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| **Final application REVIEW 2017-2018** | |
| **Proposed School Name (Commonwealth):** | Equity Lab Charter School |
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| **Grades Served At Full Capacity:** | 5-12 |
| **Number of Students At Full Capacity:** | 640 |
| **Proposed School Location:** | Lynn |
| **Proposed Opening Year:** | 2018-2019 |
| **Mission Statement:**  Equity Lab Charter School partners with families and communities to provide powerful learning experiences that unleash students’ natural potential for creativity, innovation, collaboration and social responsibility. Through integrated and project-based curricula anchored in authentic experiences of social entrepreneurship, students develop the academic and social emotional competencies to complete higher education, thrive in evolving economies, and seize opportunities to be change agents in their communities. Serving as an incubator for educational and social innovation, Equity Lab works to scale equity in schools and communities.  **Proposed Growth Plan for First Five Years of Operation:**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **School Year** | **Grade Levels** | **Total Student Enrollment** | | First Year | 5, 6 | 160 | | Second Year | 5, 6, 7 | 240 | | Third Year | 5, 6, 7, 8 | 320 | | Fourth Year | 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 | 400 | | Fifth Year | 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 | 480 |   The Department has compiled a summary of the evidence identified through the review of the charter application, the responses provided by the applicant group during the subsequent interview, and the testimony and comment provided at the public hearing and during the public comment period. The summary below describes the evidence identified that addresses the application criteria and identifies the areas of the application criteria where limited evidence was provided during the application process.  **Public Comment:**  The application received testimony and written comment **in support** during the public hearing and public comment process. At the public hearing, eight individuals spoke in support of the proposed school, including parents, community members, Massachusetts Charter Public School Association Executive Director Tim Nicolette, and one member of the applicant group. The Department received written comment in support from 15 individuals, including a student, two parents, seven community members, four members of the applicant group, and Center for Artistry and Scholarship Executive Director Linda Nathan.  **Public Comment (cont.):**  The application received testimony and written comment **in opposition** during the public hearing and public comment process. At the public hearing, approximately 20 individuals spoke in opposition to the proposed school and/or to the expansion of KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School, including: State Senator (now Lynn Mayor) Thomas M. McGee, State Representatives Daniel Cahill and Brendan P. Crighton, Lynn City Council President Darren Cyr, Lynn City Councilor-at-Large Brian LaPierre, Lynn School Committee members Brian Castellanos, Donna Coppola, John Ford, Lorraine Gately, Jared Nicholson, and Michael Satterwhite, Lynn Public Schools Superintendent Catherine Latham, teachers, Lynn Teachers Union President Sheila O’Neil and Vice President Colleen McElligott-Liporto, parents, and community members. Written comment in opposition includes a Lynn City Council resolution opposing further charter school expansion in Lynn, a written statement by Lynn Public Schools Superintendent Catherine Latham, and letters from four individuals, including Lynn Teachers Union President Sheila O’Neil, American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts Director of Educational Policy and Programs Dan Murphy, a teacher, and a parent.  In addition, the application contained 10 letters of support from organizations and higher education institutions that propose to collaborate or support the proposed charter school. The following organizations submitted letters proposing future collaborations: Building Bridges Through Music, Healthy Streets, Straight Ahead Ministries, Entrepreneurship for ALL Lynn, The Food Project – North Shore, Lynn Shore Rest Home, Cairn Hill Educational Collaborative, Pathways Adult Education and Training Inc., North Shore Community College, and Center for Community Schools at Salem State University. Seven additional letters of support or grant awards are referenced within the evidence summary, see sections Capacity and Governance (III.A. and III.B.) and Facilities, Student Transportation and Finances (III.D. and III.E.) | |

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| **Mission (I.A.) and Key Design Elements (I.B.)