



CHICAGO**PREP**
CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Chicago Preparatory Charter Middle School

A proposed Chicago Public Schools Charter School

Tier I Application

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DOMAIN 1: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

SECTION 1.1: COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The applicant has sought to understand the characteristics, background, and history of the students, families, and communities it would serve if approved to open.

- *Identified possible location(s) for the proposed school(s)*
- *Identified communit(ies) where the school intends to focus recruitment efforts and/or the neighborhoods from which the applicant anticipates most students will enroll*
- *An accurate description of the demographics of the proposed school's community and targeted student population*
- *A comprehensive but concise demographic and historical overview of the targeted communit(ies), which includes key events from at least the last few decades and the major political, economic, educational, demographic, and/or community-specific trends that are important to understand when seeking to serve the community*

1.1.1: TARGETED COMMUNIT(IES)

Chicago Preparatory Charter Middle School (“Chicago Prep”) proposes to open a 5-8 college-preparatory middle school for the students of Chicago. Our proposed school model has been developed, revised, and refined through extensive community engagement and is informed by the rigorous study of some top-performing schools nationwide. Our school is rooted in the firm belief that all children – no matter their zip code, race, ethnicity, previous achievement, disability status, or language background – can achieve academic success and positively impact their communities. Chicago Prep commits to unlocking the potential of our middle school scholars through a supportive, academically rigorous school thoughtfully designed to meet their needs and engage their hearts and minds. Chicago Prep is proposed to open in Bronzeville in the fall of 2021 at one of the following locations:

- The former Young Women’s Leadership Academy (closed in 2019), 2641 South Calumet Avenue
- St. Ambrose School, 1012 East 47th Street

Aligned with our goal to become an anchor in the Bronzeville community, Bronzeville will be our primary student recruitment area. Although different sources offer varying boundaries for this historic region, there is some agreement that Bronzeville stretches from 26th Street south to 51st Street and east from the Dan Ryan Expressway to Cottage Grove Avenue. The area we refer to as “Bronzeville” includes Douglas and Grand Boulevard as defined by the CPS School Locator Map. We plan to focus 80% of our recruitment efforts within Bronzeville as defined by these boundaries and the remaining 20% within Bronzeville’s neighboring communities and zip codes as described below.

We will recruit from the entire 60616 zip code, which includes the northern part of Bronzeville as well as parts of South Loop, Bridgeport, Chinatown, and Pilsen. We will recruit from the entire 60653 zip code, which includes the central part of Bronzeville as well as Oakland and parts of Kenwood. Finally, we will recruit from 60615, which includes the southern part of Bronzeville as well as parts of Hyde Park, Kenwood, and Washington Park. By including the communities neighboring Bronzeville, we strengthen our capacity to meet our enrollment targets and increase the likelihood of our student body including more racial and economic diversity, which has been shown to positively impact academic, social, and emotional outcomes for students.¹

¹ Wells, Amy Stuart, Lauren Fox and Diana Cordova-Cobo. “How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students.” The Century Foundation, February 9, 2016. <https://tcf.org/content/report/how-racially-diverse-schools-and-classrooms-can-benefit-all-students/?session=1>.

1.1.2: COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

Bronzeville is a historic Black neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago. Beginning around 1916, hundreds of thousands of African Americans migrated from the American South to Chicago as part of the Great Migration, which lasted until about 1960. Southern Blacks were seeking better lives in the north, including improved economic opportunities and relief from racial discrimination and violence. Although there were indeed better opportunities than in the South, racist housing policies and continued job discrimination greatly confined African Americans' options for where to live and work. They were forced to settle in the area now known as Bronzeville.²

Gathered together in Bronzeville and limited in their ability to travel outside the area, African Americans began developing a robust hub of commerce, arts, culture, and entertainment. Bronzeville was known as the "Black Belt" or the "Black Metropolis" during the early part of the twentieth century and is sometimes still referred to as the Black Metropolis today.³ Many talented and influential people lived in Bronzeville and indelibly left their mark on Black history and American history. Some key Black leaders in Bronzeville included Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, who founded the first interracial hospital and performed the first open-heart surgery; entrepreneur Jesse Binga, who founded the first privately owned Black bank; lawyer Robert Abbott, founder of the *Chicago Defender*; journalist and activist Ida B. Wells; and Jackie Ormes, the first Black woman cartoonist with comic strips published in major national newspapers. The Bronzeville community created a thriving economy and rich culture, particularly well-known for its lively restaurants and jazz and blues clubs. Bronzeville's culture is said to have rivaled that of the Harlem Renaissance and indeed gained widespread recognition in 1986 as the Chicago Black Renaissance.⁴

Since its heyday in the early twentieth century, Bronzeville has also been a highly engaged community socially and politically. Churches, in particular, were then and remain today key social institutions that connect and support families and residents. Local activists have continuously advocated for the rights and quality of life of Black people both locally and nationally. In the 1930s, James Gentry, with support from the *Chicago Defender*, initiated a contest to elect the "Mayor of Bronzeville." Though the position was unofficial, it was highly revered in Bronzeville. The leader was popularly elected to represent the community's interests through engagement with powerful stakeholders city-wide. First held by former Pullman Porter and owner of the famous Palm Tavern James Knight, the role has been held by a variety of influential and admired citizens, including today the owner of Gallery Guichard, Andre Guichard.⁵ Bronzeville was also the longtime home of Chicago's first Black Mayor, Harold Washington, a leader beloved by many in underrepresented communities for his ongoing advocacy of their needs and interests.⁶

The beginning of World War II marked the start of significant decline for the Bronzeville community, impacted by both the Great Depression and the ongoing segregationist policies of the government. In 1941, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) constructed the Ida B. Wells public housing projects, which

² "History of Bronzeville." Illinois Institute of Technology: Community Affairs and Outreach Programs. Accessed September 4, 2019. <https://web.iit.edu/community-affairs/history-bronzeville>; "Bronzeville." The City of Neighborhoods, January 8, 2018.

<http://www.thecityofneighborhoodsproject.com/blog/2017/12/31/bronzeville>.

³ "Bronzeville: The Black Metropolis." WTTW, accessed September 4, 2019. <https://interactive.wttw.com/dusable-to-obama/bronzeville>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "Bronzeville." *Encyclopedia of Chicago*, accessed September 4, 2019. <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/171.html>; "History of Bronzeville." Domu. <https://www.domu.com/chicago/neighborhoods/bronzeville/history-in-bronzeville?page=1>.

⁶ Camponovo, Daniel. "Remembering Harold Washington." Columbia College Chicago. November 27, 2017. <https://www.colum.edu/news-and-events/articles/2017/remembering-harold-washington#.XqJZPchKg2w>.

provided some of the best apartments Black residents were allowed access to at the time.⁷ In Bronzeville, most of the buildings were white-owned and poorly maintained, yet landlords still significantly overcharged. Thus, many Black families were excited about the opportunity to live in Wells' fully functioning units with multiple bedrooms, private bathrooms, and running water. Unfortunately, the Wells housing community deteriorated rapidly due to CHA neglect and a takeover by Chicago gangs who fought for control through drug trade and violence. As soon as the law allowed, Black residents who had the means began moving to other neighborhoods and suburbs, leaving almost exclusively low-income residents in Wells and in Bronzeville in general, and contributing to overcrowding in the housing projects. Constructed after Wells, Stateway Gardens and Robert Taylor Homes followed similar trajectories. The projects of Bronzeville remained plagued by neglect and disrepair, gang control, poverty, drug use, and violence throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1990s and early 2000s, CHA decided to demolish the city's public housing projects. Although the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development took over the CHA in 1995, CHA regained control with a deal that included the Plan for Transformation, with the devastated projects in Bronzeville to be replaced by mixed-income housing. However, with slow or nonexistent construction, many residents were displaced from public housing with no viable alternative.

Since the late 1990s, there have been significant efforts to revitalize the Bronzeville community and economy and preserve the beautiful Black history and culture. Local leaders working to preserve the community's cultural and historical legacy include the South Side Community Art Center, Sherry Williams of the Bronzeville Historical Society, Harold Lucas of the Black Metropolis Convention & Tourism Council, and Paula Robinson of the Bronzeville Community Development Partnership. Among other initiatives, these leaders are seeking formal recognition from the National Park Service of the Bronzeville-Black Metropolis National Heritage Area.⁸ Lifelong Bronzeville resident and centenarian, Timuel D. Black is a nationally renowned civil rights activist and historian who has fought for racial equality all his life. Today, he continues to advocate for the preservation of Bronzeville's history and culture. Bronzeville has seen the development of several affordable/mixed-income apartment complexes in recent years, including the Cornerstone Apartments, Oakwood Shores, and the 4400 Grove Apartments. Bronzeville is also home to many Black-owned local businesses, including Gallery Guichard, Parkway Ballroom, Bronzeville Boutique, Abundance Bakery, Ain't She Sweet Café, Peach's Café, and many more. In addition to the local businesses in Bronzeville, many nonprofit organizations in the region are working to continue making the community a better place to live, work, and start or grow a business. One example is the region's Quad Communities Development Corporation (QCDC), an organization focused on south lakefront communities' economic development, education initiatives and outcomes, and employment opportunities; the South East Chicago Commission (SECC) and the 51st Street Business Association have similar goals. Bright Star Community Outreach (BSCO) is a hugely influential nonprofit in Bronzeville that builds connections across stakeholders and offers programs in youth advocacy, trauma responsiveness, parent engagement, and workforce development. Other key nonprofits include Centers for New Horizons, the Chicago Urban League, the South Side Community Art Center, The Renaissance Collaborative, and the Timothy Community Corporation. Bronzeville is also home to the Bee, Hall, and King branches of the Chicago Public Library as well as Taylor Park, Ellis Park, and Mandrake Park of the Chicago Park District. Community newspapers in Bronzeville include *South Side Weekly*, *dnainfo.com*, and *Bronzeville Life*. Collectively, Bronzeville's businesses, nonprofits, and key institutions provide a wide array of supports and services for community residents.

⁷ Olkon, Sara. "Left behind by plan for progress." *Chicago Tribune*, August 11, 2008. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2008-08-11-0808100304-story.html>.

⁸ Tucker, Dorothy. "A Tale of Two Black Communities: New York City's Harlem and Chicago's Bronzeville." CBS Chicago, October 12, 2019. <https://chicago.cbslocal.com/2019/10/12/new-york-citys-harlem-and-chicagos-bronzeville/>.

Roughly coinciding with Bronzeville's redevelopment since the late 1990s, Bronzeville has experienced challenges in education. As the community's public housing came down and families moved, many neighborhood schools lost enrollment and faced subsequent budget cuts. Since 1999, 16 schools in Greater Bronzeville have been either closed or turned around, due in part to declining enrollment, the loss of resources, and academic underperformance. Many families and students are eager to see more quality, open-enrollment schools in the neighborhood that reflect their needs and interests and prioritize enrolling students in the community.⁹ Today, the Greater Bronzeville Community Action Council (GBCAC) is an influential community organization focused on improving educational opportunities and outcomes.

Among the diverse key stakeholders in Bronzeville, community members are excited about the opportunities associated with economic development and concerned about the risks of gentrification as the community becomes increasingly middle-class. Many leaders advocate for a local approach to development, helping residents, small businesses and neighborhood organizations lead efforts rather than bringing in large external development companies.

The population of Bronzeville has declined dramatically since the region's heyday in 1950. At that time, Bronzeville was home to approximately 75,000. Today, Bronzeville is home to approximately 29,313.¹⁰ However, that population decline came to a halt in 2010 and in some pockets notably reversed. For example, the Douglas community in the northern part of Bronzeville has grown by 14% since 2010, and the Oakland neighborhood on the eastern/central border of Bronzeville has increased by 12%.¹¹ Most of Bronzeville's employment opportunities are in public, nonprofit, and institutional sectors. The region has an underrepresentation of private sector jobs, which made up just 36% of the region's 20,790 total jobs as of 2010. As of 2011, the top three employers in Bronzeville were Chicago Public Schools with 1,150 jobs, the Chicago Police Department with 551 jobs, and Centers for New Horizons with 250 jobs. Rounding out the top ten employers were Walgreens, William Dawson Nursing Center, Community Care Center, Regents Park LLC, U.S. Postal Service, Avenue Care Center, and Keller Williams Realty. Among the approximately 7,500 service sector jobs in Bronzeville in 2010, about two-thirds represent service industries: healthcare, retail, educational services, accommodation and food services, and real estate.¹²

Demographics of Proposed School Community: Bronzeville The Bronzeville community has a population of 29,313, including 5,298 school-aged children (age 5-19). Of the school-aged children, 1,618 are aged 5-9 and therefore would be eligible for enrollment in Chicago Prep between 2021 and 2024. The median household income is \$38,500. The most represented levels of educational attainment for residents aged 25 and older are high school degree (22.7%) and some college (27.2%). The unemployment rate among the 25- to 64-year old residents is 11.6%, with 46.7% employed and 41.7% classified as other.¹³ The racial composition of Bronzeville residents is outlined below in Figure 1.1.

⁹ Ahmed-Ullah, Noreen S. "Greater Bronzeville buffeted by school closings." *Chicago Tribune*. January 9, 2012. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2012-01-09-ct-met--bronzeville2-20120109-story.html>. Ewing, Eve. "What led Chicago to shutter dozens of black schools? Racism." *The Guardian*. December 6, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/dec/06/chicago-public-schools-closures-racism-ghosts-in-the-schoolyard-extract>.

¹⁰ "Overview of Bronzeville, Chicago, Illinois." Statistical Atlas, updated September 14, 2018. <https://statisticalatlas.com/neighborhood/Illinois/Chicago/Bronzeville/Overview>.

¹¹ Zotti, Ed. "Chicago's south lakefront is reviving, though the price has been high." *Chicago Sun-Times*, October 18, 2019. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/crossroads/2019/10/18/20917470/south-side-chicago-lakefront-bronzeville-kenwood-hyde-park-grand-boulevard-ed-zotti-city-crossroads>.

¹² Bronzeville Retail Corridor Land Use Plan: Existing Conditions Report: DRAFT. Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, July 2012. <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/59620/Bronzeville%20ECR-%20Draft%20Report.pdf/540cf8bd-3668-449d-86fe-c149bb508e6c>, 43-46.

¹³ "Overview of Bronzeville, Chicago, Illinois." Statistical Atlas, updated September 14, 2018. <https://statisticalatlas.com/neighborhood/Illinois/Chicago/Bronzeville/Overview>.

Figure 1.1: Racial Composition of Bronzeville Residents¹⁴

Race or Ethnicity	Percent of Bronzeville Residents
Asian	2.4%
Black or African American	88.6%
Hispanic	2.1%
White	6.3%
Mixed	1.8%
Other	0.7%

Demographics of Target Recruitment Area: 60616. The northern part of Bronzeville includes a section of zip code 60616. This zip code also includes parts of several other neighborhoods that we plan to recruit from: Bridgeport, Chinatown, Pilsen, and South Loop. The 60616 zip code has a population of 52,580, including 7,624 school-aged children (age 5-19). Of the school-aged children, 2,236 are aged 5-9 and therefore would be eligible for enrollment in Chicago Prep between 2021 and 2024. The median household income is \$42,800. The most represented levels of educational attainment for residents aged 25 and older are high school (21.9%) and bachelor’s degree (21.5%). The unemployment rate among the 25- to 64-year old residents is 5.6%, with 57.8% employed and 36.5% classified as other.¹⁵ The racial composition of 60616 residents is outlined below in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2: Racial Composition of Zip Code 60616¹⁶

Race or Ethnicity	Percent of 60616 Residents
Asian	40.7%
Black or African American	25.5%
Hispanic	9.0%
White	22.9%
Mixed	1.8%
Other	0.2%

Demographics of Target Recruitment Area: 60653. The center of Bronzeville is located in zip code 60653; this zip code also includes Oakland and parts of Kenwood. The 60653 zip code has a population of 31,045, including 6,572 school-aged children. Of the school-aged children, 2,180 are aged 5-9 and therefore would be eligible for enrollment in Chicago Prep between 2021 and 2024. The median household income is \$26,200. The most represented levels of educational attainment for residents aged 25 and older are some college (26.8%) and high school (22.2%). The unemployment rate among the 25- to 64-year old residents is 13.3%, with 48.5% employed and 38.2% classified as other.¹⁷ The racial composition of 60653 residents is outlined below in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3 Racial Composition of Zip Code 60653¹⁸

Race or Ethnicity	Percent of 6053 Residents
Asian	1.2%
Black or African American	91.1%

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ “Overview of ZIP Code 60616, Illinois.” Statistical Atlas, updated September 14, 2018. <https://statisticalatlas.com/zip/60616/Overview>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ “Overview of ZIP Code 60616, Illinois.” Statistical Atlas, updated September 14, 2018. <https://statisticalatlas.com/zip/60616/Overview>.

¹⁸ “Race and Ethnicity in ZIP Code 60653, Illinois.” Statistical Atlas, updated September 14, 2018. <https://statisticalatlas.com/zip/60653/Race-and-Ethnicity>.

Hispanic	1.5%
White	4.2%
Mixed	1.5%
Other	0.5%

Demographics of Target Recruitment Area: 60615. The southern part of Bronzeville is located in zip code 60615; this zip code also includes parts of Hyde Park, Kenwood, and Washington Park. The 60615 zip code has a population of 40,257, including 6,126 school-aged children. Of the school-aged children, 1,810 are aged 5-9 and therefore would be eligible for enrollment in Chicago Prep between 2021 and 2024. The median household income is \$40,600. The most represented levels of educational attainment for residents aged 25 and older are graduate or professional degree (33.1%) and bachelor’s degree (23.4%). The unemployment rate among the 25- to 64-year old residents is 6.9%, with 55% employed and 38.2% classified as other.¹⁹ The racial composition of zip code 60615 residents is outlined below in Figure 1.4.

Figure 1.4: Racial Composition of Zip Code 60615²⁰

Race or Ethnicity	Percent of 6015 Residents
Asian	8.2%
Black or African American	57.9%
Hispanic	5.1%
White	25.5%
Mixed	2.6%
Other	0.7%

Overview of Public Schools in Bronzeville. There are currently 29 public elementary schools and 16 public high schools in the Bronzeville/South Lakefront region, as identified by Chicago Public Schools’ Annual Regional Analysis. Included in those schools are ten Bronzeville-boundary elementary schools and nine Bronzeville-boundary high schools.²¹ Figures 1.5 and 1.6 provide an overview of these schools’ governance and type, grades served, enrollment, demographics, and population of diverse learners and students with limited English proficiency. All data is from the 2018-2019 school year.

Figure 1.5: Public Elementary Schools in Bronzeville²²

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	2018-19 Enrollment	% Low Income ²³ / Homeless ²⁴	Demographics	% Diverse Learners	% Limited English
John B. Drake Elementary School	CPS district, open enrollment	K-8	288	96.2%/13.2%	Asian: 0.7%; Black: 94.8%; Hispanic: 3.8%; White: 0.3%; Other: 0.3%	18.4%	2.1%
John J. Pershing Elementary Humanities Magnet	CPS magnet with boundary	PK, K-8	578	80.4%/2.8%	Asian: 1.2%; Black: 94.8%; Hispanic: 2.1%; White: 0.7%; Other: 1.2%	10.2%	3.1%
James R. Doolittle Jr. Elementary School	CPS district, open enrollment	PK, K-8	228	94.7%/11.5%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 99.6%; Hispanic: 0.4%; White: 0.0%; Other: 0.0%	11.0%	1.3%

¹⁹ “Overview of ZIP Code 60615, Illinois.” Statistical Atlas, updated September 14, 2018. <https://statisticalatlas.com/zip/60615/Overview>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Bronzeville boundaries as defined in Section 1.1.1.

²² 2018-19 Annual Regional Analysis: Bronzeville/South Lakefront Region. Chicago Public Schools, 2019.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b212dce5417fcd9ddec5349/t/5c9283128165f51d36550f64/1553105686059/13-ARA_BronzevilleSouthLakefront_1819.pdf; “Search Schools.” Chicago Public Schools, accessed September 5, 2019.

<https://schoolinfo.cps.edu/schoolprofile/FindaSchool.aspx>

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid

²⁴ “Find Your School.” Illinois Report Card 2018-2019. Illinois State Board of Education, 2019. <https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/>.

Ida B. Wells Preparatory Elementary School	CPS district magnet cluster	PK, K-8	395	83.3%/1.4%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 92.9%; Hispanic: 4.1%; White: 0.5%; Other: 2.5%	10.4%	0%
Bronzeville Classical	CPS district, selective enrollment (admissions test required)	K-3	201	15.4%/Data not available	Asian: 12.9%; Black: 69.7%; Hispanic: 4.5%; White: 6.5%; Other: 6.5%	4.0%	2.5%
University of Chicago – Donoghue	Charter	PK, K-5	517	80.3%/3.5%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 96.3%; Hispanic: 1.5%; White: 0.0%; Other: 2.1%	8.3%	3.9%
Melville W. Fuller Elementary School	CPS district, open enrollment	PK, K-8	360	95.6%/14.4%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 98.9%; Hispanic: 0.3%; White: 0.6%; Other: 0.3%	13.1%	0.6%
Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School	CPS district, open enrollment	PK, K-8	299	89.3%/3.5%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 97.3%; Hispanic: 2.0%; White: 0.0%; Other: 0.7%	20.4%	0.7%
Irvin C. Mollison Elementary School	CPS district, open enrollment	PK, K-8	295	98.3%/9.7%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 99.0%; Hispanic: 0.3%; White: 0.0%; Other: 0.7%	10.2%	0.7%
Ludwig Van Beethoven Elementary School	CPS district, open enrollment	PK, K-8	247	96.4%/24.5%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 98.0%; Hispanic: 0.8%; White: 1.2%; Other: 0.0%	15.8%	0.8%

Figure 1.6: Public High Schools in Bronzeville²⁵

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	2018-19 Enrollment	% Low Income	Demographics	% Diverse Learners	% Limited English
Dunbar Vocational High School	CPS district, open enrollment	9-12	347	99.4%/11.2%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 94.8%; Hispanic: 4.0%; White: 0.6%; Other: 0.6%	23.9%	2.0%
Youth Connection Charter School - McKinley	Charter	9-12	155	93.5%/30%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 98.1%; Hispanic: 1.3%; White: 0.6%; Other: 0.0%	29.7%	0.6%
Urban Prep Academy - Bronzeville Campus	Charter	9-12	286	83.9%/5.7%	Asian: 0.3%; Black: 98.3%; Hispanic: 0.3%; White: 0.3%; Other: 0.7%	27.6%	0%
Youth Connection Charter School - Youth Connection	Charter	9-12	125	92.8%/15.5%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 93.6%; Hispanic: 3.2%; White: 3.2%; Other: 0.0%	24.0%	0.8%
Perspectives - Math & Science High School	Charter	6-12	502	91.2%/11.9%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 98.6%; Hispanic: 1.2%; White: 0.0%; Other: 0.2%	19.5%	1.0%
Chicago Military High School	District, Service Leadership Academy, application reqs	9-12	302	86.8%/6.4%	Asian: 0.3%; Black: 62.9%; Hispanic: 34.1%; White: 1.3%; Other: 1.3%	7.9%	6.6%
Walter H. Dyett High School for the Arts	District, various arts programs and general education programs, no admissions requirements	9-12	607	87.8%/3.4%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 96.4%; Hispanic: 2.3%; White: 0.7%; Other: 0.7%	13.7%	0.5%
Daniel Hale Williams Prep School of Medicine	District, some application requirements/considerations	9-12	123	96.7%/10.7%	Asian: 0.0%; Black: 98.4%; Hispanic: 0.8%; White: 0.0%; Other: 0.8%	13.0%	0%
Bronzeville Scholastic Academy High School	District, IB with some admissions requirements	9-12	114	97.4%/7.4%	Asian: 0.9%; Black: 96.5%; Hispanic: 2.6%; White: 0.0%; Other: 0.0%	25.4%	1.8%

In addition to the public schools in the Bronzeville/South Lakefront region, there are seven private schools. Figure 1.7 provides an overview of the schools' location and grades served.

²⁵ Ibid.

Figure 1.7: Private Schools in Bronzeville

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Location
Hales Franciscan High School	Religious, Catholic	9-12	4930 S Cottage Grove Avenue
Holy Angels Catholic School	Religious, Catholic	Pre-K-8	750 East 40 th Street
McKinley Lakeside Leadership Academy	Alternative high school	Ages 16-21	2920 South Wabash Avenue

1.1.3: STUDENT POPULATION

Based on student population data from CPS overall, student population data specifically from Bronzeville/South Lakefront schools, and our plans to focus 20% of our recruitment efforts on the neighboring communities of South Loop, Pilsen, Bridgeport, Chinatown, Kenwood, Oakland, Hyde Park, and Washington Park, Chicago Prep anticipates the following data for our students:

Figure 1.8: Anticipated/Target Student Population for Chicago Prep

Racial Demographics	Percentage Low Income	Percentage Diverse Learners/Special Education	Percentage English learners	Percentage Homeless Students
Asian: 5% Black: 80% Hispanic: 7% White: 5% Other: 3%	80%	15%	3%	6%

Anticipated Needs. Academic: In **Section 1.3.2**, a table is included showing Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) NWEA and Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) data for schools specifically within the Bronzeville boundaries. Out of all 29 elementary schools in the Greater Bronzeville/South Lakefront region with NWEA MAP data available for the 2018-19 school year, 15 have school attainment percentiles below the 50th percentile for reading. Of the remaining 14, only two, Carnegie and Murray, are above the 75th percentile. Twenty-one of the 29 schools have school attainment percentiles below the 50th percentile for math. Of the remaining eight, the highest is the 63rd percentile (Murray). Out of 29 Bronzeville/South Lakefront region schools with Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) data available for the 2018-19 school year, only four schools have a proficiency rate for ELA above the CPS average of 27.9%, and 15 have less than 20% proficiency. For math, only three schools have a proficiency rate above the CPS average of 22.2%, and 11 have less than 10% proficiency. In ELA, 18 schools have proficiency rates lower than 10% for students with disabilities, and 10 of those schools have proficiency rates lower than 5%. In math, 23 schools have proficiency rates lower than 10% for students with disabilities, and 17 of those schools have proficiency rates lower than 5%.

Considering NWEA and IAR data, charted in detail in **Section 1.3.2**, we anticipate that the majority of our scholars will enter Chicago Prep below grade level – that is, without the academic skills and knowledge necessary to meet grade-level standards. We also know that some scholars will be on grade level, while others will be academically advanced. We therefore predict the need for significant differentiation in instruction to be able to meet the needs of all learners. The instructional team will need to plan proactive interventions and consistent scaffolding techniques when teaching grade-level content to ensure that all scholars can access and master grade level material. Similarly, to ensure that advanced students remain

academically challenged, the team must provide rigorous differentiation through, for example, advanced multi-step problems, above grade level texts, and independent extension projects.

Social and Emotional: We believe that all young people have complex and often significant social and emotional needs, and that it is part of our responsibility as a school to ensure these needs are met. As middle schoolers, we expect our students will need additional support navigating their evolving sense of identity and social belonging. Other than infancy, early to middle adolescence marks the period of humans’ most rapid and significant brain development. The intense growth and plasticity of the brain along with significant hormonal changes during puberty mean that our students will be more sensitive to social cues, more prone to risk-taking and emotional swings, and more vulnerable to such triggers as stress and social rejection.²⁶ In addition, because we anticipate 80% of our students will come from low-income families, we expect that our students may need more robust social and emotional supports because of the trauma that comes from poverty itself and the traumatic experiences often associated with poverty. Students who have grown up in poverty are more likely to have experienced long-term stress and therefore often struggle with both self-control and noncognitive, executive functioning skills. These skills are crucial for success in school.²⁷ These anticipated needs call for explicit instruction in social and emotional skills and concepts along with their integration throughout the school day. Additionally, they highlight the importance of providing a structured and supportive community for students that is grounded in strong relationships with peers and trusted adults.

Physical health: Much like social and emotional development, proper physical health is especially important during early adolescence. In particular, young adolescents need regular physical activity, adequate sleep, and proper nutrition in order to better handle stress and develop skills like decision-making and emotional management. In addition, based on our projected percentage of low-income students, we expect that most of our students will need to eat two healthy meals a day at school. Children who grow up in poverty are at a much higher risk of health problems compared to their higher-income peers. We therefore anticipate that our students may be more likely than average student populations to suffer from poor vision, hearing problems, dental problems, poor nutrition, and asthma.²⁸

SECTION 1.2: FACILITIES

The proposed facility option(s) reflect identified space requirements and are viable and available in the proposed opening timeline.

- *Identified space requirements that adequately address the programmatic and operational needs of the school, including any proposed growth (Tier 1)*
- *An explanation of how the proposed facilities reflect the identified space requirements (as evidenced by an adequate number of classrooms, specialized spaces, and administrative spaces) and are viable and available in the proposed opening timeline (Tier 2)*
- *A facilities plan that includes a cost estimate for each location, evidence of interest from each facility’s owner(s), and clearly articulates a plan for completing necessary renovations, including:*
 - *Construction estimates and timelines,*

²⁶ Immordino-Yang, Mary Helen, Linda Darling-Hammond, and Christina Krone. “The Brain Basis for Integrated Social, Emotional, and Academic Development: How Emotions and Social Relationships Drive Learning.” The Aspen Institute: National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, 2018.

²⁷ Tough, Paul. *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012. 16-20.

²⁸ “Poverty and Child Health in the United States.” *Pediatrics: Office Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics* 137 no. 4 (April 2016). <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/137/4>; Rothstein, Richard. “A look at the health-related causes of low student achievement.” *Economic Policy Institute*, March 1, 2011. https://www.epi.org/publication/a_look_at_the_health-related_causes_of_low_student_achievement/.

- potential funding sources, and
- plans to achieve ADA compliance (Tier 2)
- A plan to appropriately address any risks associated with the proposed sites (Tier 2)
- A clear timeline for securing one of two viable and available independent facilities, or one fully secured facility, that will feasibly permit school use in time for the school’s opening (Tier 2)
- If the proposed site(s) will not accommodate the projected space needs throughout the entire five-year period of the contract: A reasonable facility plan to meet space needs thereafter, including a discussion of risks and contingency plans (Tier 2)

1.2.1: SPACE REQUIREMENTS

Facilities experts who have worked with other high-performing charter schools implementing a slow-growth model recommend that a school site allow for approximately 80 square feet per student.²⁹ Given this number, Chicago Prep will need a school site of 9,600 square feet in Year 1 to accommodate our 120 students, to grow in correlation with our enrollment as indicated in Figure 1.9.

Figure 1.9: Square Footage Requirements for School Site

Year of Operation	Number of Students	Square Feet Requirements Assuming 80 Square Feet Per Student
Year 1	120	9,600
Year 2	180	14,400
Year 3+, at capacity	240	19,200

Within the total square footage, we have determined both our ideal requirements to successfully implement the school model (Figure 1.10) as well as our minimum requirements (Figure 1.11). Having both sets of requirements will help to guide our decision-making when weighing the pros and cons of possible sites for Chicago Prep.

Figure 1.10: Year 1 Ideal Requirements

Space	Function and Details
6 general education classrooms	One classroom for each core content teacher: 5 th math, 5 th ELA, 6 th math, 6 th ELA, 5 th /6 th science, 5 th /6 th social studies.
1 special education classroom	Space for the special education teachers to deliver pull out services.
1 gymnasium	Space for the physical education teacher to hold class, allowing scholars plenty of room to play sports and exercise.
1 multipurpose room	Space for students to eat breakfast and lunch, weekly whole-school assemblies and other multi-classroom and/or family events, including talent shows, trimester awards ceremonies, and art showcases.
1 conference room	Space for group meetings to take place, including IEP meetings, student-teacher-parent meetings, and Chicago Prep team meetings.
1 teacher work room	Houses one large printer/copy machine and provides space for teachers to work and plan.
1 custodial/maintenance room	Storage for all custodial supplies.
1 student restroom for boys	Student restroom
1 student restroom for girls	Student restroom
2 staff restrooms	Staff restroom

²⁹ As part of the BES Fellowship, Lead Founder Mary Griffin received facilities training from the team at BES, which has opened over 175 charter schools in 21 states, as well as charter school facilities expert Bob Baldwin, Managing Principal of Qroe Preservation Development.

1 office for Head of School	Space for Head of School to work and meet with staff, students, and families.
1 office for Assistant Head of School	Space for Assistant Head of School to work and meet with staff, students, and families.
1 front office space	Space for welcoming students, families, visitors; main entry to the school. Space where the Manager of Operations works and meets with staff, students, and families.

Figure 1.11: Year 1 Minimum Requirements

Space	Function and Details
4 general education classrooms	One classroom per cohort of students; each classroom to serve as the home base for one math or ELA teacher: 5 th math, 5 th ELA, 6 th math, 6 th ELA. Social studies classes will take place in ELA classrooms; science classes will take place in math classrooms.
1 special education classroom	Space for the special education teachers to deliver pull out services.
1 multipurpose room	Space that could fulfill a variety of needs if necessary, including space for breakfast and lunch each day; space for physical education class; and space for weekly whole-school assemblies and multi-class and/or family events.
1 teacher work room	Houses one large printer/copy machine and provides space for teachers to work and collaboratively plan.
1 custodial/maintenance room	Storage for all custodial supplies.
1 student restroom for boys	Student restroom
1 student restroom for girls	Student restroom
2 staff restrooms	Staff restroom
1 front office space	Space for welcoming students, families, visitors; main entry to the school, space for administration to work.

In Year 1, the key differences between the ideal space and minimum space are the elimination of two classrooms; the elimination of a conference room; the elimination of both administrative offices; and the combining of the gymnasium, multipurpose room, and cafeteria into one multipurpose room. Although six classrooms are preferred to give each core content teacher a sense of ownership over space, four classrooms would also suffice with only four classes of students. If necessary, we could also do without a conference room and hold meetings in other available spaces, including the multipurpose room. Similarly, it would be ideal for each member of the leadership team to have his or her own designated workspace but shared front office space would also be sufficient. Finally, our minimum requirements include just one multipurpose room because none of the key functions – breakfast, assembly, lunch, physical education class, and whole-school and/or family events – will take place at the same time during the school day/week. The only exception is on Fridays, when different classes have lunch and physical education at the same time, but in those instances, physical education could take place outdoors or in a classroom. In Year 2 and Year 3, the average square footage requirement increases to reflect our increasing number of students through Year 3 when we reach full enrollment. The other main difference between the minimum requirements and the ideal requirements in each of the first three years is the number of general education classrooms, as indicated in Figure 1.12 below.

