

MATCH Community Day Charter School

Questions as derived from Panel Review

Mission and Vision

1. You have put at the centerpiece of your final application your stated relationship with Community Day Charter Public School (CDCPS). Please explain how the board of trustees determined that you wanted to contract with CDCPS.

- We have an interest in serving low income kids and preparing them for college. The questions we face are around capacity, and knowledge/insight around serving younger kids and ELL students.
- We have gotten to know Community Day, faculty to faculty, school leader to school leader. From this relationship came the idea of partnership, where Community Day can help us tell the story of how we can serve all kids, younger and ELL. Our current need is to develop expertise around serving this population of students.

a. What services will be purchased from CDCPS?

- We'll pay CDCPS an amount of money for curriculum, assessments, and written materials of various kinds. There's lots of informal access between the two schools, encompassing school visits and consulting advice. This is not merely a contract, but a real partnership.
- There's a similar approach between our schools. Our teachers are passionate and intense.

b. How did the board determine the fee?

- We considered the amount of time CDCPS would be spending with MATCH and the expenses for reproducing materials.
- Community Day also benchmarked against what we charged for consulting services in the past.

2. What do you think are the needs of the English language learner (ELL) population you hope to serve?

- As the chair of The Boston Foundation, I have worked with high-risk kids. This next wave of immigrant students is increasingly representative of the school system (29% in Boston.) They have very special needs. Important group to reach.
- MATCH will offer the extended school day, more time on task, MATCH Corp and teachers certified or trained in ESL techniques. Just because kids have disadvantages, it doesn't mean they can't succeed and have access to a greater set of like opportunities. We will be engaging the families, connecting with parents and offering them the opportunity to increase their own language skills – engage the whole family in the learning process. Community Day is a partner who shares these values with us.

a. How will your strategies meet the needs of ELLs?

- Sheltered English immersion is led by teachers certified in ESL. Our targeted students for the new school are similar to our current students. Our work will be enhanced by Community Day's know-how. Tutoring is key to what we do. We can offer 2 hours of targeted individualized instruction to the students. Tutors will be trained in ELL strategies and supervised by master teachers and literacy specialists.
- The reason children of immigrant families might not do well in school is that families are not brought into the life of the school and socialized into the high standards school culture. This is something we will do to avoid the disengagement and disenfranchisement that leads to students dropping out at high school.

Educational Philosophy, Curriculum and Instruction

1. How will the college success mission of your educational philosophy be evident at the different grade levels?

- The high school level is much closer to when students consider college. In the first two years of high school, the priority is to get them to grade level. Until this year, the middle and high school have operated separately.
- In the middle school, our 6th graders come in at 4th grade level, and we work very hard to close the gap. We try to fold the families into MATCH culture earlier on and give them a 5-hour induction before their children begins 6th grade. We explain to them why we have a no-excuses culture.
- Part of it is getting the kids into the college mindset as well. We reinforced this mindset by having tutors who have gone to college.
- CDCPS's work with students is supported by data and meetings between teachers. Because we are partnering with MATCH, we can help them to do this at the early school level, so that college becomes a thread in the culture.

2. Please describe how instructional strategies may differ between K1-5 and 6-12 classrooms.

- Tutoring in the early years is going to focus on literacy – reading, writing, and oral language development. The two hours of tutoring in the beginning will have this focus on language development.
- It's harder to develop a tutoring relationship with 9th graders and older students, but not so with younger kids. We'll use data to inform instructions.
- A lot of our current tutors are pulled into remediation work, but they really want to do enrichment. In the K-12 model, we will be able to do a lot of things we currently do not. What we have is a preventative model that uses tutors to provide support.
- At Community Day, we've seen the effectiveness of this preventative model.

a. How will you ensure that teachers are proficient in delivering the chosen instructional methods?

- We're only hiring master teachers who are experts in language development and licensed in ELL instructions. We'll provide them with four weeks of trainings between July and August – some will be joint sessions with Community Day, and some are unique to MATCH. We'll also schedule half and full day trainings in September and October.
- We think about both training and coaching. Individual coaching will consist of the principal, another instructional leader, or peer doing observations and giving feedback.
- Every month, we meet twice on Wednesdays. Those will be half days and the kids will be out by 12:15 p.m. We do professional development from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Match Corps (the tutors) trainings will happen in the morning.
- We will have common planning time during specialty time, so that teachers can have a set weekly meeting time.
- MATCH's adult capacity, 30 adults for 100 kids, is unique among schools. MATCH Corps provides an amazing stream of human capital.

