation of best practices as evidenced by research.
- Provide a focus on instructional repertoire and content-specific skills. Instructional improvement requires that teachers possess a deeper understanding of both their academic disciplines and of specific pedagogical approaches.
- Impart opportunities to explore, question, and debate in order to integrate new ideas into classroom practice.
- Maintain a differentiated and developmental approach to meet individual and school needs relating to the teaching and learning process.
- Involve teachers in the identification of what they need to learn and in the development of the learning experiences in which they are involved.
- Include flexible times and models that are essential for successful implementation of professional development.

To support the professional development philosophy above, teachers will receive weekly walkthroughs by either the principal, assistant principal, or instructional coaches. Immediate feedback will be provided to the teacher from these walkthroughs.

For addition information regarding professional development, please see Section 2.5.

(e) Describe how the proposed school intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, including termination, as well as leadership/teacher changes.

In situations of unsatisfactory performance or violations of Employee Handbook policies, RCP will utilize an Improvement Action Form (IAF) to address concerns in a timely manner and provide the employee with an opportunity to improve on their actions. Execution of an IAF is determined by the Principal or Assistant Principal. Throughout the performance improvement process, the employee will receive coaching from the Principal or another member of administration regarding specific directives and goals for improvement. Principals receive coaching from the state leadership team. The goals and directives may include, but are not limited to mentoring assistance, additional professional development training focused on improving identified shortfalls, and classroom/building observations with corresponding constructive feedback. The employee will have regular check-ins to monitor their progress on achieving the established directives and goals. If the employee does not make adequate progress in achieving the goals outlined in their IAF, RCP will have the option to take further corrective disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In addition, if the unsatisfactory performance results in a more serious issue such as safety concerns or misconduct, the sequential progressive discipline process may be bypassed and escalated to unpaid administrative leave pending investigation and/or separation of employment.

In instances of teacher turnover, we will hire daily or permanent substitute teachers to compensate for the loss of staff until permanent certified teachers are hired to fill the positions. In addition, we will keep a pool of approved teacher applicants to expedite the hiring process for cases of unexpected teacher turnover. In instances of leadership turnover, we will make all attempts to hire a replacement from NEI's existing network. If a suitable replacement cannot be found internally, we can draw from a pool of approved candidates that have completed the 3D Leadership Discovery Process, which is the process used to select school leaders.

(f) 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.

RCP will comply fully with T.C.A. § 49-13-119 and provide staff with health care, other insurance, and fringe benefits "in the same manner as teacher and other full-time permanent employees of the LEA."

Base Salary Average = Min $43,500 Mid $46,000 MAX $48,500 based on years of experience. Starting salary does not reflect merit increases, extra allocations, and school/individual bonuses.

Performance-based compensation research supports the notion that employees are motivated through achievement and growth. Research has validated that school employees believe it is very important to be eligible for pay differentiation based on performance. Moreover, studies indicate that not only does this contribute to the retention of high-quality staff, but also positively impacts student achievement. Principal and teacher performance evaluations comply with State Board Policy 5.201.

Consequently, we will have a performance-based compensation plan that includes the following:

- Performance bonuses for administration based on pre-determined goals.
- School-wide performance incentive goal provided to faculty and staff that achieves predetermined school-wide goals such as student growth measures. We will operate as aprivate employer and use an employment practice that seeks to mirror the diversity of the community and student population. ReThink believes that it is in the best interest of both RCP and its employees to fairly compensate its workforce for the value of the work provided, and the compensation system is structured in a way that rewards high performers based on criteria linked to student achievement. Examples of these are student achievement and school enrollment criteria. ReThink establishes budget criteria, incentives, and other motivating factors that attract, reward, and retain the best employees.

When determining starting salary, several factors are considered, including but not limited to:

- Base pay
- Years of experience the candidate brings with him/her
- Higher education degree of a Master's or PhD.
- Critical shortage area: science, math, etc. (as needed)

A salary worksheet is used to calculate starting salaries in a fair and consistent manner. ReThink fully understands that differentiated pay is required according to the Student Success Act and each teacher's actual compensation will be based on merit pay. Once the starting salary is determined, the employee receives increases depending on how well he/she performs. Increases are assessed annually based on local market analysis, cost of living adjustments, budget, and other factors that might justify adjusting the increase amount. The abovedoes not include additional bonus opportunities that teachers are eligible for through school and goal achievement. ReThink will work hard to provide performance incentives to supplement base pay and to reward high-performing staff. Each year, a percentage increase is built into the budget for merit increases as fundingallows. The proposed budget includes a Performance Assessment Pool that will be utilized for merit increases. Incentive strategies include, but are not limited to:

- Merit increases: Merit increases are built into the budget and awarded based on performance on formal evaluations. Merit increases are awarded in conjunction with the annual performance evaluation period in August.
- Recognition Programs: NEI will provide network-wide recognitions such as Teacher of the Year, New Teacher of the Year, and Team Member of the Year. These are awarded at an individual level and to overall winners. The recognition is accompanied by a cash award.

Retention Strategies

Teacher retention begins with a sound workforce engagement plan. Gallup research tells us the following[48]:

- 60% of employees say the ability to do what they do best in a role is "very important" to them.
- In 2016, only 33% of U.S. employees were engaged, involved in, enthusiastic about, and committed to their work and workplace.

- Gallup measures employee engagement by using four types of employee development needs in a 12-element survey (Gallup Q12): 1. Basic needs; 2. Individual needs; 3. Teamwork needs; and 4. Personal growth needs.
- Question 12 of the Gallup Q12 is: This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

Millennials are more likely than both Gen Xers and Baby Boomers to say a job that accelerates their professional or career development is "very important" to them (Gallup, 2017). Forty-five percent of Millennials said that professional growth is "very important" to them. According to Gallup (2017), only four in 10 employees strongly agree that in the last year they have had the opportunity to learn and grow. By moving that ratio to eight in 10 employees, organizations could realize 44% less absenteeism, 41% fewer safety incidents, 24% higher retention, and 16% higher productivity (Gallup, 2017).

A great school cannot be established without consistency. As such, below are the reasons why narrowing the retention gap will be a priority at RCP:

- Turnover dramatically affects the bottom line (it costs 20% of an employee's salary to replace them).
- The school loses talent and ideas.
- It is difficult to establish camaraderie with a transient school staff.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and families notice when names change.
- Jobseekers notice high turnover.
- Constantly training new employees is a waste of resources.
- Competitor schools benefit from our trained talent.

ReThink believes that school leaders strengthen the recruitment, development, and retention of teachers, as well as lift student outcomes. As such, the workforce engagement plan will begin with the school leader and focus primarily on individualized professional growth and development to foster employee engagement. School-level factors that are influenced by school leaders were shown to include teacher satisfaction, school effectiveness, improvement, capacity, teacher leadership, distributive leadership, organizational learning, and development. School leaders help buffer against the excesses of the mounting and sometimes contradictory external pressures. A skilled and well-supported leadership team can help foster a sense of ownership and purpose in the way that teachers approach their job.