Figure 1.12: Ideal vs. Minimum General Education Classrooms Years 1-3+

Year	Ideal Classrooms	Minimum Classrooms
1	6 classrooms (one for each core content teacher: 5 th math, 5 th ELA, 6 th math, 6 th ELA, 5 th /6 th science, 5 th /6 th social studies).	4 classrooms (one for each math and ELA teacher: 5 th math, 5 th ELA, 6 th math, 6 th ELA. Social studies teaches in ELA classrooms, Science teaches in math classrooms).

2	9 classrooms (one for each core content teacher: 5 th math, 5 th ELA, 6 th math, 6 th ELA, 5 th /6 th science, 5 th /6 th social studies, 7 th math, 7 th ELA, 7 th social studies and science).	6 classrooms (one for each math and ELA teacher: 5 th math, 5 th ELA, 6 th math, 6 th ELA, 7 th math, 7 th ELA. Social studies teaches in ELA classrooms, science teaches in math classrooms).
3+	12 classrooms (one for each core content teacher: 5 th math, 5 th ELA, 6 th math, 6 th ELA, 5 th /6 th science, 5 th /6 th social studies, 7 th math, 7 th ELA, 8 th math, 8 th ELA, 7 th /8 th science, 7 th /8 th social studies).	8 classrooms (one for each math and ELA teacher: 5 th math, 5 th ELA, 6 th math, 6 th ELA, 7 th math, 7 th ELA, 8 th math, 8 th ELA. Social studies teaches in ELA classrooms, science teaches in math classrooms).

In each year, our preference is for each core content teacher to have his or her own classroom. This layout benefits the teachers, who would have the autonomy to organize their space and to maintain all student papers and instructional materials in one centralized location. This layout also benefits the students, who will be better prepared for high school by transitioning occasionally and navigating more spaces. However, if necessary, we can fulfill the mission of Chicago Prep without the benefit of one classroom per teacher. The other differences between our ideal requirements (Figure 1.13) and our minimum requirements (Figure 1.14) can be seen in the tables below, which reflect Year 1-3 growth, when Chicago Prep will be operating at full capacity with 5th-8th grade.

Figure 1.13: Ideal Space Requirements By Year

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Overall sq ft (100 sq ft/student)	12,000	18,000	24,000
Number of students	120	180	240
Grades served	5-6	5-7	5-8
Gen Ed. classrooms	6	9	12
Sp. Ed. classrooms	1	2	2
Gymnasium	1	1	1
Multipurpose room	1	1	1
Conference room	1	1	1
Cafeteria	1	1	1
Teacher work room	1	1	1
Custodial room	1	1	1
Student restrooms – boys	1	1	2
Student restrooms – girls	1	1	2
Staff restrooms	2	3	4
Administrative offices	2	2	3
Front office space	1	1	1

Figure 1.14: Minimum Space Requirements By Year

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 and beyond
Average square feet (80 square feet per student)	9,600	14,400	19,200
Number of students	120	180	240
Grades served	5-6	5-7	5-8
Gen Ed. Classrooms	4	6	8
Sp. Ed. classrooms	1	2	2
Gymnasium	0	0	0
Multipurpose room	1	1	1

Conference room	0	0	0
Cafeteria	0	0	0
Teacher work room	1	1	1
Custodial room	1	1	1
Student restrooms – boys	1	1	1
Student restrooms – girls	1	1	1
Staff restrooms	2	2	3
Administrative offices	0	0	1
Front office space	1	1	1

SECTION 1.3: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The proposal presents a compelling rationale for community need for the proposed school, and how the school will effectively serve the target population.

- Members of the design team/board members with strong existing ties to the community
- Applicant conducted a needs assessment and has demonstrated need with data (community data, Annual Regional Analysis, etc.)
- A salient explanation of the top three challenges to the success of the specific students in the community that the proposed school intends to serve, and a plan to address those challenges aligned to the mission and vision of the school.
- Evidence that the design team participated in various meetings, events, and/or volunteer opportunities to become more familiar with the target community.
- A discussion of what community members identify as the existing assets and needs of the targeted community(ies) and how the proposed school would build on these assets and help meet identified needs
- Evidence that the design team involved the community in developing an educational vision for the proposed school or, alternatively, adapting the existing model to meet the unique needs of the community
- A strong rationale for why the proposed school is a good fit for the community

1.3.1: LEARNING ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Chicago Prep believes deeply in the power and importance of community voice, as highlighted in our key design element **family and community partnerships**. We believe in the proverb that it takes a village to raise a child; we know that for Chicago Prep to achieve lasting success and fulfill its mission, we will rely on the collective strength of the community. In order to do so, we must build a deep understanding of its strengths, challenges, needs, and desires, and we must collaborate meaningfully with all stakeholders – businesses, organizations, parents and families, churches, community leaders and residents, and other institutions – to support and uplift our students.

The Chicago Prep design team is comprised primarily of our Lead Founder, Ms. Mary Griffin, and our Founding Board of Directors. The design team’s work has been heavily influenced by key advisors and community stakeholders, all of whom have provided sound guidance on the design of Chicago Prep. Well before the mission and vision of Chicago Prep had been clearly articulated, the design team sought to learn more about the history, culture, demographics, economy, strengths, and challenges of the Bronzeville community. Our team undertook extensive research of the history of the Bronzeville

community, including print sources from the Illinois Institute of Technology,³⁰ WTTW,³¹ the City of Neighborhoods Project,³² the Encyclopedia of Chicago,³³ *South Side Weekly* newspaper, *Sacred Ground: The Chicago Streets of Timuel Black*,³⁴ and *Along the Streets of Bronzeville: Black Chicago's Literary Landscape*.³⁵ We took tours of the Bronzeville neighborhood, including one with the Convention & Tourism Council (BMC&TC).³⁶ Founder Harold Lucas gave our Lead Founder a personal tour of the Bronzeville region, beginning in South Loop at Buddy Guy's Legends given the historical significance of the blues in the region, as Mr. Lucas explained. Mr. Lucas has lived in Bronzeville and been an advocate of the community all his life, and his extensive knowledge from lived experiences, personal connections, and professional work provided our Lead Founder with a deep understanding of the community.

The design team has also frequented local businesses over the past nine months to gain a better understanding of the community. These include Sip & Savor Coffee, Ain't She Sweet Café, Shawn Michelle's, Yassa African Restaurant, Some Like it Black, and Boxville. Ms. Griffin became a member of the Bronzeville Incubator, a coworking space located at 5061 S Prairie Avenue, to enable her to spend even more time working in the community and meet local residents. The design team also held a Founding Board meeting at Bronzeville's Pearl's Place Restaurant on Monday, March 2, 2020. Due to the unfortunate circumstances of COVID-19, our in-person monthly board meetings at local restaurants have been cancelled. However, our team has met during the month of March and April virtually and will continue to do so until it is safe to resume in-person meetings. Several members of the design team have close ties to Bronzeville.

Ms. Mercedes Bender grew up in the Bronzeville community, living in a family-owned building that her great-grandmother purchased, her mother and her siblings grew up in, and her family still owns today. Ms. Bender's mother worked as a Chicago Public Schools teacher for her entire career. As a child, Ms. Bender attended Beasley Academic Center and before that the John Farren School, often referred to as "Little Beasley" by community members, and later graduated from Whitney Young High School. After spending a few years away from Chicago, Ms. Bender returned and recently closed on a home in Bronzeville. She is excited about living in the neighborhood she grew up in and furthering the efforts to strengthen and revitalize the community.

Mr. Ken Dickerson lives with his wife in Bronzeville, where he has been a resident since 1999. Mr. Dickerson was a business owner in Bronzeville from 2004 to 2017, when he owned the community's UPS Store at Lake Meadows Shopping Center, and he has strong ties with many other local business owners. In addition, he helped to start the Bronzeville Little League and served as a board member from 2015 to 2016. Since 2010, Mr. Dickerson has served on the Board of Directors for Bronzeville's Trinity Acres Retirement Community. Currently, he serves as Chairman of the Board. Mr. Dickerson is eager to leverage his broad community network to continue building awareness of and support for Chicago Prep.

Mr. Mitchell Newsome currently lives in Bronzeville with his fiancé and three children. As a lifelong resident of the community, Mr. Newsome has seen and taken part in Bronzeville's large-scale

³⁰ "History of Bronzeville." Illinois Institute of Technology: Community Affairs and Outreach Programs. Accessed September 4, 2019. <https://web.iit.edu/community-affairs/history-bronzeville>.

³¹ "Bronzeville: The Black Metropolis." WTTW, accessed September 4, 2019. <https://interactive.wttw.com/dusable-to-obama/bronzeville>.

³² "Bronzeville." The City of Neighborhoods. January 8, 2018. <http://www.thecityofneighborhoodsproject.com/blog/2017/12/31/bronzeville>

³³ "Bronzeville." *Encyclopedia of Chicago*, accessed September 4, 2019. <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/171.html>.

³⁴ Black, Timuel D., Jr. As told to Susan Klonsky, edited by Bart Schultz. *Sacred Ground: The Chicago Streets of Timuel Black*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2019.

³⁵ Schlabach, Elizabeth Schroeder. *Along the Streets of Bronzeville: Black Chicago's Literary Landscape*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013.

³⁶ "Tours." Black Metropolis Convention & Tourism Council, 2016. <https://bviconline.info/>.

transformation over the past 35 years. From 2007 to 2012, Mr. Newsome worked in Chicago’s real estate industry and was primarily focused on investment and rehabilitation of various properties in the Bronzeville area. Mr. Newsome recently purchased the property at the corner of 35th Street and Prairie Avenue and has plans to redevelop the property into a mixed-use development. The goal is to continue promoting growth within the community and bring much-needed businesses for local residents to access. Mr. Newsome is thrilled to be part of a team expanding educational opportunities in his community.

In addition to the methods of initial research and the connections we have through several design team members, the design team also sought to learn from community leaders, residents, parents, businesses, and key institutions by attending and organizing meetings, hosting events, tabling at community events, reaching out and advertising on social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Eventbrite), and distributing online and paper surveys. **Figure 1.15 provides** a list of some key stakeholders we have met with since September 2019. During each of the meetings, our goals were to learn from stakeholders about the strengths and needs of the Bronzeville community, to share our proposal for Chicago Prep, and to get feedback on what each individual would want to see incorporated in our school design.

Figure 1.15: Meetings Held with Community Stakeholders

Date	Stakeholder(s) and Role in the Community
9/9/19	Harold Lucas, President and CEO of Black Metropolis Convention & Tourism Council
9/11/19	Ed Garcia, Director of Finance at Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council
9/16/19	Allison Jack, Director of Charter Growth and Support at the Illinois Network of Charter Schools (INCS)
9/19/19	Maya Jones, Neighborhood Engagement Fellow at Build Bronzeville
9/20/19	Jonathan Swain, President and CEO of LINK Unlimited Scholars
10/8/20	Bill Gerstein, Senior Advisor at Leadership Greater Chicago, former Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Administrator and Principal
10/9/19	Bernard Loyd, Urban Juncture/Build Bronzeville Founder and President, Bronzeville resident/ parent
10/10/19	Shenita Johnson, Executive Director of the Illinois State Charter School Commission, and Tony Hardy, Director of the Chicago Association of Realtors
10/11/19	Tim Jones, Executive Director of Good News Partners
10/11/19	Jasna Jackson Omerovic, Financial Manager at University of Chicago and Bronzeville resident
10/11/19	Caitlin Closser, Senior Manager of Partner Engagement at United Way Metro Chicago
11/1/19	Natalie Butler, Dean of Teaching and Learning at People’s Music School, Bronzeville resident/parent
11/1/19	Greg Moses, Manager of Comm. and Office Solutions at LEAP Empowers, Bronzeville resident/parent
11/7/19	Kate Gannon, Youth Farm Manager at Chicago Botanic Garden
11/8/19	Teshera Hull, part of group to found Concerned Citizens of Bronzeville; mother of girls aged 6 and 9
11/12/19	Dr. Barrington Price, Vice President for Student Success and Engagement at Dominican University
11/12/19	Greg Richmond, former President and CEO of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and former Chief Officer of the New Schools Office at Chicago Public Schools (CPS)
11/13/19	Stacy Jackson, Executive Director of Chicago Lights
11/15/19	Albany Park Community Center (APCC) South and Chicago Youth Employment Program (CYEP): Cheetah Farrar, Melanyie Reid, Jazymyne Walker, Antoinette Peterson
11/15/19	Fanai Croff, Hyde Park resident and parent
11/18/19	Bradly Johnson, Director of Core Programs at BUILD Chicago
11/19/19	Patricia Abrams, Executive Director of The Renaissance Collaborative (TRC)
11/19/19	Terry Phipps, Librarian at Chicago Bee Branch
11/23/19	Yahanna Diemer, Manager of Field Care Management with Meridian; born and raised in Bronzeville; graduate of King College Prep; former community development leader at Centers for New Horizons
11/25/19	Kimberly Hagan, Branch Manager at Chicago Public Library: Hall Branch
11/25/19	Jill Bradley, COO of BUILD Chicago; longtime and Bronzeville resident

12/11/19	Diane Burnham, Executive Director of the South East Chicago Commission (SECC)
12/18/19	Raul Rodriguez, Program Director at the Boys and Girls Club (BGC) of Chicago: Valentine
2/3/20	Senabella Gill, The Bronzeville Diva
2/4/20	Stanley Wilkerson, Youth Development Director at South Side YMCA
2/18/20	Laura Murielo, Executive Director of the Wood Family Foundation and Pitch In Program
2/18/20	Dr. Regina Williams, Special Education Teacher and Consultant and Bronzeville resident
2/19/20	Nichole Carter and Carole Jones, Bright Star Community Outreach (BSCO)
3/3/20	Dr. Sokoni Karanja, Founder of Centers for New Horizons and 2016 Ma’at

Figure 1.16 includes a comprehensive list of the community meetings and events we have attended since September 2019.

Figure 1.16: Community Meetings and Events Attended

Date	Event/Meeting
9/7/20	Greater Bronzeville Community Action Council (GBCAC) Parent Breakfast
9/13/20	People’s Church of the G.H.E.T.T.O. (Greatest History Ever Told To Our People) – a performance, Blanc Gallery
9/19/20	Personal bus tour of Bronzeville from Harold Lucas, President and CEO of BMCTC
9/20/20	Bronzeville Art District 3 rd Friday Trolley Tour
9/21/20	Community Day at Overton Elementary School Building: Making Space Together
9/21/20	Social Architecture Walking Tour of Bronzeville, Bronzeville neighborhood (departed from Overton Elementary)
10/6/20	Volunteered at Bronzeville 5K, Lillian Armstrong Park
10/8/20	Attended Real Estate Round Table of Bronzeville at Luxe B Studio
10/10/20	Caucus for Change: Illinois for Educational Equity (ILEE) 2019 Issues Assembly
10/20/20	Open House at The Forum, 318-324 East 43 rd Street
10/21/20	Find Your Cause with Chicago Cares
10/22/20	OneGoal: An Evening with Paul Tough
11/17/20	A Conversation with Timuel Black and Susan Klonsky at Hyde Park Union Church
11/21/20	Program Focus RFP Community Outreach Event at South Shore International College Prep
11/22/20	ComEd Save and Share App Community All-Stars Pitch Pop-Up! At 5025 South State Street
12/3/20	ILEE Issue Action Team Meeting at Teach for America Office
12/12/20	SECC Young Professionals Advisory Council: Ugly Sweater Party
2/5/20	Greater Bronzeville Community Action Council (GBCAC) Executive Committee Session at Bright Star Church. Presented our proposal for Chicago Prep to the 12 individuals present for Executive Committee session, including Pastor Chris Harris.
2/6/20	Meet and Greet at Centers for New Horizons, Mandrake Park
2/6/20	School Funding Community Workshop at Dyett High School
2/8/20	STEAM Saturday at Bee Branch Library
2/8/20	Film Screening: <i>Shame of Chicago</i> and Discussion at IIT Tower Auditorium
2/17/20	Reparations Symposium at Black Ensemble Theater
2/18/20	Recovering the Lost South Side: Authors Lee Bey and Don Hayner at Chicago Public Library: Harold Washington Branch
2/19/20	Volunteered at HelloBaby, 600 East 61 st Street
2/19/20	4 th Ward Advisory Council Meeting – Douglas Community – Sixth Grace Presbyterian Church
2/20/20	The South Side Community Art Center Presents: Bronzeville through the Ages
2/26/20	A Conversation with Timuel D. Black, Junior at South Side Community Art Center
2/29/20	Timothy Community Corporation (TCC) Open House
3/3/20	The GAP Community Organization Meeting at Illinois College of Optometry

3/10/20	SIB's Breakfast Club's Cocktails and Conversations: Recycling the Black Dollar in the Black Community - Heard from nine local business owners at Norman's Bistro, 1041 East 43 rd Street
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Figure 1.17 includes a list of the events we have held and participated in as an organization.

Figure 1.17: Chicago Prep Events Held and Participated In

Date	Event and Location	Description
12/11/19	Information Session, Bee Branch Library, 3647 South State Street	Shared our school model with three community residents and got feedback via written surveys, conversations, and signatures of support.
12/14/19	Get in the Spirit! Holiday Market, Bronzeville Community Clubhouse, 3847 South Giles Avenue	Tabled; shared our school model with fifteen community residents and got feedback via written surveys, conversations, and signatures of support.
12/17/19	Information Session, Hall Branch Library, 4801 South Michigan Avenue	Shared our school model with two community residents and got feedback via written surveys, conversations, and signatures of support.
12/21/19	Soulful Chicago Holiday Book Fair, 1100 E 55 th Street	Tabled; shared our school model with more than twenty community residents and got feedback via written surveys, conversations, and signatures of support.
12/22/19	Tabling at Walmart Neighborhood Market, Walmart Neighborhood Market, 4720 South Cottage Grove Avenue	Tabled; shared our school model with more than twenty community residents and got feedback via written surveys, conversations, and signatures of support.
2/4/20	Information Session, Hall Branch Library, 4801 South Michigan Avenue	Shared our school model with four community residents and three students and got feedback via written surveys, conversations, and signatures of support.
2/23/20	Tabling at Walmart Neighborhood Market, 4720 South Cottage Grove Avenue	Tabled; shared our school model with more than twenty community residents and got feedback via written surveys, conversations, and signatures of support.
2/25/20	Information Session/Community Focus Group, King Branch Library, 3436 South King Drive	Shared our school model with four community residents and two students and got feedback via written surveys, conversations, and signatures of support.
2/29/20	Black History Fashion Meets Poetry/Music & Shop Black Business Showcase, South Side YMCA, 6330 South Stony Island Avenue	Tabled; shared our school model with more than sixty community residents and got feedback via written surveys, conversations, and signatures of support.
3/4/20	Information Session/Community Focus Group, Bee Branch Library, 3647 South State Street	Shared our school model with two community residents and got feedback via conversations.
3/7/20	11 th Annual Woodlawn Community Summit, University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration, 969 E 60 th Street	Tabled; shared our school model with more than thirty community residents and got feedback via written surveys, conversations, and signatures of support.

When the Chicago Prep design team began its extensive community outreach in September, our goal was to hear from community stakeholders, inclusive of our families. Our school vision has developed significantly with the input of the community. As we engaged with stakeholders in the early stages of the design process, we presented an outline of a college-prep middle school for Bronzeville that emphasized character and personal growth as well as academic rigor. Through more than 250 conversations with a wide variety of community stakeholders over the past eight months, our initial ideas have been

continuously revised and refined as we learned more about the strengths and needs of the Bronzeville community. In all engagement, we asked families and residents directly what they would like to see in a new middle school option in Bronzeville. We also invited people to share their feedback in a written survey and have collected over 60 surveys to date. In addition, the wide variety of community meetings, panels and presentations, and local networking events we have attended have allowed us to listen to community concerns, desires, and points of pride, both in education and more generally. It is through this engagement that our fundamental ideas for Chicago Prep developed into the robust vision that we have today. Several overarching trends we heard regarding what the community would like to see at Chicago Prep Middle School have become essential elements of our mission and vision:

1. Financial Literacy: We first learned about the community’s desire for a Financial Literacy component at the GBCAC Parent Breakfast in September 2019. Parents from every breakout group shared they wanted their children to have financial education earlier – that in many cases, financial literacy was relegated to one course in high school, if taught at all. When we began raising this as a possible focus of Chicago Prep in future community engagement conversations, it was consistently met with excitement. The idea to make **financial literacy** a key design element came directly from the Bronzeville community and from Chicago more broadly.

2. Exposure to Enrichment Opportunities: The idea of exposure to enrichment opportunities came up in more than 50 community conversations and surveys. Parents and residents discussed the importance of exposing students to a wide variety of role models and meaningful extracurricular activities. The activities residents wanted to see varied from visual arts, dance, and music to coding, technology and STEM, to sewing, cooking, and woodworking. This input led us to expand the scope of our Financial Literacy program to focus on **entrepreneurship** as well, creating a daily course called Money and Business in Action (MBA). Through this daily class, scholars will be exposure to a wide array of entrepreneurial opportunities, including in healthcare, business and finance, and environmental science. We also decided to prioritize not just traditional entrepreneurial education, but also education that exposes students to the breadth of activities mentioned to spark their creativity and motivation for the *kind* of small business or organization they might want to lead. Additionally, we have committed to partnering with community organizations to provide our students with additional enrichment opportunities through after-school programming. Possible partner organizations include Genius Lab, the Boys and Girls Club of Chicago (Valentine and Carter Club locations), Mandrake Park, Bright Star Community Outreach, and Chicago Youth Centers. One of the tasks in our Start-up Plan, attached in **Appendix 4.1**, is to meet with all possible community partners, decide on official partnerships, and develop a method for evaluating partnership effectiveness.

3. Parent Involvement: When we asked stakeholders what they believe makes an excellent school, parent involvement was one of the most frequent and universal responses. We knew that parent engagement was very important and that we would have at least two family events per month in addition to our robust parent communication plans. However, we also heard from stakeholders that gaps in parent engagement at schools are more often the result of inadequate planning or poor implementation than a lack of commitment. Therefore, we decided to form a Parent Advisory Council during our Planning Year. This group of parent leaders will be charged with leading parent engagement efforts. For example, they will work to plan events that families truly want to engage in, to schedule events on family-friendly timelines, and to encourage parent participation in all aspects of the school.

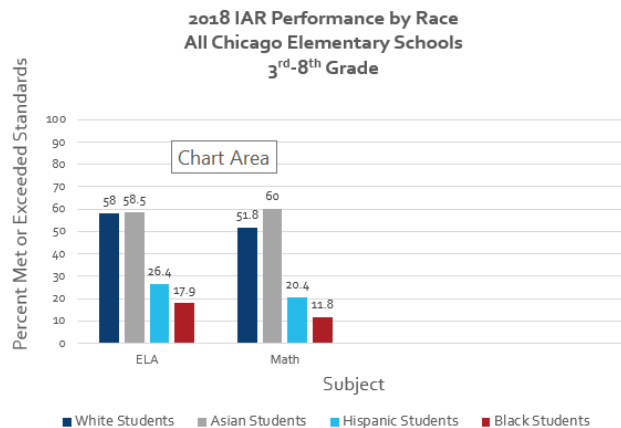
4. Social and Emotional Learning: Many community stakeholders spoke about issues such as social and emotional learning and supporting the whole child. Given the widely agreed upon importance of such services, we decided to implement daily Advisory for twenty minutes in the morning and ten minutes in the afternoon. This significant investment of time and resources will allow us to explicitly teach social and

emotional skills. These lessons can then be integrated throughout the school day and directly referenced when working with students on personal/behavioral growth. Additionally, it provides dedicated time for relationship-building among peers and teachers, which is crucial for creating a supportive environment.

1.3.2: COMMUNITY NEED

Academic Need. Chicago Public Schools has garnered much attention in recent years as a leader in education reform, frequently named as the fastest-improving large urban district in the nation and cited by some sources as the leader in student test score growth. Specifically, a 2017 study by Stanford University researchers found that Chicago students in grades 3 through 8 were learning faster than their counterparts in nearly every other district in the country. However, the study also found that Chicago students are still performing below the national average in both math and reading, and that the opportunity gap, though it has been narrowed, persists: white students on average are ahead of Black and Hispanic students by one grade level.³⁷ In 2018 (the most recent year for which aggregated data is available), only 27.9% of Chicago students met or exceeded expectations on the PARCC in ELA, and only 22.2% of students met or exceeded expectations on the PARCC in math. Among students from low-income families, 22.5% met or exceeded expectations in ELA and 17.1% did so for math. The data disaggregated by race tells a different story: while 58% of white students met or exceeded expectations for ELA, only 17.9% of Black students and 26.4% of Hispanic students met or exceeded expectations. Similarly, for math, 51.8% of white students met or exceeded expectations, while the figure was 11.8% for Black students and 20.4% for Hispanic students.³⁸ Additionally, among students with disabilities, 3.0% met or exceeded expectations for ELA and 3.2% for math.

Figure 1.18: 2018 Grade 3-8 IAR Performance by Race



With the broader educational landscape in Chicago in mind, the Chicago Prep design team has conducted an academic needs assessment of the Bronzeville community specifically. We draw on data as well as conversations with hundreds of community stakeholders, including residents, families, students, business owners, religious leaders, and nonprofit organizations. Based on this analysis, the top three things that present challenges to the success of students in the community are (1) lack of access to rigorous academics and aligned supports; (2) challenges associated with trauma and poverty; and (3) inadequate collaboration between schools and families.

³⁷ Sparks, Sarah D. "Chicago Schools Lead Country in Academic Growth, Study Finds." Education Week - Inside School Research, 10 Nov. 2017, blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2017/11/chicago_schools_lead_country_in_academic_growth.html.

³⁸ "School Data." Chicago Public Schools, 2018. cps.edu/SchoolData/Pages/SchoolData.aspx.

In the sections that follow, we discuss each challenge as well as how Chicago Prep proposes to proactively address those challenges.

Lack of Access to Rigorous Academics and Aligned Supports. Figure 1.19 presents student growth and achievement data from the Annual Regional Analysis (ARA), the Annual School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP), and the Illinois State Report Card. Data is included for the ten elementary schools in the Bronzeville boundaries as defined in **Section 1.1.1**.

Figure 1.19: Academic Achievement Data for Bronzeville Elementary Schools, 2018-19³⁹

School	Illinois Report Card Rating ⁴⁰	PARCC: ELA Met/ Exceeded Proficiency DL = Diverse Learners ⁴¹	PARCC: Math Met/ Exceeded Proficiency DL = Diverse Learners ⁴²	CPS SQRP Rating ⁴³	NWEA: Reading Growth Percentile: 3-8	NWEA: Reading Attainment Percentile: 2-8	NWEA: Math Growth Percentile: 3-8	NWEA: Math Attainment Percentile: 2-8
Drake	Commendable	All: 11.4% DL: 13.2%	All: 6.0% DL: 2.6%	2	38 th	21 st	28 th	13 th
Pershing	Commendable	All: 24.9% DL: 10.3%	All: 16.3% DL: 5.2%	2+	46 th	54 th	39 th	41 st
Doolittle	Lowest Performing	All: 4.0% DL: 5.5%	All: 0.7% DL: 0.0%	3	34 th	3 rd	55 th	4 th
Wells	Commendable	All: 15.0% DL: 11.1%	All: 11.3% DL: 3.7%	1	68 th	50 th	77 th	41 st
Bronzeville Classical	N/A	N/A	N/A	NR	No data	99 th (2 nd grade only)	No data	99 th (2 nd grade only)
U of C Donoghue	N/A (Insufficient size or data)	All: 21.0% DL: 0.0%	All: 21.8% DL: 10.5%	2	22 nd	39 th	28 th	42 nd
Fuller	Underperforming	All: 10.2% DL: 3.0%	All: 12.0% DL: 4.7%	2+	40 th	18 th	32 nd	24 th
Woodson	Underperforming	All: 8.0% DL: 8.4%	All: 9.0% DL: 4.3%	2+	50 th	39 th	55 th	28 th
Mollison	Lowest Performing	All: 6.2% DL: 0.0%	All: 3.6% DL: 0.0%	2+	62 nd	29 th	57 th	20 th
Beethoven	Underperforming	All: 11.2% DL: 2.5%	All: 6.5% DL: 2.5%	2	50 th	16 th	27 th	6 th

We consider two sets of data for analysis: the 29 elementary schools within the Bronzeville/South Lakefront region as defined by the ARA, and the ten elementary schools within the Bronzeville boundaries. The data for the 29 elementary schools in Bronzeville/South Lakefront suggests a need for schools that prepare students to meet rigorous, college-preparatory standards. Only seven schools in the region had 20% or more of their students meet or exceed Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) standards in both math and reading in 2019. The IAR provides valuable data about students' college readiness; the test includes significant writing for both the math and reading tests, unlike the NWEA, and sets strict time limits for completing the test, also unlike the NWEA. Only nine schools in the region reached the 50th percentile for NWEA attainment in both math and reading. The NWEA is an important indicator of high school access and college readiness. Chicago offers just 11 selective enrollment high schools, and the admissions process is extremely competitive. One-third of students' application score for the selective

³⁹ 2018-19 Annual Regional Analysis: Bronzeville/South Lakefront Region. Chicago Public Schools, 2019. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b212dce5417fcd9ddec5349/t/5c9283128165f51d36550f64/1553105686059/13-ARA_BronzevilleSouthLakefront_1819.pdf

⁴⁰ "Find Your School." Illinois Report Card 2018-2019. Illinois State Board of Education, 2019.

⁴¹ Ibid; Diverse Learners defined here as students with disabilities.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ "Search Schools." Chicago Public Schools, accessed September 5, 2019. <https://schoolinfo.cps.edu/schoolprofile/FindaSchool.aspx>

enrollment schools comes from their 7th grade NWEA scores, and scoring below the 50th percentile makes it nearly impossible to gain entry to these college-preparatory programs.

The students of Bronzeville/South Lakefront need a strong mathematics program. In 22 of the 29 elementary schools in Bronzeville/South Lakefront, the NWEA reading attainment is higher than the NWEA math attainment. In 25 of the 29 schools, more students met or exceeded reading standards on the IAR than met or exceeded math standards on the IAR. Schools throughout Chicago similarly perform better in reading than in math. This need in Bronzeville/South Lakefront aligns well with the demand we have heard from many parents to teach financial literacy in schools. Our students will greatly benefit from our double block of math and additional math-focused period of Money and Business in Action (MBA).

Academic rigor and comprehensive supports are even more urgent needs among the ten elementary schools within the boundaries of Bronzeville. Among these schools, only one is above the 50th percentile in both math and reading – the selective Bronzeville Classical – and only two others reached the 50th percentile in either subject: Wells at 50th for reading and Pershing at 54th for reading. Five schools are below the 30th percentile in both math and reading. All nine of the Bronzeville-boundary schools with IAR data available are below the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) average for both math and reading, and seven had less than 15% of students meet or exceed standards in both math and reading. The ARA found that 38% of students who live in the Bronzeville/South Lakefront region attend a Level 1 or Level 1+ elementary school. This is the lowest percentage of all 16 regions analyzed by the report; only three other regions have percentages below 60%. The ARA also indicated that 32% of students in the Bronzeville/South Lakefront region attend a school outside of the region.⁴⁴

Based on the data within Bronzeville and district-wide and on our conversations with parents and stakeholders, Chicago Prep believes that the community needs a quality open-enrollment middle school offering a rigorous academic program, high expectations for all students, and the robust supports to help all students meet those expectations. Bronzeville residents speak with great pride of several existing schools in the region: Beasley’s Gifted Center, King College Prep, and the recently opened Bronzeville Classical. But all three programs have selective admissions, with no opportunity for students who are below grade level to attend.

Chicago Prep proposes to respond to this need by providing **academic rigor** for all students. Our selected curriculum and planned instructional methods, discussed in **Section 2.2** and **Section 2.3**, are modeled after some of the top-performing charter schools in the country, schools that serve demographics very similar to our targeted student population. Further, our school will implement a system of **robust supports** to ensure that we meet the needs of all students. Discussed in more detail in **Section 2.1** and **Section 2.5**, our supports include an extended school day and year, a daily small-group tutoring block, and systematized Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions to support all learners.

The Challenges Associated with Trauma and Poverty. Bronzeville data and community engagement also suggest that students and families face significant challenges as a result of poverty and trauma, including violence, which impacts their academic achievement. A few key demographic data points are highlighted:

- The median income in Bronzeville is \$38,479, compared to \$50,434 in Chicago.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ 2018-19 Annual Regional Analysis: Bronzeville/South Lakefront Region. Chicago Public Schools, 2019.
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b212dce5417fcd9ddec5349/t/5c9283128165f51d36550f64/1553105686059/13-ARA_BronzevilleSouthLakefront_1819.pdf

⁴⁵ <https://statisticalatlas.com/neighborhood/Illinois/Chicago/Bronzeville/Household-Income>

- 7,339 Bronzeville residents are living below the poverty line, approximately 30% of population, compared to approximately 19% of the larger Chicago population.⁴⁶
- 35.5% of Bronzeville residents are on food stamps compared to 13.1% of Chicago residents.⁴⁷
- 11.6% of Bronzeville residents are unemployed, compared to 7.3% in Chicago.⁴⁸
- As of 2015, census tract 3504, which includes Bronzeville’s Dearborn Homes public housing, had “the highest deep poverty rate in the city, about 50 percent of its residents.” Living in “deep poverty,” defined as income less than half of the federal poverty line, means an annual income of less than \$12,125 for a family of four.⁴⁹
- Douglas and Grand Boulevard both have high rates of violent crime. In Douglas, the northern part of Bronzeville, the rate of violent crime is an estimated 1.6 times the rate in Chicago and 4 times the rate in Illinois.⁵⁰ In Grand Boulevard, the southern part of Bronzeville, the rate of violent crime is an estimated 1.9 times the rate in Chicago and 4.6 times the rate in Illinois.⁵¹

Decades of research have shown poverty to negatively impact academic achievement, including grades, test scores, and level of educational attainment.⁵² “Since the inception of the tracking of U.S. students’ achievement via the National Assessment of Education Progress program (NAEP), the data has shown large and persistent achievement gaps between students who qualify for the federal free and reduced lunch program and those who do not.”⁵³ This data carries significant implications for Bronzeville, where most schools have over 80% of students qualifying for free and reduced price lunch.