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Identified Evidence** | **Limited Evidence** | | * The mission describes the value of the school as an institution that fosters both academic achievement and civic engagement. The mission communicates the applicant group's belief that families and community partners have an essential role to play in students' schooling. (I.A.) * The program described in the application is reflected in and is generally consistent with the mission. (I.A.) * The application briefly describes the applicant group's educational philosophy aligned with the mission. The school seeks to achieve equity through helping each individual realize their potential. The school proposes to help individuals realize their potential by providing access to a relevant and challenging curriculum in an inclusive and collaborative educational setting. The application briefly describes four core values which are also listed in the mission: creativity, innovation, collaboration, and social responsibility. (I.B.) * The application identifies the school's five key design elements as: project-based learning, community-based learning, inclusive learning, social emotional learning, and creative learning. While these approaches are used at many schools, the plan to orient the entire curriculum around year-long community-based projects makes the school unique and distinct from other public school options. (I.B.) * The school’s key design elements are generally aligned with the mission, even though they are not specifically identified in the mission. The key design elements are generally reflected throughout the application. (I.B.) * The school intends to partner with Big Picture Learning, a school support organization. The application states that Big Picture Learning was chosen because of its “rich history of developing and sustaining innovative, rigorous, and high performing schools,” and because it is a “leading pioneer of real-world learning, personalized learning, and project-based learning, and its educational model has a track record of dramatically raising the achievement levels of diverse youths in under-resourced communities.” These characteristics are relevant to the proposed school’s mission and key design elements. (I.B.) | * The application lists five key academic and nonacademic goals that are generally consistent with the stated mission, key design elements, and educational philosophy of the school; however, the list of goals does not appear to incorporate all aspects of the school's "vision for educational equity and student outcomes (college readiness, economic viability, and student agency for social change).” Further, goals lack sufficient specificity, and it is unclear whether the assessment measures described will allow the school to adequately measure progress over time. (I.B.) | |

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| **Description of the Community to Be Served and Enrollment and Recruitment (I.C. and I.D.)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Identified Evidence** | **Limited Evidence** | | * The application states that Lynn was selected as the location for the school because of applicant group members' ties to the Lynn community. At least five members of the applicant group, including two board members, the proposed chief executive officer, and two other proposed school employees currently live in Lynn or were raised in Lynn. Other proposed board members operate programs serving the Lynn community. (I.C.) * The application states that the founding group has been working since 2012 to identify priorities of Lynn parents, and that it has connected with over 1,400 families at over 40 information sessions. The application states that a Commonwealth charter is necessary because parents with whom the applicant group has interacted are looking for a schooling option that is better aligned with their educational priorities, and the proposed program was designed with those priorities in mind. The application includes a chart that lists priorities identified by families at information sessions and shows how elements of the school’s mission and key design elements are aligned with those parental priorities. (I.C.) * The application describes the student population that the proposed charter school would serve, based on characteristics of families who attended information sessions. The application states that about two-thirds of families were Latino and about a third were Cambodian. The applicant group anticipates that the school would serve English learners (ELs) and students with disabilities in numbers comparable to those served by the Lynn district. The applicant group anticipates that more than half of students will be the first generation in their family to attend college. (I.C.) * During the interview, the applicant group reported that they have received 173 applications and that there are an additional 112 families who have expressed intent to apply if the school is chartered. (I.C.) * Consistent with the school’s emphasis on community engagement, the school plans to provide families and community partners with multiple opportunities to support the success of the school. The application lists ten community organizations that have been recruited to support the school's program in a variety of ways, and states that there are 22 additional organizations that intend to lend their support once the school has been chartered. (I.C.) * The application lists a variety of strategies to be used to publicize and market the school's program to a broad cross-section of prospective students. Big Picture Learning will assist the school in its marketing efforts. Marketing strategies described in the application include events at the school and at community organizations as well advertising and outreach through broadcast, print, and electronic media. (I.C.) * The application articulates intent to establish a “Lynn compact” organization like those in Boston and Lawrence as a way to collaborate with other public and private schools in Lynn. (I.C.) * The proposed program will open serving 160 students in grades 5-6 (80 students per grade) and will expand by one grade per year until it serves 640 students in grades 5-12 when fully enrolled, in Year 7. The applicant group also submitted an alternate growth plan to allow flexibility, should an expansion request submitted by KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School be granted. The alternate growth plan differs only in the number of students per grade cohort: 72 rather than 80. (I.D.) * The proposed enrollment policy states that new students will be allowed to enroll at all grade levels, exceeding statutory requirements for backfilling, and enabling the school to maintain level numbers of enrolled students across the grade span. (I.D.) | * No primary concerns noted. | |