Through evaluation of school data, the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) evaluations, and the Administrator Evaluation, we will support school leadership and staff growth on an individual basis in order to keep employees engaged and help further develop their professional expertise and advance in their careers. We will coach and support both teachers and administrators, and one of the main drivers of developing school staff will be 3D Leadership. RCP will also partner less experienced educators with experienced mentors and allow each teacher to participate in annual conferences that provide collaboration and intensiveprofessional development pathways. By providing an array of high- quality leadership and professional development opportunities, trust and long-term employment relationships are created and nurtured.

3D Leadership is a year-long employee development and engagement program. There will be monthly trainings and professional development. In addition to the monthly meetings, NEI will provide support, as needed, to the principal based on regular walkthroughs and observations of the school. The fundamental belief of 3D Leadership is that great minds and great motives still matter. All leaders, new to our organization, will move through the 3D Leadership Program. The goal is to have a succession leadership pipeline in place using our 3D Leadership Program. Partnerships are currently being developed with colleges/universities for staff members to receive credits for the learning taking place.

Within the 3D Leadership Program, teachers with school leadership aspirations have the opportunity to become part of a cohort that will take part in monthly leadership training and be part of the school's supervised leadership projects (3D Leadership Project). There is an application and interview process

for entry into the program. NEI delivers on its individualized value proposition to retain current employees by providing an environment to do what they do best, learn, and grow.

Retention strategies utilized by RCP may also include allocating teacher retention bonus funds in the school budget that are strategically disbursed twice within a school year to those teachers who have met established criteria. RCP may also establish a Sunshine or similar Committee, which is made up of educators, parent volunteers, and community partners that plan and provide year-round celebratory events

(g) Explain whether the employees will be at-will or whether the school will use employment contracts.

ReThink will be an equal opportunity employer and will not unlawfully discriminate in its employment practices. The hiring policy is designed to offer an equal employment opportunity to all qualified employees. Hiring policies will comport with all federal and state laws including Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Fair Labor Standards Act, Equal Pay for Equal Work Act of 1963, Age Discrimination Act of 1963, Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Age Discrimination Act of 1967, Occupation and Health Act of 1970, Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act, Vietnam Era and Special Disabled Veterans Readjustment Assistance of1974, Worker's Compensation and Unemployment Compensation, and any other applicable amendments to these laws.

The first 90 days of employment are considered an introductory period. Since all employees will be considered "at-will," employees may resign without reason and/or notice and ReThink may terminate employment without cause and without notice. RCP does not plan to use employment contracts for its employees.

(h) Include a copy of the school's employee manual and personnel policies as Attachment I.

Please see **Attachment I**.

Complete the staffing chart below outlining your staffing projections. Adjust or add functions and titles as needed to reflect variations in school models.

Position	Start up	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Principal/ School Leader	1	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Principal	1	1	1	1	1	1
Dean(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Additional School Leadership	1	1	1	1	1	1
Classroom Teachers	22	22	26	29	32	33
Classroom Teachers (e.g., special education, ELL, foreign language, etc.)	2	2	3	3	3	3
Student Support Positions (e.g., social works, psychologist, etc.)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Student Support Positions	6	6	8	9	9	9
Specialized School Staff	2	2	5	7	7	7

Teaching Aides or Assistants	**11**	**11**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**15**
School Operations Support Staff	1	1	1	1	1	1

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.

A model of continuous growth and improvement drives the ReThink Forward Board and RCP. To ensure our teachers and administrators are using the most current research-based practices, RCP is supported through ongoing professional development (which is overseen by the principal) to improve student learning and academic achievement. Since strong teachers are our most valuable resource, ongoing professional learning is a central tenet of Rutherford Collegiate Prep (RCP). PD activities for administrators and instructional staff align with the Academic Plan and the implementation of Continuous Improvement Model. RCP's leadership team will map PD goals and ensure school initiatives are supported and instructional coaching cycles are purposeful and ongoing.

Best practice instruction begins with a robust Professional Learning Community (PLC). As discussed in Section 1.3, every teacher will be a member of a PLC within the school. PLCs are structured to provide teachers with a community of those teaching common standards or students. Teachers will work together within their PLC to establish goals based upon current levels of student achievement, work together to achieve the goal, and review data to provide periodic evidence of progress. These PLCs will provide teachers time to work together to review student, class, and school data, to assist in collaboratively planning lessons, plan for technology integration, and problem solve situations specific to their field. Teachers will participate in two hours of PLC time each week.

Sample PLC Agenda

Table 48

Action Item	Estimated Time
Review Standards-Based Goal (From Last Week) And Strategies That Worked *What worked? Each member shares evidence of a strategy that was effective in helping reach the goal of the last meeting.*	10 minutes
Challenges *What are the most urgent concerns, problems, or obstacles to progress or better results (based on data)?* • What is it we want students to learn? • What does the data tell us?	10 minutes
Proposed Solutions *What are possible, concrete solutions to these items?* • How will we respond if some students do not learn it? • How will we extend and enrich for students who have demonstrated mastery?	10 – 15 minutes
Action Steps • What are the next steps? • Who do these belong to?	15 – 20 minutes
Unfinished Instructional Business	20 minutes
New Instructional Business, including lesson planning and common formative assessment creation *What planning will take place for upcoming lessons?* • What are upcoming standards? • What learning is required to meet these standards?	40 minutes

• How do I know students are learning (common assessments)?	

Teachers will also receive a minimum of one hour of professional development each week, through multiple platforms, including but not limited to in-person and online learning opportunities. The instructional coaches will be responsible for identifying weekly professional development for teachers and staff in conjunction with the principal based on weekly walkthrough, evaluative, and student-level data.

Additionally, there will be 15 days of teacher training and development prior to the start of school in year one and 10 days in subsequent years. Four full days of professional development have been built into the school calendar. These days will maintain a differentiated and developmental approach to meet individual and district needs relating to the teaching and learning process. Teachers will also be involved in the identification of what they need to learn and in the development of the learning experiences in which they will be involved.