In 2015, Bright Star Community Outreach and The Urban Resilience Network (TURN) Center administered a survey to 1,538 Bronzeville region youth about risk factors and protective factors in their lives. The Communities That Care (CTC) Youth Survey partnered with 19 schools to survey 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students. The questions asked on the CTC survey specifically measure factors “that have been found to influence the likelihood of important outcomes, including drug use, delinquency, violence, depression, and academic achievement.”⁵⁴ Key findings are highlighted below:

- **Depressive symptoms:** Across all four grade levels surveyed, **one-third** of students reported high levels of depressive symptoms, measured by survey items like, “Sometimes I think that life is not worth it” and “All in all, I am inclined to think I am a failure.”
- **Academic failure:** In every grade level surveyed, **over 40%** of students report that they are struggling academically and have poor grades
- **Low commitment to school:** Many students, including **49%** of 6th graders, report that school success is not meaningful or important to them.
- **Low attachment to neighborhood:** In every grade level surveyed, **over 50%** of students report that they are not emotionally connected to their neighborhoods, measured by survey items like “I’d like to get out of my neighborhood.”

⁴⁶ <https://www.point2homes.com/US/Neighborhood/IL/Chicago/Bronzeville-Demographics.html>,
<https://www.point2homes.com/US/Neighborhood/IL/Chicago-Demographics.html>

⁴⁷ <https://statisticalatlas.com/neighborhood/Illinois/Chicago/Bronzeville/Food-Stamps>

⁴⁸ <https://statisticalatlas.com/neighborhood/Illinois/Chicago/Bronzeville/Employment-Status>

⁴⁹ Emmanuel, Adeshina. “Black Chicagoans most likely to live in deep poverty.” *The Chicago Reporter*. October 6, 2015. chicagoreporter.com/black-chicagoans-most-likely-to-live-in-deep-poverty/.

⁵⁰ “Douglas, IL, Chicago, IL Crime.” Area Vibes. 2018. <https://www.areavibes.com/chicago-il/douglas/crime/>

⁵¹ “Grand Boulevard, Chicago, IL Crime.” Area Vibes. 2018. <https://www.areavibes.com/chicago-il/grand+boulevard/crime/>.

⁵² Hair, Nicole L., PhD., Jamie L. Hanson, PhD., Barbara L. Wolfe, PhD., and Seth D. Pollak, PhD. “Association of Child Poverty, Brain Development, and Academic Development.” file:///C:/Users/BESFe/Downloads/poi150042.pdf.

⁵³ Olszewski-Kubilius, Paula and Susan Corwith. “Poverty, Academic achievement, and Giftedness: A Literature Review.” *Gifted Child Quarterly*. 2018, Vol. 62(1) 37-55. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0016986217738015>.

⁵⁴ “Youth Survey.” Bronzeville Community Outreach, 2015.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58f7903197aea4e201e5295/t/5966a5b6cd0f68f46e321489/1499899347065/2.+Youth+Survey.pdf>

- **Family history of antisocial behavior:** in every grade level surveyed, **50% or more** of students report problematic behaviors (e.g., crime, violence, alcohol and/or drug abuse) among family members.

Chicago Prep proposes to respond to this need with our focus on strong relationship-building and social and emotional learning. Scholars will have morning and afternoon Advisory lessons focused on social and emotional skills. Teachers will introduce concepts, lead student discussions, and provide opportunities to practice key skills. Advisory also provides the opportunity to develop trusting relationships with peers and adults. We believe that our Advisory structure will help to meet scholars' complex social and emotional needs and in turn help teachers and scholars to focus on academic growth and achievement. According to the 2018 report *The Brain Basis for Integrated Social, Emotional, and Academic Development*, supportive school environments are crucial to adolescents' development, and advisory systems can help create such environments. The authors write:

"Supportive educational settings for adolescents ensure that they continue to have strong relationships with adults who know them well—often through school advisory systems or teaching teams that can personalize instruction and supports for students in and out of school. Such settings engage students in investigations that allow them to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, to debate ideas and reflect on what they are learning, to attempt ambitious projects that interest them, and to receive feedback they can act on to improve their work. These opportunities help them develop a sense of agency, curiosity, habits for reflecting on their own thinking, and a growth mindset and self-regulation to support their ongoing learning."⁵⁵

Inadequate collaboration between schools and families. The design team asked nearly all of the more than 250 community stakeholders we spoke to, "What do you believe makes an excellent school?" The vast majority, both within Bronzeville and throughout Chicago, shared "involved parents" or "strong family engagement" as a defining feature of an excellent school. But despite the community's value of family engagement, many within Greater Bronzeville reported that strong, meaningful collaboration between schools and families is a challenge. Bright Star Community Outreach (BSCO), one of the most influential organizations in Bronzeville, recently awarded \$208,000 to local organizations. Though many organizations applied for the grant money, BSCO chose those that submitted comprehensive proposals to further family engagement as part of their work with local schools, demonstrating both the value and the need. The Five Essentials Survey evaluates schools on school-family collaboration on:

- **Involved Families:** Does the school partner with families and communities? (*Based on staff surveys*)
- **School Community:** Do parents feel welcome and included in the school? (*Based on parent surveys*)
- **Parent-Teacher Partnership:** Do parents feel teachers partner with them to support student success? (*Based on parent surveys*)

Across both Bronzeville-boundary and Bronzeville/South Lakefront schools, 50% score "neutral," "weak," or "very weak" on both School Community and Parent-Teacher Partnership. Additionally, in 60% of the ten Bronzeville-boundary schools, parent responses and staff responses are misaligned. For example, at Pershing, staff rated Involved Families as "strong," while parents rated both Parent-Teacher Partnership and School Community as "weak." At Doolittle, teachers rated Involved Families as "very weak," while families rated both School Community and Parent-Teacher Partnership as "strong."⁵⁶ Our findings are supported by the extensive research of education sociologist and writer Eve Ewing, who interviewed community members about the impact of school closings in Bronzeville and found that many parents

⁵⁵ Immordino-Yang, Mary Helen, Linda Darling-Hammond, and Christine Krone. *The Brain Basis for Integrated Social, Emotional, and Academic Development: How Emotions and Social Relationships Drive Learning*. The Aspen Institute, 2018.

⁵⁶ "Search Schools." Chicago Public Schools, accessed September 5, 2019. <https://schoolinfo.cps.edu/schoolprofile/FindaSchool.aspx>

“reported feeling excluded from their children’s new schools; alienated from events, meetings and opportunities to participate or volunteer at school; or just generally discouraged.”⁵⁷

It is critical that we ensure strong family engagement because children learn best when their home and their school are on the same page. A meta-analysis of studies on school-family collaboration found that “home-school collaboration interventions,” or strategies designed to help schools and families work together effectively, found that they improve academic achievement, social development, and school behavior for children. “The most effective interventions are those where parents and school personnel work together to implement interventions utilizing a two-way exchange of information [...] and those involving communication between school and home (e.g., daily report cards, school-to-home notes).”⁵⁸ Considering the importance of school-family engagement and the particular need in Bronzeville, Chicago Prep commits to **family partnerships** as a key design element. We propose to position families as leaders, involving them not only in the “what” but in the “how” of school-family collaboration. For example, we will update families weekly on their children’s academic and behavioral progress and host monthly events to connect with parents and have fun as a community (the “what”). We also approach family partnerships with humility – recognizing that families know their children best, and families best understand historic and current barriers to involvement at school. Therefore, we will establish and engage a Parent Advisory Council to support us with the “how”: How to design events so that families are eager to join. How to communicate in ways that are both meaningful and convenient. How to leverage parents in creative ways that staff might not have brainstormed. The authentic teamwork of families and school staff will be a key driver of our scholars’ success.

Community Assets and Needs. The Chicago Prep team is excited and humbled about proposing to open in Bronzeville, a proud and highly engaged community with such a rich history. Through both research and community engagement, we have learned more about Bronzeville’s assets and needs beyond the academic performance of students, and we are committed to building upon these assets and proactively responding to needs. One of the assets that many stakeholders spoke about is the incredible historical and cultural legacy of the community, discussed in detail in **Section 1.1.2**. Courageous and innovative artists, activists, politicians, businessmen and businesswomen, and doctors called Bronzeville home and created an economy and culture rivaling that of the Harlem Renaissance. This profound legacy creates a unique opportunity for students to learn about their community’s history, identify with its leaders, and emotionally identify with the neighborhood. In our daily social studies classes, students will learn about the history of Bronzeville and Chicago. Both of these focus areas respond to the low neighborhood attachment found in Bright Star Community Outreach (BSCO’s) survey by helping scholars to take pride in their community just as many adults do. We leverage this asset with our staff, too: Each summer during professional development, we will take staff on a guided tour of the Bronzeville community led by Mr. Lucas of BMCTC or another local expert and enjoy staff outings at Bronzeville restaurants and businesses.

Bronzeville also has a great wealth of social capital – of long-standing, meaningful connections and collaborations among families and organizations. Our key design element **family and community partnerships** leverages this asset. Family engagement is a major priority; we know that families are their children’s first advocates. With our twice-a-month parent events, weekly parent communication, and active Parent Advisory Council, we seek to leverage family’s investment not just in their own children but in all children of the community. Similarly, drawing inspiration from BSCO’s Community Action Plan and

⁵⁷ Ewing, Eve. “What led Chicago to shutter dozens of black schools? Racism.” *The Guardian*. December 6, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/dec/06/chicago-public-schools-closures-racism-ghosts-in-the-schoolyard-extract>.

⁵⁸ Cox, Diane D. Evidence-based interventions using home-school collaboration. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 20(4), 473–497. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2006-02288-007>

the Greater Bronzeville Neighborhood Network, we will collaborate with community groups for afterschool programming, counseling services, and other opportunities. Again, this has the mutually beneficial effect of engaging community groups' resources and employees and supporting our students' growth and well-being.

Economic opportunity and development are two of the most significant needs in the community. Stakeholders consistently speak of the need for adults and young people to be more educated in the basics of finances, including earning and saving money, investing money, and budgeting. People also share the importance of investing in the creation and support of small businesses, particularly those that are locally owned with a focus on job creation and stimulation of the local economy. There is so much opportunity for economic growth in the region, as evidenced by the open lots and vacant buildings that can be found throughout the neighborhood. Many stakeholders pointed out that such disinvestment simply does not exist in north side neighborhoods, where residents have everything that they need within a few blocks. Chicago Prep represents in part the beginning of a long-term solution to this problem, educating our students in **financial literacy and entrepreneurship** from 5th-8th grade. Chicago Prep students take our Money and Business in Action or MBA class for thirty minutes, four days a week, for four years. Cumulatively, then, our students will graduate with 296 hours of learning in financial literacy and entrepreneurship, *37 entire school days' worth* of skills and knowledge in these critical areas. This course also builds upon Bronzeville's long history of entrepreneurship; in the early part of the twentieth century when Bronzeville was in its "heyday" and home to as many as 300,000 residents, the economy was thriving with small businesses.

Our mission is to prepare students to positively impact the world, and part of our vision is that students will be equipped and motivated to make a tangible impact within the Bronzeville community. The substantial time we allot for entrepreneurial education will allow us to expose students to possible careers and business opportunities in such diverse fields as the arts, retail, literary, culinary, cosmetology, sports, and entertainment. Our entrepreneurial instruction will also provide instruction and practice in crucial networking skills, while our partnerships with local businesses and organizations, will start to broaden students' networks – a crucial factor in access to job opportunities. Students will also learn how to pitch themselves and their ideas, market a product, and collaborate with a team. An essential understanding of the MBA course is that with a quality education, our students have the power to *create* opportunities in their community, not simply take advantage of what already exists. Similarly, the financial education that Chicago Prep students receive will prepare them to handle personal and business finances effectively. The engaging, creative, interpersonal aspects of entrepreneurship are complemented with fluency in key monetary concepts: budgets, taxes, credit, loans, investments, and more. Students will build confidence in their capacity to start a small business and motivation to do so within their own community. Additionally, students with a strong understanding of finances are better equipped to move into the middle class and further stimulate the economy. From all that we have read and learned from the Bronzeville community, our commitment to **academic rigor** and **robust supports**, along with our unique focus on **financial literacy**, **entrepreneurship**, Black history contextualized with local history, and **community partnerships** makes Chicago Prep a strong fit for the community.

DOMAIN 2: ACADEMIC PLAN

SECTION 2.1: THE SCHOOL MODEL

The proposal explains who the school will serve; what it will accomplish in measurable terms; and describes the methods it will use to help students achieve defined student outcomes.

- *A succinct, clear, and compelling mission statement that:*

- *Is focused on high educational outcomes for students*
- *Reflects priorities that are meaningful, manageable, and measurable*
- *Reflects the targeted student population*
- *Is consistent with the purposes outlined in the Illinois Charter Schools Law (105 ILCS 5/27A-2(a))*
- *Indicates what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree*
- *A vision that articulates what the school will accomplish in the near term and future, with concrete examples of anticipated student outcomes*
- *An educational philosophy that reflects the design team’s core beliefs and priorities for educating the proposed student population*
- *An overview of the key design elements that explains how it is appropriate for and likely to result in improved educational performance for the targeted student population, including at-risk students*
- *(If proposing a Next Generation blended learning model): A compelling rationale for the scope and design of blended learning strategies, which is rooted in the needs of the student population and aligns with the educational philosophy. **NOT APPLICABLE***

2.1.1: SCHOOL MISSION

Mission Statement: Chicago Preparatory Charter Middle School provides academic rigor in a structured and supportive community, preparing all 5th-8th grade scholars to succeed in college and positively impact the world.

2.1.2: KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Vision. Chicago Preparatory Charter Middle School (Chicago Prep) will establish a college-preparatory program that leads our scholars to flourish both academically and personally. Scholars will take pride in the success they experience and in our focused, joyful school community. They will close persistent achievement gaps with peers from more affluent and majority White schools. They will articulate goals for the future and steps they must take to accomplish them. Chicago Prep scholars will consistently demonstrate our core values: **kindness, courage, gratitude, curiosity, responsibility, and perseverance.**

In 2024, our first 8th grade class will graduate from Chicago Prep prepared to excel in college-preparatory high schools throughout Chicago. Some will enroll in selective-enrollment schools like Whitney Young; some will go on to top-performing charter schools like Noble Muchin; and some will choose specialized programs like the Chicago High School for the Arts. All scholars will enroll in schools that suit them well as individuals and will continue to provide an academically rigorous education. With a strong foundation in core subjects, a broad base of background knowledge, and flexible critical thinking skills, Chicago Prep graduates will meet the challenges of top-tier honors, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate courses. Upon graduation from Chicago Prep, scholars will have the social and emotional skills to thrive in new, often larger school communities that increase student independence and responsibility. They are self-aware, socially intelligent, and intrinsically motivated. Importantly, our scholars take initiative to find or create opportunities. They stay engaged in their communities, from school to neighborhood to city, eager to further their own development and positively impact others.

In 2028, our founding 8th grade scholars are seniors preparing to graduate from high school and enroll in the colleges of their choice. They are well-prepared, confident, and independent, equipped with not only the academic foundation and character necessary for success at selective universities, but also the

practical knowledge and skills. Because of the academic rigor they experienced in middle and high school, they find the work meaningful and challenging but not overwhelming. Because of their strong foundation in personal finance, they manage their money well without undue stress. Because of their entrepreneurial skills and mindsets, they take initiative and grab hold of opportunities, including attending professors' office hours to build relationships and communicate when they need help; participating in extracurricular activities; and seeking out leadership roles. Because of their social and emotional intelligence, they take care of themselves, experience joy and gratitude, and build lasting relationships. As a result of their strong character, they are kind to others, stand up for what they believe in, and do the right thing even when no one is watching.

Harriet Tubman said, "Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars and change the world." Throughout their personal and professional journeys, Chicago Prep graduates will focus beyond themselves and their own success and think about how they can uplift other people and positively impact their communities. As doctors, lawyers, educators, entrepreneurs, scientists, activists, artists, and more, our scholars are courageous and compassionate leaders in their communities. They have the education and motivation to change the world.

Educational Philosophy. We envision a bright and transformational future for our young scholars. We recognize that this future is ambitious and aspirational, but we know that it is possible. As we collaborated with community leaders, residents, and families to develop, revise, and refine a proposal to make that vision a reality, we have been guided by four core beliefs. These beliefs are fundamental to our educational philosophy and will guide all decision-making upon authorization and years into operation.

1. All scholars can achieve academic excellence. We deeply believe that all scholars, regardless of race, income, zip code, learning disability, home language, or previous achievement, can excel academically. Top-performing schools across the country have driven outstanding student growth and achievement by providing access to key resources, including excellent teaching, rigorous academic programs, and individualized support.⁵⁹ We know that all children have unlimited potential, and we convey this to them every day through words and actions. Unwavering high expectations, communicated both implicitly and explicitly, have a profound impact on academic outcomes.⁶⁰

2. Strong character leads to lifelong growth and success. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education." We believe that character traits like **kindness**, **gratitude**, and **curiosity** not only have intrinsic value but also lead scholars to accomplish more and contribute positively to the world around them.⁶¹ A large body of research demonstrates the powerful impact of character on long-term success.⁶² We believe schools have the potential and the responsibility

⁵⁹ "Results." Uncommon Schools. 2018. 22 Aug. 2019 <<https://uncommonschoools.org/results/>>. Uncommon Schools is a high-performing charter network in the northeast, operating 54 schools and serving 20,000 students. Approximately 99% are students of color and 82% are considered economically disadvantaged. Their students have closed the achievement gap on state tests; e.g., on the 2018 New York State exams, Uncommon's New York City students had higher rates of proficiency in both math and reading than did white students in New York State. In addition, 76% of their alumni have graduated or are on track to graduate college. In addition to learning about the network through research and training, Lead Founder Mary Griffin has visited three Uncommon campuses and studied their practices in-depth.

⁶⁰ "The Opportunity Myth." The Opportunity Myth, TNTP, September 25, 2018, <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/>. High expectations are a key determining factor in students' success. Of four key factors shaping students' education, teacher expectations "demonstrated the strongest relationship to student growth..."

⁶¹ Grant, Adam, and Allison Sweet Grant. "Stop Trying to Raise Successful Kids and Start Raising Kind Ones." *The Atlantic*. December 2019 Issue. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/12/stop-trying-to-raise-successful-kids/600751/>.

⁶² E.g., Duckworth, Angela. *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*. New York: Scribner, 2016; Tough, Paul. *How children succeed: Grit, curiosity, and the hidden power of character*. Boston: Mariner Books, 2012.

to teach and develop character; in fact, scholars' academic success depends on it: "Successful engagement in the classroom and in life relies on a set of cognitive and social-emotional skills and mindsets, which are not represented in academic standards."⁶³

3. Scholars thrive in a structured and supportive community. We believe that scholars learn best in an environment that is calm, safe, and predictable. When schools create "strong learning environments, shaped by clear expectations for both students and teachers," the entire school community has the freedom to focus on what truly matters: mastering rigorous academic content and growing into the best version of themselves.⁶⁴ We also believe in making school a welcoming, supportive community – one that meaningfully includes and engages families and the community. Scholars learn best when their parents and teachers are on the same team, working together to support individual students for who they are.

4. Effective education motivates scholars and prepares them to excel in the real world. Scholars must be able to envision a successful future and understand how their education will help them get there. In a study investigating the perspectives of high school dropouts, nearly 70% said they were not motivated or inspired to work hard, and more than 80% said there should be more opportunities for real-world learning.⁶⁵ We believe in making explicit connections between what scholars are learning in school and the many possible college and career options for their future. In addition to a strong academic foundation, scholars need to learn the financial and entrepreneurial skills essential for success.

Key Design Elements. Our seven key design elements demonstrate how we will make our ambitious mission and vision a reality for all of our scholars, including the traditionally underserved groups of our target population: low-income students, Black students, students with disabilities, homeless students, and English learners. These elements have been informed through our conversations with key stakeholders in Bronzeville and throughout Chicago, and by the practices of top-performing schools both locally and nationally. In particular, we draw inspiration from Forte Preparatory Academy, a 5-8 school in Queens, New York, and the Collegiate School of Memphis, a 6-12 school in Memphis, Tennessee.⁶⁶ Our implementation of these key design elements is guided by our core beliefs and driven to fulfill our mission.

1. Academic Rigor. Academic rigor means high expectations for all scholars, every day. It means that we challenge our scholars to think critically about meaningful, relevant content and to produce thoughtful, high-quality work. We are preparing our scholars for more than college acceptance. In fact, more students from low-income families than ever are attending college, but too many are attending less selective institutions, aiming for an associate's degree rather than a bachelor's degree and/or dropping out before

⁶³ Stafford-Brizard, K. Brooke, Ph.D. *Building Blocks for Learning: A Framework for Comprehensive Student Development*. Turnaround for Children. 2016.

⁶⁴TNTP and New Schools Venture Fund conducted a study of 23 high-performing charter schools in Boston, where charter school students outperform their peers in local school districts and in charter schools throughout the country, even though Boston Public Schools is one of the highest-performing urban districts in the country. They found that clear and consistent expectations are defining characteristics of these schools. *Greenhouse Schools in Boston. School Leadership Practices Across a High-Performing Charter Sector*. TNTP, 2014. https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP_GreenhouseSchoolsinBoston_2015_Web.pdf

⁶⁵ Bridgeland, John M., John J. Dilulio, Jr., and Karen Burke Morison. *The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts*. Civic Enterprises, 2006. <https://docs.gatesfoundation.org/Documents/thesilentepidemic3-06final.pdf>.

⁶⁶ Lead Founder Mary Griffin spent time at Forte Prep and Collegiate School of Memphis (CSM) as part of the BES Fellowship, including a month-long residency at CSM. A start-up school in its third year of operation founded by a BES Fellow, Forte Prep's student body is 99% scholars of color (including 80% Hispanic/Latinx) and 90% economically disadvantaged. In 2019, Forte Prep scholars outperformed their peers in New York City and New York State on State Math and ELA exams, with 74% of their scholars – and 90% of sixth grade scholars – proficient on the New York State Math exam, compared to averages below 50% in both New York City and New York State. CSM is a private school with 100% of scholars receiving scholarships and 97% students of color, and on the ACT, outperformed the national average by 2.8 points and the Tennessee average by 4 points.

college completion.⁶⁷ Of the many complex factors influencing this pattern, one that we can control at Chicago Prep is the academic preparedness of our scholars from low-income families compared to their peers from more affluent families, and rigor is the driving force behind this equalizer.

At Chicago Prep, rigor is defined by the depth of thinking scholars do and the quality of work they produce. Nationwide each year, students on average are spending more than 500 hours on “assignments that [are not] appropriate for their grade level and with instruction that [does not] ask enough of them – the equivalent of six months of wasted class time in each core subject.”⁶⁸ We ensure depth of thinking through the use of Common-Core-aligned curriculum, described in **Section 2.2.2**, that uses rigorous grade-level assignments and has been proven effective with similar student populations. In execution of this curriculum, described in **Section 2.3**, we believe in using instructional practices that allow students – not teachers – to do most of the cognitive work in the classroom. In addition to scholars thinking deeply and critically, scholars consistently producing high-quality work – essays, speeches, projects – is a defining feature of rigor at Chicago Prep. We know our young scholars can demonstrate true college-readiness.

We prioritize literacy, math, and foundational knowledge as a way to uphold our commitment to rigor. Chicago Prep scholars have extended time in literacy, 130 minutes per day, which includes independent literacy and small-group tutoring. We work relentlessly to ensure all scholars have strong reading, writing, and speaking and listening abilities because they provide a strong foundation for achievement in all subjects. Similarly, scholars have 100 minutes of math per day, in addition to the financial literacy education provided during Money and Business in Action (MBA) class. This decision responds to the community’s demonstrated need for a strong math program based on academic data. It is also modeled after the best practices of other high-performing charter schools throughout the country and based on the trend that students with strong math skills have a wide range of high-paying job opportunities available.⁶⁹ Finally, we unapologetically provide a foundation of knowledge, the importance of which is supported by ample research. Although many educational standards and programs today focus only on “skills” transferable to any problem, high-performing schools and families value *depends* on knowledge.⁷⁰

2. Character Development. We encourage our scholars’ growth and development by creating a learning environment centered around our six core values: **kindness, courage, gratitude, curiosity, responsibility, and perseverance**. In developing our values, we aimed to include values that represent the four major categories of virtues: moral, civic, performance, and intellectual,⁷¹ values associated with lifelong flourishing, and values that will contribute to making our school community warm, focused, and joyful. The rationale for choosing our particular values is outlined in detail in **Section 2.7**.

We believe that character strengths, often referred to as noncognitive skills, are essential for students to succeed in college and ultimately leave a positive impact on the world.⁷² For example, if you are an exceptional mathematician but you lack responsibility, you are unlikely to complete homework or study and therefore unlikely to succeed in your challenging college math courses. If you are a talented writer

⁶⁷ Smith, Ashley A. “Pew Study Finds More Poor Students Attending College.” *Pew Study Finds More Poor Students Attending College*, Inside Higher Ed, 23 May 2019, www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/05/23/pew-study-finds-more-poor-students-attending-college.

⁶⁸ “The Opportunity Myth.” *The Opportunity Myth*, TNT, 25 Sept. 2018, <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/>.

⁶⁹ Smith, Jacquelyn. “14 high-paying jobs for people who love math.” *Business Insider*. June 14, 2016. <https://www.businessinsider.com/high-paying-jobs-for-people-who-love-math-2016-6>.

⁷⁰ Willingham, Daniel T. *Why don't students like school?: A cognitive scientist answers questions about how the mind works and what it means for the classroom*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009.

⁷¹ “A Framework for Character Education in Schools.” *The Jubilee Centre for Character & Virtues*, 2017. <https://uobschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Framework-for-Character-Education-2017-Jubilee-Centre.pdf>.

⁷² Tough, Paul. *How children succeed: Grit, curiosity, and the hidden power of character*. Boston: Mariner Books, 2012.

but lack courage, you may never tackle the topics and themes that matter most, those that are difficult to write about and discuss but are key to enacting meaningful change. And if you are a skilled scientist but do not feel kindness and gratitude towards those in your community, then you might use your skills exclusively for personal gain and have a negative impact on the environment. We therefore explicitly teach, model, and reinforce our core values throughout the school year, beginning during our week-long orientation at the start of each year and particularly prioritized during daily Advisory and weekly Assembly. For example, during class each day, homerooms will be able to earn points for demonstrating values. A class with 100% homework completion will earn a point for **responsibility**; a class with multiple students asking thoughtful questions will earn a point for **curiosity**; and a class with students consistently treating each other with respect and generosity will earn a point for **kindness**. Similarly, individual students will be honored with value shout-outs and awards at weekly and monthly assemblies. And when scholars make choices that are not in line with our values, we center our corrections and consequences in discussion of our values. In everything that we do, the message will be clear: your character counts.

3. Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship. Financial literacy is a desperately needed skill in American society today. Federal data suggests that 40% of Americans would not be able to handle a \$400 emergency, that 25% of Americans have no retirement savings,⁷³ and that nearly 80% of American workers are living paycheck to paycheck.⁷⁴ Only 17 states require high school students to take a course in financial literacy, even though studies show that students who did not receive courses on finance are more likely to experience financial struggles, including having low credit scores.⁷⁵ Chicago Prep will teach students about earning income, budgeting and saving, investing, managing college expenses, and more. Our highly knowledgeable teachers will teach through the lens of social justice, helping students to understand how the wealth gap came to be,⁷⁶ engaging them in critical discussions about the causes and solutions, and empowering them to fight for equity.

We added entrepreneurship to complement our financial literacy program and to carry on the incredible legacy of the Black Metropolis that is Bronzeville. Here, African Americans, despite the immense financial and social injustice they faced throughout the twentieth century, created a thriving community of commerce, politics, arts, and culture. Today, Bronzeville greatly values economic development and entrepreneurship, and the community has many organizations that encourage their development. Chicago Prep will educate all students with entrepreneurial skills and mindsets, setting them up to pursue successful entrepreneurial careers in the future if they so choose. An education in entrepreneurship values and develops personal strengths such as creativity, leadership, and teamwork, as well as practical, professional skills such as networking, marketing, and financial planning. Financial literacy and entrepreneurship will be taught during our Money & Business in Action (MBA) class. Together, they represent a powerful way for us to motivate scholars and prepare them for the real world. Both subjects draw explicit connections between what scholars are learning at school and the skills and knowledge they will need for college and career. Financial literacy gives young scholars an early advantage in planning and saving for the future, thereby proactively addressing one of the key barriers that keeps Chicago students from college graduation.⁷⁷ Entrepreneurship helps scholars to see how they can apply their education –

⁷³ Bahney, Anna. "40% of Americans can't cover a \$400 expense." *CNN Money*, May 22, 2018.

⁷⁴ Martin, Emmie. "The government shutdown spotlights a bigger issue: 78% of US workers live paycheck to paycheck." *CNBC Make It*, January 9, 2019. <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/01/09/shutdown-highlights-that-4-in-5-us-workers-live-paycheck-to-paycheck.html>.

⁷⁵ Nova, Annie. "Financial education stalls, threatening kids' future economic health." *CNBC*, February 8, 2018. <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/02/08/financial-education-stalls-threatening-kids-future-economic-health.html>.

⁷⁶ McIntosh, Kriston, Emily Moss, and Ryan Nunn, and Jay Shambaugh. "Examining the black-white wealth gap." *Brookings*, February 27, 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/02/27/examining-the-black-white-wealth-gap/>

⁷⁷ Hendershot, Steve. "Obstacle course." *Crain's Forum*. October 25, 2019. <https://www.chicagobusiness.com/html-page/863431>.

not only to further their own success, but also to make a direct impact on their community. Chicago Prep’s unique focus on financial literacy & entrepreneurship will change our students’ experience at school and prepare our students to change the world.

4. Excellent Teaching. At Chicago Prep, we believe that high-quality teaching is the key to ensuring academic success for all scholars. Excellent teaching means caring deeply about scholars, believing in them, and working hard to build relationships with them. It means being committed to equity, being willing and able to engage in difficult conversations about race and other aspects of identity to ensure we are working towards equitable opportunities and equitable outcomes for our scholars. Excellent teaching means practicing a wide variety of effective strategies to engage scholars in rigorous, meaningful curriculum, while simultaneously managing behavior with firm, calm finesse.⁷⁸ To be an excellent teacher, one must focus relentlessly on results and use data to inform instruction, and reflect on one’s own practice thoughtfully with a commitment to continuous growth.

To ensure that all of our teachers are truly excellent, we have a strategic plan for teacher recruitment, hiring, development, and retention, all described in detail in **Section 2.9**, with development as the most distinguishing element. Our teachers will have four full weeks of summer professional development. We will spend that time internalizing our mission, vision, and values; planning strong units and lessons; and practicing, practicing, practicing. Our teachers will practice teaching lessons, analyzing data, creating strong classroom culture, and delivering precise praise and redirections. Teachers will practice these skills repeatedly, getting targeted feedback from peers and school leaders to continuously improve their craft. This time invested upfront will ensure our teachers are ready to hit the ground running, leading excellent instruction from the very first day of school. Throughout the year, teachers will be observed and coached on a weekly basis, receiving support both real-time in the classroom and during post-observation meetings.

Excellent teachers are driven by data. At Chicago Prep, all staff will focus relentlessly on outcomes. It does not matter if a teacher has a “highly engaging” class or “well-designed lesson plan” if the scholars do not master the objective or the standard. Data is used daily, weekly, quarterly, and yearly. Daily data analysis and data-driven instruction includes teachers providing rapid feedback during independent practice and responding to gaps through feedback (individualized, small- and whole-group), as well as administering exit tickets to assess mastery of the day’s lesson. Weekly data includes cumulative quizzes as well as the most important exit ticket from the week. Four times a year, we administer interim assessments designed to assess if our scholars are on the right track to meet the end-of-year standards. Summative data at the end of the year allows us to reflect on where we succeeded, where we fell short, and what we need to do differently next year. Each time teachers analyze data, we think about the gaps between where our scholars should be for college-readiness and where they are, and we strategize to close those gaps. Every classroom at Chicago Prep will be led by an excellent teacher, a teacher on a mission to prepare our scholars to succeed in college and positively impact the world.

5. Structured and Supportive Community. We believe that scholars learn best in an environment that is calm, safe, and predictable. These are prerequisite conditions for the fulfillment of our mission to prepare *all* scholars to succeed in college. Scholars will not be able to take risks or learn and grow at the highest levels if they do not feel physically or emotionally safe at school. Structure allows scholars to know exactly

⁷⁸ Lemov, Doug. *Teach like a champion: 49 techniques that put students on the path to college*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010. 175-76. “Firm, calm finesse” is one of the keys Lemov suggests for getting 100% compliance in the classroom. It entails requiring students to follow directions and doing so for purpose, not power.

what to expect and to feel success within the daily routines of school. Chicago Prep will create clear procedures and systems for all key routines and we will explicitly teach and practice them with scholars and staff. Systems and routines not only maximize learning time, they also build pride and community. Aristotle is quoted as saying, “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.” Doing small things well every day reinforces that excellence is just a part of your identity. And when all members of the school, scholars and adults, are on the same page about doing these small things well, we become a community of excellence. Scholars also learn best in environments where they feel known, challenged, and supported. All Chicago Prep staff will have a deep reverence for children and view relationship-building as a top priority. We believe in getting to know all scholars as individuals – their strengths, struggles, and dreams for the future, their families, their likes and dislikes, their interests outside of school. We will nurture scholars’ talents while helping them through their areas of academic and personal growth.

Two key tools Chicago Prep uses for creating our structured and supportive community are our emphasis on social and emotional learning (SEL) and our school-wide behavior management system, both described in detail in **Section 2.7**. Scholars will start and end each day with an Advisory period dedicated to building SEL competencies such as self-awareness, stress management, empathy, and conflict resolution. Advisory will provide opportunities to practice SEL skills in the context of conversations and activities meaningful to scholars. With each homeroom divided into two smaller Advisory groups, each led by one staff member, fostering strong peer relationships and scholar-staff relationships is another SEL focus of Advisory. In addition, our daily schedule includes ten minutes daily for mindfulness and meditation, which research has shown to improve mood and coping skills for our targeted student population.⁷⁹ SEL-based interventions have been shown to support positive youth development,⁸⁰ which is particularly important for our context. Not only are Chicago Prep scholars navigating the critical stage of early adolescence, but the school is designed for the Bronzeville community, where trauma and poverty pose significant challenges for students.⁸¹ Our school-wide behavior management system also helps to establish our structured, supportive community by setting and enforcing the same expectations across classrooms and contexts. Scholars will understand that they have choices and know the consequences of those choices. Much like the consistency of our systems and routines, the consistency of a school-wide behavior management system helps to maximize time for learning and free scholars’ and teachers’ minds to focus on academic content.