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| **Overview of Program Delivery and Curriculum and Instruction (II.A. and II.B.)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Identified Evidence** | **Limited Evidence** | | * The application describes in detail five teaching practices that will be used at the school (project-based learning, community-based learning, inclusive learning, social-emotional learning, and creative learning) and explains how these practices address the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners. The application includes research citations supporting the use of each of the five teaching practices. (II.A) * The application states that school will be in session 185 days, with a mandatory daily schedule that starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 5:00 p.m. which exceeds minimum student learning time requirements. (II.A) * The application includes a sample weekly schedule for grades 5-8 and for grades 9-12. For students at all levels, the day is organized into a 30-minute morning circle time, a 60-minute intervention period (referred to in the application as Accelerated Learning Lab), six 60-minute instruction periods, and a 60-minute lunch. Students in grades 9-12 will spend one day a week in internships and/or college classes. (II.A.) * The application states that during the pre-operational period a Big Picture Learning school design coach, proposed staff members, and proposed board members will work with a team of school practitioners and professional developers on project-based learning modules for grades 5 and 6. During the interview, the applicant group stated that they will map the curriculum and assessments to Massachusetts Curriculum Framework (MCF) standards. (II.B.) * According to the application, the annual school schedule for teachers includes times set aside for developing curricular materials for the following year. The process will be supported by Big Picture Learning staff members. The principal is ultimately responsible for curriculum development. (II.B.) * The application describes a number of instructional approaches that will be used to deliver the project-based and community-based curriculum model. These include: universal design for learning, sheltered content instruction, reading and writing workshop, teacher as coach and facilitator, students as agents of their own learning, a studio environment, arts integration, movement integration, and a co-teaching protocol. The school also plans to provide targeted academic and social-emotional interventions. (II.B.) * The application indicates that general education teachers, special education teachers, and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers have the same 90 minutes at the end of each day for planning and professional development. Special education and ESL teachers have an additional two hours each week. Arts and movement teachers have 60 minutes at the beginning of each day for planning and professional development. (II.B.) * The application includes a table with professional development topics to be addressed during the summer preceding the opening of the school and during the first school year. Topics are aligned to the school's key design elements and include topics regarding the needs of English learners and students with disabilities. (II.B.) * Professional development is to be informed by analysis of student data, aligned with annual instructional priorities, and provided through Big Picture Learning and school-based coaching during the school year and during two intensive summer trainings. (II.B.) * The principal will implement the teacher evaluation system, which includes teachers identifying learning goals at the beginning of the school year, teachers compiling a portfolio of evidence throughout the year, and four formal observations by the principal. During the interview, the proposed principal said that he plans to be in classrooms on a daily basis and will provide supports to teachers based on their individual needs. (II.B.) | * The application states that for both the middle school grades (5-8) and high school grades (9-12), student cohort groups and their teachers will advance together for four years, but does not acknowledge the challenges inherent to this unique proposal, such as finding high school science teachers with content expertise across a four year grade span. (II.A., II.B.) * The curriculum map and sample curriculum module included in the application specify a sequence in which Massachusetts state standards are to be addressed, but it is unclear from the description of the learning experiences included in the sample module how all of the standards listed are meaningfully addressed (II.B.) * The application states that the project-based curriculum will be supplemented by other materials "to ensure students are experiencing the breadth and depth of the standards" but does not include a description of a process for identifying which standards will and will not be met by the project-based curriculum, for developing supplemental materials, or for integrating the use of those materials into the program. (II.B.) * The application states that the School Leadership Team (consisting of staff, students, parents, and community members) will