

Road to Success Charter High School

Questions as derived from panel review

Mission and Vision

1. **Please describe the vision of the school. What would it feel and look like to be at this school?**
 - Some of these students are troubled and may have given up on school. Then there will be a few other students who don't fit that category but see the school as a great opportunity.
 - This will be an exciting new opportunity which may enable students to give school another chance. Potential students might get excited by the drama, music, technology, or the potential help to get into college and to get through college.
 - Once in the school students will see that the advisory support, tutoring, teachers and administration, make this a different school. This will give them a new hope.
 - We envision the school with a group of teachers who are extremely flexible to meet the needs of individual students, through the individual learning plans which have been developed in collaboration with teachers, parents, and other human service providers. Tapping in to and resolving the needs that the students have and moving them into academic programs is truly the vision of the program.

Statement of Need

1. **How would this school enhance or expand the educational options currently available to this student population (English language learners, students in DCF care and homeless students, and pregnant and parenting teens)? What is the overall rationale for targeting these populations? How do you know there is a need and demand in these local communities?**
 - a. **What do you see are the varied needs of these populations?**
 - b. **How will you meet the varied needs of these populations? Will there be childcare for parenting teens? How will this longer school day work for these populations? What evidence is there that the extended day helps these students?**
 - c. **Please describe the "informal meeting of parents and community members at a home in Peabody."**
 - d. **How will you reach out to these students?**
 - Essentially there are three target populations: 1) English language learners- each different culture has a different set of needs. Many young people are here living by themselves or with folks that they don't really know; 2) young people in foster care- often the experience is fragmented and young people are moved from place to place; and 3) pregnant and parenting teens. This school will offer young people hope and try to meet social needs and then bring them into the academic work in order to tap true potential and link to vocational and career opportunities, with flexibility.
 - These three districts have the traditional length of school day and that doesn't work for many of these kids who go home to empty houses. With the extended day, and summer programs, this school will offer more support. The school will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., with classes also available online. Sometimes extended learning time works and sometimes it doesn't for high need students. *Did not cite research about extended learning time with these populations. Offered antidotal evidence for summer time programs.*

- There won't be child care for parenting teens; funding is a problem – looking for community-based resources to provide child-care, vouchers, welfare, and DCF.
- A lot of contacts in the Peabody school system. There were nine people at the Peabody home meeting.
- Where there is need there is demand.

Educational Philosophy, Curriculum and Instruction

1. Why did you choose the curriculum? What is the research behind these decisions?

(PowerSpeak for languages, McGraw Hill's Contemporary Series in Social Studies and Science and [blank in final application page 8] Perfection Learning's "6 Trait Power Write", Pearson Prentice Hall Math curricula, and Math EL software)

- This curriculum was chosen with the special education and English language learners in mind. This curriculum presents material in chunks, and particular reading levels, and it's computerized so students can listen and read along.

2. How will the virtual component to the curriculum work? What's the plan for virtual instruction? How about students (homeless) that don't have access to computers?

- Virtual curriculum allows students to access information from computers and can allow students to work at varying levels.
- The virtual library will have literature in many languages. We are going to have a dual approach for English language learners; students will read and be literate in English and their own native language to bridge understanding.
- Homework assignments will be online; students will be able to watch the class online and have a chance to review what they missed in class.
- If students don't have a computer at home there will be many computers on campus. We will have some sort of digital device for students - laptop or reading device.

3. You mention in the Vision Statement that this is a college preparatory curriculum – what makes this a college preparatory school?

- The entire curriculum meets the needs for college preparation. It will allow students to go to community or four year colleges. Even if the reading is leveled.
- We will be in touch with colleges and universities to make sure that it meets the needs.
- We have discussed Advanced Placement (AP); we have to see what the skill level is initially. The goal is to bring them up through the years and bring them in to AP courses.
- We are also looking into dual enrollment in the last couple of years in school. We are looking to work with North Shore Community College, Bunker Hill, and UMASS.
- The tutors will be college students and that will create a college environment. We will be discussing college every day. We have talked with Salem State to provide students as tutors through work-study. The director of support services and staff at the school will train the students.

4. Please give an example of the Learning Achievement Plan (LAP), how will it function on the ground?

- a. **How will students and advisors meet quarterly to formally assess and reevaluate the LAP's?**
 - b. **What are the non-academic goals for these populations?**
- The LAP will have assessments, work-based learning goals, and other non-academic goals. It will be reviewed regularly. The LAP will be developed during summer immersion.
 - The LAP goes hand in hand with the mentoring program. Each student will have a mentor teacher. The teachers will have more than one student that they are connecting with and help each student work with their individual LAP. The mentor will support students and help students find the resources that they need. In the schedule students will have a time every day to meet with their mentor. They must meet quarterly to see what has changed on the LAP. The advisor, tutor, mentor, and student will meet each month to discuss the student's LAP. This will be an advisory support panel.

