

FINAL APPLICATION REVIEW 2010-2011

Proposed School Name:	Proposed School Location:	
Community Day Charter Public School- Riverside	Lawrence	
Community Day Charter Public School- South	Lawrence	
Network of Schools with Community Day Charter Public School		
	Riverside	South
Grades Served at Full Capacity:	K1-8	K1-8
Number of Students Served at Full Capacity:	400	400
Proposed Opening Year:	FY2013	FY2013

Public Statement:

The Board of Directors of CDCPS is applying to the DESE Charter School Office for two additional K1-8 Schools in Lawrence. Each of these schools will draw upon CDCPS success in closing the achievement gap for second language learners and each will enroll 400 students. The schools will contract with the non-profit agency, Community Day Care Center of Lawrence, Inc. (d/b/a Community Day Charter Management Organization), to provide school management services in the areas of finance, technology, human resources, data reporting and development. All schools will be governed by the CDCPS board, which will be expanded to accommodate community members representative of the new schools.

Mission Statement:

The mission of Community Day Charter Public School- Riverside (CDCPS-Riverside) and Community Day Charter Public School- South (CDCPS-South) is to provide two kindergarten 1 through grade eight schools that will draw upon our considerable experience in working together to develop and implement a curriculum that discovers and supports the special characteristics and unique learning styles of each student. We will engage that student in meaningful learning experiences for the purposes of clearly stated goals in the areas of understandings, knowledge, skills, habits and social competencies. The school will reinforce the positive aspects of our city: its culture, art and economy, its working class history and strong work ethic. Our educational philosophy, curriculum and teaching methods are informed by an understanding that learning takes place in the context of family and that family must be supported in ways that make learning for the child possible.

Proposed Growth Plan for First Five Years of Operation:

School Year	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment
2012-2013	K1, K2, 1	120
2013-2014	K1-2	160
2014-2015	K1-3	200
2015-2016	K1-4	240
2016-2017	K1-5	280

NOTE: Both proposals describe the same growth plan.

Mission, Vision, and Description of the Community(ies) to Be Served

Primary Strengths

- The mission provides a clear description of the purpose and values of the schools. It describes a meaningful connection to the individual students it intends to serve and the city of Lawrence. (Section I.A.)
- The emphasis of the mission on ‘discovering and supporting the special characteristics and unique learning styles of each student’ is reflected throughout all sections of the applications. (Section I.A.)
- The vision provides a compelling image of the proposed school and provides a strong organizing principal throughout the applications. It incorporated academic and non-academic goals as well as a clear emphasis on community building among all stakeholders. (Section I.B.)
- During the interview and within the applications, the applicant group emphasized the high demand for seats at the existing charter school and the many structures already in place that will support the group in implementing their expansion plans. (Section I.C.)
- The application provides strong evidence of the past successes of the Community Day Charter Public School in closing the achievement gap for Hispanic students. The application describes the unique programming that will be replicated at these proposed schools, such as a longer day, small classes, grade clusters, English Language Learner teaching expertise, summer programming, and Spanish language instruction. (Section I.C.)
- CDCPS’ expansion proposals have received community support during the public hearing and public comment process. Senator S.Tucker, Representatives B. Finegold, D. Torrisi, and M. Devers have voiced their support for both proposals. See public comment. (Section I.C.)

Primary Weaknesses

- The applications contained limited information discussing the specific needs of the student populations in Lawrence and how the strategies used at Community Day Charter Public School (CDCPS) address those needs effectively. During the interview, the applicant group provided a specific rationale for different strategies that are targeted to serve English language learners (ELLs). (Section I.C.)