6. Robust Supports. We recognize that our scholars will come to us with widely varying degrees of academic preparedness, which is why we provide robust supports to ensure that *all* scholars meet our high expectations. The support we provide begins with our extended school day and year. Chicago Prep scholars are in school for an additional hour Monday through Thursday compared to the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) seven-hour elementary school day. With six-hour days on Friday allowing for staff professional development, our students are in school for an additional three hours each week. Our 185-day calendar also provides seven additional days of learning. This additional time will help us to close academic gaps while also maintaining the bar that will ensure scholars are on track to access, and succeed

⁷⁹ Gutierrez, Akira S., Sara B. Krachman, Ethan Scherer, Martin R. West, and John D.E. Gabrieli. Mindfulness in the Classroom: Learning from a School-based Mindfulness Intervention through the Boston Charter Research Collaborative. Transforming Education January 2019. <https://www.transformingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2019-BCRC-Mindfulness-Brief.pdf>. One study, focused on a demographic mirroring Chicago Prep’s targeted student population, found that scholars who engaged in mindfulness training self-reported improvements in mood and coping skills and a reduced likelihood of ruminating

⁸⁰ Taylor, Rebecca D., Eva Oberle, Joseph A. Durlak, and Roger P. Weissberg. Promoting Positive Youth Development Through School-Based Social and Emotional Learning Interventions: A Meta-Analysis of Follow-Up Effects.

at, top colleges and universities. We also consistently provide strategic, individualized supports to ensure all students have what they need to meet our high expectations. Our daily 30-minute Aspire block is dedicated to independent literacy and small-group tutoring, allowing us to ensure that *all* scholars – those who are academically behind, those who are right on grade level, and those who are academically advanced – get the support they need. At Chicago Prep, we continuously challenge and support, providing daily assignments and frequent assessments to measure progress and adjust accordingly.

7. Family and Community Partnerships. Our school community is incomplete without the support and inclusion of families. Scholars learn best when their families and teachers are on the same team, working together to both challenge and support them. We communicate with families frequently and meaningfully. We conduct home visits with all new scholars and any returning scholars who would benefit from a home visit. We host multiple family orientation dates, welcoming parents to the school, clearly and concisely explaining what they can expect from Chicago Prep, and opening up dialogue to learn more about the family and the child. Whenever a new family enrolls, we ensure a member of the leadership team meets with the family to clearly explain the what and why of the school model, learn more about the family and child, and answer any questions they may have. These transparent conversations lay the groundwork for strong partnership, but we must work throughout the year to grow and sustain the partnership. Families have teachers’ cell phone numbers so that they can let teachers know about concerns going on at home or ask questions about homework or school events. Teachers reach out to parents to share regular updates and one-off celebrations or concerns. We expect that every family hears from at least one adult in the building at least every two weeks. We also formally welcome families into our school at least once per month to enrich our community. We have Coffee with the Head of School as a monthly recurring event, and one other event each month in the evening or on the weekend. We consistently heard the importance of meaningful family involvement through community engagement and therefore we also plan to establish a Parent Advisory Council in our Incubation Year. This council is tasked with planning events that families look forward to attending, monitoring and responding to attendance, and sharing parent concerns with Chicago Prep leadership.

We believe our scholars’ success depends on the collaboration of the entire community. We work to form partnerships with community organizations that can provide after-school programming, counseling and trauma services, and adult education. We invite local leaders from small businesses, nonprofit organizations, large corporations, and top colleges to visit Chicago Prep and speak with our scholars. This access to successful entrepreneurs and adults from all walks of life will help scholars understand the connection between what they are learning in school and what they need to succeed in life.

SECTION 2.2: PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION

The curricula will help students become critical thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible global citizens.

- *A convincing rationale for the chosen learning standards (attached to the proposal)*
- *A clear description of and rationale for the selection of curricula in each grade level and major subject area to be served*
 - *For curricula already developed: Persuasive research-based evidence and/or rationale for success of curriculum with target student population*
 - *For curricula yet to be developed: A thorough, detailed plan for curriculum development, citing who will be responsible for key tasks, their relevant qualifications/experience, and a realistic schedule with clear tasks and deadlines*

- *A sound explanation of how teachers will know what to teach and when to teach it, including a description of the resources that will help support teachers' instructional planning and implementation*
- *All sample curricular materials requested for the appropriate grade levels and subjects*
- *Clearly explains policies for promoting students from one grade level to the next, citing criteria for promotion and retention*
- *Specific graduation requirements with clear rationale for their selection*

2.2.1: ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The mission of Chicago Prep is to prepare all scholars to succeed in college and positively impact the world. We set high expectations because we know that with the right supports in place, **all scholars can achieve academic excellence**. Chicago Prep scholars will graduate high school with the broad range of content knowledge and foundational, analytical, and problem-solving skills necessary for success at prestigious universities. We have therefore chosen learning standards and aligned curriculum designed to drive towards college and career readiness. Chicago Prep will use the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for our 5th-8th Grade English Language Arts and Math programs. For English Language Arts, this includes the CCSS for Reading: Literature; Reading: Informational Text; Writing; Language; and Speaking & Listening. The CCSS were informed by the most rigorous state standards across the country, as well as the standards of top-performing countries, to ensure that American students are held to the highest possible standards and are prepared to contribute to and compete in our global economy.⁸² The Standards set a high bar of rigor and will hold us accountable to developing critical-thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills.

Chicago Prep will use the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which have been officially adopted as the Illinois Learning Standards in Science, to drive our science program. Much like the CCSS, the NGSS were created through a collaboration across states; they were written and repeatedly revised by a team of experts. The standards are rigorous and research-backed, informed by the science programs of nations where students are performing well in science and engineering. The NGSS cover the four major domains of science: life sciences, physical sciences, earth and space sciences, and engineering design. A key benefit of NGSS is that the performance expectations for students are informed by three key elements: Science and Engineering Practices; Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concepts. The NGSS set a high bar for performance and will prepare our scholars for success in college and career, including in STEM fields.

To guide our social studies program, Chicago Prep will use the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science. At every grade level, these standards specify the inquiry skills students should have within three key categories: developing questions and planning inquiries, evaluating sources and using evidence, and communicating conclusions and taking informed action. The standards also specify what students should know and be able to do within four key domains of social sciences – civics, geography, economics, and history – to help scholars grow into informed and engaged citizens. In addition, the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science allow the flexibility to cover culturally relevant content. To complement the NGSS and the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science, we will use the CCSS ELA Standards for Science & Technical Subjects and the CCSS ELA Standards for History/Social Studies, respectively. These standards guide the type and complexity of reading and writing scholars should complete in science and social studies classes.

⁸² "Development Process." Common Core State Standards Initiative. Accessed December 15, 2019. <http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/development-process/>.

For our Entrepreneurship program, we plan to partner with the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE). Although the curriculum is not aligned to standards in the traditional sense, it is designed to develop students’ entrepreneurial mindsets, defined by six key domains: initiative and self-reliance, flexibility and adaptability, communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, future orientation, opportunity recognition, and comfort with risk. NFTE has also developed the Entrepreneurial Mindset Index (EMI) to measure the attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs needed to be strong in all six domains.⁸³

The National Standards for Financial Literacy from the Council for Economic Education will guide our Financial Literacy program. These standards will inform our instruction to cover the six critical topics of earning income, buying goods and services, saving, using credit, financial investing, protecting and insuring. We believe that providing scholars with key knowledge and skills in these areas will prepare them to manage their personal finances wisely, which is critical for college and career success. Further, these standards ensure scholars have a broader understanding of the economy, which will help them to contribute meaningfully as adults and to navigate societal economic changes.

We will use the National PE Standards to guide our physical education program. These five standards are clear and concise, and they will allow teachers to exercise flexibility in selecting the exact content and activities most appropriate for our scholars. Similarly, we will use the National Health Education Standards to guide our health program. These standards are approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and will provide our scholars with the knowledge and skills to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Finally, Chicago Prep will use the Illinois Art Learning Standards’ Visual Arts Standards to guide our visual arts program. The standards specify outcomes for creating, presenting, responding, and connecting. They are written in a way that allows all children to access the arts as both artists and critics/critical thinkers. Much like the National PE Standards, the Visual Arts Standards provide a useful guide for teachers while allowing for flexibility and creativity in the specific program of instruction. A summary of our standards by subject area and grade level can be found in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Standards by Subject Area and Grade Level

Subject and Grade Level	Standards	Link
English Language Arts, 5th-8th Grade	Common Core State Standards	http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/
Mathematics, 5th-8th Grade	Common Core State Standards	http://www.corestandards.org/Math/
Science, 5th-8th Grade	Next Generation Science Standards, supplemented by Common Core State Standards	5 th : https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Grade3-Grade5.pdf ; 6 th -8 th : https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Middle-School-6-8.pdf ; 5 th -8 th supplement: http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RST/6-8/
Social Studies, 5th-8th Grade	Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science, supplemented by Common Core State Standards	5 th : https://www.isbe.net/Documents/ss-stds-grade5-012716.pdf ; 6 th -8 th : https://www.isbe.net/Documents/ss-stds-6-8-012716.pdf ; 5 th -8 th supplement: http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/6-8/

⁸³ Gold, Thomas and Sophia Rodriguez. “Measuring Entrepreneurial Mindset in Youth: Learnings from NFTE’s Entrepreneurial Mindset Index. NFTE, November 2018. <http://www.nfte.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NFTE-Whitepaper-Measuring-Entrepreneurial-Mindset-in-Youth-November-2018.pdf>

Entrepreneurship Program of MBA, 5th-8th Grade	NFTE: Domains, not traditional standards, that develop an entrepreneurial mindset.	https://www.nfte.com/entrepreneurial-mindset/
Financial Literacy Program of MBA	National Standards for Financial Literacy from the Council for Economic Education	https://www.councilforeconed.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/national-standards-for-financial-literacy.pdf
Physical Education and Health	National PE Standards and National Health Education Standards	PE: https://www.shapeamerica.org/standards/pe/Health : https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/ser/standards/index.htm
Art	Illinois Art Learning Standards' Visual Arts Standards	https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Visual-Arts-Standards.pdf

2.2.2: CURRICULUM

Chicago Prep commits to providing an academically rigorous education that prepares all scholars to succeed in college and positively impact the world. Because an excellent curriculum is necessary for the fulfillment of our mission, Chicago Prep believes in using curriculum that has been proven effective with similar demographics of students. For this reason, we have chosen to use the free, publicly available, and CCSS-aligned curriculum provided by Achievement First (AF), a high-performing network of charter schools in the Northeast. Achievement First students are predominantly Black, Latinx, and low-income, and are closing the achievement gap with their wealthy and predominantly white peers.⁸⁴

- **92%** of AF 8th graders in New York are proficient in math, compared to **33%** of all students in New York and **76%** of students in New York’s wealthiest areas.
- In 2015, Connecticut adopted rigorous new Common Core-aligned standardized tests. Since that time, AF students have improved proficiency rates by **21** percentage points in math and by **15** percentage points in reading.
- With an average score of **1126** on the SAT, students at AF University Prep High are performing better than their peers from similar backgrounds (**990**) as well as the national average (**1068**).
- AF Rhode Island students outperform state proficiency averages by **19** percentage points in ELA and **24** percentage points in math.

Considering this strong student achievement data and the curriculum’s rigor, detail, and clear standards-alignment, we strongly believe that our curricular choices will be a key factor in the growth and achievement of Chicago Prep scholars. In alignment with Chicago Prep, AF uses the CCSS for ELA and math and the NGSS for science. The curriculum is highly rigorous, assuming that students are capable of mastering challenging content while providing ample scaffolding and intervention strategies to support all students in meeting those expectations. Additionally, the curriculum is comprehensive, well-organized, and easy to follow. Each content area includes key resources, outlined in Figure 2.2, and sample AF curriculum material can be found in **Appendix 2.2.2**.

Figure 2.2: Resources Included with Achievement First Curriculum

Resource	Description
Program Overview	Provides the overall vision for the content area across grade levels. Includes rationale for the curriculum content, design, and instructional strategies.
Fundamentals of Instruction (FOI)	Provides the purpose and overview of each type of lesson within a content area. ELA includes close reading lessons, reading workout lessons, writing workout lessons, and guided drafting. Math includes cumulative review lessons, conjecture lessons, and exercise lessons. History

⁸⁴ AF Annual Report 2019. Achievement First. https://www.achievementfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/AF_AnnualReport_2019-For-Web.pdf.

	includes close reading lessons and student investigation lessons. Science includes inquiry-based lessons. The FOI includes a description of each key part of the lesson (e.g., for science, framing, building a body of evidence, explanation, and closing) with why, how long, what happens, and markers of excellence.
Scope & Sequence (SS)	A high-level overview of the academic program for the year for each subject and grade level. The SS includes the names of all units, the number of instructional weeks and number of lessons included, and in some cases the overview of how/when standards will be covered.
Unit Overview	Each grade-level subject area includes multiple units; the unit overviews help teachers and leaders understand the purpose, goals, and timeline of the unit. The unit overview helps teachers to see the connectedness and flow of each lesson within the unit and to plan instruction with the end goals in mind.
Lesson Plan / Classwork	For each daily lesson, there is a detailed lesson plan that includes the objective and aligned standard, materials needed, time stamps, exemplar responses for assessment questions, and strategies for teachers to break down complex tasks, differentiate, and intervene as needed. Additionally, student-facing materials are included: texts, student work packets, graphic organizers, visual aids, guided notes, etc.

We will use AF curriculum for 5th-8th ELA, math, science, art, and physical education. For social studies, we will reference AF curriculum as a resource but will internally create a scope and sequence and aligned unit plans. Our goal is to ensure the social studies program meets all Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science and incorporates the community input we have received through community engagement. For example, we want to ensure that our social studies classes engage deeply with African history, African American history, and Bronzeville history, a desire that we heard expressed by dozens of community stakeholders, to affirm our scholars’ identities and deeply invest and engage them in learning. During Chicago Prep’s Planning Year, the Head of School will research additional social studies curricular resources and develop the course scope and sequence; this task is accounted for in our Start-up Plan, attached in **Appendix 4.1**. The Head of School will work with local leaders to identify rigorous, high-quality, culturally relevant texts, lessons, and projects. All units of study will be developed prior to the start of summer professional development in July 2021, providing a comprehensive overview of the social studies course while allowing for ongoing flexibility to be responsive to scholar needs and interests.

To complement the AF physical education curriculum, Chicago Prep will internally create health units and lessons. Beginning in January of 2021, the Head of School will research existing standards-aligned health curriculum during the planning year and will work with key community stakeholders throughout the spring to select and adapt existing resources, ensuring our plans meet the National Health Education Standards. All final scopes, sequences, and unit plans will be finalized and ready for summer professional development no later than June 18, 2021.

Curriculum Training and Implementation. During summer professional development, the Chicago Prep leadership team will lead detailed and interactive sessions instructing teachers how to navigate and use the robust AF curriculum resources. Teachers will develop familiarity with their grade and content’s program overview, fundamentals of instruction, scope and sequence, first two units, and first two weeks of lesson plans. Professional development will include time to study and discuss the key AF curricular to ensure that all teachers have a shared frame of reference. Teachers will have independent and collaborative work time to explore in-depth the curriculum for their own subject and grade level. Investing ample time upfront on understanding the curricular resources will make it easy for teachers to know what to teach and when to teach it. They will start by referring to their grade level/content area scope and sequence and teach the units in order, then refer to each unit and teach the lessons in order. Teachers will also engage in professional development on our “internalization protocol” – the steps we go through

to internalize scopes and sequences, unit plans, and lessons. This allows teachers to adapt them to the needs and interests of our scholars and prepare to execute effectively. Our lesson internalization process includes carefully reading all texts, lesson plans, and student packets; completing exemplar responses for all questions/tasks; planning student engagement strategies for the lesson; and differentiating to meet the needs of all learners. The Head of School and Assistant Head of School will lead the professional development for lesson internalization, including training over the summer and in response to teacher and scholar needs throughout the year. Teachers will submit fully internalized lesson plans one week in advance. A draft Chicago Prep Professional Development calendar is attached in **Appendix 2.9**.

For our entrepreneurship course, we will use the curriculum provided by NFTE. NFTE will train our entrepreneurship teachers during a two-day workshop over the summer, the cost of which is accounted for in line item 77, Professional Development, on the budget attached in **Appendix 3.1**. As part of teacher training, NFTE will provide year-long curriculum that is designed to develop students' entrepreneurial mindsets as defined by six key domains: initiative and self-reliance, flexibility and adaptability, communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, future orientation, opportunity recognition, and comfort with risk. Founded in 1987, NFTE has over three decades of experience educating youth in entrepreneurship and has demonstrated significant positive impact: 75% of NFTE alumni enroll in college and 25% of alumni start at least one business, compared to 2% of young people overall.⁸⁵ The program's entrepreneurial mindsets also align well with our core values, particularly **courage, curiosity, responsibility, and perseverance**, providing opportunity for meaningful integrated instruction in entrepreneurship and character development.

For financial literacy, we plan to use Dave Ramsey's Foundations in Personal Finance for Middle School as our core curriculum. The curriculum is aligned to National Standards for Financial Literacy. It includes videos, engaging student materials, and teacher's editions that make it easy to use. We will also complement the Dave Ramsey curriculum with internal resources developed in collaboration with community leaders, including local banks, nonprofits, entrepreneurs, and business owners. Our Head of School will work with our network of community partners to source additional lessons and materials during the spring of our planning year.

Other than social studies and health curriculum, Chicago Prep does not anticipate the need for creation/development of extensive curriculum. We do anticipate the need for intervention materials, and these will be selected and/or created by school leadership in collaboration with teachers on an ongoing basis throughout the year, based on scholar data.

Chicago Prep scholars must complete the following courses each year: ELA, math, science, social studies, Money & Business in Action (MBA), art, and physical education. The subject areas will remain the same each year, but the complexity will increase in alignment with our chosen standards. An overview of the core content curriculum for each subject and grade level can be found in **Appendix 2.2.2**, including sample curriculum maps, unit plans, and lesson plans.

2.2.3: PROMOTION AND GRADUATION POLICY

The mission of Chicago Prep, to prepare scholars to succeed in college and positively impact the world, requires that scholars achieve a high bar of academic preparedness. Academic preparedness will therefore be used to determine promotion from one grade to the next, including graduation from Chicago Prep in 8th grade. We do not promote scholars based on their age or social factors; this policy is in alignment with

⁸⁵ NFTE 2018 Annual Report. <https://www.nfte.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/NFTE-2018-Annual-Report-released-January-2019.pdf>

our mission and vision for our scholars’ success, as well as with Illinois law. We firmly believe that **all scholars can achieve academic success**. We believe that promoting a scholar who has not achieved key measures of academic success leaves the scholar unprepared to meet the academic demands of the next grade level. Chicago Prep will consider three major factors when determining whether to promote or retain a scholar: grades, NWEA growth and attainment, and attendance.

1. Grades: Our curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards, designed to prepare students to meet rigorous grade-level standards and remain on track to succeed in college. Because scholar grades are based on assignments and assessments from our curriculum, scholars’ grades are the primary indicator of their performance on the Common Core Standards and their academic readiness for promotion to the next grade. Information on the grading composition for each class can be found in **Appendix 2.2.3**. Throughout each trimester, scholars will receive grades in five categories: tests and projects, quizzes, classwork, and homework. Scholars and parents will receive weekly progress reports that include cumulative percentages and corresponding letter grades in all seven content areas: math, literacy, social studies, science, financial literacy and entrepreneurship, art, and physical education/health. Letter grades will be determined the grading scale in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Grading Scale

Points	Letter Grade	Description
97-100	A+	Scholar has mastered the content standards with few or no gaps in understanding or execution.
93-96	A	
90-92	A-	
87-89	B+	Scholar has demonstrated proficiency in the content standards with only minor gaps in understanding or execution.
83-86	B	
80-82	B-	
77-79	C+	Scholar has demonstrated basic competency with the content standards, but still has some gaps in understanding or execution.
73-76	C	
70-72	C-	
60-69	D	Scholar has not yet mastered the content standards and must demonstrate at least basic competency to earn credit.
0-59	F	

Scholars’ final grades in a course will be calculated as the average of their three trimester grades. At Chicago Prep, 70% or higher is considered passing. A 70% indicates the scholar has a baseline readiness to begin mastering the skills and content of the next grade level. Our core classes are math, literacy, social studies, science, and Money & Business in Action (MBA), and passing these five classes is an important requirement for promotion.

2. NWEA MAP Growth and Attainment: Scholars at Chicago Prep will take the NWEA MAP three times a year, in the fall, winter, and spring. NWEA MAP results provide a holistic portrait of a scholar’s academic performance because they (a) indicate the scholar’s growth from year-to-year, and from fall to winter to spring, (b) indicate the scholar’s absolute mastery of grade-level standards, and (c) indicate the scholar’s performance relative to grade-level peers. Our goal is for every scholar to be performing at or above grade level as measured by the NWEA. While NWEA provides an important and well-rounded portrait of a scholar’s academic performance, it is a snapshot take on *one* day of an entire year. We believe that a scholar’s grades, which indicate progress and achievement, measured daily and weekly throughout an entire school year, provide an overall better indicator of a scholar’s readiness for the next grade level.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ This belief is in alignment with the finding that high school grades are better than test scores at predicting college graduation, as cited in Paul Tough’s book *How children succeed: Grit, curiosity, and the hidden power of character*. Boston: Mariner Books, 2012.

We also recognize that many of our incoming 5th grade scholars, as well as scholars who transfer to Chicago Prep in later grades, may have significant academic gaps that require more than one year to remediate. This is why our grading standards for promotion, requiring students to attain a 70% or higher in rigorous academic classes, are more demanding than our testing standards for promotion. When weighing NWEA results into promotion and retention decisions, growth is considered just as important as attainment. Therefore, a scholar who is below grade level *may* still be promoted as long as he/she has demonstrated the expected growth from the previous school year and/or the beginning of the current school year. This decision depends on how far below grade level the scholar is and whether the school team believes that repeating the grade will be beneficial for the scholar long-term. Similarly, a scholar who has not demonstrated the expected growth from the previous school year and/or the beginning of the current school year *may* still be promoted if he/she is performing at or above grade level. To be in good standing for promotion, scholars must meet their growth goal AND reach the 30th percentile for attainment, OR reach the 50th percentile for attainment.

3. Attendance: We believe that all scholars need to attend school daily in order to achieve the high academic bar of college readiness. At Chicago Prep, missing even one day of school means that the scholar has missed important content and assignments. Whenever a scholar is absent, Advisors or homeroom teachers will be responsible for calling the parent that day to check in, learn the reason for the absence, and reiterate the importance of attendance by highlighting some of what the scholar will/did miss. Scholars who have ten or more unexcused absences in a year or fifteen or more total absences (excused and/or unexcused) in a year may be at-risk of retention. At Chicago Prep, half-day absences, which are constituted by a scholar being present for less than five hours of the school day, will be counted as an absence. In other words, if a scholar misses four hours of school on two separate days, that scholar now has one absence. Given the importance of daily attendance, Chicago Prep will communicate with families at each of the absence benchmarks below, at a minimum:

- 3 or more unexcused absences in one trimester; 5 or more unexcused absences total for the year; 9 or more unexcused absences total for the year
- 5 or more total absences in one trimester; 8 or more total absences for the year; 14 or more total absences for the year

Communication will include written notices prepared by the operations team as well as phone or in-person conferences with teachers and/or administrators to reiterate the importance of daily attendance and the impact of attendance on promotion/retention decisions. In addition, weekly progress reports will include scholars' absences for the trimester and the year. Attendance is an important factor in promotion; to be in good standing, scholars must have 9 or fewer unexcused absences AND 14 or fewer total absences (excused or unexcused)

Promotion and Graduation Policy. Scholars who meet the grading, NWEA MAP, and attendance criteria described above will be automatically promoted to the next grade level. Scholars who fail to meet one or more of the above criteria may be retained, however attendance alone will not be a sole factor for retention. Final decisions for promotion or retention will be made on a case-by-case basis. All staff members who work with a scholar will weigh in on whether or not to promote the scholar. The scholar's parents or guardians will also weigh in on whether or not they believe their child should be promoted or retained. However, the Head of School will make all final decisions regarding retention/promotion for scholars who fail to meet all of Chicago Prep's promotion requirements. All decisions will be made with the best interests of the scholar in mind. Staff members and families will work together to determine whether promotion or retention will ultimately help or hinder the scholar on his or her path to high school,

college, and life success. The graduation criteria is the same as the promotion criteria, applied to 8th grade students. Students who do not meet the graduation criteria but will be 15 years old on or before September 1st of the following school will be promoted in alignment with the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Elementary School Promotion Policy. All scholars Chicago Prep retained will have the option of attending three weeks of summer school, staffed by Chicago Prep teachers and accounted for in line 81 of the attached budget. Scholars who meet all summer school requirements, including daily attendance, completion of all assignments, and passing of courses, will be promoted to the next grade.

Communication of Promotion and Retention Decisions. Chicago Prep is deeply committed to establishing and maintaining robust partnerships with families. While final decisions regarding retention and promotion will be communicated on or before the last day of school, teachers and administrators will maintain frequent and consistent communication with all families about scholars' academic progress and attendance. At a minimum, communication of progress and concerns will include:

1. Chicago Prep will send home weekly progress reports that indicate the scholars' grades in all classes, behavior progress throughout the week, as well as his/her daily attendance, including tardiness and early dismissals.
2. Scholars' Advisors will personally communicate with all families at least once every two weeks.
3. Scholars' Advisors will hold a phone conference with all families at least once per month.
4. During Trimester 1 and Trimester 2 Report Card Conferences, teachers and/or administrators will communicate if a child is currently at-risk of retention. This communication may occur in-person or via phone AND will include a formal letter either shared with the parent in-person or mailed to the home.
5. No later than six weeks before the last day of school, Chicago Prep administrators will communicate with all families of scholars who are at-risk of retention. Administrators will let the families know why the child is at-risk and communicate whether promotion is still possible. If promotion is still possible, administrators will communicate clear next steps (e.g., maintaining a B average for the remaining six weeks in math class, meet growth goal on reading NWEA). At this time, administrators will also notify families of the summer school option for scholars who are retained.

On or before the last day of school, the Head of School will let families know if their child is promoted or retained. For scholars who are retained, the Head of School may meet with the families in person or via phone and will send a formal letter explaining the decision.

SECTION 2.3: INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Instructional strategies are intentional and engaging and will ensure that all students are challenged to use and develop higher-order thinking skills.

- *A clear, coherent instructional approach that aligns with and will support implementation of the school's curriculum*
- *Instructional strategies that are built on a foundation of proven educational practices and teaching approaches*
- *Clear alignment of the instructional strategies with the mission and educational philosophy of the school*
- *An explanation for and research-based evidence of how the instructional strategies will address the needs of the targeted student population*
- *(If proposing a Next Generation blended learning model): The response clearly explains how the teacher-student relationship will be translated into a virtual or technologically-driven classroom.*

World-class instruction is at the heart of educators' work and is core to our mission of preparing scholars to succeed in college. At Chicago Prep, we believe that great instruction engages, challenges, and supports *all* scholars. This includes scholars performing at or above grade level as well as scholars performing below grade level. We challenge and engage our English Learners, our scholars with disabilities, and our scholars who need **robust support** to meet our high behavioral expectations. Our approach to instruction is informed directly by our educational philosophy and key design elements.

At Chicago Prep, we believe that **all scholars can achieve academic excellence** and that **effective education motivates scholars and prepares them to succeed in the real world**. It is through **excellent teaching** that our scholars will truly be prepared to succeed in college and positively impact the world. These beliefs drive the design of our core instructional methods. We ensure that teachers have a robust toolbelt of instructional strategies, many of which come from anchor texts *Teach Like a Champion* and *Teach Like a Champion 2.0*, *Reading Reconsidered*, and *The Writing Revolution*. We have designed our instructional program specifically to meet the needs of our target population, the majority of whom are students of color from low-income families. Many high-performing charter schools across the country with similar demographics of students rely on similar instructional strategies. These schools include:

- Uncommon Schools: The charter network in the Northeast operates 54 schools and serves 20,000 scholars; 77% of scholars qualify for free and reduced-price lunch, and 99% are scholars of color. Their scholars have closed the achievement gap. On the 2018 New York State exams, Uncommon's New York City scholars had higher rates of proficiency in both math and reading than did white scholars in New York State. Uncommon's impact extends beyond tests, too: 76% of alumni have either graduated from or are still enrolled in a four-year college.⁸⁷
- Brooke Charter Schools: Brooke operates five campuses in Massachusetts, and 92% of their 1,975 scholars are Black and Latinx. Brooke leads the number one open-enrollment school in Boston based on Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results in 2018 and 2019. Brooke also ranked in the top ten schools in Massachusetts for scholar growth in both ELA and math.⁸⁸
- The Achievement First (AF) Network: AF operates 34 schools across five cities in the Northeast; 82% of scholars qualify for free and reduced price lunch, and 99% are scholars of color.⁸⁹ AF Rhode Island scholars outperform state proficiency averages by **19%** points in ELA and **24%** points in math.⁹⁰
- Forte Prep: A start-up school in its third year of operation founded by a BES Fellow, Forte Prep's student body is 99% scholars of color (including 80% Hispanic/Latinx) and 90% economically disadvantaged. In 2019, 74% of their scholars – and 90% of sixth grade scholars – were proficient on the New York State Math exam, compared to averages below 50% in New York State.

Our foundational instructional methods, driven by our educational philosophy and key design elements, ensure academic rigor, data-driven instruction, and scholars' investment in their learning.

1. Academic Rigor: Our scholars do the critical thinking work and actively engage in their own learning.

Instructional practices across all classrooms that will drive towards academic rigor include the following:

⁸⁷ <https://www.publiccharters.org/latest-news/2018/06/07/achievement-first-dsst-and-uncommon-schools-named-2018-broad-prize-finalists>, <https://uncommonschoools.org/results/>

⁸⁸ <https://www.ebrooke.org/ourschools/our-story/>

⁸⁹ <https://www.publiccharters.org/latest-news/2018/06/07/achievement-first-dsst-and-uncommon-schools-named-2018-broad-prize-finalists>

⁹⁰ AF Annual Report 2019. Achievement First. https://www.achievementfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/AF_AnnualReport_2019-For-Web.pdf.

How and Why. After scholars answer a question, teachers ask “How do you know?” or “Why?”, requiring scholars to explain and expand through evidence, prior knowledge, etc. Asking how and why pushes scholars to think more critically by getting them in the habit of explaining or defending their thinking.

Everybody Writes. Teachers pose a rigorous question to the class and instruct everyone to respond in writing for a set period of time. Everybody Writes provides scholars more time to think before sharing with peers and the teacher. Not only does this allow scholars more time to process; it also is likely to increase the thoughtfulness and complexity of ideas during discussion. It holds everybody accountable to thinking and participating.

Habits of Discussion: Turn and Talk; Whole-group discussions: Using Habits of Discussion – sentence stems and concepts (e.g., I agree with you because, I disagree with you because, what’s your evidence for that, I partially agree, I want to build on that, etc.), teachers facilitate rigorous small-group and whole-class discussions in which scholars respond directly to each other’s ideas. Habits of Discussion help scholars learn to listen carefully and respond to each other in increasingly rich, nuanced ways, thus strengthening their ability to think critically and take different perspectives. Scholars use Habits of Discussion to drive all academic discussions, including Turn and Talk and Whole-group discussion.

When implementing Turn and Talk, teachers ask a question and instruct scholars to “turn and talk” with a neighbor. Turn and Talk boosts Participation Ratio by getting all scholars engaged in the content. It also provides an opportunity for scholars to “test” their ideas with a neighbor before sharing with the whole class, which helps all scholars, particularly more hesitant scholars, to build **courage**.

During whole-group discussions, scholars are **responsible** for listening closely to a variety of ideas and evidence offered by their peers. Whole-group discussions can be as brief as two minutes (for example, to review a math problem that the majority of scholars got correct), as long as thirty-five minutes (in the case of a Socratic Seminar), or anywhere in between. Scholar discussions improve both engagement and rigor. Finally, whole-group discussions also mimic the discussions of many college and university classes, thus preparing scholars to succeed in those settings.

Show Call: Show Call refers to displaying a scholar’s work for the class to see, discuss, evaluate, and/or revise. Show Call motivates scholars to give their best effort in written responses or independent practice because they know that at any point in time the teacher could select their work to share with the class. A Show Call is never used to embarrass scholars. Rather, the message in the classroom is that the work scholars do matters and will be followed through on – revised, discussed, and graded. Show Call boosts rigor by pushing scholars to evaluate, particularly when they do not know if the work in question is exemplary or average, right or wrong, and must instead decide for themselves by applying their skills and knowledge.

Oral Drill. Teachers ask a series of content review questions in quick succession and call on scholars to answer. Oral Drill provides consistent practice with some of the most important concepts for a given unit or course and is therefore a way to help scholars to learn and retain factual knowledge. As scholars build a broad base of background knowledge, they are better able to think critically and apply their knowledge in novel situations.⁹¹ Additionally, oral drill serves as a helpful entry point to class for scholars who struggle with comprehension and/or writing but can express ideas aloud.

⁹¹ Willingham, Daniel T. *Why Don’t Students Like School? A Cognitive Scientist Answers Questions about How the Mind Works and What It Means for Your Classroom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009. Chapter 5 “Is Drilling Worth It?”

Direct instruction. Direct instruction is presenting new skills or knowledge to scholars by teaching it explicitly, including via presentation and modeling. Scholars cannot think critically or creatively in the absence of foundational knowledge and skills. Often, direct instruction is the most efficient and reliable way to provide scholars the baseline that they need for higher-order thinking. Asking scholars to think critically or come up with their own solutions when they do not have any background knowledge can be confusing and unproductive.⁹²

2. Data-Driven Instruction: Excellent teaching is driven by data. We teach until our scholars master. We are responsive and flexible. Instructional practices across all classrooms that will leverage data-driven instruction include:

Cold Call: Cold Call refers to calling on scholars regardless of whether they have raised their hands. Cold Call has four main purposes: (1) **Checking for Understanding** – it is the teacher’s job to know how *all* scholars are doing, not just those who volunteer to tell us. By calling on scholars who might not otherwise raise their hands, teachers can gauge more accurately the mastery of the *entire* class. (2) **Accountability** – holding scholars accountable for staying actively engaged as listeners and participants throughout the lesson. (3) **Pacing** – scholars and teachers move through content faster when the teacher does not feel they must wait for scholars to volunteer. (4) **Increasing Ratio** – Cold Call ensures more scholars participate more of the time and increases the quality and depth of scholar thinking. It improves Participation Ratio by encouraging scholars to answer every question the teacher asks (in their head even if not out loud) rather than only the ones they are called on for. It can also improve Think Ratio by combining it with other techniques, such as Everybody Writes and Wait Time, to allow scholars the time and space to think critically about rigorous questions and content.