Assessment, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

1. **Since you can't conduct testing and assessments prior to enrollment (in the application you state prior to enrollment) how will you determine levels/grades for students? Where do credits fit in? Will you have a credit recovery and remediation program?**
 - a. **Please walk us through how you get to the level 4 benchmark?**
 - b. **What do students need to do to graduate? How is it connected with high academics, 21st century skills, and taking control of their futures as mentioned in the mission?**
 - c. **What will the "social expectations" (page 17) (behavioral/emotional) look like and how will you assess student achievement? How will you track non-academic goals?**
 - d. **How will you assess 21st century skill development?**
- We intend assessments after the student is enrolled. Then the immersion program will start in August. The immersion program is for all new students and will allow time for testing to help determine the level of classes the student needs. If students come in with credits but they are on level one, we will remediate. The LAP will indicate what needs to be done for each student. We will also determine students' learning styles. We will be flexible and find ways to accelerate that learning.
 - Using Stanford 10 to determine levels. That assessment is the one consistent tool that is oriented towards college. It also confirms any other data from the school district. The levels don't necessarily align with the credits. Credits are class completion that's different from proficiency levels.
 - The LAP will include benchmarks, what each student will need to graduate. But graduation is based on completing a certain number of courses.
 - The school's emphasis on technology will prepare students more thoroughly for the job market and college. The 21st century skills focus is on the use of technology. Also the companies we will be dealing with are in the 21st century. Through work-study, companies will indicate what skills are needed. Students will be learning how to deal with diversity. What better 21st century skill can you have? The school will be involved with teaching

knowledge, skills, and attitudes. How students communicate with each other is important. There will also be project-based learning so students will work together and communicate. The 21st century skills will be tracked by technology. There will be a multitude of data using online capacity.

2. When do students take MCAS?

- When they are at level two, equivalent to a 10th grader.

School Characteristics

1. Please discuss the school schedule. How many days in a year? On page 21 it states 185 days, elsewhere it's 4-10 week sessions, 200 days? Also please discuss school staffing from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. What is the teacher's schedule? Who teaches between 3:15 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.?

- School will be open 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Students and teachers are required to be there 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. However there is some flexibility with teachers. Some will work 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. It's almost like having two shifts.
- 3:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. is a flexible time for electives like drama, music, and tutors. It will depend on the availability of instructors and student interest. Teachers will have prep-time, but it is not clear when professional development will take place.
- The school intends to have 4 equal 10 weeks session at 185 days, and the three weeks before school. That is only required for new students.

2. What will work-based learning look like at this school?

- We haven't had a lot of discussion about it.
- It's primarily an internship program. Students will have an opportunity to be at a particular workplace that interests them. Some of the workplaces have particular needs and different times of day. So we need to figure it out for each student.
- Some of the businesses may help out in the classroom.
- Developing job readiness skills. There are also summer employment opportunities and selecting the right place for employment.
- S & P Engineering is a good example. The business will work with the science teacher about the curriculum and the student will come to the business between 3:15 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. to see and touch and do.

3. How does the founding group envision establishing the norms and school culture as described in the mission and vision?

a. What kinds of "personalized networks of support" will be in place for students? (Advisory, tutors, wrap-around supports, summer program, etc.)

- This is an outline. It's not a one size fits all plan. This is a resource that will be made available to every student. There will be an advisory support panel, not sure who will be on that but maybe an administrator, advisor, mentor, and tutor. Students will meet with tutors as needed. Tutors will help with academics and be like big brothers/sisters.

- Tutoring for all will be available 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. If students don't need tutoring at that time, they will participate in electives including work-based learning. It will be evolving, if a student needs academic help, they may not be able to participate in work-based learning or "work-study."
- 4. Please explain the partnerships you have included in the application?**
- Comprehensive School Age Parenting Program – not clear if they will provide the social work contract position.
 - The Boston Learning Center – They are successful at motivating students while tutoring. They go into the student's home. This is additional tutoring outside of the school and will be prescribed through the LAP.
 - Massachusetts Portuguese Speakers – (*mentioned but not sure what they will do*).
- 5. How will Professional Development be determined and when will it take place?**
- Professional Development will probably take place on Friday afternoons in shifts.
 - We have two people on the founding board that can provide professional development for the staff.
- 6. Who will be dealing with the issue of truancy and counseling in the school? Who is going to make sure these kids get to school every day from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.? How will you motivate students?**
- It's not clear how emotional and case management services will be provided. Ideally emotional support and case management will be provided by a contractor on site who is imbedded, yet separate from the staff in terms of brokering for services and if there is a problem, the person can provide mediation and intervention.
 - The guidance counselor will be the primary person dealing with demerits or merits. But our school offers a team approach and we will all be responsible.
 - Regarding truancy - talking about community collaboration with DYS, police, and local school districts that have truant officers.