Table 49

Training, Planning, and PD	Sample Offerings within Trainings
Principals and Assistant Principal Meetings The NEI Professional Development Team along with the state team members facilitate 10 principal and Assistant Principal meetings throughout the school year to disaggregate data, share best practices, calibrate use of the Teacher Walk-through Tool and PLDs, plan student scheduling, and develop leadership skills.	• Unit Mapping/Planning Guides • Using Data to Drive Instruction – interim benchmark assessments, i-Ready and other assessments • Differentiated Instruction • Common Expectations • Cross-Curricular Instruction • Explicit Vocabulary Instruction • Data Analysis for Data Chats • Targeted/Differentiated Instruction • Minute-by-Minute Plans • Writing Strategies Across Subjects • Action Steps and Monitoring Effectiveness • Student Engagement • School-wide Behavior Plan • Establishing Expectations and Procedures • Social-Emotional Learning • PBIS • Incorporating Test Specifications • Student-to-Student Interaction • Six Stages of Feedback • Reading: A Core Skill • Standards-Based Centers • Critical Thinking Strategies • Investigating Thinking in Math • Maximizing Instructional Minutes • English for Speakers of Other Languages Regulations and Procedures • Exceptional Student Education Regulations and Procedures • Research-Based Innovative Learning Methods
Curriculum Cadres The NEI Professional Development Team facilitates meetings with Instructional Coaches to calibrate understanding of standards, instruction, accountability measures, and curriculum resources, as well as develop coaching and modeling skills.	
New Teacher Academy New teachers have 3 weeks of training prior to the opening of school. Week 1 includes training on the Continuous NEI Continuous Improvement Model, as well as instructional methods for data-driven instruction, research-based classroom management, and student motivation, among other topics. Instructional Coaches, with the support of administration and NEI (as needed), deliver NTI content. This is combined in year one with orientation described below.	
Returning Teacher Academy After the first year, all staff members will participatein 10 days of training prior to school beginning. This training will consist of new school initiatives, safety and procedural protocols, curriculum, and other pertinent information for the school year.	
New Educator Prep Program (NEPP) NEPP supports teachers throughout the year by focusing on research-based teaching methods through a blended- learning model. An experiencedteacher selected based on a demonstrated understanding of the Continuous Improvement Model and ability to facilitate coaching	

support is selected to mentor beginning teachers at RCP. The beginning teacher has access to online instructional content	• Content-based Professional Development • Content Specific Training Selected for Implementation (ex. CHAMPs, Kagan Strategies, PBL, etc.). • Book Study: *Learning by doing: A handbook for professional learning communities at work* (DuFour, Eaker, Many & Mattos, 2006).
Instructional Coach Bootcamp Instructional Coaches are trained by the NEI Professional Development Team in delivery of New Teacher Academy and implementation of the instructional coaching cycle prior to the start of the school year.	
Curriculum Mapping Although the process of monitoring and editing curriculum maps occurs throughout the school year, once a year, teachers meet to discuss the notes they have taken throughout the year to see how they can improve the curriculum maps for each subject area by identifying additional resources.	
Data Chats Data Chats are a key component of responsive teaching and will take place at the school and classroom level. Staff development is provided to teachers by the leadership team and/or CSs to ensure that they are analyzing their students' data for maximum student achievement. Data chats take place regularly, and as teachers develop the capacity to assume the role of facilitator, the responsibility of presenting data and accompanying action plans shifts to them.	
Blended Learning Staff development is provided to support teachers in effectively planning blended learning opportunities, aligning models of blended learning to student learning styles, and effectively utilizing instructional software and technology available within the learning communities.	
PD Days The principal plans full-day PD based on schoolneed, which may include rotations through instructional software learning centers and small-groupdifferentiated PD to meet teacher/grade-level instructional needs.	
Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) PLCs constitute a key supportive element of the Continuous Improvement Model. Teachers meet regularly by grade-level teams to analyze student data, design units, and create accompanying lessons. Based on administrative walk-throughs, and student performance, teachers are provided with specific, differentiated professional development from mentor teachers, administration, and instructional coaches.	

(b) Identify the person or position responsible for professional development.

Professional development will take a multi-person approach. First, the individual teacher and staff member will be responsible for the development of a personal growth plan, which will be reviewed and approved by the principal and their direct supervisor. We believe that the individual teacher and staff member must have a stake in their own personal growth and development from planning to execution.

A team consisting of instructional coaches, the principal, and the assistant principal will conduct a weekly walkthrough on every instructional staff member. This team will then provide feedback to each teacher outlining the teacher's specific needs for development. These walkthrough observations will drive identification of the overall development needs of the staff.

(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.

The components of the professional development plan shown below will be provided to school leadership to assist in maintaining a focus on continual school improvement efforts. Professional development will be intentionally focused on the needs and direction of the school. This process will be led by data and the goals of the school.

The four components of the professional development plan are described below:

1. **Professional Learning Goals –** To identify the annual goals of the school, it will be important to review and analyze student achievement data for all subgroups, including students receiving services for SPED and ELs, as well as teacher evaluation results. Goals will be written as SMART goals.
2. **Professional Learning Activities –** Some professional learning activities may address more than one goal. As activities are determined, consideration will be given to creating follow-up activities for the purpose of further deepening the learning and how it will meet the needs of all students, including those receiving SPED and EL services. A natural part of this is to ensure teacher reflection as well as reflection/evaluation of the activities planned. A continuous review of data will also reveal effectiveness of the activities.
3. **Essential Resources –** Essential resources include materials and resources necessary to implement the school-level plan.
4. **Progress Summary –** Clearly defined evidence demonstrating effective professional development, educator growth, and improvement in student achievement.

The four components of the professional development plan will support effective implementation. This will allow all professional development to continually improve the implementation of the academic plan and, consequently, student success.

Our academic plan follows the CIM, and includes a focus on data-driven, standards-based instruction, SEL, and career exploration. Below, each core component of PD is tied to this academic plan.

Professional Learning Goals

In order to assess professional learning goals, data will be analyzed based on student academic performance (including individual students, student cohorts, and student sub-groups). In addition, student SEL goals will be examined using students' portfolios, and they will be cross-referenced with discipline infractions housed in the

student database. Finally, students' career exploration opportunities will be assessed relative to careers explored.

Professional Learning Activities

Professional learning activities will be developed from the data mentioned in the above section. These learning activities will be devoted to success of all student sub-groups by working to improve weak data points identified in analysis of student academic performance, SEL, and career exploration. Planning for these learning activities will include identifying specific accommodations in order to ensure to meet any IEPs, 504 Plans, ILPs, and EPs.

Essential Resources

Once professional learning goals and activities are established, the school will determine resources that are essential to implement the activities. Each resource that is identified will be tied to a professional learning goal. All learning goals are aligned to student success via the academic plan.

Teachers will receive training centering around meeting the needs of special populations, including communication with families of EL students, and discipline procedures for students with special needs. This is identified in the back-to-school training outlined below.

Progress Summary

This component is focused on identification, analysis, and evaluation of evidence to illustrate educator growth and student achievement growth. This evidence will come from a second analysis of the data noted above under the heading "professional learning goals". When weak data points improve, this will reveal a correlation to the four components of the professional development plan.

Each of the above components will not only support the implementation of the academic plan, they will also foster the success of student groups, including SPED, EL, gifted learners, and students at risk for academic failure. In order to plan professional development, the school will depend on analysis of data. This data will be mined from several areas. Included in these areas is data related to the above student groups. Using data-based decision making relative to individual student groups will ensure that the professional development plan addresses these areas.

Sample Professional Development Plan

Table 50

School Name	Principal Name	Plan Begin/End Dates
School Name	*Principal Name*	*00-00-21/00-00-22*

Professional Learning Goals (example)

Table 51

No.	Goal	Identified Group	Rationale/Sources of Evidence
EX	*Increase student engagement*	*Grade 7 teachers*	*Data shows a high behavior referral rate in this group, teacher observations show a lack of engagement strategies being utilized during instruction.*
1			
2			

3			

Professional Learning Activities (Example)

Table 52

PL Goal No.	Initial Activities	Follow-up Activities (as appropriate)
EX	*Grade 7 teachers will:* • *Peer observe an identified colleague for student engagement practices at least once per month.* • *Participate in and reflect on a student engagement book- study collaboratively.*	*Grade 7 teachers will:* • *Discuss classroom observed strategies with colleagues.* • *Implement new strategies and reflect on impact with colleague and administrator.* • *Video-tape lesson and reflect on their own implementation of strategies.*
1		
2		
3		
4		

(d) Provide a schedule and overview of professional development that will take place prior to the school's opening.