Rapid Feedback: While scholars work independently, teachers actively monitor progress by quickly checking the work of every scholar in the classroom. Teachers follow a clear, strategic pathway, and give individualized, pen-to-paper and verbal feedback to each scholar. Teachers record the data on their clipboard to use in planning future lesson. Rapid feedback allows scholars to practice key objectives every single day with targeted feedback to improve their work. Practicing is the only way to get better at something, and practice must be focused, intentional, and feedback-rich to maximize impact. This strategy aligns with our commitment to data-driven instruction, as teachers use scholar work to immediately inform and adjust their instruction. It also helps scholars understand how making mistakes helps them to grow. Rapid feedback is one of the key ways that we provide scholars with **robust supports**.

Small-group/individual tutoring: For small-group tutoring during our daily independent literacy and tutoring period, scholars will be grouped homogeneously by ability, including groups of scholars requiring additional supports to meet grade level standards, as well as scholars at or above grade level. Groups may be as small as two or as large as eight; teachers may also work one-on-one with scholars in some cases. Scholars will enter Chicago Prep with vastly varying levels of academic achievement. While some gaps can be addressed during whole-group instruction, others will require more targeted intervention. For example, if we have 5th graders reading at a first-grade level, we cannot and will not expect them to simply “catch up” during whole-group novel study. They will need additional, intensive, focused supports. Similarly, we expect to have some scholars who have far outpaced their peers, and we want to continuously challenge them to grow. These scholars, too, will need differentiated instruction to ensure they stay above grade level and continue to reach new levels of excellence.

⁹² Ibid, 37.

Blended learning. Blended learning is one way that Chicago Prep will ensure that all scholars receive the **robust supports** they need. Scholars will use Chromebooks for additional practice with skills they have learned in class. For example, while the teacher pulls a small group of scholars who still need help memorizing their multiplication tables, the rest of the class works independently on Chromebooks on IXL math, getting targeted practice and feedback. While whole-group instruction and rapid feedback certainly help the struggling scholars to catch up over time, scholars at both ends of the spectrum also need specific instruction targeted to their level. When the teacher provides this instruction, our blended learning method ensures that other scholars continue learning and growing.

3. Investing Scholars in Their Learning: We help scholars see the connection between effort and success. We intentionally design opportunities for scholars to practice skills required for college and career. We motivate scholars and prepare them to excel in the real world. Instructional practices across all classrooms designed to invest scholars in their learning include the following:

Check your work: Check your work refers to feedback after scholars have completed a timed and/or graded assessment. For example, scholars take a 5-question reading quiz on last night's reading assignment, then check their answers one-by-one as the teacher shares correct answers; or scholars have two minutes to answer as many math problems as they can, then check their work against the correct answers displayed on the projector. Immediate feedback builds scholar accountability and investment. Scholars feel more accountable because they know that their work will be checked or graded immediately; this sends the message that they are responsible for their own studying, growth, and achievement. Similarly, it increases scholars' feelings of wanting to do well by making the results of their efforts visible in such a timely manner. When Chicago Prep scholars move on to high school, college, and beyond, the personal investment they have developed in their own learning will help to drive their continued growth and achievement.

Collaborative group work. Teachers place scholars in groups and instruct them to work together on an assignment. Collaborative groupwork has several important purposes. First, it is effective preparation for college, where group projects and partner work are common, and for career, where working as part of a team is an important skill for just about any role. In particular, being an entrepreneur requires scholars to work well with others, to be able to listen well, share ideas clearly and at the appropriate times, and make connections. Additionally, scholars who regularly work in groups build social and emotional skills. They see firsthand the importance of treating others with kindness, showing understanding when someone makes a mistake or encouraging a quieter peer to share their ideas. They also get practice responding productively to setbacks, as experiencing frustration or disappointment can be common for young scholars working in a group. Finally, scholars working in groups experience the power of learning from others, rather than seeing the teacher as the only expert in the room.

Speeches and presentations. Scholars will be challenged to share their learning throughout a unit by giving speeches and presentations in front of classmates. When preparing a speech or presentation, scholars must think as critically and work as hard as if they are writing a paper. Scholars also have the added challenge of communicating their learning in an engaging way, practicing the presentation, and delivering it with confidence. These skills will prepare them for job interviews, college courses, and entrepreneurial work that so often requires effective pitching. Speeches and presentations tie directly to our core values of **courage** – for the presenter – and **kindness** – for the audience. Scholars will also benefit from hearing their peers speak and being pushed to provide feedback on those presentations.

Projects and long-term assignments. Scholars are given several weeks to work on a challenging, culminating major assignment. Examples include a science fair project, a combined art-social studies-

reading project, or a small business model for Money & Business in Action (MBA). Scholars must plan, generate questions and find answers, create drafts, get feedback, and revise. These skills build college and career preparation as well as scholar pride and confidence. Projects and long-term assignments tie directly to our core values of **responsibility** and **perseverance**. Additionally, teachers use projects to push scholars to think about how they might positively impact the world. Through multidisciplinary projects, scholars see the relevance of their education and are motivated to put it to good use.

SECTION 2.4: EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND ASSESSMENTS

The proposal sets ambitious but achievable goals for student achievement and outlines a clear plan to ensure that students stay on track to achieve the stated outcomes.

- *Specific, measurable, ambitious, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) academic goals that align with the School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP)*
- *Academic goals that reflect the mission, vision, and educational philosophy and assessment plan (if proposing a Next Generation blended learning model, metrics for the blended learning components of the educational model)*
- *An assessment plan and table that aligns with SQRP with descriptions of the purpose, design, and format of each assessment*
- *Demonstrated readiness to implement Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), once finalized*
- *Diagnostic, benchmark/interim, and summative assessments that are valid, reliable, and appropriately aligned with curricula and Common Core State Standards (CCSS)*
- *A data collection and analysis process that school leaders and teachers use to monitor student progress toward identified goals, make curricular adjustments, improve instruction, and identify areas for professional development*
- *A clear plan for consistently communicating with parents/guardians about their child’s academic progress*
- *If proposing a Next Generation blended learning model with non-automated online courses and built-in course assessments, course materials offer students’ access to answers, explanations, and/or rubrics. **Not Applicable.***

2.4.1: SCHOOL GOALS

Academic Goals Overview. Our mission at Chicago Prep, to provide academic rigor in a structured and supportive community, preparing all 5th-8th grade scholars to succeed in college and positively impact the world, is ambitious and long-term. To ensure we are on track to fulfill our mission, it is imperative that we set and monitor progress against a series of key academic goals that are clear and measurable, based on student achievement on standardized tests, and are designed to measure scholar college readiness. We set attainment, growth, and longitudinal growth goals to help paint a robust picture of student learning and achievement. Goals include both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced measures because we need both types of information: how our scholars are doing compared to other students across the nation, and how our scholars are doing against an absolute bar of college readiness. Figures 2.4 through 2.6 below outline our academic goals for attainment and growth for our first five years of operation. These goals are designed to keep Chicago Prep in “Good Standing” in accordance with the School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP). Additionally, the goals become increasingly ambitious from Year 1 through Year 3 when we reach full capacity enrollment. The change in goals is in alignment with our expectation that student growth and achievement continue to improve until we are sustaining excellent results. It also recognizes that it takes time to achieve high levels of excellence school-wide, particularly when we anticipate many scholars arriving to Chicago Prep with significant academic gaps.

Figure 2.4: Year 1 Academic Goals: Attainment and Growth

Subject	Type	Goals
READING	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school attainment $\geq 50^{\text{th}}$ percentile 2. IAR: 40% of Chicago Prep scholars meet or exceed expectations
	Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school growth percentile $\geq 60^{\text{th}}$ 4. NWEA: 60% of scholars meet or exceed their spring-to-spring growth goals (fall-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from the previous spring; winter-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from spring or fall)
MATH	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school attainment percentile of $\geq 50^{\text{th}}$ 2. IAR: 40% of Chicago Prep scholars meet or exceed expectations
	Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school growth percentile of $\geq 60^{\text{th}}$ 4. NWEA: 60% of scholars meet or exceed their spring-to-spring growth goals (fall-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from the previous spring; winter-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from spring or fall)
WRITING	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IAR: 40% of Chicago Prep scholars meet or exceed expectations
SCIENCE	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school attainment percentile of $\geq 50^{\text{th}}$ 2. ISA: 50% of scholars will score at or above grade level (grade 5)

Figure 2.5: Year 2 Academic Goals: Attainment and Growth

Subject	Type	Goals
READING	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school attainment percentile of $\geq 60^{\text{th}}$ 2. IAR: 50% of Chicago Prep scholars meet or exceed expectations
	Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school growth percentile of $\geq 65^{\text{th}}$ 4. NWEA: 65% of scholars meet or exceed their spring-to-spring growth goals (fall-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from the previous spring; winter-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from spring or fall)
MATH	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school attainment percentile of $\geq 60^{\text{th}}$ 2. IAR: 60% of Chicago Prep scholars meet or exceed expectations (grade 5)
	Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school growth percentile of $\geq 65^{\text{th}}$ 4. NWEA: 65% of scholars meet or exceed their spring-to-spring growth goals (fall-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from the previous spring; winter-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from spring or fall)
WRITING	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IAR: 50% of Chicago Prep scholars meet or exceed expectations
SCIENCE	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school attainment percentile of $\geq 60^{\text{th}}$ 2. ISA: 60% of scholars will score at or above grade level (grade 5)
	Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. NWEA: 65% of scholars meet or exceed their spring-to-spring growth goals (fall-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from the previous spring; winter-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from spring or fall)

Figure 2.6: Years 3-5 Academic Goals: Attainment and Growth

Subject	Type	Goals
	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school attainment percentile of $\geq 70^{\text{th}}$ 2. IAR: 60% of all Chicago Prep scholars meet or exceed expectations 3. IAR: 75% of scholars who have been at Chicago Prep for at least three years

READING		meet or exceed expectations
	Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school growth percentile of $\geq 70^{\text{th}}$ 5. NWEA: 70% of scholars meet or exceed their spring-to-spring growth goals (fall-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from the previous spring; winter-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from spring or fall)
MATH	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school attainment percentile of $\geq 70^{\text{th}}$ 2. IAR: 60% of Chicago Prep scholars meet or exceed expectations 3. IAR: 75% of scholars who have been at Chicago Prep for at least three years meet or exceed expectations
	Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school growth percentile of $\geq 70^{\text{th}}$ 5. NWEA: 70% of scholars meet or exceed their spring-to-spring growth goals (fall-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from the previous spring; winter-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from spring or fall)
WRITING	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IAR: 60% of Chicago Prep scholars meet or exceed expectations 2. IAR: 75% of scholars who have been at Chicago Prep for at least three years meet or exceed expectations
SCIENCE	Attainment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: Chicago Prep achieves a school attainment percentile of $\geq 70^{\text{th}}$ 2. ISA: 70% of scholars will score at or above grade level (grades 5 and 8)
	Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. NWEA: 70% of scholars meet or exceed their spring-to-spring growth goals (fall-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from the previous spring; winter-to-spring goals will be substituted for scholars with no data from spring or fall)

In addition to the annual attainment and growth goals outlined in the tables above, we also have longitudinal growth goals beginning in Year 2 when we can compare cohorts' performances from year-to-year. These longitudinal growth goals will remain the same from Years 2-5 and are outlined in Figure 2.7.

Figure 2.7: Longitudinal Academic Growth Goals, Years 2-5

Subject	Goals
READING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, scholar attainment percentiles average a minimum of five (5) percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile reaches 80. For example, if last year's 5th grade scholars were at the 50th percentile, this year's 6th grade scholars should achieve at least the 55th percentile. 2. IAR: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, proficiency rates increase by a minimum of five (5) percentiles until the proficiency rate reaches 80%. For example, if 65% of last year's 5th grade scholars were proficient, at least 70% of this year's 6th grade scholars should be proficient.
MATH	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NWEA: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, student attainment percentiles average a minimum of five (5) percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile reaches 80. For example, if last year's 6th grade scholars were at the 65th percentile, this year's 6th grade scholars should achieve at least the 70th percentile. 2. IAR: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, proficiency rates increase by a minimum of five (5) percentiles until the proficiency rate reaches 80%. For example, if 40% of last year's 5th grade scholars were proficient, at least 45% of this year's 6th grade scholars should be proficient.
WRITING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IAR: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, proficiency rates increase by a minimum of five (5) percentiles until the proficiency rate reaches 80%. For example, if 50% of last year's 6th grade scholars were proficient, at least 55% of this year's 6th grade scholars should be proficient.

SCIENCE

1. **NWEA:** In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, student attainment percentiles average a minimum of five (5) percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile reaches 80. For example, if last year's 6th grade scholars were at the 65th percentile, this year's 6th grade scholars should achieve at least the 70th percentile.

Finally, an important part of our mission and vision is ensuring that scholars enroll in college-preparatory high schools. Starting in Year 3 when we have our first 8th grade class, we expect that 100% of scholars apply to at least one selective enrollment high school and at least 60% of scholars are accepted to at least one selective enrollment high school.

Chicago Prep's Board of Directors will hold the Head of School responsible for the fulfillment of these goals. The Board will monitor progress towards these goals monthly with the support of the Academic Committee. Each month, the committee will review data dashboards provided by the school leader to ensure that Chicago Prep is on track to meet its ambitious annual goals and will report that data to the full Board. If the school is not on track to meet the goals, the Board of Directors and Head of School will create a plan to adjust and improve. The goals will be revisited and revised a minimum of once per year during the board's annual retreat.

Entrepreneurship and Financial Literacy Goals, Years 1-5. We commit to implementing effective **financial literacy and entrepreneurship** in direct response to our stakeholder input. While not tied to SQRP or external accountability, our financial literacy and entrepreneurship goals help us measure the effectiveness of our Money & Business in Action (MBA) class.

1. Exposure: Scholars are meaningfully exposed to a minimum of ten entrepreneurs each year. Meaningful exposure may include, but is not limited to, scholars visiting the entrepreneur's business or organization or the entrepreneur visiting Chicago Prep to speak to scholars; scholars are meaningfully exposed to a minimum of ten *additional* start-up companies or nonprofits each year beyond those of the entrepreneurs they meet. Meaningful exposure includes, but is not limited to, readings, videos, and discussions.

2. Effort and Completion: 95% of scholars complete a minimum of one entrepreneurial venture each year – an app, a small business plan, a nonprofit providing social services, etc. Projects can be completed individually and/or in small groups.

3. Proficiency: 75% of scholars are proficient on Network For Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) Career-Readiness Measure 1: Academic; 75% of scholars are proficient on NFTE Career-Readiness Measure 2: Employability; 75% of scholars are proficient on NFTE Career-Readiness Measure 3: Industry; on a rigorous financial literacy test, proficiency rates are 60% for 5th graders; 70% for 6th graders; 80% for 7th graders; and 90% for 8th graders.

Character Goals, Years 1-5. Chicago Prep holds the firm belief that **strong character leads to lifelong growth and success**. Demonstrating our core values of kindness, courage, gratitude, curiosity, responsibility, and perseverance will help scholars to navigate the inevitable challenges of college, career, and life. Given our belief in the importance of character, we set goals to hold ourselves accountable to implementation of our program.

1. Exposure: Staff introduce scholars to six core values during the annual student orientation through definitions and examples, texts, discussions, and activities. Staff implements Core Value of the Month to dive deep into one value per month through activities and discussions in Advisory and Assembly.

2. Celebration: Four or more scholars per grade level each month receive recognition (at Assembly) for demonstrating core values; 90% of scholars receive recognition at least once during the year (at Assembly) for demonstrating core values.

3. Effort and Completion: 95% of scholars complete a minimum of one (1) character-based project each year. Examples include service projects, “published” books, presentations, and school-wide initiatives. Projects can be completed individually and/or in small groups.

4. Proficiency: 90% of scholars accumulate more merits than demerits over the course of the year.

Organizational Goals⁹³. As a publicly funded organization, we set goals to ensure fiscal accountability and organizational health. Our performance against these goals holds us accountable to using taxpayer dollars effectively and maintain organizational health and short- and long-term sustainability. Our organizational goals remain consistent each year.

Goal 1: Chicago Prep demonstrates fiduciary and financial responsibility.

- **Measure 1:** Our annual audit report, conducted annually by an external, independent contractor in compliance with Illinois Charter School Law, demonstrates that the school meets or exceeds professional accounting standards.
- **Measure 2:** Budgets for each academic year demonstrate effective allocation of financial resources to ensure execution of mission, measured by annual balanced budgets.

Goal 2: Board of Directors provides effective school oversight.

- **Measure 1:** Board conducts formal annual evaluation of the school leader.
- **Measure 2:** Board conducts annual self-evaluation to assess strengths/weaknesses.
- **Measure 3:** Board conducts formal annual review of by-laws and policies.
- **Measure 4:** Board conducts formal annual review of school’s strengths/weaknesses.

Goal 3: Chicago Prep is fully enrolled, with high levels of attendance and re-enrollment.

- **Measure 1:** Waitlist equals 50 percent of 5th grade enrollment annually.
- **Measure 2:** 85 percent of students who begin the school year remain throughout the year.
- **Measure 3:** 85 percent of students who complete the school year re-enroll the following year.
- **Measure 4:** School averages 95 percent daily attendance annually.

Goal 4: Chicago Prep rates highly on Five Essentials Survey.

- **Measure 1:** School scores “strong” on Five Essentials survey for Effective Leaders.
- **Measure 2:** School scores “strong” on Five Essentials survey for Collaborative Teachers.
- **Measure 3:** School scores “strong” on Five Essentials survey for Involved Families.
- **Measure 4:** School scores “strong” on Five Essentials survey for Supportive Environment.
- **Measure 5:** School scores “strong” on Five Essentials survey for Ambitious Instruction.

Goal 5: Chicago Prep consistently maintains school-wide tracking systems for student/school metrics.

- **Measure 1:** Attendance and student data is entered daily.
- **Measure 2:** Interim assessments grades are entered into our data system with seven days of assessment administration.
- **Measure 3:** Grade reports and behavior/character reports aligned to core values are sent to families on a weekly basis.
- **Measure 4:** Individual student academic and behavioral data is updated on school’s student information system on a weekly basis.
- **Measure 5:** Assessment participation rate is at least 95% for the school and for all priority groups.
- **Measure 6:** Data Quality Index Score is at least 95% on annual SQRP.

⁹³ We use the same Organizational Goals as Great Lakes Academy, a BES-founded K-8 charter school in South Shore.

2.4.2: ASSESSMENT AND DATA-DRIVEN PROGRAMS AND INSTRUCTION

Purpose of Assessments at Chicago Prep. At Chicago Prep, assessments play a crucial role in the fulfillment of our mission. First, assessments – both formative and summative – help us to keep a constant pulse on student growth and achievement, so that we can quickly and effectively respond to the data. Second, tests are essential for creating access to opportunity from kindergarten to twelfth grade, from college to graduate school. In Chicago, strong 7th grade test scores are key for gaining admission to the top selective enrollment, college-preparatory high schools. Similarly, high SAT and ACT scores help students earn entry into the most selective colleges and universities, and rigorous graduate level exams are also required for access to meaningful opportunities like law school and medical school. Given the significance of test performance throughout students’ academic careers, we unapologetically ensure that our scholars are prepared to perform well through rigorous curriculum, high-quality instruction, and data-driven decision making.

Approach to Data-Driven Instruction. A critical part of our vision, data-driven instruction serves as the primary guide for instruction in every class. It is therefore a key priority of professional development both during the summer and throughout the school year. Our approach to data-driven instruction is grounded in the practices described in *Driven by Data*⁹⁴ and *Leverage Leadership*.⁹⁵ We believe that analyzing and responding to data effectively begins with a deep understanding of academic content, including the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the objectives of a unit and lesson, and the level of rigor of curriculum and quality of work scholars are expected to produce. With that in mind, training in data-driven instruction includes training on how to “break down” standards (e.g., CCSS RL 5.2) and/or content (e.g., understanding the theme of *The Giver*) into all of the skills and knowledge required for mastery. Training also includes working with teachers on how to annotate texts in ELA, solve problems in math, and write open-ended responses in a way that sets a high bar and clarifies the key points of the lesson or unit. Once teachers have received training in standards and curriculum analysis and lesson internalization, we then guide them to analyze student work by comparing it to the exemplar and identifying the gaps. From there, we create a plan to close the gap, or re-teach the content. The ultimate goal of data analysis is to close gaps so that scholars consistently improve in growth and achievement. Because of this, we carefully plan and practice our re-teach plans so that teachers receive frequent feedback and build a habit of reflecting on their own efficacy. Our training and collaboration around data-driven instruction happens on an ongoing basis; it is not something we cover once and expect teachers to know.

The full Chicago Prep team is responsible for data collection and analysis, with specific roles depending on the type of assessment. For example, teachers are expected to collect data daily by completing rapid feedback during independent practice and grading exit tickets. They then respond by pausing the class to address misconceptions or by executing a quick re-teach lesson the next day. Similarly, teachers will be able to collect more formal assessment data by scanning student bubble sheets into our student information system. The operations and instructional leadership team will assist with data collection as needed to support quick turnaround, analysis, and action planning. Data we analyze includes all assessments listed in Figure 2.8. Data analysis happens daily, weekly, monthly, and annually. In addition to our summer professional development and weekly Friday sessions, we also have four “Data Days” throughout the year. Each Data Day falls after one of our four Interim Assessments; the purpose is for staff to work both independently and collaboratively to analyze the test results and create aligned action plans for the next 6-8 weeks of instruction.

⁹⁴ Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul: *Driven by Data: A Practical Guide to Improve Instruction*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010.

⁹⁵ Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul. *Leverage Leadership: A Practical Guide to Building Exceptional Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012.

We respond to data in a variety of ways, including whole-class re-teaches, the spiraling of standards and objectives, strategic seating arrangements in the classroom, and small-group instruction and tutoring. Our daily Aspire block is dedicated to small-group tutoring; two teachers simultaneously work with small groups of scholars to re-teach, remediate, and challenge based on data. The data we gather also informs our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), described in **Section 2.5**, by helping us to identify scholars for Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports and track their progress with the additional interventions. In order to meet our goals of preparing scholars for college success, Chicago Prep will administer and analyze a wide variety of assessments. To ensure that the school remains in good standing according to SQRP, we focus heavily on NWEA MAP data in the fall and spring, and we leverage formative assignments throughout the year aligned to the rigor of NWEA MAP. Figure 2.8 details all assessments and how they will be used in alignment with our commitment to data-driven instruction.

Figure 2.8: Assessments and Data Analysis at Chicago Prep

Assessment, Frequency, and Type	Design and Format	Purpose and Rationale	Process for Analysis and Use
NWEA MAP: Three times a year: fall (diagnostic), winter (formative), and spring (summative)	Norm-referenced, Common Core-aligned, multiple-choice test in reading, math, and science. Measures students' growth and attainment relative to other students taking the test in the same time frame.	Provide overall portrait of scholars' achievement in reading, math, and science in a way that is highly relevant and widely referenced in the Chicago educational landscape. NWEA data (reading/math) factors heavily in Chicago's SQRP. NWEA measures growth relative to scholars' previous scores, and achievement relative to grade level standards. It also provides comparative measures of both a student compared to other students, and a school compared to other schools throughout the country. NWEA is aligned to our annual goals, tied to selective-enrollment high school admissions, and provides an indicator of college readiness through alignment with projected ACT and SAT scores.	School leadership will work with teachers to analyze NWEA MAP data each fall, winter, and spring. Data will impact professional development, curricular choices, test prep materials, and scholars tutoring groups. Additionally, school leadership will work with the Board of Directors each spring to evaluate the NWEA data against the goals outlined in Section 2.4.1 and create an aligned action plan for the upcoming school year.
IAR: Once a year: spring (summative)	Criterion-referenced, Common Core-aligned, multiple-choice and open-ended response test in reading, writing, and math.	Provide overall portrait of scholars' achievement in reading, writing, and math as an indicator of college readiness. The IAR is a nationally normed test, which like the NWEA allows us to compare our scholars to others across the country.	School leadership will work with the Board of Directors each fall (when IAR data is typically released) to evaluate the data against the goals outlined in Section 2.4.1 and create an academic action plan. IAR data from the previous spring will impact professional development, curriculum, instruction, and tutoring groups.
Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) Once a year: spring (summative)	Alternate assessment in math, ELA, and/or science; completely individualized.	Alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.	The Student Supports Coordinator and special education teachers collaborate with school leadership to analyze scholars' progress and inform next year's curriculum and instruction.

<p>WIDA ACCESS</p> <p> Screener: Once a year; Within 30 days of enrollment</p> <p> ACCESS: Once at the end of the year (May/June)</p>	<p>English language proficiency assessment.</p>	<p>The WIDA Screener is administered only to scholars required to be screened in compliance with compliance with 23 Illinois Administrative Code 228 (more information in Section 2.5.2).</p> <p>All identified ELs will take the WIDA ACCESS test at the end of each year to assess English language growth and proficiency.</p>	<p>The Screener identifies, and avoids misidentification of, ELs, and determines the level of support required. WIDA ACCESS assesses English language proficiency level. The Student Support Coordinator, alongside teachers, will use the data for planning instruction and intervention for our ELs.</p>
<p>Illinois Science Assessment (ISA):</p> <p>Once a year in 5th and 8th grade: spring (summative)</p>	<p>Criterion-referenced, multiple-choice standardized test aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).</p>	<p>Provide overall portrait of scholars' achievement in science.</p>	<p>School leadership will work with the Board of Directors each fall (when ISA data is typically released) to evaluate the data against the goals outlined in Section 2.4.1 and create an action plan. ISA data from the previous spring will impact science professional development, curriculum, and instruction.</p>
<p>Interim Assessments:</p> <p>Four times a year (summative)</p>	<p>Content area tests directly aligned to our curriculum and the CCSS and designed to meet or exceed the rigor of the IAR. Interim Assessments include multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions.</p>	<p>Interim Assessments are designed to measure our progress on mastery of the grade-level CCSS. They will assess whether our scholars are on track to meet or exceed standards on the NWEA MAP and IAR.</p>	<p>Each round of Interim Assessments is followed by a Data Day, when scholars do not have school and teachers and leaders work together to analyze the test results and create aligned action plans for the next 6-8 weeks of instruction.</p>
<p>Accelerated Reader:</p> <p>Multiple times throughout the year (formative and summative)</p>	<p>Online testing platform for assessing students' comprehension of books read independently.</p>	<p>Assess the degree to which scholars understood independent reading books; motivates scholars and holds them accountable to reading extensively.</p>	<p>We set a goal for all scholars to read one million words through independent reading each year. Scholars track their own progress towards this goal and must pass assessment for the book to count towards goal.</p>
<p>Unit exams:</p> <p>End of each unit, approximately every 3-4 weeks depending on subject and length/ complexity of unit (summative)</p>	<p>Content area tests directly aligned to our curriculum, typically covering content taught over the course of several weeks. Unit exams include a variety of question types including multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions.</p>	<p>Assess scholars' mastery of recently covered content, and help teachers determine which standards/content were mastered and which need additional practice in upcoming units. Unit tests hold scholars accountable to working hard and studying and help them to see the connection between effort and achievement. Unit tests provide summative grades for scholars.</p>	<p>Teachers take the lead on grading their tests and responding to the data. School leadership serves as thought partners during weekly data meetings or as needed.</p>
<p>Quizzes:</p> <p>Once a week (formative)</p>	<p>Content area quizzes directly aligned to our curriculum. Quizzes are typically only a few questions and include a variety of question types: multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, etc.</p>	<p>Assess scholars' mastery of recently covered content, and help teacher determine which objectives/content were mastered and which need additional practice before the end of the unit. Quizzes hold scholars accountable to working hard and studying and should help them to see the connection between effort and</p>	<p>Quizzes and exit tickets serve as the core data for weekly data meetings between teachers and school leaders. During these meetings, leaders use the See It, Name It, Do It template for data analysis used the by Relay Graduate School of Education. Leaders and teachers analyze</p>

		achievement. Quizzes provide formative grades for scholars to add to overall portrait of scholar progress.	the exemplar response and scholar work in advance of the meeting. During the meeting, they work together to name the key gap(s) and create a re-teach plan.
Exit Tickets: Daily/at the end of every lesson (formative)	Brief content area - assessments given at the end of each lesson (or almost every lesson) to assess mastery of the objective. Exit tickets are typically 1-3 questions and include a variety of question types: multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, etc.	Gather data on scholars' mastery of the objective and help teacher determine if any gaps need to be closed before moving on. Provide quick, targeted feedback to scholars. Keep a constant pulse on data to ensure scholars are appropriately challenged and avoid completing a unit in which scholars are either deeply confused or bored because tasks are too easy. Exit tickets are embedded in our curriculum lesson plans from Achievement First.	Quizzes and exit tickets serve as the core data for weekly data meetings between teachers and school leaders. During these meetings, leaders use the See It, Name It, Do It template for data analysis used by the Relay Graduate School of Education. Both leaders and teachers analyze the exemplar response and scholar work in advance of the meeting. During the meeting, they work together to name the key gap(s) and create a re-teach plan.
Independent Practice: Multiple times per day/at least once per lesson (formative)	Time embedded into each lesson for scholars to practice the day's objective independently.	Give scholars meaningful "at-bats" to help them grow and master the day's objective. Gather real-time data on scholars' progress towards objective mastery. Independent practice will be embedded in our lesson plans from our common curriculum.	Teachers will respond to gaps in the moment through quick modeling, re-teaching, or class discussions.
Speeches and Presentations: Frequency varies depending on content and unit; typically about once every month or two (summative or formative)	Scholars will be challenged to share their learning throughout a unit by giving speeches and presentations in front of classmates.	Speaking and listening are key elements of literacy at Chicago Prep. Scholars communicate their learning in an engaging way, practicing the presentation, and delivering it with confidence. These skills will prepare them for job interviews, college courses, and entrepreneurial work that so often requires effective pitching. Scholars will also benefit from hearing their peers speak and being pushed to provide feedback on presentations.	Teachers use rubrics to analyze trends in student strengths and areas for growth. They use this data to guide their targeted support for the whole class as well as individual scholars during the next assignment. School leadership serves as thought partners during weekly data meetings or as needed.
Projects: Approximately once per trimester (summative)	Scholars are given several weeks to work on a challenging, culminating major assignment. Examples include a science fair project, a combined art-social studies-reading project, or a small business model for Money & Business in Action (MBA).	Long-term projects require scholars to make a plan, generate questions and find answers, create drafts, get feedback, and revise. These skills build college and career preparation as well as scholar pride and confidence. Projects and long-term assignments tie directly to our core values of responsibility and perseverance.	Teachers use rubrics to look for trends in scholar strengths and areas for growth. They use this data to guide their targeted support for the whole class as well as individual scholars during the next assignment. School leadership serves as thought partners during weekly data meetings or as needed.

In order for our data-driven instruction to be truly impactful, all key stakeholders must be aware of and invested in the data. Figure 2.9 outlines how the Chicago Prep team will share data with students, families, and the Board of Directors.

Figure 2.9: Stakeholder Access to and Use of Data at Chicago Prep

Stakeholder	Access to Data	Use of Data
Students	Scholars will have access to their data in several ways, including weekly progress reports, scholar accounts to access their online grading system, and graded assignments returned on a frequent basis (minimum once per week). In addition, scholars will receive feedback about their performance on key assessments, such as unit exams, NWEA MAP, and IAR. Teachers will review this data individually and/or in small groups with scholars to ensure strong framing and authentic comprehension. Through Accelerated Reader, quizzes, scholars also keep track of their own progress towards their goal of reading one million words each year.	Scholars are expected to use their grades and feedback to take ownership over their growth and achievement (with significant scaffolding and support from adults in 5 th and 6 th grade, and gradual transfer of responsibility in 7 th and 8 th grade). This includes seeking help in after-school and Saturday tutoring, as well as asking teachers and peers for support during or after class. They should also use both grades and test scores to learn to speak with clarity about their strengths and areas of growth.
Families	Families will have access to their scholars' growth and achievement data in several ways. They will receive weekly progress reports each Friday and be expected to return them to school signed on Monday. They will have parent accounts to access our online grading system. In addition, advisory teachers will call parents at least once every two weeks to provide thorough, personalized feedback on scholars' academic progress. All teachers will meet with parents at least once per trimester for report card conferences. Whenever scholars take key assessments, including unit exams, NWEA MAP, and IAR, teachers communicate transparently about scholars' performance on this during phone or in-person conferences, guided by detailed system reports of scholars' progress when possible (e.g., NWEA MAP individual reports)	School-family communication about scholar data helps to maintain transparency and forge meaningful partnerships. It also empowers parents to support scholars with homework help, study habits, selecting independent reading books, and more.
Board of Directors	The Board of Directors will have access to scholar growth and achievement data through monthly dashboards completed and shared by the Head of School. The Head of School will first share and discuss the data with the Academic Committee each month. The Academic Committee will then share the information with the full Board of Directors at monthly meetings. The Board will also review annual growth and achievement data as part of the Head of School's evaluation and strategic planning meeting.	The Board will closely monitor data as part of the academic oversight of Chicago Prep. If results are lower than anticipated, the Board will work with the Head of School to generate a plan for improvement. The Board will also use data to inform the Head of School's annual evaluation.

SECTION 2.5: SPECIAL STUDENT POPULATIONS

2.5.1: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The school has strategies in place to advance the learning of all students.

- *Presents a continuum of special education services, including related services, that is supported by research and best practice and likely to lead to success for the school's students with special needs*
- *Proposal and accompanying ISBE Special Education Certification form that reflect a sound understanding of the legal requirements of IDEA and Section 504, including, but not limited to:*
 - *The charter's obligation to serve students with special needs*
 - *Providing a Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) to all students*
 - *Providing a continuum of special education services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), including providing access to the general education curriculum, standardized testing, extracurricular and culture-building activities*
 - *Methods for identifying and supporting students with disabilities*

- *Procedures for evaluating identified students, developing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), and monitoring and assessing progress, including the roles of personnel and parents*
- *The rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary proceedings*
- *Well-defined processes for identifying English Learners, including administration of placement assessments and communications to parents and teachers*
- *Proposal and accompanying ISBE English Learners Certification form that reflect a sound understanding of the legal requirements related to English Learners*
- *A clear description of an academic multi-tiered system of support to identify and meet the needs of students requiring support beyond general education, including levers, methods, and protocols to be used to assess and differentiate instruction to meet students where they are.*
- *A clear understanding of expected remediation needs of incoming students Programs and services to ensure that all students are challenged with the appropriate level of rigor, including students with accelerated learning needs*

Commitment to Serving Scholars with Disabilities. Chicago Prep is committed to preparing all scholars to succeed in college and positively impact the world, and scholars with disabilities are an important part of our community and our mission. It is our moral and legal responsibility to ensure that scholars with disabilities receive an education that is inclusive and welcoming, rigorous and research-based, and in compliance with all state and federal laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. We ensure that families and community members understand that students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities are welcome at Chicago Prep. We explicitly state this during canvassing campaigns, tabling events, information sessions, and community focus groups. We also communicate that students with special needs are welcome at Chicago Prep during community engagement conversations with local leaders (e.g., pastors, nonprofit leaders, business owners, elected officials) who are influential in the community and will be able to spread the message to families. Our intent-to-enroll forms and applications include a non-discriminatory statement and do not ask about disability status or home language.