Special Student Populations and Services

- 1. You changed your anticipated special education population from 20% in the prospectus to 12% in the final application. Why? Also based on the districts, what do you anticipate your ELL population to be? In what ways have you considered the staffing needs of that population?**
- The language barrier is the key issue, not that they will need special education.
 - We believe that a lot of students who are classified as special needs are misclassified.
 - English language learners are probably going to be our largest population at about 55%.
 - The students who are foster children will be the second largest population.
- 2. How are you going to serve your English language learners? How will Sheltered English Immersion function at the school?**

- We will use a dual language approach to working with English language learners.
- We won't be teaching courses in the student's languages but we will have staff who speak different languages.
- The individuals who know how Sheltered English Immersion operates aren't present at the interview.

Enrollment and Recruitment

1. Please describe the enrollment and recruitment strategy?

a. Why start with 240 students?

b. How will students re-enroll? How will that work with the lottery?

- We will be pounding the pavement. We have been going to local churches and speaking to different groups. We have been handing out flyers in multiple languages. We have some sign-up sessions, for people interested in finding out about the school. We have a huge network through social services.
- If we are over enrolled we will need a lottery. But if students take a semester off, they can come back unless there is a waiting list. But with some folks they will be on medical leave. They don't drop out of the system.

2. You mention taking anyone under the age of 18, how long will you serve these students?

- In the case of Peabody, they provide services till 20 years old.
- Don't know about Lynn or Salem.
- But nothing stops us legally from serving these students and not getting paid.

Capacity

1. In the application you did not specify which individuals are in the proposed board of trustees. Please do so now.

- *Seven of the people in the interview report that they plan to be on the board of trustees. A number of people haven't determined if they will be on the board of trustees. Some folks want to work for or with the school and they don't want to create a conflict of interest.*

2. People were proposed for positions at the school in the prospectus, but not indicated in the final application, why? If any person is still targeted for positions at the school, please indicate who and the process used to determine that the individual is the best candidate for the position?

- Anthony Barrows still hopes to be the executive director. We didn't put it in the application because people's commitments might change.

Governance and Management

1. What's the role of Non Profit Care Coordination, Inc. (NPCCI) being your Sponsor Agency?

- Just the sponsor agency for the Developer Grant.
- 2. **Please describe the administrative and staffing structure of the school.**
 - a. **If the principal is responsible for student services, what does the director of student support services do? What does the instructional leader do?**
 - b. **What kinds of skill sets are you looking for with your teachers?**
 - c. **Why do you have a part-time person giving ELL support for the first 5 years, when this is one of your target populations?**
 - d. **Who does the hiring? Application states that those personnel decisions will be made by senior staff and are presented to the board by the executive director. Why?**
 - e. **What are the supports for staff?**
 - f. **There are discrepancies in the governance section and the bylaws. Is the principal ex-officio and expected to attend every board meeting? Is the board run by consensus (page 36) or majority vote (page 59)?**
- The principal is in charge of academics, hired by the executive director; both are responsible for the outcomes of the school.
- Two levels of teachers, those just out of college and experienced teachers. They will all have to agree that the classroom will be recorded for online learning.
- Supports for staff include professional development and working during the summer to develop the team.

Transportation

1. What will transportation look like for Peabody students?

- There will be a set a side of \$40 per month per student for MBTA. Some parents want there own control over how they want to do it or we may use a local not-for-profit who wants to provide transportation.

Budget

1. Please explain the “work-study” grant - \$256,000? Line item 2. What if you don’t get it?

- It’s in-kind.

2. Explain the role of Information Technology Director – shows up on page 53?

- The main focus is IT, maintaining servers and computers.
- Person will also train folks about technology.
- Work with teachers around curriculum.

3. Are there contingency plans if you don’t enroll 240 students in year one?

- Have considered the “what-ifs.” Number of students will affect the number of teachers or the size of the space that we lease.

4. There is a discrepancy about the numbers budgeted for SPED testing...on page 51 you have \$6,022, \$8,531, and \$11.694 but on page 56 \$34,560, \$48,980, etc. Which is correct?

- There is a formula issue/error.

Action plan

1. The last item of the Action Plan is about meeting with organizations for service learning component of the educational program. What is the service learning component of the educational program and how does it fit in the school?

- That's the company "Across World." They mostly work internationally. It has software connect-ability with colleges. There is content created by professors. Students could connect to people around the world as part of the model UN program.
- The education folks weren't able to make the meeting today. *It is not clear to the group what service learning is.*