We will have an intensive 15-day training for all teachers and staff prior to the first student day of school in year one and 10-day training in subsequent years. This training will be done in a 10-unit training format. Because our school will be integrating SEL for our students, our back-to-school training will model full integration of the SEL frame. Research done by The Aspen Institute showed that when schools fully implement SEL into the Kindergarten – Grade 12 curriculum, academic achievement and performance is improved. Furthermore, this same research showed that students were more engaged in school and, as a result, were more likely to graduate from high school and pursue some postsecondary endeavor. Because we believe that SEL needs to be a part of how we work with families and the community, it must also play a role in the fabric of every part of the school. This fabric includes explicit and intentional instruction and rethinking school design and culture.

According to Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), there are five core competencies that should be taught across all areas. These core competencies are:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Self-Management
3. Social Awareness
4. Relationship Skills
5. Responsible Decision-Making

These five core competencies then need to transcend and be embedded within three important parts of the school:

1. Homes and communities through family and community partnerships
2. School community as a whole through school-wide practices and policies
3. Learning communities through SEL curriculum and instruction

Teachers will be supported and given complete training integrating SEL competencies in conjunction with instructional strategies by using the following schedule for our back-to-school professional development:

Table 53

Unit	SEL Module(s)	Instructional Strategy(s) Modules
1	**Self-Awareness**: The ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mindset." • Identifying Emotions • Accurate Self-Perception • Recognizing Strengths • Self-Confidence • Self-Efficacy	**Education Model for Continuous Improvement:** A specific focus on the elements that are necessary to see continuous improvement, no matter where the student begins. This model includes the following: • Data disaggregation • Developing and understanding an instructional timeline • Determining an appropriate instructional calendar • Remediation and enrichment • Maintaining student learning
2	**Self-Awareness Implementation**: Relating how to embed self-awareness into the home and community, school, and classrooms.	**Maintaining a Well-Managed Learning Environment:** Understanding and developing best practices for maintaining a well-managed learning environment. • Developing expectations • Developing procedures • Modeling expectations and procedures in the classroom • Learning community configurations including utilizing an agenda, word wall, concept wall, etc.
3	**Self-Management:** Successfully regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations — effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals. • Impulse Control • Stress Management • Self-Discipline • Self-Motivation • Goal setting • Organizational Skills	**School and Learning Community Climate:** Developing a positive and supportive classroom climate. • Understanding of Responsive Classroom, Developmental Design, and Restorative Justice • Discipline policies, including policies for special populations • Utilizing appropriate teacher language • Understanding logical consequences • Developing transitions and routines for instructional software
4	**Self-Management Implementation:** Relating how to embed self-management into the home and community, school, and classrooms.	**Academic Expectations:** Understanding of TAS • Unpacking standards • IFC and Unit Maps • Instructional software training
5	**Social Awareness:** Take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports. • Perspective-Taking • Empathy • Appreciating Diversity	**Assessments:** Understanding the purpose and use for various assessments • Diagnostic assessments • Universal screeners • IFC Assessments • Formative assessment techniques • i-Ready overview

Unit	SEL Module(s)	Instructional Strategy(s) Modules
	• Respect for Others	
6	**Social Awareness Implementation:** Relating how to embed social awareness into the home and community, school, and classrooms.	**Disaggregating Data:** Utilizing student data to drive instruction • Diagnostic data • State assessment data • Differentiation • Centers • Success Block
7	**Relationship Skills:** establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed. • Communication • Social engagement • Relationship-Building • Teamwork	**Lesson Planning:** Developing a well-designed lesson • Lesson plan overview • Components of a lesson plan • Writing learning targets
8	**Relationship Skills Implementation:** Relating how to embed relationship skills into the home and community, school, and classrooms.	**Lesson Planning continued:** Addressing the needs of all students in a lesson plan • Planning while addressing student IEPs, 504 plans, ILPs, and EPs • Revising lesson plans based upon feedback • Co-planning with a SPED or EL teacher
9	**Responsible Decision-Making:** Make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. The realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others. • Identifying Problems • Analyzing Situations • Solving Problems • Evaluating • Reflecting • Ethical Responsibility	**RTI² Training:** Understanding RTI² • Meeting the needs of all students • RTI² tiers
10	**Responsible Decision-Making Implementation:** Relating how to embed responsible decision-making into the home and community, school, and classrooms.	**Active Learning:** Promoting active learning • Incorporating active learning in lesson planning • Planning for collaborative learning structures • Understanding benefits of active learning

As you can see from this robust agenda, all staff development related to curriculum, instruction, data mining, and operations will be facilitated using SEL as the model. This will ensure that SEL is fully integrated into all fabrics of the school, including the families, community, entire staff, classroom instruction, and with the

students themselves.

(e) Describe the training that will be provided to all staff on the topics of anti-racism, unconscious bias and/or culturally relevant pedagogies.

Professional development (PD) will be provided to teachers during NEI's two-week Teacher Academy training prior to the first day of school. One of the trainings during this time period will have a three-hour focus on creating a culturally responsive classroom. During this time, teachers will identify the difference between culturally sensitivity and culturally responsive teaching, reflect on how biases impact student outcomes, and gain a deeper understanding of culturally responsive teaching in order to grow in their own cultural awareness. Through collaboration and support, teachers will create lessons that are culturally relevant to their student population and identify appropriate resources in order to develop their culturally aware classroom environment.

(f) Describe the plan to cultivate future leadership capacity.

We take a systematic approach to identifying the right talent, helping them discover their strengths, developing those strengths, and then distributing that learning throughout the organization. The three Ds of the 3D Leadership Program noted above in section 2.4 are Discover, Develop, and Distribute. The program operates on the premise that everyone is a leader. We also believe that everyone can learn leadership skills. We will facilitate aspiring leaders to discover strengths, develop those strengths, and then distribute the enhanced leadership attributes throughout the entire school organization. We deliver on our individualized value proposition to retain current employees by providing an environment to do what they do best—learn and grow.

Through recruitment, hiring, and training strategies, we make it clear to potential employees that we value individual strengths; moreover, we hire and develop people based on what they do well.

We take developing, growing, and improving our 3D Leadership Program very seriously at RCP. As Matthew Paese, Audrey Smith, and William Byham stated in their latest book, *Leaders Ready Now: Accelerating Growth in a Faster World*, "Everything you need to accelerate the growth of leadership is already inside your organization." We believe in this concept. To do this, less-experienced leaders must be pushed into broader, more formidable assignments. This is the premise behind our 3D Leadership Projects. The projects become what Paese et al. call Acceleration Pools©. These experiences, along with the 3D Leadership Program, will enable us to prepare leaders with real time development and coaching. These projects also give us the ability to deploy future leaders to key assignments.