Educational Philosophy, Curriculum and Instruction

Primary Strengths

- The educational philosophy describes the group's educational beliefs and values, aligns with the schools' mission, and is integrated into the implementation of comprehensive educational programs. (Section II.A.)
- While reviewers commented upon the lack of current research, the applications cite research that supports the impact of this educational philosophy on the performance of all learners. (Section II.A.)
- The educational philosophy provides a concrete plan for implementation with a focus on individualized support and structured learning methods to reach every student. Each student has Personal Education Goals (PEGs) which provide an individual student success plan used as a road map to meet their needs and track progress. (Section II.A.)
- The application provided a comprehensive overview of the curriculum for the proposed schools. The application provides a clear explanation of why the curriculum was chosen for the school and the English language learner components of the curriculum programs. (Section II.B.)
- Though the applications described non-academic goals that did not appear cohesively integrated into the schools' educational programming, during the interview the applicant group described in greater detail what these strategies look like implemented at the different grade clusters. (Section II.B.)
- The application describes an annual collaborative process during the spring and summer between school leaders and faculty to formulate and implement a curriculum development, improvement, and refinement plan based upon student achievement data. (Section II.B.)

Primary Weaknesses

- The application itself provides limited explicit discussion of the instructional methods implemented at the different grade levels, beyond indicating activity centers, hands-on activities, direct instruction, guided practice and independent work. (Section II.B.)

Assessment System, Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

Primary Strengths

- The application provides performance standards within clear rubrics that are easy to understand and provide detailed information about student performance towards standards. (Section II.C.)
- The proposed school utilizes Personal Educational Goals (PEGs) to communicate student performance in an authentic and meaningful way for students and families. (Section II.C.)
- The graduation standards incorporate clear academic proficiency standards in addition to a Spanish language project, community service project and attendance requirements that are consistent with the proposed schools' mission and philosophy. (Section II.C.)
- The applications describe the use of internally designed benchmark tests based on released MCAS test items, DIBELS, GRADE, G-MADE, and internally developed formative assessments. (Section II.D.)
- The applications describe a robust data management system that manages and synthesizes data for ease of use by all stakeholders. Personnel at Community Day Care are responsible for creating data summaries to facilitate faculty and school leadership use of student data to inform curriculum, instruction, and professional development. (Section II.D.)

Primary Weaknesses

- While the promotion policy is clear, reviewers were concerned that the proficiency standard was not based on high expectations. (Section II.C.)

School Characteristics

Primary Strengths

- The proposed schools will incorporate the grade clusters of the existing school to permit school leaders oversight of a small group of 150 students. This infrastructure is in alignment with the school's mission of community building and individualized support. (Section II.E.)
- During the interview, the applicant group provided information about the student

Primary Weaknesses

- While the school characteristic section of the application did not fully address the criteria requested, the applicant group was able to provide additional information during the interview. The section omitted a student behavior philosophy and discipline plan, provided a limited description of the typical student and teacher day and how the school culture

<p>behavior philosophy and discipline plan implemented at one of the grade clusters. The present policy appears to be responsive to the developmental needs of the students at the school and is tied to extrinsic consequences and rewards. (Section II.E.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant group intends to implement similar family-school partnerships at the expansion schools. The heads of schools interview parents once their child is enrolled to share 'hopes and expectations.' The existing charter school has two parent advisory boards (English and Spanish speaking) to facilitate the participation of all families. The school also collaborates with parents to develop parenting workshops based on their needs and suggestions. (Section II.E.) 	<p>will be promoted. (Section II.E.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applications provide limited information on how the school day would operate for the different grade clusters. (Section II.E.)
---	---

Special Student Populations and Student Services

<p><u>Primary Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applications provide accurate information regarding the identification and assessment of ELLs, family notification, language development instruction, and sheltered content instruction within English language learner programming. The applications also provide examples of the methods that will be used by teachers to provide ELLs access to the general education curriculum. (Section II.F.) The applicant group has pursued Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) category 3 training for its existing staff and have plans in place for all staff to be category 1 trained. (Section II.F.) 	<p><u>Primary Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applications provide a limited description of the processes and procedures to identify, assess, and provide instruction to students in need of special education services. The applications indicate that all staff will receive training in special education programming and provided examples of in-class accommodations. (Section II.F.)
---	--

Enrollment and Recruitment

<p><u>Primary Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the interview, the applicant group explained that opening the proposed schools during the same year, FY13, with grades K1, K2, and 1, would allow for 	<p><u>Primary Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No primary weaknesses.
---	--

more planning time and will allow the schools to share resources and build a similar foundation at both schools. The schools follow a slow growth model of one additional grade level per year in the following years. (Section III.A.)