review student performance data at a monthly meeting and that the school CEO and the board will review data on a quarterly basis; however, the application does not further describe a process for evaluating whether the curriculum is effective and successfully implemented. (II.B.) * The application does not include a clear plan for implementing the community-based learning components of the proposed program. These components include student expeditions to community sites, quarterly community learning forums, a mentoring and tutoring program, internships, and an early college or dual enrollment program. During the interview, the applicant group described plans to develop and expand the community-based learning components over time under the oversight of the proposed community learning director with support from Big Picture Learning, and said that teachers and students will be involved in initiating and cultivating connections with community organizations. (II.B.) | |

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| **Student Performance, Assessment, and Program Evaluation (II.C.)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Identified Evidence** | **Limited Evidence** | | * Student progress will be monitored primarily through assessment of project portfolios, Achievement Network (ANet) English language arts and mathematics assessments, and state tests. ANet and Big Picture Learning will support the school's system for gathering and analyzing student performance data. (II.C.) * The school’s approach to homework for the middle school grades is primarily about engaging families in students’ learning. At the high school level, the approach is to develop students’ abilities to work independently at the sorts of tasks they will need to be able to complete on their own in college. (II.C.) | * The application includes grade-level promotion standards and graduation standards. These are aligned with assessment of student competencies in creativity, innovation, collaboration, and social responsibility, which are the school’s four core educational values. However, the connection between an individual competency and the category into which it is put is unclear in many instances. Although the application states that grade-level competencies are aligned with academic content standards, evidence of that alignment is not provided. (II.C.) * The application does not explain what happens for students who do not meet the school’s promotion and graduation standards of achieving the equivalent of a B in every class and on their overall project portfolio. During the interview, the applicant group expressed confidence that with a proactive approach to monitoring student performance and providing support, it would be unusual for a student to not meet the standards for promotion. (II.C.) * The application includes limited evidence of a plan to assess student learning in the high school internship and early college components of the program. According to the application, the school will "seek feedback from internship sites and colleges/universities about student performance.” (II.C.) * The application includes limited details regarding the Project Learning Plan (PLP), which is the primary student assessment tool to be used at the school and the centerpiece of the student assessment system. It is unclear what exactly will be included in the PLP and how data from the PLP will be used to support student learning and to measure the progress of individual students and the school as a whole. During the interview, the applicant group reported they are still developing aspects of the PLP with the support of Big Picture Learning. Big Picture Learning is also supporting the applicant group in identifying an online platform for managing PLP data. (II.C.) * The application describes the process for reviewing data as happening at three levels: among staff, among members of the school leadership team, and at the board level, and states that the CEO and school principals are responsible for overseeing the process. However, the application includes few details about how the process would actually work at any of the levels or in an integrated way. (II.C.) | |

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| **Supports for Diverse Learners (II.D.)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Identified Evidence** | **Limited Evidence** | | * The application describes an English development (ELD) program and support services to be offered, including the number of hours of English as a second language (ESL) instruction to be provided to English learners (ELs) at different levels, a description of the ESL curriculum, and a description of strategies to be used to support ELs in content-area classes. Services for ELs will be delivered in general education settings and during Accelerated Learning Lab periods (II.D.) * The school plans to hire an equity director to oversee ELD programming and special education programming. The school will hire one ESL teacher and one special education teacher for each grade level. (II.D.) * The application states that all content-area teaching staff members will be required to have the sheltered English immersion (SEI) endorsement. (II.D.) * The application states that students potentially in need of ESL services will be identified and assessed by the equity director and ESL teacher (one per grade level), using the Home Language Survey and the WIDA ACCESS placement test. (II.D.) * The application states that the ELD program will be evaluated by the equity director, ESL teachers, morning circle advisors with ELs, and the principal on an annual basis using the Department’s