Within the 3D Leadership Program, teachers with school leadership aspirations have the opportunity to become part of a cohort that will take part in monthly leadership training and be part of the school's supervised leadership projects (3D Leadership Project).

(g) Explain plans for differentiating professional development for different groups of teachers, such as new versus experienced teachers.

Differentiated professional development takes place throughout the year to ensure that all teachers are receiving the appropriate opportunities for growth. The one hour weekly professional development requirement will be differentiated based upon weekly walkthrough, evaluative, and student-level data. Teachers will attend professional development based upon their individual needs, such as factors including experience, expertise, student achievement, grade-level, or subject area. For example: a first-year teacher may be requested to attend a session on modeling procedures while a third-year teacher may attend a session on increasing academic discussion within small-group collaboration time.

(h) Explain how the proposed school will provide orientation to teachers that are hired mid-year.

Teachers hired after the start of the school year will participate in an onboarding process. This training may take place in a combined online and in person training, orienting the new teacher to our operational and academic expectations. This training will be done through a series of modules developed to orient the new teacher to those trainings provided to staff members during back-to-school professional development, with checkpoints during the first 30 days with administration and a mentor teacher.

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.

Please see Attachment J.

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**

(d) If you are not providing transportation, describe how students will get to and from your school.

RCP plans to provide daily transportation to students who live outside of a reasonable distance from the school, which is generally considered to be a 2 – 4-mile radius of the school's location. Three buses have been included in the budget and will be equipped to provide daily transportation to 165 students, which would account for approximately 35% of RCP's projected Year 1 enrollment. This will ensure that all students who require transportation have access to the school. Transportation needs will also be met for school-based events and to address the regulatory requirements regarding special needs students and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act. ReThink understands that transportation may be a barrier to providing families with school choice, especially for those families living in poverty. Therefore, ReThink will continue to assess the demand for transportation in order to meet the needs of the student population as enrollment capacity increases.

Transportation needs will be met for school-based events and to address the regulatory requirements regarding special needs students and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act.

Transportation is to be provided and meet the needs of all students requiring transportation, with daily transportation cost assumed at $294 per bus. The transportation expense assumption was established using actual budgetary costs of student transportation at other schools managed by NEI. The cost for three buses has been included in the budget at an average rate of $52,913 per bus in year 1. The transportation cost increases in years 2 through 5 to accommodate additional students as enrollment increases, as well as to capture 2% cost inflation each year. Historical transportation costs at other schools managed by NEI show this expense assumption to be very accurate. However, the budget included as **Attachment O** does anticipate a positive fund balance each year, which would allow RCP to add additional buses if necessary to meet the needs of the student population.

In order to meet the transportation needs of students at RCP, NEI will partner with a third-party transportation provider currently utilized at other schools that NEI manages. The requirements of the proposed transportation provider include meeting all applicable state and local requirements for employment, insurance, safety, and obligations to students as well as a defined Service Level Agreement (SLA). RCP will employ a Business Manager, who will serve as the transportation supervisor in compliance with T.C.A § 49-6-2116, and will be responsible for the oversight of any contracted transportation. The Business Manager will complete a student transportation management training program developed by the departments of safety and education upon being appointed, and, thereafter, will complete a minimum of four hours of annual training approved by those

departments. By August 15 of each school year, RCP will submit the name of the transportation supervisor and verification that the transportation supervisor has completed the required training.

In addition, RCP will adopt a transportation policy relative to the safe transport of students. This policy will include:

1. A procedure for students, parents, teachers and staff, and the community to report school bus safety complaints.
2. A procedure for the transportation supervisor to investigate any complaint of a safety violation or concern (the procedure will include all requirements listed in T.C.A § 49-6-2116).
3. A requirement that each school be equipped with the phone number for reporting complaints on the rear bumper.
4. A process to provide annual notice to students and parents regarding the process for reporting complaints.
5. A policy or procedure for the collection and maintenance of the following records:
    - Bus maintenance and inspections.
    - Bus driver credentials, including required background checks, health records, and performance reviews.
    - Driver training records.
    - Complaints received and any records related to the investigation of those complaints.

Since RCP will be providing transportation, this question is not applicable.

2.8 Food Service

Describe the proposed school's proposed food service plan and include the following:

(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).

(c) Describe how the food service vendor will be selected or, in the alternative, how the proposed school will provide meals in-house.

According to the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), school lunch is critical to student health and well-being, especially for low-income students—and ensures that students have nutrition they need throughout the day to learn. Research shows that receiving free or reduced-price school lunches reduces food insecurity, obesity rates, and poor health.

ReThink will apply for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) in advance of the first school year on behalf of RCP. Upon acceptance into the national meal programs, we will offer two meals a day to students that will meet nutritional standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Our school kitchen will be fully equipped to meet industry standards for serving and maintaining food within health and safety regulations. If ReThink's application for participation in NSLP and SBP is declined, our operating budget will be adjusted to accommodate the addition of the food service expenses.

ReThink will issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a food service provider. The chosen vendor will be required to provide a quality unitized meal program that includes all the "components" of a full-service operation. The "component meal system" consists of individually packaged entrees, side dishes, fresh fruits, vegetables, fresh bread, condiments, plastic wear, trays, and liners. In addition to providing these items, the chosen vendor shall also provide the following services to RCP: delivery of all items to the school; menu planning; nutritional analysis; all necessary kitchen equipment (ovens, refrigeration, freezers, milk coolers, etc.); equipment maintenance; commodity utilization; food service training; and marketing and promotions. Prior to the beginning of each school year, training personnel will be sent to RCP to work with the food service staff on how to properly run the food service program, including ordering, inventory, food preparation, serving procedures, and clean up. During the school year, the cafeteria staff will prepare all the required meal components following the directions provided by the vendor.

We plan to reduce nutritional challenges facing students by providing food service that includes adequate meal options. Free and reduced pricing will be available to those students who meet the guidelines, as determined by the NSLP, SBP, and ReThink.

We will provide school meal applications (available in electronic and hard copy formats) to families at the beginning of each school year and collected with school registration documents. Paper applications will also be sent home with students during the first week of school. Applications will be accepted and available any time during the school year. Informational flyers and posters about NSLP and SBP will be posted in the front office and in the school's high-traffic areas for parent(s)/guardian(s) and students.

All applications will be reviewed by our food service supervisor before granting free- or reduced-pricing benefits. We will comply with all state and federal guidelines regarding free school meals to the eligible recipients of federal assistance programs, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

2.9 Additional Operations

Describe the proposed 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 proposed 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 proposed school will ensure student access to the technology required for state-mandated assessments; include infrastructure requirements and costs in the budget section.**

ReThink and RCPRCP recognize the importance of technology in today's society. However, both ReThink and RCP believe that confident, self-directed students should not rely on technology for self-worth. To that end, technology at school is a tool, not a toy, and intended to aid in discovering and harnessing every child's potential.