- The applications describe a recruitment plan that targets the multilingual Lawrence population through popular mediums such as local radio stations and newspapers. (Section III.A.)

Capacity and School Governance

Primary Strengths

- The present board of Community Day represents a broad cross-section of the Lawrence community and broad expertise in education, law, business management, finances, and community development. (Section III.B.)
- The success of CDCPS demonstrates that the applicant group and the board of trustees can manage public funds effectively and responsibly and also have the capacity to found and sustain an excellent charter school. (Section III.B.)
- The applications provide a clear reporting structure that encourages an appropriate relationship among the board of trustees, school leader, administration, and staff regarding the governance and management of the proposed schools. (Section III.C. and III.D.)
- The applications provide clear explanations of how the governance model functions and the processes for policy development. (Section III.C.)
- The governance model incorporates parents as members of the board of trustees. The applicant group spoke directly about a number of school policies that were initiated by parents and adopted by the school, such as uniforms and longer school days. (Section III.C.)
- The applications contain a draft management contract between CDCPS and Community Day Care Center of

Primary Weaknesses

- No primary weaknesses.

Lawrence (CDCMO) that demonstrates a clear understanding and delineation of their respective roles and the performance measures used to evaluate CDCMO. If chartered, the contract would need further refinement and then review and approval by the Department. (Section III.C.)

Capacity for Network of Schools

Primary Strengths

- During the interview, the applicant group clarified that the board of CDCPS and CDCMO have no board members in common. The applicant group stated that the entities are separate though they have a shared mission. (Section III.C.)
- The applicant group stated that CDCMO would provide management, fiscal management, human resources, data and technology services, accountability (data assessment,) fundraising and development services for a minimal 6.5% management fee. (Section III.F.)
- CDCPS and CDCMO collaborated to form Community Partners Initiative which employs CDCPS teachers to disseminate best practices to educators in charter and district public schools. This enterprise provides the valuable experience needed to prepare CDCPS teachers to disseminate school practices during the expansion plan. (Section III.C.)
- CDC is putting structures in place to support the expansion plan. They have hired a Director of Charter Schools to provide direct oversight to Heads of School and added additional staff at the network level with expertise in technology and finance. (Section III.C.)

Primary Weaknesses

- Originally in the prospectus phase the applicant group planned to open both new schools in FY12, but the final application pushed those both back to FY13. The applicant group explained why they are intending to open both proposed schools during the same year. It is not clear however, if the potential advantages of opening both schools in the same year outweigh the potential challenges. (Section III.C.)

Management

Primary Strengths

- The applications emphasize a commitment to train and promote from within the ranks of the teaching staff. All

Primary Weaknesses

- The applications provide limited information about the responsibilities of school leaders and administrators at each

present heads of school were teachers at CDCPS. The application describes opportunities for staff to advance their careers through varied professional development. Each faculty member has their own individual professional development plan. (Section III.D.)

- The applications describe the role of staff from CDCPS in supporting the development of the proposed schools through summer, and in-service training and job shadowing during the planning year. (Section III.D.)

of the grade clusters within the proposed schools. During the interview, the applicant group provided helpful details as to the role of the two operations managers at each school in acting as the bilingual community and family liaison. (Section III.D.)

Facilities, Transportation, and Finances

Primary Strengths

- The board of trustees has a subcommittee focused on identifying a facility for the proposed schools and investigating potential buildings available. The applicant group will consider temporary shared housing if necessary though they prefer separate facilities. (Section III.E.)
- The applicant group plans to continue contracting with local independent transportation services because they wish to maintain the use of bus monitors for their students' safety. (Section III.E.)
- The applications provide a clear description of the fiscal checks and balances for managing the school's finances at the school and network levels. (Section III.F.)

Primary Weaknesses

- No primary weaknesses.