program evaluation rubric. The school will set annual objectives for the program and measure success in relation to those objectives. (II.D.) * The application includes a description of support services to be offered for students with disabilities. Universal Design for Learning is described as informing the school’s approach. The school will offer instruction in inclusive settings, with classes co-taught by special education teachers. Services will also be delivered during Accelerated Learning Lab periods. (II.D.) * Student identification and assessment will be conducted by the equity director based on input from a Learning Intervention Study Team consisting of the student's advisor, a special education teacher, the student support director, and an ESL teacher as appropriate. (II.D.) * Individualized education programs (IEPs) will be developed by the equity director and grade-level special education teacher, with input from the student and the student’s family. (II.D.) * The application states that the special education program will be evaluated on an ongoing basis by the equity director and principal and will incorporate a wide range of student performance data, observation data, and survey data. (II.D.) | * The application does not include a clear explanation of how the four cohorts of students at each grade level will be organized so that the one ESL teacher and one special education teacher for each grade level will be able to deliver all of the services outlined in the application. During the interview, applicant group members indicated the commitment to increase staffing if levels of need or enrollment differs from projections and indicated how students will be organized is an ongoing discussion within the applicant group. (II.D.) | |

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| **Culture and Family Engagement (II.E.)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Identified Evidence** | **Limited Evidence** | | * The application describes how the school will build a school culture consistent with the school’s mission. Elements are drawn from Big Picture Learning: democratic governance, focus on relationships and communication, proactive behavior system, social entrepreneurial mindset, and relentless reflection and excellence. (II.E.) * The application describes a plan to orient staff, students, and families to the school culture, including a two-week focus at the beginning of the school year on school-wide expectations and building community. (II.E.) * The application describes plans to address students’ physical, social, emotional, and health needs by providing daily physical exercise, access to counseling services, access to a school nurse, and healthy snacks and meals for all students. (II.E.) * The application describes a restorative justice approach to student discipline, including restorative circles and mediation. During the interview, the proposed student support director stated that he plans to work with teachers one on one to support them in implementing this approach effectively. (II.E.) * The school plans to involve parents in a variety of ways as partners in the education of their children, including having each child’s advisor serve as a primary point of contact with parents, providing opportunities for parents to serve as tutors and/or mentors, involving parents in regular conferences regarding student progress, and involving parents in school oversight through the school leadership team (SLT). The SLT is a stakeholder group that will meet monthly to review and discuss school performance. (II.E.) * The applicant group has partnered with a non-profit organization in Lynn to provide adult education services such as English to speakers of other languages classes and career and vocational training. (II.E.) * The application lists ten community partnerships and explains how each will support various aspects of the school's program (project-based learning, community-based learning, creative learning, etc.). The application includes letters of support from all ten organizations. Each letter of support includes details about how the partnership will benefit the school, and these details are consistent with what is described in the application. (II.E.) | * The application does not include a plan for how the proposed one-hour lunch will accomplish the stated goal of fostering community and developing students' social and emotional development. (II.E.) | |

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| **Capacity and Governance (III.A. and III.B.)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Identified Evidence** | **Limited Evidence** | | * The application summarizes the experience and qualifications of each of 14 proposed board members. Included are members with skills and experience in K-12 education, charter schools, program planning, management, community engagement, facilities, finance, and law. Several members have strong ties to the Lynn community. (III.A.) * The application names six individuals as proposed school employees. Of the six, two are also proposed board members (Frank DeVito, the proposed CEO, and Alexander Zapata, the proposed finance and operations director). The proposed CEO, Frank DeVito, first started working on the project in 2012 and was appointed CEO based on his professional experience as a teacher and school leader. Frank has over 20 years of experience in the field of education, with eight of those years as a teacher and headmaster in Chelsea Public Schools (1991-1999). The proposed principal, George Papayanis, has over ten years of experience as a high school science teacher and served as a principal intern