3. What challenges do you anticipate as you merge curriculum and instructional practices from CDCPS and MATCH?

- For the first several years, we'll depend on the CDCPS curriculum because we don't have our own yet. Therefore, merging won't be as big an issue. Having a coherent curriculum will be great.
- If we succeed, then our 6th graders coming from Community Day/MATCH will be performing at a higher level than our current entering 6th graders.
- CDCPS is learning from MATCH too. We have reservations about collaboration with another group, but MATCH is very much in line with us.

a. CDCPS (K1-5) and MATCH 6-12: Is this accurate?

- Yes.

4. You report that “values education” is integrated into the school program on every level. Please explain. Do you have a character education curriculum?

- CDCPS: We have character development in all our buildings. In the lower school, it's a challenge. From 2:45 to 3:30 p.m, we have a school-wide service learning project for the school. We'll then do a project for the Lawrence community and then a national project later on. We have the Spartan award for students who are not model students, but who are making progress and displaying the values we care about. We have a structured behavior system based on our four school rules.
- MATCH: We have character development at the school in many different forms. We go by the mantra, “Students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.” Every staff member knows every student.

Assessment, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

- 1. How has MATCH meshed promotion standards with Community Day?**
 - a. What is the rationale for having dissimilar promotion policies for K1-8 and 9-12?**
 - In preK – 5, we are using the Community Day standards. If students failed two classes, they'll be retained. There will be an opportunity to make up work in the summer.
 - The retention discussion is not done in isolation with staff only, but also with the family. Student retention is not necessarily bad thing; we do it when it's beneficial for the students.
 - We're going to have to do some work around the middle grades.
 - b. How do PEGS interact with grades? How are they connected with report cards? Will report cards be different for different grade levels?**
 - PEGS are report cards issued on a trimester basis with numerical grades along with narratives. PEGS are consistent through 5th grade.
- 2. How will the 'best practices' of MATCH's and CDCPS's assessment and data management systems be integrated at the proposed school?**
 - We really like Community Day's system. Community Day has age appropriate assessments for younger students and benchmarks for older students. They have the ability to turn data around quickly, so that teachers can review and course correct.
 - We'll have instructional specialists. We will use assessments and monitor progress. Master teachers and tutors will map out their work to address what students need.
 - MATCH has license from Community Day to acquire all their know-how.

School Characteristics

- 1. Please briefly describe some of the aspects of your proposed educational program and any modifications that will be found at different grade levels.**
 - MATCH July Academy is only for 6th graders, who come in half days for four weeks in the summer. Teachers will work to boost math, English, and science. Saturday Academy, consisting of 13 Saturdays, is also for 6th graders. This year, 7th graders who are behind will start coming in for Saturday Academy too.
 - Incoming 9th graders will take proficiency exams. Throughout year, we'll give them one-on-one attention on Fridays, in addition to two hours of tutoring a day.
 - All 10th graders will do weekend tutoring for 4 hours, consisting of SAT and AP preparation.
 - It's unlikely that we'll do July Academy in year one of the new school, but we will probably introduce that at some later point. Our decision will depend on getting to know the families and knowing what they do during the summer.

- For the younger kids, we are interested in providing more arts, music, and gym. We'll promote singing for oral language development.
- Right now, we're not making the commitment to do an afterschool program, mostly due to transportation issue. If it turns out we have parents who want an afterschool program and who can pick up their kids at 5 or 6 p.m., we can definitely provide one.
- It's a luxury for us to run a high school and now to develop backward to the younger grades. We have an over-engineered schedule for the older students right now, so it's so great to be able to scale back for the younger kids.

a. How will the multilingual and multicultural commitment of your school be evident within the different aspects of your school?

- We have outreach materials in different languages. We'll have sheltered English immersion and individualized support. We're working to recruit bilingual staff.
- We'll listen to parents and celebrate their heritage. We want to be an unusually welcoming place.
- We will have parent leadership groups for the school. We want to encourage their participation. We'll make it a requirement that teachers call parents once a week. With parent outreach, you can build trust.

