

<b>FINAL APPLICATION REVIEWS 2009-2010</b>			
<b>Proposed School Name:</b>	Road to Success Charter High School		
<b>Grades Served At Full Capacity:</b>	9-12		
<b>Number of Students At Full Capacity:</b>	400		
<b>Proposed School Location:</b>	Salem		
<b>Proposed Opening Year:</b>	2010-2011		
<b>Regional?</b>	Yes		
<b>Proposed Sending Districts:</b>	Lynn, Peabody, and Salem		
<p><b>Mission Statement:</b>            “The Road to Success (RTS) Charter High School is a college-preparatory high school serving the most vulnerable students from Salem, Lynn, and Peabody -- those who have struggled in school due to language or life issues (i.e., English Language Learners, those involved with DCF, homeless, or pregnant/parenting). Grounded in the beliefs that history should not determine destiny and that students will rise to high expectations in the right environment, RTS will provide students with the opportunity to take control of their futures and thrive academically despite personal adversity and significant life stressors.”</p> <p><b>Curriculum Synopsis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internally generated curriculum structured around 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Frameworks and linked directly the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.</li> <li>• Unlike traditional high schools with four grade levels, RTS students will be placed at proficiency levels and will graduate upon completion of required credits; each student has a Learning Achievement Plan.</li> <li>• Strength-based and student-centered educational approach, with the social supports needed to graduate from high school and succeed in college.</li> <li>• Incorporates differentiated and inquiry based instruction along with experiential learning.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Mission, Vision, and Statement of Need</b></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b><u>Primary Strengths</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mission Statement defines the purpose and values of the school. (AP Section I. A. 1)</li> <li>• The Statement of Need generally describes the students the charter school intends to serve and the needs of this population. (AP Section I. C. 3)</li> </ul> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b><u>Primary Weaknesses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neither the Mission Statement nor Vision serves as an organizing principle throughout the application. It is not clear how the list of guiding principles in the Vision is translated into an educational program. (AP Section I. A. 5 and I. B. 5)</li> <li>• The Statement of Need does not provide a specific rationale for how this school will enhance or expand the educational options currently available to this student population. Also, the application refers to “an informal meeting of parents and community members in a house in Peabody.” In the interview, it became clear that nine people attended that meeting. It is not clear that the founding group assessed parental demand throughout the region. (AP Section I. C. 2 and 5)</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>		<p><b><u>Primary Strengths</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mission Statement defines the purpose and values of the school. (AP Section I. A. 1)</li> <li>• The Statement of Need generally describes the students the charter school intends to serve and the needs of this population. (AP Section I. C. 3)</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Primary Weaknesses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neither the Mission Statement nor Vision serves as an organizing principle throughout the application. It is not clear how the list of guiding principles in the Vision is translated into an educational program. (AP Section I. A. 5 and I. B. 5)</li> <li>• The Statement of Need does not provide a specific rationale for how this school will enhance or expand the educational options currently available to this student population. Also, the application refers to “an informal meeting of parents and community members in a house in Peabody.” In the interview, it became clear that nine people attended that meeting. It is not clear that the founding group assessed parental demand throughout the region. (AP Section I. C. 2 and 5)</li> </ul>
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education. The philosophy is founded on an understanding of effective, research-based educational practices. (AP Section II. A. 1 and 4)

educational program. (AP Section II. A. 2)

- The Curriculum and Instruction section needs further clarification. For example, other than the digital availability of materials, it is not clear how or why the group identified the curriculum for this school. Also, the application does not describe a clear plan and curricular components that facilitate ongoing development, improvement, and refinement of the curriculum or how to evaluate its effectiveness. (AP Section II. B. 3, 6, and 7)

**Assessment System, Performance, Promotion, Graduation Standards**

**Primary Strengths**

- None.

**Primary Weaknesses**

- Although the Learning Achievement Plan seems like a useful tool to keep track of student goals, it is not clear how the Assessment System, Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards will work together or how they will be communicated to teachers, administrators, parents or guardians, and students. Also it's not clear how the standards are connected to high academics, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, college preparation, and the other non-academic skills that are mentioned in the mission. (Section II.C. 1, 2 and 3 and II. D.4 and 8)

**School Characteristics, Special Student Populations and Student Services**

**Primary Strengths**

- While the school cannot evaluate students before they are enrolled, as proposed in the application, the idea of providing a 3-week immersion program at the start of the school year, as a time to evaluate each student and develop Individual Learning Plans, and establish the school culture is an interesting way to try and meet the needs of individual students. (AP Section II. D. 2 and E. 10)

**Primary Weaknesses**

- The school cannot evaluate students before they are enrolled, as proposed. The description of School Characteristics is vague. It is not clear how the schedule operates for teachers and students. It is not clear what occurs between 3:15 and 5:00 or how this school will provide "personalized networks of support(s)" for students. There are no concrete plans to provide the unique supports needed for this target population as described in the application. It has not been determined if the school will provide a social worker or counselor to provide emotional support for students and families; there is no plan for childcare. Also, it is not clear how work-based learning, service learning, internships, and job shadowing, as described in the application, are integrated into this school. The interview did not provide additional information. (AP Section II. E. 1, 5, 6, and 10)
- The description of the processes and procedures to identify, assess, and serve students who are English language learners is not thorough. In light of the targeted population, the structure of the program is

under-developed and staffing levels are not adequate. The founding group anticipates that 55% of all students will be English language learners. However, in the application they indicate having a part-time ELL specialist for all five years of operation. In general, service delivery is vague and it is not clear how teachers will be trained to work with this population. (Section II.F.1)

**Enrollment and Recruitment**

**Primary Strengths**

- The applicant group reports having a large network of social service providers to help with an aggressive and broad outreach. (AP Section II. A. 4)

**Primary Weaknesses**

- The application does not provide a specific rationale for a viable and sustainable size and growth strategy. (Section AP II. A. 1)

**Capacity, School Governance, and Management**

**Primary Strengths**

- The applicant identifies clear criteria for the selection and evaluation of a school leader. (AP Section III. C. 9)

**Primary Weaknesses**

- The application does not specify who is on the proposed board of trustees as required. At the interview, the founding group members were not clear as to who will be serving on the board of trustees. Therefore, it is difficult to determine capacity. The founding group as a whole does not appear to have tangible ties to, and broad and diverse representation from, the communities the school intends to serve. (AP Section III.B. 3 and 4)
- The management section is very confusing. The management structure in the organizational chart is not clearly explained. Roles and responsibilities for the school's leader and other administrative staff are not well delineated. It is not clear how staff and administrators will be evaluated or how professional development activities are determined. (Section III. D 1, 3, 6, 8, and 9)