Identifying Scholars with Disabilities. Based on data from Bronzeville and Chicago Public Schools (CPS), cited in **Section 1.1.2**, we are anticipating 15% of our scholars to have disabilities. After families have been offered a seat, our enrollment forms will ask whether their child has an IEP, 504 plan, or known disability. Staff will follow up with personal conversations. For scholars who do have IEPs or 504s, we will contact their previous schools to access their existing IEP. We also engage parents in conversation about their child's needs and strengths and get their views about what has and has not worked to help their child learn in previous school settings. These personalized conversations will help the Chicago Prep team prepare to meet each child's needs from the first day of school and set the tone that the parent is an essential member of the IEP team. Chicago Prep also complies with IDEA's Child Find provisions in order to identify students with disabilities and includes training on these legal requirements for teachers during summer professional development.

Chicago Prep will implement Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to ensure that all scholars are at or above grade level by the time they leave 8th grade, prepared for success in college-preparatory high schools. Any scholars who are far below grade level and/or are not making academic progress (typically aligned with six-week cycles) with Tier 1 interventions will receive Tier 2 and, when appropriate, Tier 3 interventions, as described in **Section 2.5.3**. Scholars who are still not progressing after six weeks of Tier 3 interventions and progress monitoring may be referred for an evaluation of a potential disability. At this

point, the Student Supports Coordinator schedules a Domain meeting, which includes the Student Supports Coordinator, a member of the leadership team, the special education teacher, a general education teacher, the scholar's parent or guardian, and related service providers. If the parent/guardian gives written consent, a team of licensed professionals then begins an evaluation of the scholar. At any time, if a disability is suspected, a family can request an evaluation regardless of whether the scholar was receiving supports through MTSS. Once the evaluation is completed, the team reconvenes for an Eligibility Meeting. Each team member shares the results of his/her evaluation, and if the scholar is deemed eligible for an IEP or 504 plan, then the Student Supports Coordinator and special education teacher work together to develop one, with input from all relevant team members, using the CPS form and in compliance with all CPS policies, procedures, and guidelines. If the scholar is not deemed eligible, then the team will generate an alternate plan for individualized supports, including a combination of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 interventions.

Services. The Head of School, Assistant Head of School, the special education endorsed Student Supports Coordinator, and Manager/Director of Operations will collaboratively provide the leadership to ensure that all students receive a Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). We employ full-time, endorsed special education teacher(s) to support the Student Supports Coordinator in executing our special education services. Based on our projection of 15% of scholars requiring special education services, our anticipated ratio of diverse learners to special education certified staff is as follows: **Year 1:** 18 scholars and 2 staff members; ratio of 9 to 1; **Year 2:** 27 scholars and 3 staff members; ratio of 9 to 1; **Year 3+:** 36 scholars and 3 staff members; ratio of 12 to 1.

In addition to our full-time special education staff, the Student Supports Coordinator works with the leadership team and CPS to contract additional part-time clinicians, including a School Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and Nurse, accounted for in Line 45 of the budget. In Year 3 and beyond we will have a full-time licensed Social Worker on staff.

The first step upon receiving (or developing) scholars' IEPs and 504 plans is for the leadership team, including the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Student Supports Coordinator, and Manager/Director of Operations, to read the plans carefully and prepare to ensure proper implementation. This begins with creating or adjusting the schedules of scholars, the special education teacher, and the Student Supports Coordinator as necessary to include the appropriate inclusion support in general education classrooms and/or pull-out instruction. The goal is to include scholars with special needs in the general education classroom to the maximum extent legally possible. The Head of School and Student Supports Coordinator work together to plan our Introduction to Student Supports professional development session over the summer, which will help teachers understand the spectrum of student supports, accommodations, and modifications for scholars with IEPs, 504s, and MTSS supports. We also provide time during summer professional development for teachers to read the IEPs and 504s of all scholars they support and ask questions of the leadership team.

Chicago Prep's academic model is designed to meet the needs of all scholars, including scholars with disabilities. Many elements of our program are well-suited for special populations. Our commitment to data-driven instruction means that we regularly evaluate where scholars are in relation to mastery of objectives and adjust our teaching accordingly. Beyond analyzing formal data like NWEA MAP and Interim Assessments to inform upcoming curricular decisions and scholar grouping, teachers also analyze scholar work to look for specific misconceptions. This results in all scholars receiving scaffolded and targeted instruction based on what they did not understand. One aspect of our data-driven approach, rapid

feedback, will support scholars with special needs well by providing frequent one-on-one check-ins with the teacher during independent practice – often multiple times per class. Our curriculum and instructional approach also provides many useful tools and strategies for diverse learners. For example, scholar packets for math include problems solved as a model and problems solved as a class as well as independent practice, providing tools for scholars to reference throughout class and during homework. Finally, our daily Aspire block provides built-in time for small-group instruction for *all* scholars, meaning that general education and special education teachers can both pull scholars with special needs in a non-exclusionary manner, minimizing opportunity for stigmatization. Aspire provides time for all scholars to read high-interest, independent books every day, and allows teachers and scholars to monitor comprehension through the program.

We also consistently adjust our approach to meet the needs of our diverse learners. An important advantage of our common curriculum is that it facilitates co-planning for general education teachers and special education teachers. Special education teachers do not have to wait for general education teachers to finish lesson planning but rather can access the unit plan calendar and proactively design accommodations and modifications to upcoming lessons and assessments. Similarly, general education teachers do not create curriculum, which means they have more time to meaningfully adapt materials and activities to meet the needs of their diverse learners. Specific modifications and accommodations will be driven by scholars' needs and IEPs, but examples include providing extended time for assignments, providing an outline of the lesson, having scholars complete an outline instead of an essay, and allowing for the use of a calculator or dictionary. In addition to adjusting our common curriculum, scholars with special needs will also receive supplemental content as needed to meet their IEP goals and/or to catch them up to grade level. This includes, but is not limited to, phonics and basic comprehension instruction in reading, spelling support in writing, and remedial instruction in math concepts and procedures. Supplemental materials are accounted for in Line 48 of the attached budget.

Throughout the year, the Student Supports Coordinator will continue to hold professional development sessions to support teachers in implementing the services outlined in scholars' IEPs. The Student Supports Coordinator will work with the Head of School and Assistant Head of School to design outcomes-focused professional development. Chicago Prep also commits to providing special education teachers with robust coaching and data analysis supports. The Student Supports Coordinator observes special education teachers at least once per week and leads a weekly coaching meeting, alternating between observation feedback meetings and data analysis meetings. Data analysis will include scholar work for IEP progress monitoring as well as grade-level curriculum assignments. In addition, under the guidance of the Student Supports Coordinator, special education and general education teachers will meet at least once every two weeks (or as often as IEPs mandate) to discuss scholars' progress.

Scholars with disabilities will have full access to all extracurricular and culture-building activities at Chicago Prep. Access to all program component, along with our strategies for inclusion instruction, facilitate the consistent integration of diverse learners with their non-disabled peers. Scholars with special needs will participate in all school-based assessments and district and state standardized testing with the appropriate supports identified in their IEPs and 504s, provided by special education teachers and the Student Supports Coordinator. The only exception is scholars with the most significant cognitive disabilities who qualify for Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA).

Progress Monitoring and Family Communication. In collaboration with special education teachers, the Student Supports Coordinator leads the process of monitoring and assessing scholars' progress towards

their IEP goals. This includes working with the special education teacher to develop tasks, metrics, and timelines for monitoring scholars' progress towards IEP goals. The Student Supports Coordinator also oversees the scheduling and implementation of annual IEP review meetings and reevaluation meetings at least once every three years. Parent involvement is a key to the success of our special education programming. Parents of scholars with special needs receive biweekly communication not only from their child's Advisor (as with all Chicago Prep scholars), but also from the special education teachers and/or Student Supports Coordinator. The goals of parent communication include updating parents on scholars' progress towards IEP goals and grade-level standards; getting parents feedback and input, particularly on homework assignments; and keeping parents informed of their rights and the process to follow if at any point they would like to schedule an IEP review or reevaluation outside of the regular schedule. Parents will receive more formalized feedback and evidence of their child's progress towards IEP goals at a minimum of once per trimester during report card conferences. Additionally, the Chicago Prep team always asks for parent feedback when reviewing or reevaluating scholars' IEPs (e.g., if they would like to see goals adjusted or supports added).

Discipline for Scholars with IEPs. Chicago Prep believes that scholars with special needs can meet our high behavioral expectations when they are provided with the appropriate supports. Supports include legally required interventions such as those stated in an IEP or 504 plan, but also less formal supports generated through conversations with the Dean of Students, Student Supports Coordinator, Social Worker (if applicable) teachers, and families. Scholars with disabilities who are receiving the necessary supports may be disciplined in the same manner as their non-disabled peers, including out-of-school suspensions (totaling up to 10 days) in cases where the scholar's continuing presence on campus poses a threat to school safety or an impediment to scholars' learning. Once a scholar with a disability has been suspended for ten days, we hold a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) to determine if the scholar's behaviors are a manifestation of their disability or a result of the school's failure to implement the IEP. If either of those is determined to be the case, the school will no longer rely on exclusionary discipline and will work as a team to find alternative interventions and consequences. If neither of them is determined to be the case, the scholar may still be subject to suspensions in the same manner as their non-disabled peers, but Chicago Prep will still provide a FAPE during the period of suspension. Discipline procedures for scholars with special needs are described in more detail in **Section 2.7.2**.

Evaluation of Special Education Programming. Chicago Prep holds the expectation that our special education scholars progress at at least the same rate as their general education peers, and we hold ourselves accountable to this commitment through thorough evaluation of our special education program. As part of our data analysis systems, described in **Section 2.4.2**, we disaggregate assessment data from NWEA MAP, IAR, Interim Assessments, and scholar grades, by general education/special education (as well as breaking down by other subgroups). The instructional leadership team – in Year 1, the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and Student Supports Coordinator – will meet accordingly after each round of assessments to review the disaggregated data, draft a response plan, and share it with the rest of the team. At the end of each school year, we review NWEA data, staff survey data, and family survey data, and plan adjustments for the following year based on our analysis. Adjustments we may make to ensure we meet the needs of our scholars with disabilities include, but are not limited to supplementing or replacing curricular materials, adjusting our daily schedule, creating new coaching and professional development plans for teachers, or modifying our planned supports for scholars. More information on our services for scholars with special needs can be found in the ISBE Special Education Certification form, attached in **Appendix 2.5**.

2.5.2: ENGLISH LEARNERS

Chicago Prep will provide a college-preparatory education to all scholars, including our English Learners. Chicago Prep will comply with all state and federal laws regarding the education of English Learners (ELs), including Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Education Opportunities Act of 1974. We ensure through community engagement that families and community members know that English Learners are welcome at Chicago Prep. Our intent-to-enroll forms and applications include a non-discriminatory statement and do not ask about home language. In compliance with 23 Illinois Administrative Code 228, after students have been offered a seat at Chicago Prep, we administer home language surveys to identify students who have a language background other than English. For any such scholars, Chicago Prep will determine whether we have documentation that they have previously been tested and identified as English language proficient; have met the exit requirements described in 228.25(b)(2); or have met other criteria that exempts them from English language proficiency screening. For scholars who have not met these criteria, Chicago Prep will administer the WIDA Screener within 30 days of enrollment to provide identification of and avoid misidentification of ELs. All scholars who are not “proficient” in English language, as scored on the WIDA Screener or instrument administered by the student’s previous school/district within the past 12 months, is considered an English learner and is eligible for bilingual education services. In addition, scores on the WIDA Screener (or scores attained on the English language proficiency assessment administered by the previous school/district) will indicate the scope of services that scholars need. We are projecting 3% of our student body to be ELs based on the demographics of surrounding area schools and our recruitment strategy. Given this projection, Chicago Prep will provide a transitional program of instruction, Sheltered English Instruction.

We rely on our Student Supports Coordinator and our MTSS Tiered Interventions to support ELs with the appropriate accommodations for full access to the educational program. ELs will participate in all school-based and standardized assessments with accommodations and supports wherever necessary and will be included in all extracurricular and culture-building opportunities. Many elements of our core educational program are well-suited to the needs of ELs. For example:

- **Small-group instruction during daily Aspire:** This time allows ELs to be pulled together for targeted language support, and it allows ELs to be integrated in small groups with their non-EL peers according to academic proficiency rather than English language ability.
- **Ample independent reading time:** Teachers will support ELs in choosing high-interest books at the appropriate level to enhance their English.
- **Teaching vocabulary:** All classes offer explicit vocabulary instruction; instruction in ELA classes is particularly useful with its focus on Tier 2 vocabulary.
- **Emphasis on oral language:** Chicago Prep places a huge emphasis on speaking and listening, with instructional methods including Oral Drill, Habits of Discussion, and Turn and Talks.
- **Collaborative peer work:** We provide many opportunities for scholars to work with peers in small groups. Examples include projects in MBA class, small-group discussions in ELA, and team athletics in physical education.

Our Student Supports Coordinator will determine the structure of each English learner’s program of instruction based on the scholar’s English language proficiency, as well as information regarding the scholar’s native language literacy proficiency. The Student Supports Coordinator will provide direct English as a Second Language (ES)L instruction for scholars as required by their English language proficiency, train staff on Sheltered English Instruction, and monitor the progress of our ELs. If our EL population is larger than anticipated and we enroll 20 or more English learners of the same language classification, we will establish a Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program and hire the necessary

certified staff to meet the needs of all scholars. We will administer the WIDA ACCESS assessment to all identified English learners at the end of each year. The assessment will provide us with scholars' English Language proficiency levels (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and allow us to adjust scholar supports accordingly. Any scholars receiving EL support will not be exited from the supports until they have achieved English proficiency as demonstrated by a 5.0 composite score on the WIDA ACCESS.

Fundamental to our approach with ELs is the belief that bilingualism is an asset. We will ensure that all scholars, particularly ELs, understand the meaningful benefits of speaking more than one language. We explicitly discuss with scholars how fluency and literacy in one language can reinforce fluency and literacy in another, and how bilingualism facilitates cross-cultural friendships and strengthens professional networks. Bilingualism also increases one's marketability and opens an array of career opportunities.

Evaluation of English Language Programming. Chicago Prep holds the expectation that our ELs progress at at least the same rate as their non-EL peers, and we hold ourselves accountable to this commitment through thorough evaluation of our EL programming. As part of our data analysis systems, described in **Section 2.4.2**, we disaggregate we disaggregate assessment data from NWEA MAP, IAR, Interim Assessments, and scholar grades, by EL/non-EL (as well as breaking down by other subgroups).

The instructional leadership team – in Year 1, the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and Student Supports Coordinator – will meet according to the timelines above to review the disaggregated data, draft a response plan, and share it with the rest of the team. At the end of each school year, we review EL's proficiency and growth data on WIDA ACCESS, NWEA data, staff survey data, and family survey data, and plan adjustments for the following year based on our analysis. Adjustments we may make to ensure we meet the needs of our ELs include, but are not limited to hiring additional staff to support EL scholars, supplementing or replacing curricular materials, adjusting our daily schedule, creating new coaching and professional development plans for teachers, or modifying our planned supports for scholars. More information on our EL services can be found in the ISBE English Language Learning Services Certification form, attached in **Appendix 2.5**.

2.5.3: MULTI-TIRED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

Our commitment to prepare *all* scholars for long-term success is an acknowledgement that different scholars will need different supports. We commit to executing strategic, adaptive plans to provide that differentiated support. Chicago Prep will implement Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to ensure that all scholars are at or above grade level by the time they leave 8th grade, prepared for success in college-preparatory high schools. Our Student Supports Coordinator will oversee MTSS. His/her responsibilities including training staff in MTSS; meeting with special education teachers and general education teachers to discuss scholars' progress; communicating with parents regarding scholars' supports; and working with school leadership on an ongoing basis to determine which scholars need more intensive supports and which are ready to have supports scaled back. Our MTSS for Academics is outlined in the following sections. Our MTSS for Social Emotional Learning is outlined in **Section 2.7.1**.

Tier 1. As described in **Section 1.1.3**, we anticipate that many of our incoming scholars will be performing below grade level. Thus, the Tier 1 Interventions we provide to all scholars as part of our core educational program will include built-in opportunities for remediation. Core components of Tier 1 include our extended school day and year, small-group instruction with strategic grouping during our daily Aspire period, blended learning, and our rapid feedback approach. Our scholars will receive three extra instructional hours per week; this additional time will help teachers to close gaps from previous grade

levels without lowering the grade-level standards to which all scholars will ultimately be held accountable. During the daily Aspire period, teachers will pull *all* scholars for small-group and/or individualized instruction – not just those who are far behind or far ahead. Thus, all scholars will have access to the targeted instruction a small-group setting creates. Similarly, all scholars will have access to Chromebooks and technology that provides practice with the skills scholars need, such as IXL and Khan Academy. All scholars will also experience the benefits of teachers providing rapid feedback during independent practice each day. During rapid feedback, scholars receive individualized feedback that helps them to understand the specific mistakes they made and, later, whether they have corrected them.

We anticipate that approximately 75% of scholars will experience success within our robust Tier 1 system of supports. Chicago Prep teachers and instructional leaders will consistently analyze which scholars are not experiencing adequate progress with Tier 1 interventions. Key ongoing sources of data include scholars' independent practice, exit tickets, and quizzes. Not only will teachers respond to all three sources of data daily; teachers and coaches will also work together to respond to these sources at least once every two weeks during one-on-one data meetings. Coaches will support teachers in using a school-wide grading and sorting system for exit tickets. Exit ticket data will be used in combination with sources such as grades, Interim Assessment data, and NWEA score reports to determine which scholars should receive Tier 2 supports.

Tier 2. Teachers and instructional leaders will prioritize intervention for struggling scholars. Tutoring content during Aspire will be designed to support scholars in Tier 2 or 3. For example, teachers may teach mini lessons covering content from previous grade levels. Teachers may also focus on the basic prerequisite skills of their subject rather than extension and application. For example, teachers will ensure scholars achieve basic comprehension of grade-level texts or have the procedural skills required to solve grade-level math problems. Depending on scholar needs, Tier 2 interventions may also include additional one-on-support and small group instruction. Scholars may also receive weekly, or daily, targeted intervention outside of the schedule Aspire period. Scholars may also benefit from supplemental tools and materials such as math aids (multiplication tables, place value charts), as well as organizers such as paragraph templates and writing checklists. Additionally, for scholars that would benefit from support with goal setting and monitoring progress, we may implement a check-in/check-out system where a student can meet with their Advisor twice daily to review work, make a plan, and set goals. We will also provide at least one after school tutoring session per content area per week and will also provide before school tutoring for scholars to opt into. We also offer 18 Saturday tutoring sessions throughout the year designed to support all scholars, include scholars receiving Tier 2 supports.

Tier 3. Scholars who are not making progress in response to Tier 2 interventions after six weeks will be considered for the more intensive, individualized supports of Tier 3. Scholars in Tier 3 will receive interventions similar to those in Tier 2 but with increased frequency and/or adjusted content. For example, scholars in Tier 3 may receive small-group instruction five days per week as opposed to two or three times per week, and they may receive significant support with skills that are far below grade level but that the scholar has not yet mastered (for example, learning basic decoding techniques in 6th grade or addition and subtraction of one- and two-digit numbers in 5th grade).

As with our scholars in Tier 1, our commitment to data-driven instruction will help us to consistently progress monitor our scholars in Tier 2 and Tier 3. Teachers will use many of the same data sources (independent practice, exit tickets and quizzes, IAs and NWEA) but will also keep track of which interventions they are using, when and how frequently they are using them, and how scholars are

responding. Teachers will share this data with the special education teacher(s) and the Student Supports Coordinator, who will work together to adjust the interventions as needed for each scholar. If scholars are not experiencing success with the support of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 interventions, the Chicago Prep team, including the family, will convene to determine whether the scholar should be evaluated for a potential disability.

2.5.4: ADVANCED LEARNERS

It is very important for advanced learners, like all learners, to be appropriately challenged each day at school. Thus, the Chicago Prep team will leverage all our formative and summative assessments, described in **Section 2.4.2**, to ensure that we identify academically advanced scholars and gain an accurate understanding of their needs. We will rely on quantitative data such as scores on daily independent practice, exit tickets, quizzes, unit tests, interim assessments, and NWEA MAP. For example, scholars who score above the 90th percentile on the Fall NWEA MAP in math, reading, and/or science are likely (but not necessarily) gifted in those subjects. Similarly, scholars earning all A's in their classes and scholars consistently earning 4's on exit tickets, particularly considering the rigorous, college-preparatory Achievement First curriculum, are likely to be academically advanced. However, such indicators by themselves are neither necessary nor sufficient. Scholars who are gifted may not necessarily be high achievers. They may be bored by curriculum that is too easy for them and thus disengage from the work, or they may struggle with behavior, attendance, or other barriers to achievement. Similarly, scholars who consistently achieve at high levels may not necessarily be gifted but rather have excellent work ethics and robust supports outside of school. Thus, we will use a range of quantitative data and qualitative reports to identify our advanced learners. Qualitative inputs include teacher and instructional leader observations, parent/guardian assessments of children's ability, and conversations with the scholars themselves. Additionally, our assessment portfolio includes non-traditional assessments such as speeches and projects, which will help to identify scholars who thrive with more independent, open-ended, or creative assignments.

Once we have identified a scholar as being academically advanced, the Chicago Prep team, with the Head of School and Assistant Head of School primarily responsible, will create a written snapshot of the scholar's academic abilities. The snapshots include current levels by subject area, as some scholars may be gifted in math but not reading or vice versa. Scholar snapshots will also include goals for the scholar to accomplish by the end of the year. The goals help to hold the instructional staff accountable. For example, a 6th grade scholar doing math at an advanced 7th grade level in October who is still at an advanced 7th grade level in June has not grown. Without the scholar goals determined in advance, a year-end score demonstrating no growth might still be celebrated rather than seen as cause for concern.

Based on the specific needs of academically advanced scholars, we provide a variety of supports to ensure that advanced scholars are appropriately challenged and continue to grow. For example, gifted scholars will be pulled in homogenous groups during the daily Aspire period. At that time, the teacher may challenge them by guiding them through an advanced book or assigning them high-interest extension projects to work on with extra time in class and/or in lieu of grade-level homework assignments. Appropriately challenging projects may require multidisciplinary skills and knowledge, independent research, and more creative or analytical thinking. Teachers will also ensure gifted scholars receive appropriate challenge during independent work time. During Aspire independent reading, teachers can guide gifted scholars to select books that are not only high-interest, but also challenging (for example, texts characterized by the challenges referred to as "the five plagues of the developing reader" in *Reading Reconsidered*: archaic texts, nonlinear time sequence, complexity of narrator, complex plot and

symbolism, and resistant texts).⁹⁶ Because all scholars take reading quizzes to assess their comprehension of independent books using Accelerated Reader, teachers can follow up with scholars accordingly about their comprehension. In our math curriculum, many scholar materials come with built in differentiation; practice problems are often divided by bachelor's level, master's level, and doctoral level to indicate the level of difficulty, and typically include too many problems in total for the class to complete in one period. Thus, gifted scholars can not only work at a faster pace, but also work on more complex and multi-step problems while teachers assist the rest of the class. Similarly, when scholars work on technology programs that give immediate feedback, such as Khan Academy or IXL, teachers can challenge gifted scholars by assigning problems from higher grade levels or problems not yet covered in class.

SECTION 2.6: SCHOOL CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES

The school calendar and schedule provide a clear picture of how students and teachers will spend a typical day at school, incorporating all of the unique aspects of the proposed school model.

- *Annual calendar that:*
 - *Is compliant with the Illinois School Code*
 - *Reflects all of the instructors' professional development days and student assessment days*
 - *Is supported by the school's proposed budget*
- *Teacher and Student Weekly Schedules that:*
 - *Provide a clear picture of how a teacher or student would respectively spend a day at the school*
 - *Reflect all of the instructors' described professional development requirements, collaboration time, and roles and responsibilities*
 - *Reflect all described student activities*
- *(If proposing a Next Generation blended learning model): The proposal specifies the percentage of time students will engage in learning through digital mediums and provides a clear rationale for designating that percentage of time. **Not Applicable.***

2.6.1: ANNUAL CALENDAR

Chicago Prep's calendar, attached in **Appendix 2.6**, is designed to support our ambitious mission to prepare all scholars to succeed in college and positively impact the world. The calendar is compliant with Section 10-19 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/10-19] and Public Act 101-0012. The Chicago Prep annual calendar reflects the following values:

Extended instructional time: Chicago Prep has an extended school year, providing a total of 185 instructional days. We also have a longer school day Monday through Thursday, beginning at 7:40am and ending at 3:40pm, for a total of seven hours and thirty minutes of instruction. The Friday schedule begins at 7:40am and ends at 1:40pm, for a total of five hours and thirty minutes of instruction. Adding all days throughout the school year, Chicago Prep scholars receive 1,315.5 total instructional hours each year. This extended instructional time allows us to drive the **academic rigor** and provide the **robust supports** that are core to our mission. We are committed to closing any academic gaps and continuously pushing all scholars to new levels of growth and achievement, and additional time is a key lever for this goal. Our extended instructional time also carves out the space for us to focus on **character development** and **financial literacy and entrepreneurship**, which are key elements of our vision. We also provide 18 Saturday Academies throughout the year to help support struggling scholars. In addition, we offer three

⁹⁶ Lemov, Doug, Colleen Driggs, and Erica Woolway. *Reading Reconsidered: A Practical Guide to Rigorous Literacy Instruction*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016. 29-44.

weeks of summer school in July, with five instructional hours for each of 14 days, for scholars who are at risk of being retained. This option provides 70 additional instructional hours for scholars most in need of support and provides an alternative to scholars repeating a grade.

Strong partnerships with families: Chicago Prep hosts monthly family events at consistent times, allowing Chicago Prep staff and families to convene and communicate regularly, creating space to share concerns, feedback, questions, and suggestions. This partnership ensures that families feel welcome and included in decision-making, and it increases the support that students feel in their learning community.

Data-driven instruction: Chicago Prep’s calendar prioritizes assessments so that we can prepare our students to achieve at high levels and gain access to opportunity, and so that we can keep a constant pulse on our progress towards this goal. We also have four Data Days, professional development days following interim assessments for staff to analyze the assessment data and create aligned action plans.

Excellent teaching: Chicago Prep provides 28 days of professional development, including four days dedicated to data analysis and action planning, so that we can train our teachers to provide the highest quality of instruction. We use our four weeks of summer PD to prepare teachers to internalize and teach our rigorous curriculum, deeply internalize our core values and model them for students, explore inequity and fight for equity, and ensure classrooms are safe, calm, orderly, and engaging. Our abbreviated day on Fridays allows for 42 hours of additional weekly professional development, data analysis, and curriculum and intervention planning.

We do not anticipate that our annual calendar will change significantly in Years 2 through 5. However, we do plan to revisit the annual calendar and evaluate its effectiveness during our strategic planning each February and March. The Head of School will first work with the school team’s operational and instructional leaders to reflect on key calendar elements including family events, testing schedules, and professional development days. The team will use student achievement data and teacher and family feedback to make recommended adjustments. The Head of School will then share the recommended adjustments with the Academic Committee of the Board of Directors, who will approve the final calendar no later than April.

2.6.2: STUDENT SCHEDULES

Figure 2.10: Sample 5th Grade Student Schedules

Monday through Thursday		Friday	
Time	Period	Time	Period
7:20-7:40AM	Arrival and Breakfast	7:20-7:40AM	Arrival and Breakfast
7:40-8:00AM	Advisory	7:40-8:10AM	Assembly
8:00-8:50AM	Literacy I	8:10-9:00AM	Literacy I
8:50-9:40AM	Math I	9:00-9:50AM	Math I
9:40-10:30AM	Literacy II	9:50-10:40AM	Science
10:30-11:20AM	Science	10:40-11:10AM	Lunch
11:20-11:50AM	Lunch	11:10-11:20AM	Mindfulness and Meditation
11:50AM-12:00PM	Mindfulness and Meditation	11:20AM-12:10PM	Social Studies
12:00-12:50PM	Math II	12:10-1:00PM	PE/Health
12:50-1:40PM	Social Studies	1:00-1:30PM	Aspire (Independent Literacy & Small-Group Tutoring)
1:40-2:30PM	PE/Health OR Art	1:30-1:40PM	Afternoon Advisory

2:30-3:00PM	Aspire (Independent Literacy & Small-Group Tutoring)		1:40-1:50PM	Dismissal
3:00-3:30PM	MBA			
3:30-3:40PM	Afternoon Advisory			
3:40-3:50PM	Dismissal			

A Day in the Life of a Chicago Prep Student

7:15am. At 7:15am, Brandon is on the way to Chicago Prep with his mom, Ms. Frazier. “So, Brandon, which core value are we working on this week?” asks Ms. Frazier as she drives. “Kindness,” Brandon replies confidently. “Right, and what are some ways you can show kindness today?” Brandon thinks for a moment. “Don’t leave anybody out. If I see somebody who looks sad or lonely, ask if they’re okay and if they want to talk.” Ms. Frazier smiles, and so does Brandon. They pull up to the front door of school, where the Head of School and Assistant Head of School, Ms. Griffin and Mr. Daniels are standing outside, professionally dressed, smiling, and greeting students and families. Ms. Griffin stays by the front door, checking in personally with students one by one, while Mr. Daniels moves around to greet families as they drop off their children. Brandon feels a sense of connectedness seeing his classmates all dressed in the same uniform as him – navy blue pants and a bright blue polo with the Chicago Prep logo embroidered on the chest. As Mr. Daniels waves and says hello to Brandon’s mom, Brandon jumps out of the car, adjusts his backpack neatly on both shoulders, checks that his shirt is tucked in, and walks straight to Ms. Griffin with his hand extended. “Good morning, Brandon!” she says, looking genuinely excited to see him. He gives her a firm handshake and eye contact as he greets her back. “Brandon, excellent responsibility yesterday in math class. You were working hard all morning. Keep up the good work!” Ms. Griffin says. “And I got a 100% on my exit ticket!” Brandon adds. “Wow! That’s excellent!” **7:20-7:37am.** Brandon walks quietly indoors and is welcomed by the sound of instrumental jazz music playing over the community speakers. He sets out confidently on the morning routine, starting with greeting his homeroom teacher, Ms. Martin, with a hug, then moves on to check in with Mr. Mason, his science teacher, who is at the homework table supporting scholars as they hand in last night’s homework. Brandon places each assignment neatly in the crate for its subject, feeling proud he was responsible last night and completed all of it. Mr. Mason high fives Brandon, who grins and then continues the routine, setting his backpack down, grabbing his breakfast, and sitting down at his table. Settled into the first open seat for his homeroom, Howard, Brandon opens his breakfast package and whispers, “hello,” to his classmates already seated – Miracle, Tommie, Jada, and Chris. The volume at breakfast, other than the jazz music, is like a college library. As he eats, Brandon starts on his morning work. **7:37-8:00am.** At exactly 7:37am, after the scholars’ clean-up routine, the music fades and Ms. Griffin steps to the front corner of the cafeteria and raises her hand. Brandon and all his classmates quickly raise their hands in response, and the room hushes to silence within ten seconds. “Good morning, community!” “Good morning, Ms. Griffin,” comes the chorus of scholars. “Scholars, it’s so great to see you all today. On this day in history, the Medical School at Howard University opened. November 9, 1868, was the first day of classes, with just 8 students. Think about how that fact connects to our school and our values. Meditate on it as you walk to class, and take time to talk about it with your friends during break this morning. Have a wonderful day.” Brandon feels proud thinking about the medical school of his homeroom college opening as he and his classmates transition urgently and silently from the tables to lines to walk to their homerooms. Brandon loves the sense of calm and focus that this quiet provides. When they arrive to their Advisory classroom, Brandon and his classmates engage in a quick mini-lesson on their social and emotional focus for the week: growth mindset and resilience, discussing today whether personalities can change over time and the implications of that. Tommie speaks up: “I don’t think people really change. You just are who you are. You might get more mature over time and change from going to school to having a job, but you’re still

always gonna be pretty much the same.” Jada raises her hand and, when called on, speaks directly to Tommie as well as the rest of the class: “I disagree with you, Tommie, that people don’t change. I think when you go through something really serious in your life, it can change you for better or maybe for worse.” Brandon listens closely. He isn’t quite sure what he thinks about this, but it’s interesting and makes him think about his older sister who some days is very kind and other days can be so mean. At 7:58, Brandon and the rest of Howard put away their Advisory materials and, at Ms. Martin’s cue, urgently stand up, push their chairs in, and stand up straight at their desks. She shares her quote for the day, “Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.” She urges the scholars to tap into their own power and encourage others to tap into theirs. **8:00-8:50am.** Howard’s first class is literacy, also taught by Ms. Martin. The students remain standing as Ms. Martin starts Oral Drill, rapidly asking questions and cold calling students: *What is a simile? What is a metaphor? Name this figurative language: From across the room, Uncle Noah’s laughter was booming thunder. What is personification? Give an example of personification.* Brandon answers every question in his head, alert and ready, and is proud to share the definition of *imagery* when Ms. Martin calls on him. When the two-minute timer goes off, Ms. Martin gives the cue to sit down, saying, “I am committed to teaching.” Brandon and his classmates respond in unison, “We are committed to learning.”⁹⁷ The students have been reading *Esperanza Rising*, and they urgently sit down, take out their class novels, and flip to page 115. After asking a few review questions about the previous chapter, Ms. Martin reads several paragraphs aloud, varying her voice to show great excitement for the story. Because the focus for the day is figurative language, Ms. Martin pauses and does a short “Think Aloud” about the author’s use of imagery and simile so far. Next, Ms. Martin cold calls several scholars to read a paragraph or two, and Brandon is excited when he hears his name. He does his best to project his voice and pause fluently at commas and periods so that all scholars can easily hear and enjoy the novel, and Ms. Martin rewards his efforts with a merit. Before the scholars continue reading independently, Ms. Martin poses a question for class discussion: *Based on pages 100-120, what are two ways Esperanza has changed?* Thinking about the similarities between that question and what they were discussing about personalities in Advisory, Brandon has a chance to turn and talk with his seat partner, Kamaya, before sharing with the class. After several scholars answer and respond to each other using habits of discussion, they continue reading independently, annotating key pieces of evidence and jotting notes about what they have read. **8:45-8:50am.** At 8:45am, Ms. Martin praises the class for staying focused and disciplined, awarding a core value point for responsibility, and makes the Scholar of the Day announcement. Every day, every class at Chicago Prep, one scholar gets this award, accompanied by a bright blue card the teacher writes his or her name on and two merits. Today, Ms. Martin awards Scholar of the Day to Kamaya for her excellent curiosity and positive attitude, and Brandon snaps in encouragement along with the rest of the class. The scholars then stand up on Ms. Martin’s cue and remain standing until they hear the bell ring. Ms. Martin says, “Thank you, Chicago Prep scholars,” and they respond in unison, “Thank you, Ms. Martin.”⁹⁸ **8:50-9:40am.** Ms. Carter, their math teacher, begins class with Oral Drill, as always, and an opening greeting (I am committed to teaching/We are committed to learning) as always. The scholars then sit down and pass the math packets down the aisles silently and at lightning speed, getting right to work on their Do Now. Ms. Carter actively monitors the students’ work and realizes that 90% of the class correctly solved the problem, so she brings the scholars together and cold calls Jaylen to explain his work. Jaylen projects his voice, speaks in complete sentences, and uses mathematical vocabulary, so Ms. Carter gives him a merit for academic excellence, and all the scholars give him two claps in unison. Then it’s time for more practice – lots and lots of practice! The scholars have what they call fluency and procedural practice with problems that get increasingly harder to ensure all scholars solve problems at the right level of challenge. While they work, Ms. Carter