2. How will the MATCH Corps function at the new school?

- MATCH Corps members' priority is to tutor students in groups of 5 to 6 students. They tutor six periods out of the day. In the afternoon, they do some teacher assisting or enrichment with students.
- We provide MATCH Corps with trainings at the beginning of the school year. Every two weeks on Wednesdays, they get a full day of professional development.
- We realize there are a lot of recent college graduates who want to serve, but don't want to make a long term commitment to teaching or to a classroom of 20 kids at a time. We also look at what other opportunities are out there for them.
- Tutors want specific pairing and accountability for a couple of kids. They would focus on literacy and also on math in the early years.

3. Please describe your proposed behavior management system and how it reflects your philosophy regarding student behavior and discipline.

- We will have intensive trainings in the first couple of weeks of school around school rules, discipline, how to raise your hand, how to file to class, etc. (routinizing the children). In the beginning, it will be all hands on deck.

a. How will the proposed school modify discipline policies for lower and upper grades?

- The level system is age appropriate.
- Every adult in the building is your teacher. Every adult is expected to manifest expectations for the students anywhere you see them.

- Great opportunity with young students to socialize them to the expectations in the MATCH Community Day environment.

Special Student Populations and Services

1. How do you propose to recruit and hire classroom teachers and specialists that are ESL certified?

- With our existing school, we have a deputy director who has been networking and outreaching around the country to identify people interested in charter school. It is challenging to find people who are perfect fit. Some teachers will be highly skilled with low-income populations, and we will get them ESL certified or send them to ESL trainings.
- Right now, half of our teachers come from our teaching residency program. We plan for this residency to supply other charter schools in Massachusetts.
- We have proposed a school where we need just five teachers during the first year so this is not an impossible challenge.

2. Please explain the role and responsibilities of the language (ELL) specialist.

- The language specialist would supervise all the assessments for the students. Would be responsible for ELD folders - documentation related to ELL's. Advise teachers on appropriate adaptations of the curriculum and instruction for different students depending upon their language needs. Would work closely with MATCH Corps director to design the curriculum for tutors.

Capacity

1. Does the MATCH board of trustees anticipate the need or desire to recruit other additional board members?

- The board intends to stay at 10 -12 members and then to develop sub-committees as needed.

2. What are the qualifications you are looking for in the principal positions? What process did you follow to select Kate Carpenter Bernier as a principal?

- We were looking for one principal for MATCH/Community Day school preK-5. We recruited candidates from within and got recommendation from the board about hiring. We looked for someone with sheltered English immersion experience.
- Whenever we do dissemination work around the country, it's an opportunity for us to develop a network of people who might be interested in joining MATCH.
- We hired Kate to be the project manager for this whole application process, and it gave us a chance to get to know each other.

Governance and Management

1. How often do you currently meet as a board?

- Formally, we meet 6 to 8 times a year; informally, we meet more. Subcommittee meetings are throughout the year.
- We have a retreat once a year and lots of subcommittee work.

2. Please describe in a little more detail the functions of the central office staff.

- The controller has been at MATCH for four years. He came on board full time three years ago. The business office has 4 FTE's. If this application is approved, we'll get another staff accountant. As controller, my most critical role is to support the work of the new school.
- There are 7 or 8 FTE's which comprised the central office supporting the middle and high school. We are already structured as a central office supporting several units. Shared costs will be allocated among the entities.

3. Please tell us more about the Chief Academic Officer position (that you propose to hire in 2015) at the network level.

- The Chief Academic Officer will provide instructional oversight. This person will have been a charter school principal – leading, coaching, and unifying teachers. We will be careful to also give the right amount of discretion to the individual principals.
- This position would probably be in lieu of the 2 executive deputy directors.

4. Have you identified any key administrators beyond Kate Carpenter Bernier for the proposed school or network?

- We have candidates for the MATCH Corps Director and Operations Director. We're in the process of talking to people.

Budget

1. What is the financial condition of the MATCH Foundation?(reserved a sum of \$200,000 to support the start-up phases of the school as needed)

- The Foundation has been in operation before the school start up and has been able to save some money for the expansion and for paying off debts.

2. Does line item 47 (Salaries – Other Student Services) represent the PT nurse (\$11,250)?

a. Health services = 0

- \$11,250 is for the nurse.
- Health services are probably rolled up under miscellaneous services.

3. Please describe what is being included in the miscellaneous costs found on line items 29, 44, and 53?

- Line 29 – a placeholder based on \$40/pupil.
- Line 44 is a percentage of our budget.

- Administrative lines include contingency reserves.

Facilities

- This morning, we signed an option for a facility in Roxbury on Shirley St. for approximately 153 kids hoping to get the charter. If not, we were willing to lose the deposit.