in 2015-2016. The proposed student support director, Andre Bennett, has worked in the private sector for four years as an applied behavioral analysis therapist. The proposed finance and operations director, Alexander Zapata, has eight years experience in retail and commercial banking. The proposed equity director, Nancy Kelly, a licensed special educator and administrator from New York. The proposed community learning director, Nahiomy Alvarez, grew up in Lynn and has experience in communications, educational programming, and community partnership building. (III.A.) * The application indicates that the applicant group received input on their school design from participants at the NewSchools Summit (May, 2017), a NewSchools Community of Practice Session (June, 2017), and contracted professional developers and school practitioners (June and July, 2017). (III.A.) * The application explains that that board is responsible for hiring the CEO, who will report to the board. (III.B.) * The application describes the representation of stakeholder groups on the board of trustees. The proposed board of trustees would include the CEO, a parent, a teacher, a student, and a community partner as voting members. According to the application and the draft bylaws, the board shall consist of 7-25 individuals. (III.B.) * The proposed board of trustees would consist of six officers, including board chair, associate chair, treasurer, associate treasurer, secretary, and associate secretary. The application and draft bylaws both include a brief description of each board position. The application also states that the board will have seven committees to support effective oversight: education, development, finance, facilities, governance, strategy, and community engagement. (III.B.) * The application provides examples of the proposed board's future actions in governing the proposed school that reflect an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a charter school board of trustees. (III.B.) * The application describes processes related to the board’s oversight of the school, including setting priorities and goals; monitoring progress towards priorities and goals; supporting, monitoring, and evaluating the school leader; developing the annual budget; monitoring the school’s finances; and conducting long-term financial and strategic planning. Board committees will lead this work. (III.B.) * The application describes processes intended to foster effective communication between all stakeholders and transparent decision-making. These include publishing a calendar of board meetings at the beginning of each school year and following communication protocols during board meetings. (III.B.) * The application describes a proposed process and procedures for handling inquiries and complaints made to the board. (III.B.) * The application describes a proposed annual process the board will use to evaluate its own performance. The process will incorporate the use of a rubric developed by the NewSchools Venture Fund network that references practices of high performing charter schools. (III.B.) * The application describes how the board will develop policies and make decisions in ways that ensure that all stakeholders’ views are taken into account. (III.B.) * The application describes how the governance committee of the board will recruit and select board members based on a set of criteria that takes into account diversity and expertise, and assumes commitment to the school’s mission. (III.B.) * The application includes a succession plan for board officers. (III.B.) * The school intends to partner with Big Picture Learning. Big Picture Learning will provide assistance in the areas of program and curriculum design; parent, business, and community engagement programs; staff selection; principal training/coaching; and staff training/coaching. (III.B.) * The application indicates that the school will have programmatic relationships with the following organizations in addition to Big Picture Learning: The Achievement Network (ANet) (academic assessments), Program in Education, Afterschool, and Resiliency (PEAR) (holistic student assessments), Central Source (finance and technology), and HR Knowledge (human resources), and includes a letter of commitment from each. (III.B.) | * No primary concerns noted. | |

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| **Management (III.C.)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Identified Evidence** | **Limited Evidence** | | * The application includes a school organizational chart for year one of operation and at full student enrollment that encompasses all employees of the proposed school and the board of trustees. The CEO reports to the board, and in year one will oversee the middle school principal, the finance and operations director, and the equity director. At full capacity, the CEO will also oversee a higher education director, a communications and development director, and a high school principal. The principals will oversee school staff. The application includes a narrative that explains the reporting structures. (III.C.) * The application describes the role and primary responsibilities of the school leader, the other members of the executive leadership team, student support directors, and community learning directors. (III.C.) * The application describes how the school will make key organizational decisions about curriculum and instruction, student achievement, professional development, culture, staffing, fiscal planning, and operations. (III.C.) * The applicant group includes a proposed CEO, middle school principal, student support director, equity