⁹⁷ The opening ritual “I am committed to teaching”/ “We are committed to learning” comes from the Collegiate School of Memphis.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

continues to monitor and give feedback, and she pulls the class together a couple of times to help them work through points of confusion. **9:40-10:30am.** Brandon and his classmates are with Ms. Martin again for their second literacy period of the morning. Literacy II often focuses more on writing, including learning grammar, writing creative fiction, or writing in response to texts. Today, Ms. Martin shares that they will be reading the short story “The Scholarship Jacket” and answering the question, *How do Martha and her grandfather respond differently to the principal asking them to pay for the scholarship jacket?* **10:30-11:20am.** Next, Howard has science with Mr. Mason. Mr. Mason’s Oral Drill (“*What is substance? What is a mixture? Describe what happens in a chemical reaction.*”) helps Brandon to warm up his brain and get excited for science. The scholars sit down and take out their science notebooks to answer the Do Now question, “*Are new substances always made when we combine substances?*” When the timer goes off, Mr. Mason points out that this is an unfamiliar question, and invites a “risk-taker” to answer. When Miracle shares with the class, she gets a merit for showing courage, and the class gets a core value point for kindness for waving “spirit fingers” at her to show their encouragement. Brandon grins when Mr. Mason explains that today will be a demonstration/lab designed to help them answer the Do Now question with evidence. **11:20-11:50am.** When Brandon and the rest of the 5th grade arrive in the cafeteria, they move rapidly through the lunch line, and disperse to their assigned seats, where they remain standing and wait for the cue to begin reciting “Invictus.” The scholars are working to memorize the famous poem, but until they have it fully down, Ms. Griffin reads a line and the scholars repeat it. Hearing everyone recite in unison – the power of one collective voice – still gives Brandon goosebumps – especially the last two lines, “I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.” Having declared the last lines with triumph, all scholars sit down except the Scholar of the Week, Sydney, who remains standing and announces the question of the day, which is on the projector screen as usual. “Good afternoon scholars,” Sydney projects. “The question of the day is, “If you could have lunch with one famous person, past or present, who would it be and why? Enjoy your lunch!” “Beyonce,” “Barack Obama,” “Michelle Obama,” “Lebron James,” begins the chorus of answers from Brandon’s table. A few students passionately make the case for their celebrity of choice before the conversation veers to other topics. At 11:43am, Ms. Griffin reminds the scholars that it’s almost time to transition, and to take a moment to share and practice gratitude at their tables. At 11:47am just before mindfulness and meditation, she’ll cold call 2-3 scholars. “Remember, scholars,” Ms. Griffin says, “This is not only a chance to express gratitude, which we know makes our lives happier and healthier; it’s also a chance to practice your public speaking – a critical skill for acting as a leader or starting your own business.” Brandon feels butterflies in his stomach like he does most days at this time, a mixture of excitement and nervousness at speaking in front of 60 classmates. When scholars hear their name, their challenge is to stand up straight and tall, plant their feet, project their voice, and speak specifically about someone they are grateful for and why. **11:50am-12:00pm.** Mindfulness and meditation takes place right after lunch to help everyone refocus for the second half of the school day. Mr. Daniels instructs all scholars to stand, stretch, and take a few deep breaths before they sit back down and listen to the calming voice of the meditation app playing on the community speakers. The speaker helps the students do a body scan, relaxing with more deep breathing and then noticing any sensations in their head, face, chest, and the rest of their body. Brandon had never tried meditation before Chicago Prep, and at first, he found it awkward to sit silently and do nothing. Now, he is grateful to practice it every day because it helps to calm his body and clear his mind before jumping back into the rigorous learning. **12:00-12:50pm.** After lunch, Howard has Math II. This block covers similar material as Math I, but with extended practice on one or two more challenging, multi-step problems as opposed to practice with many shorter, more straightforward problems. They are also more likely to have group work and presentations during Math II. First, Ms. Carter provides the challenge problem for the day, asking how two friends can equally share two-thirds of a candy bar. Brandon tries and struggles alongside his quietly working peers, drawing and erasing models and number expressions

over the next five minutes. Ms. Carter circulates and offers questions and feedback. Next, the students break into small groups, gathering around a poster to capture their thinking as a group. As they discuss, Ms. Carter begins to see lightbulbs go off as the scholars learn from each other. She notices that two groups have different answers, so she posts their posters side-by-side at the front and has the scholars debate who they agree with and why. After again using habits of discussion and practicing public speaking skills, the scholars come to a consensus and stamp the new key idea in their notes. Ms. Carter adds a point to Howard’s “Perseverance” values on the whiteboard. **12:50-1:40pm.** Social studies is Brandon’s second favorite class. Not only is Mr. Wright one of his role models, but they also get to study the history of Bronzeville. Brandon is proud to live in the neighborhood known as the Black Metropolis, where hundreds of thousands of African Americans migrated during the Great Migration in search of better opportunity. He loves learning about the famous businessmen, scientists, musicians, writers, and civil rights activists who helped to shape not only Bronzeville and Chicago, but the rest of the country as well. Living in Bronzeville and having visited many famous historical sites with his family helps make the history real – and that helps him to understand how other, less familiar history is real, too. Today they are reading an article about Civil Rights activists. Mr. Wright says, “Scholars, as we read, remember that these events were taking place just sixty years ago – the blink of an eye in historical context. I want you to be making connections to civil rights causes of today, and what movements you are willing to advocate for.” Brandon’s mind starts racing. He and his mom talk about this a lot, and police brutality is at the top of his list. **1:40-2:30pm.** It’s Tuesday, so after social studies, Howard has Art. PE and Health are on Mondays and Wednesdays; Art on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and Ms. Harris teaches both. The students have been working on a self-portrait unit; they get to represent themselves using different mediums, and this week it’s a collage. It’s fun because they get to tear little pieces of colorful construction paper and creatively glue them together to form a representation of themselves. Ms. Harris talks with them a lot about the importance of self-love, and Brandon thinks back to what his mom said this morning about finding ways to be kind to yourself. During partner share time, Ms. Harris hears the students ask each other a lot of thoughtful questions about their artwork and its meaning, and she awards them a core value point for curiosity. **2:30-3:00pm.** During the daily Aspire block, scholars focus on independent reading and get small-group tutoring. Brandon is reading *The Hunger Games* for the first time and can’t believe how exciting it is. When he finishes, he will take a quiz on a Chromebook to assess his understanding of the book, and if he passes, he will be that much closer to the yearly goal to read one million words. While students read a book of their choice, Ms. Martin and Mr. Wright, their social studies teacher, pull small groups of students for tutoring. The groups can be as small as one student or as big as eight, and they always get help with whatever they need – what they’ve been struggling with in reading and writing. The coolest part is that everybody gets tutored – not just students who are behind or students at the top – during at least one Aspire block each week, often more. Brandon has always felt like an “average” student, so he’s not used to the special individual attention, but it’s really helpful. He settles into catch up with Katniss and Peeta until he hears his name called. “Brandon, Chyna, Kamaya, and Devonte,” Mr. Wright calls, and the four of them stand up, push their chairs in, and head to his table with their pencils and Aspire notebooks. Mr. Mason explains that they’ll be working on finding strong evidence to support their thinking. **3:00-3:30pm.** Brandon smiles and wiggles as Ms. Carter puts the question for the day on the projector. Ms. Carter teaches both math and MBA – Money and Business in Action – Brandon’s favorite class. They get to learn the financial skills they’ll need to save money and be independent when they’re older. Brandon and his mom talk about MBA class almost every day after school. She loves that he learns these skills at Chicago Prep, because financial problems were exactly what kept her from completing her four-year college degree, and she has no question that Brandon will go to college. Ms. Carter also teaches them entrepreneurship, and they get to explore lots of different ideas for starting businesses and earning money right in the Bronzeville community. Brandon has learned that earning money and creating wealth

come not just from finding jobs, but from investing and creating jobs, and he loves thinking about what financial and creative opportunities he can come up with for his community. After Oral Drill, Ms. Carter usually posts a question of the day for scholars to respond to. Today’s question is, “If you could open up one kind of store around the corner, what would it be and why do you think it would be successful?” **3:30-3:40pm.** Finally, it’s time for afternoon Advisory. Howard stays together but splits into their two advisory groups – the Morrisons, Brandon’s group, led by Ms. Martin, and the Brookes, led by Mr. Wright. They are named for the famous writer Toni Morrison and the lawyer Edward Brooke, the first African American who was elected to the U.S. Senate by popular vote; both are famous graduates of their homeroom, Howard University. With their belongings packed up and backpacks and coats ready to go, the Morrisons sit in a small circle and debrief the day. One by one, they go around the circle and each scholar has a chance to share their “something or someone” – something you’re excited about, something you’re proud of, something you’re thinking about, or someone you want to shout out or give gratitude to. **3:40-3:50pm.** At 3:40pm, the class heads outside for dismissal. A few students who live very close start to walk home, a few get on their carpool vans, and the rest hang by Ms. Martin and Mr. Wright and wait for their families. Brandon sees his mom pull up and hops in the car as Ms. Martin waves and smiles. “Brandon had a great day!” she reports. “He was kind and focused as usual. And he’s loving *The Hunger Games!*” “I know,” says his mom, “he’s been begging to stay up past his bedtime to read. Oh well, it’s a good problem to have.” **4:00-5:00pm.** After school, Brandon has basketball practice. He and his teammates practice twice a week, and he loves the opportunity to have fun and blow off steam at the end of the day. This is his first year playing on a formal team, and he had never worked out this hard in his life. Coach Watkins always has the players gasping for breath after the daily “warm up.” It’s all worth it for Saturday games, though – especially when Brandon’s teachers and mom come cheer him on.

Schedule in Years 2 through 5. Our entire bell schedule can be found in **Appendix 2.6**. We do not anticipate any significant changes to the student schedule in Years 2 through 5. However, we will revisit our daily schedule and evaluate its effectiveness during our strategic planning each February and March. The Head of School will first work with the school team’s operational and instructional leaders to reflect on the effectiveness of the schedule, including lunch and transition times, block lengths, and the order of courses for each cohort. The team will use student achievement data and teacher and family feedback to make recommended adjustments. The Head of School will then share the recommended adjustments with the Board of Directors, who will approve the final student schedule by April.

2.6.3: TEACHER SCHEDULES

Figure 2.11: Sample Teacher Schedules: 5th Grade ELA Teacher

Monday – Thursday		Friday	
Time	Responsibilities	Time	Responsibilities
7:10-7:15AM	Arrival	7:10-7:15AM	Arrival
7:15-7:20AM	Team huddle	7:15-7:20AM	Team huddle
7:20-7:40AM	Supervise breakfast and transition	7:20-7:40AM	Supervise breakfast
7:40-8:00AM	Lead Advisory: 5 th Grade A	7:40-8:10AM	Supervise Assembly and transition
8:00-8:50AM	Teach Literacy I: 5 th Grade A	8:10-9:00AM	Teach Literacy I: 5 th Grade A
8:50-9:40AM	Teach Literacy I: 5 th Grade B	9:00-9:50AM	Teach Literacy I: 5 th Grade B
9:40-10:30AM	Teach Literacy II: 5 th Grade A	9:50-10:40AM	Planning/Preparation
10:30-11:20AM	Planning/Preparation	10:40-11:20AM	Supervise Lunch and Lead Mindfulness and Meditation
11:20-11:50AM	Lunch break	11:20AM-12:10PM	Planning/Preparation

11:50AM-12:00PM	Support Mindfulness and Meditation	12:10-1:00 PM	Team Meeting: ELA, Special Education
12:00-12:50PM	Teach Literacy II: 5 th Grade B	1:00-1:30 PM	Lead Aspire: 5 th Grade A
12:50-2:30PM	Planning/Preparation; Weekly Data Meeting	1:30-1:40 PM	Lead Advisory: 5 th Grade A/Morrisons Advisory Group
2:30-3:00PM	Lead Aspire: 5 th Grade A	1:40-1:50 PM	Supervise dismissal
3:00-3:30PM	Lead Aspire: 5 th Grade B	1:50-2:30 PM	1:1 Coaching Meeting
3:30-3:40PM	Lead Advisory: 5 th Grade A/Morrisons Advisory Group	2:30-4:00 PM	Professional Development
3:40-3:50PM	Supervise dismissal	4:00 PM	End of teacher day
3:50-4:00PM	Planning/Prep		
4:00PM	End of Teacher Day		

A Day in the Life of a Chicago Prep Teacher

7:10-7:40am. Ms. Martin arrives to work at 7:10am and drops off her belongings in her homeroom classroom, Howard. With her clipboard and keys in hands, she heads to the cafeteria for team huddle. Ms. Griffin and Mr. Daniels are standing at the front table with gratitude slips, clipboards, and notebooks. At 7:15am, Ms. Griffin greets the team and says, “We have plenty of gratitude slips; please take one minute and jot down at least one thing you are grateful for today.” Ms. Martin jots that she is grateful for the time she spent reading last night and for the fact that she gets to start her day with the wonderful students of Howard. At Ms. Griffin’s cue, the team takes a moment to share their gratitude with a colleague. The next item on the agenda is the daily logistical announcements. The Manager of Operations, Ms. Smith, reminds teachers that grades are due next Friday and teachers should be communicating with parents and students about any makeup work. Finally, Mr. Daniels leads the lightning practice for the morning Cold Call. Ms. Martin and Mr. Hudson, the 6th grade ELA teacher, team up and practice asking three questions in a row aligned to their objectives for the day, using the formula: *Name – pause – question*. The team breaks and Ms. Martin heads to her post at Howard’s assigned table. As the scholars start to stream in, Ms. Martin smiles and quietly greets each child who walks past her with a hello, hug, and/or fist bump. She actively monitors her homeroom students to ensure they talk only in the occasional whisper, eat their breakfast quickly, and start working on their morning work. **7:40-8:00am.** After supervising Howard for their transition from the cafeteria to homeroom, Ms. Martin guides the scholars through their social-emotional mini-lesson on growth mindset. She loves hearing the creative and thoughtful ideas students share with each other. **8:00-9:27am.** During the first two periods of the day, Ms. Martin teaches first Howard and then the other 5th grade homeroom, University of Chicago. For Literacy I, she guides them through the latest section of *Esperanza Rising*, striving to ensure not only literal comprehension of the text but also analytical comprehension of the standards for the day, RL5.4 and RL6.3. While scholars read and write, Ms. Martin aggressively monitors their work, giving individualized feedback and recording data on her clipboard. Seeing that some scholars are struggling to adequately describe *change* by clearly naming the difference between before and after, she collects two student work samples – one that includes before and after and one that does not – and places them on the document camera to allow the scholars to evaluate. The discussion enables a scholar who had struggled to name what makes one sample better than the other, and Ms. Martin gives scholars the cue to revise their work. **9:30-10:12am.** Ms. Martin sees Howard again for Literacy II. Just as during Literacy I, the class includes scholars independently reading, annotating, and writing while Ms. Martin aggressively monitors and responds to the data. Ms. Martin also facilitates Turn & Talks and whole-class discussions to keep Participation and Think Ratio high. Often, Literacy II includes some grammar and explicit instruction in writing strategies, but today the scholars read a short story to complement their study of *Esperanza Rising*.

10:15-10:57am. During Ms. Martin’s first planning period, she prioritizes the Intellectual Preparation Protocol (IPP) for upcoming lesson plans. This means carefully studying the lesson plan, including objective and aligned standard, the overall flow and time stamps, the criteria for success, and the back-pocket questions she can use to support scholars when they struggle. Ms. Martin also takes a moment to look over her plans for today’s Aspire block, reminding herself which scholars to pull and what she will focus on with each group. **11:00-11:30am.** Ms. Martin eats lunch in the cafeteria with the other 5th grade teachers. They are in the same space as the scholars, but with Ms. Griffin, Mr. Daniels, and Ms. Harris supervising, the teachers are able to relax and unwind. Ms. Martin enjoys the time chatting about everything from student behavior to upcoming weekend plans. **11:30-11:42am.** Ms. Martin heads over to the University of Chicago lunch tables to monitor and support while Mr. Daniels leads mindfulness and meditation for the 5th grade. **11:45am-12:27pm.** After lunch, Ms. Martin teaches Literacy II again, this time to University of Chicago. **12:30-1:12pm.** During Aspire, Ms. Martin starts by pulling her group most struggling academically, while Mr. Wright pulls a group of scholars who are more in the middle. Ms. Martin works on literal comprehension with a short story that is just below grade level. The two tutoring groups learn simultaneously in opposite corners of the room, while the scholars in the middle focus on reading independently. Ms. Martin loves that Aspire provides this sacred time for intervention daily because it allows her to meet and support scholars exactly where they are. The Accelerated Reader program challenging students to read one million words has really helped to motivate the 5th grade scholars to stay focused during independent reading. **1:15-1:57pm.** During Ms. Martin’s second planning period, she usually divides her time between grading, data analysis, and parent communication. With Trimester I report card conferences right around the corner, Ms. Martin reaches out to the parents of a few scholars who are just on the cusp of achieving a higher letter grade and shares how the scholar can make that happen between now and next Friday. **2:00-2:42pm.** During Ms. Martin’s third planning period, she has a meeting with school leadership at least once a week. Today, she and Mr. Daniels have a Weekly Data Meeting. They have both prepared in advance by analyzing a set of student work and identifying what they believe is the highest-leverage misconception to address in a re-teach lesson. During the meeting, they compare notes, plan the specific details of the re-teach lesson, practice execution, and add it to the calendar for this upcoming Thursday. **2:45-3:27pm.** Ms. Martin’s last class of the day is Aspire with the University of Chicago. She continues to pull small groups of scholars at a variety of levels and monitor the students who are reading and writing independently. **3:30-3:40pm.** Although afternoon advisory is short, Ms. Martin believes it is one of the most important periods of the day. It allows her to strengthen the bonds amongst her tight-knit advisory cohort and to check on each of them before they head home for the day. Ms. Martin believes that relationship-building is the foundation of student success, and this daily period is designed to build and maintain close student-teacher and student-student relationships. She leads the Morrisons in sharing their “something or someone” – something they are excited about, something they are proud of, something they are thinking about, or someone they want to shout out or give gratitude to. She congratulates those sharing accomplishments and makes a mental note to check in with scholars who seem anxious or upset. At the same time, Mr. Wright is leading the same activity with the Brookes, ensuring that all students have the time and space to share and process feelings. **3:40-3:50pm.** Ms. Martin supervises dismissal along with the rest of the team, waving and chatting briefly with families as they arrive to pick up their scholars. **3:50-4:00pm.** Ms. Martin tidies up her classroom, sets out the materials for tomorrow, and writes the next day’s objective and homework on the board.

Teacher Schedule in Years 2 through 5. We do not anticipate any significant changes to the teacher schedule in Years 2 through 5. However, we will revisit the teacher schedule and evaluate its effectiveness during our strategic planning each February and March in the same manner as our daily student schedule, described in **Section 2.2.2.**

SECTION 2.7: CULTURE, SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING, AND BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT

2.7.1: SCHOOL CULTURE AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The proposal reflects a realistic understanding of the anticipated social, emotional, mental, and physical health needs of the student population with an intentional strategy to promote positive student behavior and foster a positive academic and social environment with high expectations.

- *The application cites clear evidence-based practices, policies, systems, and traditions that promote positive student behavior and foster a positive academic and social environment with high expectations*
- *Well-defined goals for school culture and plans to monitor progress*
- *A plan to communicate and norm a culture of high expectations with students, teachers, administrators, and families and promote positive behavior*
- *Description of the referrals, levers, methods, protocols, management and monitoring systems for the full scope of a MTSS, including a sound description of Tier 1 instruction (supportive and restorative learning climate with appropriate SEL skills development); Tier 2 instruction (targeted supports and interventions); and Tier 3 instruction (listing highly structured, individualized interventions)*
- *Clearly identified staff members to perform all roles and responsibilities described in this subsection, with alignment to their job descriptions, annual and weekly schedules, and the staffing and organizational charts*

Vision of School Culture. The mission of Chicago Prep is to provide academic rigor in a structured and supportive community, preparing all scholars to succeed in college and make a positive impact on the world. Our scholars will leave Chicago Prep with the academic skills and knowledge, the mindsets and character strengths, and the practical and professional skills they need to successfully navigate college-preparatory high schools, selective colleges and universities, and the careers of their choice. Our graduates will contribute positively to the world. Some will become lawyers, doctors, teachers, scientists; some will become writers, entertainers, or politicians; some will become CEOs of Fortune 500 companies or will start their own successful business. They will forge their own career path, shaped by their unique individual strengths and preferences and driven by their desire to create a better future. This vision for our scholars' future depends on the present that we shape today. Research suggests that the nation's highest-performing schools are those with structured and consistent learning environments, with clear expectations for students and teachers. As a report from The New Teacher Project (TNTP) found, "These expectations are not rules for rules' sake; rather, safe school environments with clear expectations are considered the foundation for learning, and a means to the ultimate end: growth for every student."⁹⁹ In alignment with these findings, Chicago Prep provides a highly structured and supportive learning environment is calm, safe, and predictable, so that scholars and teachers are free to focus on what truly matters – academic achievement and personal growth. The "feeling" we want to create at school is simple: warm and focused. The systems and practices described in the paragraphs that follow are designed to work together to establish and maintain this overwhelmingly positive learning environment at Chicago Prep.

⁹⁹ TNTP and New Schools Venture Fund conducted a study of 23 high-performing charter schools in Boston, where charter school students outperform their peers in local school districts and in charter schools throughout the country and in local school districts, even though Boston Public Schools is one of the highest-performing urban districts in the country. Greenhouse Schools in Boston. School Leadership Practices Across a High-Performing Charter Sector. TNTP, 2014. https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP_GreenhouseSchoolsinBoston_2015_Web.pdf

Core Values. Chicago Prep’s six core values – **kindness, courage, gratitude, curiosity, responsibility, and perseverance** – drive every aspect of our school culture. Teachers explicitly teach, model, and reinforce these values in both the short- and long-term, tying rewards and incentives to demonstrations of our values and tying consequences to breaches of our values. We help our scholars understand that they have responsibility for their choices, and that all choices have both intrinsic and extrinsic consequences. Our vision is that by the time our scholars graduate from Chicago Prep, they are consistently making good choices based on their intrinsic desire to do well and to do good in the world. As our scholars internalize our core values and develop this internal motivation, they take ownership not only over their personal growth and achievement but also over the positive culture of Chicago Prep, taking on leadership roles and working as a team to ensure that our school is a strong, supportive community for learning. To clarify our vision of core value implementation at Chicago Prep, Figure 12 provides labels (moral, performance, civic, and/or intellectual), descriptions, and rationale for each value.

Figure 2.12: Core Values at Chicago Prep

Value	Description	Rationale
Kindness (moral)	We are caring, compassionate, and generous to ourselves and others. We treat other people the way we want to be treated, and the way we want those we love to be treated. We show respect for others through our words and actions, and we do so without expectation of recognition or reward. We take care to encourage and uplift the members of our community, particularly those facing challenges or hardships.	The value of kindness ties directly to our mission for scholars to positively impact the world. Kindness has been scientifically demonstrated to be “contagious”; thus, if celebrating it as a value inspires one scholar to be kind, that scholar’s kindness is likely to influence others to do the same, creating an overwhelmingly positive ripple effect in our school community. ¹⁰⁰ Our focus on kindness is also designed to help prevent bullying.
Courage (moral)	We demonstrate the bravery to take risks, push ourselves, and do the right thing. We believe in ourselves and we follow our own moral compass in order to make good choices. We show initiative in connecting with others and taking advantage of opportunities. By pushing ourselves out of our comfort zones, we continuously grow as scholars and as people.	Courage is a key trait of leadership that changes the world. Many of our most respected and transformational leaders past and present are revered for their courage: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Malala Yousafzai, Winston Churchill, Mother Teresa. We ultimately want our scholars to develop their own moral compass and embody such leadership and. Additionally, courage connects to our focus on entrepreneurship. Successful entrepreneurs must be comfortable with showing initiative and taking risks, both of which are included in NFTE’s key domains for the entrepreneurial mindset.
Gratitude (moral)	We look for, acknowledge, and appreciate the goodness around us. We choose gratitude as a way to see the world. We reflect consistently on who and what we are grateful for, and we express our appreciation as often as possible. We prioritize giving thanks, creating an environment where we seek not only to find, but also to contribute, positivity.	We prioritize gratitude because it has been consistently linked to greater health, happiness, resilience, and quality of life. ¹⁰¹ Grateful people are also more likely to be empathetic and less likely to be aggressive, both highly desirable outcomes for creating a positive learning environment. When you feel grateful, you are more willing and able to help others and improve the world.
Curiosity (intellectual)	We are eager to learn and to explore the world around us; we value questions as much as answers. We take initiative to learn about people and topics that interest us. We read, discuss, and	Like gratitude, curiosity has been consistently linked to improved social, emotional, and mental well-being. Curiosity is a key driver of academic

¹⁰⁰ Zaki, Jamil. “Kindness Contagion.” *Scientific American*. July 26, 2016. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/kindness-contagion/>.

¹⁰¹ Morin, Amy. “7 Scientifically Proven Benefits Of Gratitude That Will Motivate You To Give Thanks Year-Round.” *Forbes*. 27 Nov. 2017. *Forbes Magazine*. 06 Sept. 2019 <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/amymorin/2014/11/23/7-scientifically-proven-benefits-of-gratitude-that-will-motivate-you-to-give-thanks-year-round/#6b8dfa1b183c>>.

	study, and we find great joy in this process. We are lifelong learners.	achievement, increasing both the desire to learn more and the ability to retain new information. ¹⁰²
Responsibility (civic, performance)	We take ownership over our choices, efforts, and achievement. We recognize that our actions impact our lives and the world around us. We make good choices that drive our academic and personal success and contribute positively to the world. We cultivate independence so we are ready to navigate college, career, and life.	In order to succeed in college, career, and life, scholars must learn to hold themselves accountable for their actions. They must develop the independence to make good choices without constantly being told to do so. We also want scholars to feel a sense of social responsibility to support their peers, families, neighborhoods, and other communities.
Perseverance (performance)	We work hard through challenges and obstacles; we never give up in pursuit of our goals. We know that growth and success require hard work over an extended period of time. We know that with determination and focus, we can do whatever we put our minds to. We never give up.	Studies have repeatedly shown the importance of perseverance and its closely related virtue, grit, in long-term success and achievement, particularly in graduating from college. ¹⁰³ Our scholars will encounter obstacles in the future. If they are to succeed, it is very important for them to recognize that challenges are inevitable and to have the determination to never give up.

Scholars will first learn about our values in detail during our week-long orientation. Throughout orientation, they will study definitions and real-life examples of each value, including famous people who have exemplified the values and ways in which scholars can exemplify the values each day. Scholars will continuously explore and discuss the values daily, deepening understanding over time. For example, ELA classes provide opportunities to discuss how characters do or do not demonstrate our core values, and MBA class allows scholars to make connections between our core values and entrepreneurial mindsets, discussed in **Section 2.2.2**. Teachers will award core value points to classes for collective demonstration of the value. A class with 100% homework completion will earn a point for **responsibility**; a class with multiple scholars asking thoughtful questions will earn a point for **curiosity**; and a class with scholars consistently treating each other with respect and generosity will earn a point for **kindness**. The homeroom with the most value points at the end of the week will be honored at our weekly Assembly. Similarly, individual scholars will be honored with value shout-outs and awards at weekly and monthly Assemblies. In everything that we do at Chicago Prep, the message will be clear: your character counts.

Relationship-Building. We believe that strong staff-scholar relationships are critical in creating and maintaining a positive school culture. Considering that the “quality of a person’s relationships and social interactions shapes their development and health, both of the body and of the brain,”¹⁰⁴ relationship-building is particularly important in the context of our community, where stakeholders have identified prevalent trauma and poverty pose real challenges to scholars’ success. “Adolescents’ efficacy, agency, and sense of purpose thrive” when they have opportunities to build close, trusting relationships with peers and adults.¹⁰⁵ At Chicago Prep, all staff members will foster relationships with our scholars, taking an interest in getting to know them as individuals, showing concern for their well-being, and expressing pride in their accomplishments. Relationship-building is particularly important for the Dean of Students, who will rely on strong connections with scholars and families in overseeing discipline. We cultivate strong

¹⁰² Gruber, Matthias, Bernard D. Gelman, and Charan Ranganath. “States of Curiosity Modulate Hippocampus-Dependent Learning via the Dopaminergic Circuit.” *Neuron*, October 2, 2014. [https://www.cell.com/neuron/fulltext/S0896-6273\(14\)00804-6](https://www.cell.com/neuron/fulltext/S0896-6273(14)00804-6); Campbell, Emily. “Six Surprising Benefits of Curiosity.” *Greater Good Magazine*. September 24, 2015. https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/six_surprising_benefits_of_curiosity

¹⁰³ Tough, Paul. *How children succeed: Grit, curiosity, and the hidden power of character*. Boston: Mariner Books, 2012. 151-153.

¹⁰⁴ Immordino-Yang, Mary Helen, Linda Darling-Hammond, and Christina Krone. “The Brain Basis for Integrated Social, Emotional, and Academic Development: How emotions and social relationships drive learning.” *The Aspen Institute National Commission on Social, Emotional, & Academic Development*. The Aspen Institute, 2018.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

relationships in a variety of ways, including:

- **Home Visits:** In July, after our enrollment lottery and before our staff professional development, members of the Chicago Prep team will visit the homes of all enrolled scholars. Our goal is to learn more about each scholar – to gain insight into his/her home and family, get a glimpse of personality, and hear about interests, hobbies, concerns, and goals for the future. Summer home visits will lay the foundation for each Chicago Prep scholar feeling known and valued at school.
- **Orientation:** Relationship-building is a major focus of our week-long orientation to kick off the school year. During every class that week, scholars and teachers complete get-to-know-you activities, from the silly to the serious. These activities will help scholars and teachers to see each other first and foremost as people and will foster their ability to work together effectively in the months ahead.
- **Strong School-Family Communication:** Chicago Prep continues to build on our school-family partnerships throughout the year with weekly progress reports, biweekly individual check-ins, monthly newsletters, monthly family events, and frequent website/social media updates, all described in detail in **Section 2.8**.

Advisory Program. Scholars at Chicago Prep begin and end each day with our Advisory program. These morning and afternoon sessions are centered around social and emotional learning (SEL), a primary need within the Bronzeville community. Advisory will include lessons on goal-setting, growth mindset, mindfulness, conflict navigation, and self-awareness. In addition to providing explicit lessons, Advisory will create space for group and individual check-ins, class discussions, and fun practice with SEL skills through competition and collaboration. SEL programs have been demonstrated to create a range of positive outcomes, including “improving young people’s self-control, interpersonal skills, problem solving the quality of their peer and adult relationships, commitment to schooling, and academic achievement.”¹⁰⁶ Advisory takes place in scholars’ homerooms; some lessons/activities will include the entire class in one large group, while others will have scholars split into Advisory groups. Each Advisory consists of half the class, led by one staff member who serves as their Advisees’ primary advocate and immediate point of contact with the family. This social structure provides scholars with the opportunity to voice dreams, goals, struggles, concerns, and questions with a small peer group and trusted adult. We believe that placing such intentional focus on SEL will promote a positive school culture by equipping our scholars to more effectively handle the many challenges of adolescence. The lessons will help them prioritize mental health and well-being and healthy relationships with others.

Mindfulness and Meditation. The practice of mindfulness, defined as “increased, purposeful, nonjudgmental attention to the present moment,” is a useful way to further develop children’s social and emotional intelligence and well-being.¹⁰⁷ Each day after lunch, our daily schedule includes ten minutes for mindfulness practice such as guided meditations and mindful breathing exercises. One study of schools that adopted similar mindfulness interventions found that they improved students’ attention, reduced students’ levels of self-reported stress, and “reduced the response of the amygdala, a brain structure associated with emotion and stress, to negative stimuli.”¹⁰⁸ Chicago Prep commits to educating both staff and scholars in the benefits of mindfulness and implementing mindful practices to help meet their needs.

¹⁰⁶ Taylor, Rebecca D., Eva Oberle, Joseph A. Durlak, and Roger P. Weissberg. Promoting Positive Youth Development Through School-Based Social and Emotional Learning Interventions: A Meta-Analysis of Follow-Up Effects. *Child Development*, July/August 2017. Volume 88, Number 4, 1156–1171.