RCP plans to file for eRate individually, to ensure that our technology plan is properly funded and implemented.

We intend to equip all students from Grades 3 – 8 with an individually assigned device that meets specifications and requirements for TNReady assessments, providing each student with a device all to themselves, fostering responsibility and accountability. Students in Kindergarten – Grade 2 will have access to a set of shared devices. These devices will be shared throughout the Kindergarten – Grade 2 learning communities for specific content and activities. Students will be learning to use technology for the purposes of research, creating original works, like creations of art or literature, or music, or for purposes of collaboration and connection to other students or teachers. Access to these devices will be limited by the community adults to ensure students are on task and that the technology is used educationally and appropriately.

Each learning community will have one mobile SMART interactive flat panel (or equivalent) for additional interactivity and/or to display student or teacher works. Students in testing grades will have access to keyboards for use with devices during testing, and tests will be appropriately "locked down" to prevent inappropriate access during those times.

Student devices will be monitored by teachers and through the school's CIPA-compliant content filter. Additional restrictions will be implemented based on the latest best practices, including site-wide Google Safe Search to prevent bypass or removal of safety configurations. Beginning in middle school, students may take their devices home, subject to parental approval. All devices will be protected both on and off site through cloud-based content filtering and Mobile Device Management (MDM) to both facilitate and protect.

Given the expected enrollment ramp, we will have over 300 user devices and 30 – 50 networked devices (infrastructure, printers, copiers, etc.). To support these devices, a robust wireless infrastructure will be provided (Aerohive or equivalent) that will adequately support the volume and density of devices with the benefit of cloud-based management. It is estimated that one access point will be needed for every 50 – 60 concurrent connections, based on manufacturer recommendations, and must be located to ensure sufficient signal strength, which can be affected by the building layout and materials. Wireless units and other network devices will utilize standard switching configured for best practices in performance and security. Although the infrastructure model is designed to minimize support needs, we may utilize third-party managed services to maintain this infrastructure to maximize performance and security without undue cost of technicians on staff. External bandwidth needs will be determined based on the providers available, cost, and ability to provide sufficient failover and redundancy. We will file for e-rate discounts for eligible networking and internet service.

Procurement processes for technology tools and systems follow standard procurement practices for systematic evaluation of potential solutions, RFP submissions for larger purchases, and clear understanding of

expectations. Systems and solutions are regularly evaluated for fit and value, ensuring that resources are directed where we can most effectively achieve our mission.

(a) **Student information management:**
- **Describe how the proposed 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.**

Choosing appropriate student information systems is a key decision that will be made during RCP's start-up phase. We intend to utilize many of the systems available through RCS, such as their student information system and IEP system, but will evaluate other systems and alternatives that can facilitate and support academic performance and school operations. These systems include, but are not limited to: student information systems, enrollment management systems, discipline tracking, lunch systems, communication/call-out systems, online gradebooks, learning management systems, ePortfolio systems, etc.

(b) **School health and nursing services:**
- **Describe your plan for compliance with the Coordinated School Health Program, including any plans to hire a School Nurse.**
- **Include who at the proposed school will supervise the School Nurse and his/her role in ensuring compliance with health regulations.**

We will contract with a licensed Registered Nurse (RN) as required by T.C.A. § 49-5-415, which requires certain health care procedures, including the administration of medications during the school day or at related events, to be performed by appropriately licensed health care professionals. RCP's RN shall meet or exceed the minimum qualifications and standards established pursuant to T.C.A. § 68-1-1204(a) and shall perform the duties and responsibilities enumerated within T.C.A. § 68-1-1202. Our RN shall maintain current certification through a certifying cardiopulmonary resuscitation course consistent with the scientific guidelines of the American Heart Association in collaboration with the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation.

ReThink will contract with a local, private medical center to provide these nursing services and will also contract with a medical supervisor to oversee and monitor the school nurse. In addition to required healthcare procedures, our RN will implement coordinated school health components, including comprehensive health education, nutrition services, physical education, health services, healthy school environment, family/community involvement, counseling/psychological/social services, and general health promotion among students and staff. T.C.A. 49-1-1002 establishes guidelines and standards for Coordinated School Health Programs in Tennessee that are available through the State Departments of Education and Health.

(c) **Safety and security:**
- **Describe your plan for ensuring the safety and security of 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?**

We will meet state and federal requirements regarding school safety and have a comprehensive safety plan that will be distributed and explained to staff prior to the start of the school year. Safety and security of the school is overseen by the principal. Colored emergency codes will indicate the level of severity of the emergency and the protocol that must be followed in the event of the emergency. Types of emergencies that will be covered in the plan include bomb threats, weather-related emergencies, fires, intruders, active shooters, use of firearms/weapons, and others. Emergency drills are practiced with students throughout the year to ensure they understand the seriousness of these emergencies and the actions they must take if one were to happen. We will use all available personnel to aid in safety and security, including the hiring of additional security staff if necessary and financially feasible. Every person will have a duty during fire drills and other emergencies. Most

teachers will stay with whichever class they are instructing during the time of an emergency, but other staff members will have posts that will involve directing students to appropriate locations and making sure all students exit the building (if appropriate in that particular situation).

Day-to-day operations will also involve all staff members having the responsibility to ensure students go to and transition from their classes safely throughout the day. Everyone will have a post at arrival and dismissal, and explicit procedures will be developed to ensure those times of the day run smoothly. During the day, staff will be available to monitor the hallways, the gymnasium, outside of the bathroom, or any other necessary area. In addition, administrators and instructional coaches will be consistently conducting walkthroughs each day to continue to monitor safety within the classroom. A camera system will be installed to further monitor security within our school.

To ensure the safety of its students, RCP will take every safety precaution to protect walking students as required by law. These precautions may include, but will not be limited to creating designated safe routes, recommendations and best practices to encourage parents to escort younger students to school, the use of student-led "walking buses," and potential participation in the Safe Routes to School program, which is a national and international movement to create safe, convenient, and fun opportunities for students to walk and bicycle to and from school.

To provide for the safety and security of employees and the facilities, only authorized visitors are allowed inside the school building. Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards; ensures the security of our students, confidential information, and equipment; protects against theft; safeguards employee welfare; and avoids potential distractions and disturbances. RCP will be designed with a trap front entry where both sets of front doors remain locked at all times from the outside. There will be a video intercom box outside the front entry for visitors to gain access to the front reception area. A glass window with paper pass-through and speaker will be provided.

Per the Jessica Lunsford Act, all visitors must have photo identification and will be scanned using the Raptor system. All visitors must enter the office through the reception area and must check in with the receptionist or front office. Authorized visitors will gain access to school through a second set of secured doors and receive directions or be escorted to their destination.

Employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors. If an unauthorized individual is observed on school premises, employees should immediately direct the individual to the reception area, or if necessary, notify their administrator. Cooperation gives us the ability to provide a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.

RCP's crisis plan will be developed as soon as the building and location of the school is identified. We plan to consult with RCS and a third-party security expert to review the safety plan before school opening.