director, community learning director, and finance and operations director (as noted in the *Capacity* section). The application briefly describes the process and criteria used to select proposed staff members and highlights how their professional background supports their capacity to serve in their assigned roles. (III.C.) * The application briefly describes the process to be used to evaluate the principals. The process will be based upon the Department’s educator evaluation system. (III.C.) * The application describes plans to recruit candidates to fill leadership roles. The school plans to use the network of Big Picture Learning schools as a source of potential leaders which was confirmed by the school support organization during the interview. (III.C.) * The application describes the plan for staff recruitment, advancement, and retention. The school plans to use an apprentice teacher program to recruit and train teachers, especially teachers from the Lynn community. The school anticipates that future principals and other school leaders will come from the teaching staff. (III.C.) * The application describes the qualifications and attributes of ideal teaching candidates. These include: reflecting the diversity of the student population, experience in project-based learning, strong content knowledge, passion for urban education and social justice, and commitment to collaboration. (III.C.) * The application includes a staffing chart and narrative staffing plan for each year of the proposed charter school within the five-year term of the charter. The plan appears generally viable and adequate for the effective implementation of the proposed educational program. The chart and plan are generally consistent with the submitted budget, the organizational chart, student enrollment planning, and staffing levels described in other sections of the application. (III.C.) | * No primary concerns noted. | |

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| **Facilities, Student Transportation and Finances (III.D. and III.E.)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Identified Evidence** | **Limited Evidence** | | * The application states that the applicant group has been researching potential sites since 2012 with the assistance of local commercial realtors and lists five criteria to be used in selecting a facility: near the downtown area, near potential community partners, financially feasible, inspiring to students, and of adequate size. During the interview, the applicant group reported that there are multiple properties available and described one in particular that they are likely to pursue. (III.D.) * The school plans to use the Lynn Public Schools transportation system. (III.D.) * The application states that the budget was developed by Central Source, a company specializing in charter school finance, and was reviewed and approved by the board. (III.E.) * The application states that the CEO, the finance and operations director, and the finance committee of the board will oversee the school’s finances, with the finance and operations director exercising day to day oversight of the school’s finances. The school will also continue to contract with Central Source for support in the area of finance. (III.E.) * The board’s finance committee will review monthly financial reports prepared by the finance and operations director and will report at each meeting of the full board. (III.E.) * The application describes three contingency strategies for ensuring positive cash flow: fundraising, eliminating certain administrative positions, and drawing on a revolving line of credit. During the interview, the applicant group indicated that the line of credit would only be used to address short-term cash flow issues. (III.E.) * The application summarizes financial forecasts from the school’s start-up phase through its fifth year of operation and defines and gives reasonable support for most assumptions behind projections. (III.E.) * The application includes a cash flow projection for the first year of operation and a multi-year budget from the school's start-up phase through its fifth year of operation. The budget and cash flow projections are generally realistic and generally reflect the expenses related to commitments proposed in the application. (III.E.) * The application contained three commitment letters regarding current grants awarded to the applicant group and/or prospective grants for the applicant group’s use if chartered. The Barr Foundation awarded the applicant group approximately $100,000 in May 2017 to support the applicant group during the current charter application process. If chartered, the applicant group is eligible for additional multi-year school launch and implementation grants from the Barr Foundation. The NewSchools Venture Fund awarded the applicant group approximately $215,000 in February 2017 to facilitate planning activities and committed to an additional multi-year award of between $850-950,000 if chartered. Walton Family Foundation has also committed to award the proposed school a multi-year grant of between $600-800,000 if the school is granted a charter. * The application states that the proposed school is eligible to receive a grant from the NewSchools Venture Fund in the amount of $200,000 annually, a grant from the Walton Foundation of $100,000 annually, and additional funding from the Barr Foundation and the Center for Artistry and Scholarship. The application includes letters of support from the NewSchools Venture Fund, the Walton Family Foundation, and the Barr Foundation detailing the amounts and conditions of the awards. | * No primary concerns noted. | |