COVID-19 Guidelines and Processes

RCP acknowledges and agrees that requirements and best practices for public health and safety and for instructing students during a public health emergency are rapidly changing as officials learn more about COVID-19 and how it is spread. As such, RCP agrees to comply with all national, state, and local requirements, guidelines, and best practices concerning public health and safety, and instruction of students during the COVID-19 pandemic, or any other public health emergency, as they currently exist or as they may be hereafter amended. This includes requiring all individuals within the school to wear masks at all times.

NEI has developed a detailed COVID-19 response plan that will ensure RCP maintains the health and welfare of its students while safely continuing school operations. The plan includes guidelines for both preventing and responding to a recurrence of COVID-19 outbreaks within the local community and individual exposure events that may occur within the school. Please note that the guidelines are designed to be flexible based on the ever-evolving nature of local, state, and CDC guidelines, and will be adjusted as necessary to comply with state and local guidelines. Below is a list of COVID-19 response processes that will

be put in place at RCP:

- General mitigation guidance
- Social-distancing practices
- Health screening procedures for students, staff, parents, and guests upon entry
- Hygiene practices
- Cleaning/disinfecting
- Managing building airflow
- Processes for conducting the following school operations while mitigating and preventing possible exposure:
    - Student drop off and pick up
    - School transportation
    - Outside play
    - Meals and snack time
    - Halls and hall passing
    - Gym/Physical Education instruction
- Processes for responding to the below exposure events:
    - Individuals who affirm that they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms prior to entering the school building
    - Individuals who affirm that they have come in contact with another individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 prior to entering the school building
    - Individuals who experience COVID-19 symptoms while in the school building
    - A student or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19
    - School closure due to COVID-19 response protocols

(d) **School maintenance:**

(e) **Discuss the plan for school maintenance, including maintenance staff or plans to contract for maintenance services.**

School maintenance is a key component of a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning. We intend to contract with local service providers for day-to-day custodial services. Proper ongoing and preventative maintenance minimizes long-term costs, some of which could significantly impact the budget. We will establish an effective maintenance plan and checklist and a life cycle replacement schedule for building systems with an annual budget to support. The specifics of those checklist items, schedules, and costs are dependent upon the ultimate facility decision.

(f) **Describe any additional operations, as applicable.**

Additional operational needs will be assessed and determined during RCP's start-up phase.

(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.**

This section is not applicable.

2.10 Charter Management Organization (if applicable)

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 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**

(a) For an existing ASD operator contracting with a CMO, in lieu of the above, include a copy of the CMO agreement as Attachment K.

ReThink will contract with Noble Education Initiative (NEI) to manage the day-to-day operations of RCP as the CMO.

ReThink selected NEI as the CMO due to the alignment of their mission with the vision for RCP. NEI is a non-profit CMO with the mission of creating a collaborative group of exceptional professionals who will boldly rethink education and make success attainable for all students, preparing the next generation to solve the complex challenges of tomorrow. NEI brings decades of experience in school management, turnaround operations, innovative program design, and data-driven instruction, and they have proven that they can leverage that expertise in order to effectively educate students in Nashville. In 2019, an independent board contracted with NEI to manage three local schools in Nashville serving Kindergarten – Grade 12 (Knowledge Academy, Knowledge Academy at the Crossings, and Knowledge Academy High School). ReThink has chosen NEI as the CMO for RCP due to their current track record of improving the academic, financial, and operational aspects at Knowledge Academies. This expertise will not only prepare students for the future, but also develop and train the next generation of school leaders.

Table 54 below shows the division of roles between ReThink and NEI.

Table 54

Function	NEI's Roles and Responsibilities	ReThink's Roles and Responsibilities
Selecting Curriculum	Provides a customized curriculum designed to meet national, state, and local standards, including continuous program evaluation, curriculum material selection, student data analysis, student individual education plans, assessments, records, etc.	Implements required academic reporting policies for NEI and review performance reports from NEI on a periodic basis.
Selecting	Provides professional/school	Reviews periodic staff reports and ensures

Function	NEI's Roles and Responsibilities	ReThink's Roles and Responsibilities
Professional Development Programs	development and implements teacher instructional support, coaching, and mentoring. Ensures government compliance and reporting with regard to teacher certifications.	all required staffing certifications are current and in compliance with regulatory standards.
Data Management & Selecting Interim Assessments	Provides accountability standards and sustainable performance measures designed to meet national, state, and local standards.	Implements required academic reporting policies for NEI and reviews performance reports from NEI on a periodic basis. Sets policies to ensure RCP's programs are faithful to the terms of the charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.
Determining Promotion Criteria	Provides compensation planning and performance evaluations.	Annually adopts, maintains, and amends (if necessary) the annual operating budget. Reviews school provided reports, which include detailed information regarding staffing.
Setting a School Culture	Implements RCP's mission and vision via the curriculum and disciplinary policies and standards. Provides assistance in coordinating parent(s)/ guardian(s), teacher, and student organizations.	Ensures that RCP's mission and vision is being implemented with fidelity. Sets policies to ensure RCP's programs and operations are faithful to the terms of the charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.
Student Recruitment	Assesses demographic and market needs and develops the enrollment marketing plan.	Reviews school provided reports, which include detailed information regarding student enrollment.
School Staff Recruitment & Hiring	Provides personnel administration and conducts recruitment efforts to hire the principal, teachers, and other staff, and implements personnel procedures and ongoing staffing assistance.	Will employ all school staff and will annually adopt NEI's employee manual and personnel policies. Sets policies to ensure RCP's programs and operations are faithful to the terms of the charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. Reviews school, which includes detailed information regarding staffing.
Providing Human Resources (HR) services (payroll, benefits, etc.)	Provides employee benefits, worker's compensation, and 401(k) management services, and directly manages RCP's payroll.	Annually adopts, maintains, and amends (if necessary) the annual operating budget. Implements required financial reporting policies for NEI and reviews performance reports from NEI on a periodic basis.
Managing Community Relations	Provides assistance in coordinating parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher, and student organizations and manages RCP's community partnerships.	Adheres to regularly scheduled board meetings in a manner compliant with open meeting laws. Communicates with parent(s)/guardian(s) and the community to resolve grievances not rectified at the school level.
Selecting and Providing Information	Designs and develops technology labs and student stations. Provides local and wide area network installation, remote access	Annually adopts, maintains, and amends (if necessary) the annual operating budget. Implements required financial reporting

Function	NEI's Roles and Responsibilities	ReThink's Roles and Responsibilities
Technology	and software integration, email hosting, and technology support. Maintains the student information system and RCP's websites.	policies for NEI and reviews performance reports from NEI on a periodic basis.
Managing Facilities	Provides strategic financing and construction partnerships. Assists in site acquisition and/or lease negotiations, and liaisons with building and/or renovation team to ensure quality and design standards are met. Provides operational design of classrooms and school space and programmatic input for functionality purposes. Procures furniture, fixtures, equipment, supplies, and secures basic utility services (phone, water, electric, and disposal service).	Annually adopts, maintains, and amends (if necessary) the annual operating budget. Sets operational policies to ensure RCP's operations are faithful to the terms of its charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. Reviews school provided reports, which include detailed information regarding RCP's facility issues.
Procuring Vendors	Negotiate contracted services with vendors (food, transportation, security, custodial, etc.).	Annually adopts, maintains, and amends (if necessary) the annual operating budget. Sets operational policies to ensure RCP's operations are faithful to the terms of the charter, including compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

ReThink will oversee NEI via a performance-based services agreement. Please see **Attachment K** for an executed copy of the services agreement. Please see Article VIII of the proposed services agreement for indemnification provisions, and Exhibit A of the services agreement for a breakdown of the fees for services.

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 meets 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;**
- **At least the same equivalent time of instruction as required in regular public schools;**
- **Teacher evaluation; or**
- **Requirements in the charter school statute, T.C.A. 49 Chapter 13 or State Board of Education rules and regulations specific to charter schools.**

Please list all requested waivers below:

Table 55

State Statute/Rule/Policy	Description of Statute/Rule/ Policy	Replacement Policy/Practice	How will waiver of this statute/rule/policy help student achievement?
T.C.A. § 49-5-101(a); SBE Rule 0520-01-02-.03(5)	Staffing Requirements – Licensed Principals	Will recruit and interview all highly qualified candidates around the country.	RCP will recruit the most qualified candidates around the country to fulfill its mission.
T.C.A. § 49-5-401	Hours and Benefits – Teacher Assignment	RCP utilizes an extended schedule, including increased instructional and professional development hours. Teachers receive compensation commensurate with the increased work hours.	Students will receive additional instruction throughout the year due to the extended school day.
T.C.A. § 49-6-2206-2207	Curriculum – Use of Unapproved Textbooks	RCP will use both state-approved textbooks and other unapproved instructional materials.	To meet the needs of our RCP, it is essential that we tie our curriculum and instructional approaches to our individual school's mission and goals.

T.C.A. § 49-3-306(a); SBE Rule 0520-01-02-.02; SBE Policy 5.600	Compensation – Licensed Personnel Salaries	While we ensure that public monies will be used properly and all personnel will be paid adequately and timely, it is critical to our program that the payroll system reflects our individual school's purpose and philosophy. RCP understands that adequate compensation is a critical component to attracting and retaining the best possible teachers, and as such, has included a plan for determining compensation in Section 2.4: Personnel/Human Capital.	RCP will attempt to attract and retain the best possible teachers in order to ensure that high-quality instruction is provided to students in every classroom.
T.C.A.§ 8-23-206(a)	Compensation – Longevity Pay	While we ensure that public monies will be used properly and all personnel will be paid adequately, it is critical to our program that the payroll system reflects our individual school's purpose and philosophy. Upon approval by the Board of Directors, RCP will offer incentive pay that compensates them for years of consistent student performance and professional development growth, not just years of service.	RCP will ensure that teachers are striving to improve student performance and grow their knowledge as instructors in order to be maximize their instructional effectiveness.
T.C.A.§ 49-5-408-409	Tenure – Evaluation Contracts and Employment Termination	Every teacher will be assessed based on their performance. Teachers who attain the required levels of performance, as outlined in their contracts, will be offered a contract for the following school year.	Retaining high-performing teachers allows RCP to maximize impact on student growth and achievement.
T.C.A. § 49-5-501-513	Tenure – Tenure	As a charter school, RCP will be results-driven. Accordingly, RCP employees will be "at-will."	A major element of student success will be RCP's ability to attract and retain a staff that is committed to our vision.
T.C.A. § 49-3-311	Capital Outlay	Because we finance our own buildings and do not have the power to raise taxes to fund capital outlay, it is critical that we gain freedom from non- health and safety standards for the school site and	Having this freedom will allow us to use our school site resources most effectively and efficiently and align our building choices with our mission and goals.

		have control of the facility vested in our board, rather than the city board of education.	
SBE Rule 0520-01-03-.07(2) and SBE Rule 0520-01-03-.07(3)	Staffing Requirements – Library Information Center Personnel	A substantial library is available to students at the nearest public library	RCP students will have continuous access to a substantial classroom library and the local branch of the public library.
T.C.A. § 49-3-359(a)	Instructional Materials/Supplies	In lieu of distributing funds to teachers to purchase their own instructional materials/supplies, RCP will acquire high-quality instructional materials/supplies for each teacher and will distribute them prior to the first day of school.	Acquiring high-quality instructional materials/supplies for all teachers and distributing them prior to the first day of school, as opposed to distributing funds to teachers for them to buy their own, will ensure that RCP maintains consistency and uniformity among the instructional materials/supplies used in each classroom. This will also ensure that the materials purchased are of high-quality and effective in supporting RCP's innovative academic model.

SECTION 3 FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

3.1 Planning and Budget Worksheet (Attachment N)

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 sources1, 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**

[1] Both the budget forms and narrative should specify the amount and sources of funds, property, or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include evidence of firm commitments, where applicable

3.2 Budget Narrative (Attachment O)

As Attachment O, present a budget narrative including detailed descriptions of budget assumptions, and revenue and expenditure projections, reflecting proposed growth over time. In this section include:

- **(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;**
- **(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, etc.;**
- **(d) An explanation of all anticipated expenditures including those identified in Section 3.1(d);**
- **(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;**
- **(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;**
- **(g) The different roles and responsibilities of the proposed school's administration and governing board for school finances;**
- **(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;**
- **(i) The level of financial expertise of the proposed school's internal and external team members;**
- **(j) The proposed school's contingency plans to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than expected;**
- **(k) The Year 1 cash flow contingency, in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening; and**
- **(l) How one or more high-needs student with disabilities might affect the budget and your plan to meet student needs that might be more than anticipated.**

ATTACHMENTS

Please include attachments labeled according to the following schedule:

ATTACHMENT A: Annual Academic Calendar

ATTACHMENT B: Student Handbook/School Forms

ATTACHMENT C: Student Discipline Policy

ATTACHMENT D: Enrollment Policy

ATTACHMENT E: Letters of Support/MOUs/Contracts from the Community

ATTACHMENT F: Governance Documents

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

ATTACHMENT G: School Organizational Chart

ATTACHMENT H: Student Achievement Data (if available)

ATTACHMENT I: Employee Manual/Personnel Policies

ATTACHMENT J: Insurance Coverage

ATTACHMENT K: CMO Agreement (if applicable)

ATTACHMENT L: Network Annual Report

ATTACHMENT M: Network Organizational Chart

ATTACHMENT N: Planning and Budget Worksheet

ATTACHMENT O: Budget Narrative

ATTACHMENT P: Network Financial Plan

ATTACHMENT Q: Student Achievement/Growth Results

ATTACHMENT R: School Reports/Authorizer Evaluations

ATTACHMENT S: School Financials

ATTACHMENT T: Litigation Documents (if applicable)

ATTACHMENT U: Instructional Focus Plan/Unit Plan Sample

ATTACHMENT V: Cognia Accreditation Report