¹⁰⁷ Gutierrez, Akira S., Sara B. Krachman, Ethan Scherer, Martin R. West, and John D.E. Gabrieli. Mindfulness in the Classroom: Learning from a School-based Mindfulness Intervention through the Boston Charter Research Collaborative. *Transforming Education* January 2019. <https://www.transformingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2019-BCRC-Mindfulness-Brief.pdf>

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Systems and Routines. As part of our efforts to create a prevailing school culture of warmth and focus, Chicago Prep creates, teaches, practices, and maintains clear systems and routines for every recurring part of the school day/week. Having such structure in place helps to eliminate opportunities for distracting and unproductive behavior and to ensure that our scholars feel physically and emotionally safe at school. Furthermore, strong systems enable us to carve out more time for meaningful learning, relationship-building, and enrichment opportunities. Daily school routines for which scholars will learn and consistently execute organized procedures include entering school each day, handing in homework, entering the classroom, and passing out papers. When we execute these and other routine parts of the school day in an organized, efficient, and purposeful manner, the message scholars receive is that nothing is more important than learning. The result is a culture of focus.

Recognitions and Celebrations. Chicago Prep believes in recognizing our scholars for their exemplary behavior and character, specifically the demonstration of our core values. We recognize scholars daily through the use of merits, a system described in **Section 2.7.2**. Additionally, one of the primary ways we celebrate strong character is through weekly Assembly, when scholars receive “shout outs” for demonstrating one of more core values over the course of the week. We also host longer Assemblies monthly and at the end of each trimester, when scholars receive significant honors for sustained excellence. Rewards include certificates, medals, and monthly celebrations/parties. We believe that the joyful rituals established through Assembly will strengthen the warmth and focus of our culture and motivate all scholars to give their best efforts.

Scholar Leadership. Our vision is that by the 8th grade, the scholars of Chicago Prep are just as much owners and advocates of our school culture as the staff. Our culture of warmth and focus will feel authentic and sustainable only if we can facilitate this transfer of ownership. With this goal in mind, we have created a number of leadership opportunities for our scholars. For example, during weekly Assembly, scholars will begin to take on leadership roles in or around December of Year 1, including leading “shout outs,” presentations and activities. Additionally, we create two formalized leadership positions for which scholars must apply and be selected for: Scholar Ambassadors and Peer Mentors. Scholar Ambassadors act as representatives of Chicago Prep and liaisons between scholars and school leadership. Peer Mentors are 7th and 8th grade scholars who embody the Chicago Prep values, mission, and vision and are well-equipped to support younger peers who may also be struggling with behavior, character, confidence, or grades. Meetings between peer mentors and mentees will take place at least once per week during Advisory. We believe that when scholars see their peers in such leadership roles, taking pride and ownership in the Chicago Prep way, *all* scholars will be more likely to feel pride and ownership and to take on a significant role in maintaining our structured, supportive school community.

Communication of Expectations. Home visits, parent orientation, and scholar orientation will allow the Chicago Prep team to communicate our school culture expectations to families and scholars. We will distribute and discuss our expectations outlined in our Family Handbook during summer home visits. Our families will be invited to orientation sessions prior to the start of the school year where our expectations will be clearly outlined. Our scholars will learn and practice our expectations during scholar orientation. Lessons on our core values, systems and routines, and our behavior management system will allow students to internalize and feel success meeting our expectations during the first few days at Chicago Prep. Our teachers will learn the basics of school culture expectations during our hiring process, described in **Section 2.9.1**, and will come to deeply understand and internalize the expectations during summer professional development, described in **Section 2.9.2**.

Extracurricular Opportunities. We believe that our scholars need and deserve opportunities to learn and grow outside of the classroom. Many community stakeholders in Bronzeville and throughout Chicago have expressed the importance of positive, engaging afterschool programming. Chicago Prep will leverage community partnerships to ensure our scholars have a variety of enriching opportunities available to them outside of the school day. Specifically, we plan to work with CPS SCORE (Sports Can Open Roads to Excellence), the 5th-8th grade CPS athletic league that allows everyone to participate (there are no cuts). CPS SCORE offers a variety of sports, including basketball, track, wrestling, hockey, and soccer, and we will work with the program to provide year-round after-school (and Saturday) sports depending on scholar and parent interest. Beginning in Year 2 when we have our first class of 7th graders, we also plan to work with Spark Chicago, a program devoted to helping middle school students (specifically 7th and 8th graders) experience success by teaching social and emotional skills, providing access to social capital, and exposing them to career opportunities. We are in communication with a number of local organizations about how we might partner to offer quality, consistent enrichment opportunities to our scholars. Organizations include Genius Lab, the Boys and Girls Club of Chicago (Valentine and Carter Club locations), Mandrake Park, Ellis Park, the Bronzeville Fencing Academy, Bright Star Community Outreach, and Chicago Youth Centers. In addition to extracurricular opportunities offered through community partnerships, Chicago Prep will welcome the creation of additional opportunities by members of our staff.

MTSS. In order to one day succeed in college and positively impact the world, our scholars must demonstrate behaviors that are conducive to learning, both as individuals and as part of the larger school community. In order for us to develop scholars' character and help scholars meet our high behavioral expectations, we will use a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for behavior as well as academics. All scholars will receive Tier 1 supports, some scholars (an estimated 15-20%) will receive Tier 2 supports, and few scholars (an estimated 5%) will receive Tier 3 supports.

Tier 1. The foundations of our Tier 1 behavior supports include our intentional teacher development and our implementation of school-wide behavior management systems. Every teacher in every classroom at Chicago Prep will consistently use Tier 1 interventions to help our scholars experience success. Tier 1 supports include daily mindfulness and meditation,¹⁰⁹ daily instruction in SEL, and the teaching and practicing of routines and procedures to provide a calm, predictable environment. Additionally, each classroom and common area in the school will be equipped with a quiet, calm corner for scholars to sit independently and calm down when their behavior is veering off-track, in the hopes of de-escalating the situation. Calming activities available at this station include listening to a five-minute guided meditation, coloring mindfully, or engaging in a tactile activity such as squeezing a stress ball. The reflection corner provides an alternative to removing scholars from the classroom for disruptive behavior. Tier 1 supports also include the universal implementation of *Teach Like a Champion* (TLAC) taxonomy and our schoolwide behavior management system, both described in **Section 2.7.2**.

Tier 2. Just as with academic interventions, we will consistently evaluate which scholars may need additional Tier 2 behavioral supports. These decisions will be based on quantitative data as well as qualitative scholar reports. For example, our data entry and analysis system will track scholars consistently receiving excessive demerits/few merits over the course of several weeks, scholars with multiple referrals, or scholars who have had one or more episodes of egregious behavior. This data will determine which scholars are considered for Tier 2 interventions. The Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Student

¹⁰⁹ Gutierrez, Akira S., Sara B. Krachman, Ethan Scherer, Martin R. West, and John D.E. Gabrieli. Mindfulness in the Classroom: Learning from a School-based Mindfulness Intervention through the Boston Charter Research Collaborative. Transforming Education January 2019. https://www.transformingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2019-BCRC-Mindfulness-Brief_One_study_focused_on_a_demographic_mirroring_Chicago_Prep's_targeted_student_population_found_that_scholars_who_engaged_in_mindfulness_training_self-reported_improvements_in_mood_and_coping_skills_and_a_reduced_likelihood_of_ruminating

Supports Coordinator, Dean of Students, and teachers will collaborate to refer scholars to Tier 2 interventions. Tier 2 interventions could include a daily Check In/Check Out system, preferential seating, skill based-peer groups led by staff, additional reset breaks, the assignment of a peer mentor, use of sensory tools such as stress balls or sensory seats, and/or a behavior contract that outlines goals, strategies, consequences, rewards for scholar behavior.

Tier 3. Our team will carefully document the implementation (scholar attendance/participation, staff members involved, etc.) and effectiveness of Tier 2 interventions. At least every two weeks, we will reevaluate scholars receiving Tier 2 support to determine whether they are responding well to the support. For example, decreased demerits/increased merits, positive parent/team feedback, and fewer referrals could all be signs that the Tier 2 interventions are meeting the scholar's need. In some cases, scholars may continue to receive the Tier 2 supports and in others, the supports may eventually be scaled back to Tier 1. However, if with a scholar is not making progress with Tier 2 supports, we will consider adding Tier 3 interventions, including conducting a functional behavioral analysis (FBA), creating an individualized behavior plan, and/or providing counseling.

School Culture Goals. To help us measure the effectiveness of our school culture, we set goals and monitor our progress in three key cultural areas.

1. Character and Behavior Recognition

- Four or more scholars per grade level per month receive recognition (at Assembly) for demonstrating core values.
- 90% of scholars receive recognition at least once during the year (at Assembly) for demonstrating core values.
- 90% of scholars accumulate more merits than demerits over the course of the year.

2. Scholar, Parent, and Staff Satisfaction

- School scores "strong" on Five Essentials survey for Supportive Environment.
- On internal surveys, 90% of scholars agree/strongly agree with the statement, "I feel safe at school" and 80% agree/strongly agree with the statement "The staff at Chicago Prep support my efforts to learn and grow."
- On internal surveys, 80% of parents agree/strongly agree with the statement "Chicago Prep provides a safe and structured learning environment for my child," and 80% agree/strongly agree with the statement "The staff at Chicago Prep support my child's efforts to learn and grow."
- On internal surveys, 80% of staff agree/strongly agree with the statement, "I have the support and resources I need to establish a structured learning environment for scholars," and 80% agree/strongly agree with the statement, "I have the support I need to establish and maintain a supportive learning environment for scholars."¹¹⁰

3. Attendance and Enrollment

- Waitlist equals 50% of 5th grade enrollment annually.
- 85% of students who begin the school year remain throughout the year.
- 85% of students who complete the school year re-enroll the following year.
- Average daily attendance is 95% annually.

Leadership and Staff Roles. The list below includes all major components of our vision for school and social and emotional learning and a description of the staff members responsible.

- **Core values implementation, relationship building, advisory program, systems and routines, scholar leadership, and Tier 1 supports:** The Head of School (HoS) sets the vision for these five

¹¹⁰ Or other similar survey items designed to measure school culture

core components, primarily during summer professional development but also with revision and finetuning throughout the year as needed. The teachers are responsible for ongoing implementation of these components. Under the guidance of the HoS, the Assistant Head of School coaches teachers on their implementation of these components throughout the school year. The Dean of Students also pays careful attention to these elements and reports findings and suggestions back to the Head of School.

- **Extracurricular opportunities:** As the leader of external relations for Chicago Prep, the HoS sets the vision for extracurricular opportunities and works with local organizations to implement the vision. Beginning in Year 3, the HoS trains and supports the Dean of Community Engagement and High School Placement (DCE) to oversee this component.
- **Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports:** The Student Supports Coordinator is the primary leader of Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. S/he seeks input from teachers and collaborates with the Head of School and Assistant Head of School, to monitor behavioral data and refer scholars to Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports. The entire team will work together to evaluate their effectiveness and determine next steps.

2.7.2: DISCIPLINE, BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION, AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

The proposal cites the systems, programs, and policies that will support the behavioral needs of all students and help remove barriers to learning.

- *A system of discipline and classroom management that is fully tethered to the MTSS identified in the previous section.*
- *Clear identification of specific staff members who are responsible for overseeing the implementation of student discipline and behavioral interventions, including maintenance of student records and data*
- *Plans to consistently communicate behavior expectations, consequences, and rewards to students and families*
- *A comprehensive list of offenses that may result in student suspension or expulsion*
- *An explanation of the corrective, instructive, and/or restorative responses to misbehavior that will be used prior to the use of exclusionary discipline, including a clear description of how the school intends to comply with SB 100 (PA 99-456)*
- *An explanation for how the school will protect the rights of students with disabilities/ impairments in disciplinary actions and proceedings, afford due process for all students, and provide a fair process for students facing expulsion*
- *Appendix 2.7.2: In Appendix 2.7.2, applicants who are not using the CPS Code of Conduct must provide their School Discipline Policy and supporting documents related to behavioral interventions or classroom management. The policy should include other school policies that address student behavior, including, for example, promotion or graduation policies when student behavior is an element of successful promotion/graduation.*

Overview of Discipline and Behavior Management System

Maintaining a warm and focused school culture depends in part on a strong system for discipline, behavioral intervention, and classroom management. Consistent expectations and consequences for student behavior are a defining feature of top-performing charter schools.¹¹¹ For Chicago Prep, discipline refers to teaching scholars the expected behaviors and guiding them to consistently choose those

¹¹¹ The TNTP and New Schools Venture Fund found that 81% of teachers in top-performing charter schools agree there are consistent expectations and consequences for student behavior. Greenhouse Schools in Boston. School Leadership Practices Across a High-Performing Charter Sector. TNTP, 2014. https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP_GreenhouseSchoolsinBoston_2015_Web.pdf

behaviors, eventually out of an intrinsic desire to succeed. Behavior management, in contrast, refers to the system of rewards and consequences used to reinforce behavior. We will use the CPS Student Code of Conduct, with some adaptations as described in **Appendix 2.7.2**.

Chicago Prep will use a school-wide discipline and behavior management system. This cohesiveness reinforces the sense of our school as one community and helps scholars succeed by ensuring the same expectations, rewards, and consequences in all classrooms and contexts throughout the school. The seven-step process below outlines how Chicago Prep staff will combine the elements of discipline and management to support our culture of warmth and focus and our ambitious academic goals.

1. Teacher/Staff Expectations: The teacher or staff member clearly states expectations for scholar behavior and engagement. Expectations refer to both immediate directions, e.g., “Pencils down and eyes on me,” and consistent, long-term expectations, e.g., “At Chicago Prep, we show respect to our peers and teachers.”

2. Scholar Choice: The scholar makes a choice, either positive or negative. Scholars always have a choice in their behavior, and it is part of our job as a staff to help them understand this and see it as empowering. Scholars have more control over their day, their growth, and their success than they often realize.

3. Affirm or Redirect: The teacher or staff member intentionally checks whether scholars have complied with the direction, and if they have, acknowledges and affirms this choice, e.g., “Thank you, scholars,” or “Excellent.” If scholar(s) have not, the teacher quickly redirects, e.g., “Kailani, pencil down.”

4. Consequence: Scholars who make a positive choice to meet expectations retain all regular privileges of Chicago Prep. Scholars who make a positive choice to go above and beyond expectations earn rewards, typically merits that over time result in rewards. Scholars who make a negative choice receive a consequence, typically a demerit but based on the behavior it may be a silent lunch or afterschool detention. Consequences also include other tools in the teacher toolbox including having a private conversation with the scholar, moving the scholar’s seat, or calling the scholar’s parent.

5. Restoration: If necessary, for more egregious or repetitive behavior, scholars repair the harm that they caused, and/or teachers and scholars restore their relationship.

6. Repetition: Teachers and staff at Chicago Prep use this cyclical process on an ongoing basis each day, week, and year. Our goal is that the behavior management system becomes less necessary and less visible over time.

7. Additional/Intensive Intervention As Needed: Scholars who are not experiencing behavioral success despite consistent implementation of the behavior management system may require additional support to meet expectations, specifically the supports described in **Section 2.7.1**. This may include regular one-on-one check-ins with trusted adult(s), the creation of an individualized behavior plan, or small-group support with a noncognitive skill such as self-control or anger management.

School-wide Implementation. Effective school-wide discipline depends on the adults at school. Throughout the classroom management cycle, teachers are expected to remain emotionally constant, conveying a warm-strict demeanor. This conveys to scholars that rewards and consequences are not personal; they are part of a system and have nothing to do with a teacher’s feelings or frustrations. Additionally, the team will place heavy emphasis on positive acknowledgement and praise, including the use of merits, to help guide scholars to make good choices. There is a significant body of research into the importance of praise and its positive impacts on scholar behavior.¹¹² Our goal is to maintain a merit-to-demerit ratio of at least 3-to-1.

¹¹² Paul Caldarella, Ross A. A. Larsen, Leslie Williams, Kade R. Downs, Howard P. Wills & Joseph H. Wehby (2020) Effects of teachers’ praise-to-reprimand ratios on elementary students’ on-task behaviour, *Educational Psychology*, DOI: [10.1080/01443410.2020.1711872](https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2020.1711872)

To build the foundation for effective classroom management, the Chicago Prep team will leverage *Teach Like a Champion* (TLAC) techniques when setting expectations, checking for compliance, affirming or redirecting, assigning consequences, and repeating the cycle. Specifically, all teachers will be trained and coached in the techniques outlined in Figure 2.13. Dates for training in Year 1 can be found in our professional development calendar, [Appendix 2.9](#).

Figure 2.13: TLAC Techniques for Setting and Maintaining High Behavioral Expectations¹¹³

Technique	Description	Rationale
What To Do	Giving directions that tell scholars clearly and specifically what to do – and not what <i>not</i> to do. For example, telling scholars “Pencils down and eyes on me” tells scholars clearly what the expectation is, while “Pay attention” or “Stop fooling around” are less clear.	Delivering What To Do directions teaches scholars what the expectations are and how to meet them. It minimizes confusion and allows teachers to see clearly whether scholars have followed directions.
100%	This technique includes strategies for gaining 100% compliance from scholars, including using the least invasive intervention possible for correcting misbehavior (nonverbal, positive group correction, anonymous individual correction, lightning-quick public correction, consequence).	The only acceptable percentage of scholars following directions is 100%. Teachers give directions expecting all students to follow them and do not move on until all students are engaged. If consequences are necessary, they are given neutrally and quickly.
Strong Voice	A combination of specific techniques (economy of language, do not talk over, do not engage, square up/stand still, and quiet power) that help teachers signal their authority and control.	The five techniques of Strong Voice help teachers deliver directions and redirections in a way that is calm, confident, and compelling.
Do It Again	Do It Again means asking scholars to re-do a routine, procedure, or direction that was not done correctly, or not done well, the first time. Do it Again is a technique designed to give feedback to scholars.	Do it Again reinforces a culture of high expectations and consistency by having scholars repeat routines once perfected. It also has the distinct benefit of ending with the scholars experiencing success.
Positive Framing	Making consistent corrections in a positive manner. This proactive approach allows teachers to motivate and inspire students while also correcting behavior. One example is narrating the positive where a teacher will state positive behaviors being displayed rather than naming off-task or off-culture behavior.	Positive Framing helps to create and maintain a positive, warm, welcoming classroom culture. Scholars want to be in a room led by a positive teacher who leads scholars to make good choices. Positive Framing can not only motivate scholars to make the right choice; it can also encourage scholars to sustain effort.
Precise Praise	Giving specific, genuine praise for specific behavior (not traits such as intelligence) and differentiating between praise and acknowledgement.	Scholars can sense when praise is insincere. Acknowledging scholars meeting expectations contributes to making the classroom a positive place to be and building trust. Additionally, research speaks to the importance of praising things that are within scholars’ control, such as effort or specific behaviors, rather than traits.
Warm/Strict	The understanding that warmth and strictness are not opposites or mutually exclusive; the best teachers are both warm and strict, often at exactly the same time.	To achieve our mission, teachers must hold high expectations, push scholars to do their very best, <i>and</i> do so by demonstrating care, warmth, and affection.
Emotional Constancy	The ability to remain calm and under control, never letting your emotions get the better of you. Delivering expectations, corrections, and consequences in a firm, emotionally neutral way.	Scholars earn their teacher’s trust by always remaining in control of their emotions. By maintaining emotional constancy, we continue to build relationships with scholars and create a structured, supportive culture.

¹¹³ Lemov, Doug. *Teach like a champion: 49 techniques that put students on the path to college*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010.

Merits and Demerits. At Chicago Prep, merits and demerits drive our system of rewards and consequences. Merits and demerits are an efficient tool for teachers to reinforce positive behavior and discourage disruptive or unproductive behaviors. Teachers will use Schoolrunner or another similar app on their phone to input merits and demerits immediately, helping to minimize time-consuming follow-up. Teachers will also hand scholars a physical bright blue card that says “Merit” to help scholars see the tangible reward for their effort; no comparable slip will be used for demerits to help avoid negative emotional reactions or embarrassment. Scholars will earn merits for going above and beyond expectations in demonstrating our core values or otherwise demonstrating excellence. Additionally, merits may be given for meeting expectations when scholars who consistently struggle are trying to get back on track. Below are examples of behaviors aligned to each value that may earn scholars a merit:

- **Kindness:** Going out of the way to cheer up a classmate who is feeling down; Voluntarily helping someone in need; Including a classmate who is left out of the conversation or activity.
- **Courage:** Trying something new even though it is scary; Taking the initiative to connect with someone new (networking); Attempting a challenging or unfamiliar question in class discussion.
- **Gratitude:** Volunteering to share gratitude that is genuine and specific; Spontaneously thanking a teacher, peer, or family member for something they did; Displaying an attitude that acknowledges the “good,” even when things are hard.
- **Curiosity:** Taking the initiative to learn more about something that interested you; Asking thoughtful questions of peers, teachers, and/or visitors.
- **Responsibility:** Genuinely apologizing for actions that negatively affected others; Volunteering to support the community; Devising smart study strategies and studying notes every day.
- **Perseverance:** Continuing to try and experiment with new strategies on a challenging math problem; Getting tough feedback on an assignment; then revising it multiple times; Setting an ambitious goal and working through obstacles achieve it.

Additionally, scholars may earn merits for demonstrating excellence in a variety of ways, such as working really hard on something (performance, essay, speech, athletics) so that the final product turns out great, or taking pride in the presentation of your work (thorough, neat, proofread, polished)

Scholars will earn demerits for failing to follow directions, breaking stated rules or expectations, or violating our core values. The following list provides examples of behaviors that will earn scholars a demerit:

- Talking at inappropriate times (e.g., during independent work, while a peer or teacher is talking, or during any other time when the expectation is silence).
- Making noise (e.g., humming, making silly noises) at inappropriate times.
- Inappropriate response to correction (e.g., eye rolling, loud sighing, arguing).
- Failure to follow directions.
- Failure to attempt or complete assigned work, including homework.

Privileges, Rewards, and Consequences. Each week, scholars will receive a behavior and character progress report along with their academic progress report. The report will provide scholars, parents, and staff with a well-rounded, data-driven indicator of the scholar’s behavior over the past week. Over time, scholars’ weekly report will be linked to a variety of rewards and consequences. Scholars who meet or exceed behavioral expectations at Chicago Prep enjoy regular privileges, including social time each day at lunch, dress down days every Friday (scholars are allowed to come out of uniform), and fun, themed school events once per month. Scholars who consistently go above and beyond expectations,

demonstrated by the cumulation of merits over time, retain these regular privileges and earn additional rewards. These include monthly “Merit Madness” parties, leadership t-shirts, and occasional access to purchase prizes at our school store.

Demerits cumulated over the course of the day and week result in loss of privileges and other consequences for scholars. The consequence scale is designed to strike a balance between providing scholars with a fresh start (each class, day, and week) and holding them accountable for their actions. To help new scholars learn expectations as they adjust to Chicago Prep, we will explicitly teach the merit and demerit system during student orientation and implement a roll out plan during the first few weeks of each school year that includes practice before scholars are held fully accountable. For example, if a scholar called out an answer, the teacher might say, “Remember, that will be a demerit starting next week.”

- **2 demerits in one class:** As described in the Tier 1 supports in **Section 2.7.1**, each classroom is equipped with a quiet reflection area. Scholars receiving two demerits in one class will have the opportunity to sit in the area for five minutes, quietly and independently, and utilize any of the tools and resources there to help them calm down and/or refocus. The goal is to keep scholars in class as much as possible while still minimizing distractions to teaching and learning.
- **3 demerits in one class:** The scholar will receive a referral and be sent directly to school leadership (Head of School or Assistant Head of School). School leadership will confer with the scholar (and, when appropriate, the teacher) to determine the appropriate consequence and restorative process. This will always include a written reflection and a silent lunch, but may also include any of the following: a de-escalation strategy such as meditation, parent phone call, an apology note, a public apology, community service, afterschool detention, or loss of monthly themed event.
- **3 demerits in one day:** Silent lunch the next day. During silent lunch, scholars will complete reading/writing assignment and/or written reflection.
- **6 demerits in one week:** Loss of dress down day for the upcoming Friday. Scholars must come to school in full uniform.
- **8 demerits in one week:** Loss of dress down day for the upcoming Friday and afterschool detention on Friday. Scholars must come to school in full uniform as usual. During afterschool detention, scholars will complete reading/writing assignment and/or written reflection.
- **16 demerits in one month:** Loss of upcoming themed event.

Scholars may be immediately removed from class and/or assigned a skill-building in-school suspension or out of school suspension for demonstrating egregious misbehaviors, including but not limited to bullying, fighting, threatening, inappropriate use of technology, stealing, or unauthorized travel within or outside of the school building. The Dean of Students oversees the merit and demerit system starting in Year 2.

Restoration and Repetition. Many of the consequences that scholars receive have a restorative element built in. When scholars are sent out of class or receive a silent lunch, they will complete a reflection. As much as possible, the reflection activities and prompts will relate directly to the poor choices the scholar made. For example, a scholar responding inappropriately to correction will receive an authentic text and aligned prompts on the importance of kindness and respect. A scholar who used hurtful language towards a teacher or peer will read an exemplary apology note and write their own apology note. School leadership will also facilitate a restorative conversation between the two parties. Teachers will repeat our discipline and behavior management cycle as frequently as needed. In particular, steps one, two, and three (teacher expectation, scholar choice, affirm or redirect) will be used every day, all year. Our goal is that over time, teachers will not need to rely as heavily on external rewards and consequences; however, they will always

be available as a tool to support the maintenance of our warm and focused culture and the fulfillment of our mission.

Communication of Expectations. As described in **Section 2.7.1**, we will utilize home visits, parent orientation, and scholar orientation to communicate our school culture expectations, including our behavior expectations, consequences and rewards, all outlined in our Family Handbook. Additionally, the team will communicate with scholars and parents throughout the year through our weekly character/behavior reports, biweekly phone calls, and conferences each trimester (at a minimum). These touchpoints all serve as ways for the team to reiterate our high behavioral expectations and to share feedback on scholars' progress towards meeting them. Teachers will learn the basics of our discipline and behavior management system during our hiring process, described in **Section 2.9.1**, and will come to deeply understand and internalize the expectations during summer professional development, described in **Section 2.9.2**. During summer PD, teachers will spend significant time practicing managing scholar behavior, receiving feedback, and implementing the feedback, so that when scholars arrive for orientation, the entire team is prepared.

Suspensions, Expulsions, and SB 100. Chicago Prep is fully committed to minimizing suspensions and expulsions by creating a positive school culture and implementing alternative and restorative disciplinary practices to the greatest extent possible. However, there are some instances when suspensions and expulsions may be necessary.

Chicago Prep will reference the guidelines in the CPS Student Code of Conduct to determine whether a suspension may be warranted in response to certain scholar misbehaviors. The list of behaviors that may result in a suspension is available in **Appendix 2.7.2**. Examples include fighting or other unwanted physical contact, bullying behaviors, threats, and theft. In full compliance with SB 100, Chicago Prep may suspend scholars out-of-school for a period of 1-3 days only when (1) the scholar's continuing presence on campus would pose a threat to the safety of other scholars, staff members, or the school community, or (2) the scholar's continuing presence on campus would disrupt other scholars' learning opportunities. Chicago Prep may suspend scholars for a period of 4-10 days only when (1) other disciplinary measures have been exhausted and (a) the scholar's continuing presence on campus would pose a threat to the safety of other scholars, staff members, or the school community, or (2) the scholar's continuing presence on campus would substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school. As allowed by the law, these determinations will be made on a case-by-case by the Head of School in collaboration with other school leaders. Additionally, parents of scholars who are suspended will be provided with written notification of the suspension, including the specific behaviors that led to the suspension, rationale for the duration of the suspension, and the parent's right to review. For suspensions longer than 4 days, Chicago Prep will provide appropriate and available support services, including access to curricular materials, tutoring, and sufficient time to make up all assignments missed during the suspension.

Disciplinary Action for Students with Disabilities and Impairments.¹¹⁴ At Chicago Prep, we believe that all scholars, including scholars with disabilities, can meet our high behavioral expectations with the support of strong relationships with staff and strategic tiered interventions. We will ensure that any disciplinary action taken affords all students, including those with disabilities, due process. In compliance with IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, we make additional provisions for scholars who are, or who we have reason to believe may be, eligible for such services. Specifically, scholars with disabilities are entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the

¹¹⁴ This outline draws heavily from Great Lakes Academy's charter school application.

student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short-term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in one school year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

- The IEP for every student eligible for special education or related services shall indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified to address the student's individual needs.
- Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) school days in a given school year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a "change of placement," building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team will meet to determine the relationship between the student's disability and behavior (Manifestation Determination Hearing). In most instances, during disciplinary suspensions exceeding ten (10) school days in a single school year, the student shall have the right to the receive services identified as necessary by the Team to provide him/her with a free appropriate public education during the period of suspension.
- If the Leadership Team, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, the scholar will not receive additional suspension days as consequence for that conduct. Additionally, the team may choose to conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and develop a Behavior Intervention Plan.
- If it was determined that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free appropriate public education to those students with IEPs. The student's IEP or 504 Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of suspension.
- Under certain special circumstances as defined by federal law, school personnel may place the student in an interim alternative setting for 45 school days, without regard to the manifestation determination. These special circumstances include incidents where the student possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs, carries or possesses a weapon, or inflicts serious bodily injury while on school premises or at a school function. Otherwise, if the student's continuation in the current placement is substantially likely to cause injury to himself/herself or others the district may request an expedited hearing for an order to place a student in an alternative setting for a period not to exceed 45 school days. The district also has the right to seek a court injunction.

Students with Disabilities under Section 504: Students who are not eligible for services under the IDEA, but who have disabilities within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are entitled to certain procedural protections associated with Section 504.

Leadership and Staff Roles.

The Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and Dean of Students (starting in Year 2) work together to oversee the implementation of our discipline and behavior management system. Specifically, the Head of School sets the vision for all components (the seven-step process; best practices aligned to *Teach Like a Champion (TLAC)*; merits and demerits; privileges, rewards, and consequences; restoration; intensive intervention). The Head of School will lead all professional development on these components or may delegate some sessions to the Assistant Head of School. Following this professional development, teachers will be primarily responsible for implementing *TLAC* and merits and demerits with fidelity on a

day-to-day basis. Under the oversight of the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School will be primarily responsible for coaching teachers on these components as part of weekly or biweekly one-on-one meetings.

The Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and Dean of Students will work together to oversee the system of privileges rewards and consequences and restoration. For example, when scholars are sent out of class, they will be sent to the Dean of Students (Head of School or Assistant Head of School in Year 1). The Dean has a conversation with the scholar and work with him/her to complete an appropriate restorative activity and/or assign an additional consequence. The Dean will use our data system to ensure that all scholars receive the appropriate consequences for merits and demerits earned. The Dean of Students will print weekly behavioral reports each Thursday at noon; scholars who have earned six or eight demerits in a week or sixteen demerits in a month will receive a notice to parents informing them of the consequence. The Dean of Students oversees scholar consequences, including silent lunch, removals from class, and afterschool detention. The Dean is also the point person on the implementation of additional rewards, such as monthly “Merit Madness” parties. Finally, the Head of School, Dean of Students, Student Supports Coordinator, and Social Worker will work together to determine appropriate interventions needed for scholars who are consistently struggling to meet behavioral expectations.

SECTION 2.8: POST-SECONDARY AND GRADUATION SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT _____

2.8.1: GRADUATION AND COLLEGE READINESS SUPPORT

The proposal presents robust plans to ensure that students will graduate prepared for success in high school (for elementary schools) and college.

- *A clear post-secondary vision reflecting high expectations for students*
- *Clearly identified staff members to perform all roles and responsibilities described in this subsection, with alignment to their job descriptions, annual and weekly schedules, and the staffing and organizational charts*
- *Age-appropriate college readiness supports that will build college awareness and readiness among students*
- *(If proposing a high school): Robust supports to help students apply, enroll, and persist in college **(Not Applicable)***
- *(If proposing a high school): Methods for tracking student/alumni college acceptance and persistence rates **(Not Applicable)***
- *(If proposing an elementary school): Robust supports to ensure that students are prepared to attend and succeed in a rigorous high school **(Not Applicable)***

Vision for Post-Secondary Success. Chicago Prep’s mission is to prepare all scholars to succeed in college and positively impact the world. Thus, our vision for post-secondary success begins with a high school graduate who is fully equipped with the academic, social, and emotional skills required to be successful at a four-year college or university and to ultimately graduate with a bachelor’s degree. In alignment with the CPS Learn.Plan.Succeed. initiative, we also expose scholars to other quality postsecondary options, including military service, apprenticeship, employment, job training, or a gap year.

We commit to helping all scholars discover their purpose and thinking about postsecondary plans in this way may illuminate pathways outside of pursuing a four-year degree. Still, considering the far-reaching impacts of a college degree – from significantly higher earning potential to more career opportunities to more time for the process of learning and the pursuit of knowledge – we hope and anticipate that the majority of Chicago Prep graduates will choose to enroll at a four-year college or university. Our vision is

that our graduates are highly engaged, responsible students who develop meaningful relationships and fully enjoy their experiences and, throughout their educational careers and beyond, positively impact the world. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., famously said, “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’” We want Chicago Prep graduates to be guided by this question, to focus beyond themselves and their own success and think about how they can uplift other people. Ample research has shown that consistently helping others is associated with a host of positive life outcomes, including improved health, wealth, and overall well-being.¹¹⁵ Regardless of the specific path Chicago Prep graduates choose after high school graduation, their middle and high school education has equipped them to find their purpose and positively impact the world.

Preparation for Rigorous High School Programs. The entire vision for Chicago Prep has been designed with the end in mind; we asked ourselves, “What would it look like for our scholars to graduate from high school well-equipped to succeed in college?” Then, “What does our scholars’ high school experience need to look like to ensure they reach that benchmark?” And finally, “How can we design our middle school program to set the foundation for scholars to thrive in high school, college, and beyond?” Thus, several key features of our school prepare scholars to succeed in rigorous, college-preparatory high schools.

Our Advisory program focuses on social-emotional learning. The daily morning and afternoon sessions across four years will equip scholars with social and emotional skills and knowledge to help them build self-awareness and navigate the many complex challenges of adolescence. In addition, it provides scholars with a close, consistent, trusted adult role model and fosters strong relationships among peers by encouraging open dialogue and vulnerability. Research shows that having these social opportunities for strong relationships helps adolescents to thrive.¹¹⁶ **Our focus on core values help scholars develop the essential character skills for success.** Research has shown that character strengths such as **perseverance** and **responsibility** are essential for long-term success, including maintaining high GPAs in high school, gaining admission to selective colleges, and graduating despite inevitable challenges.¹¹⁷ **Our daily schedule includes nine class periods, mirroring many high school schedules.** Selective enrollment high schools such as Whitney Young and King College Prep often short periods, with scholars attending classes with many teachers throughout the day. We chose to develop a similar schedule, with scholars responsible for maintaining materials and assignments for six separate courses, to help them develop the independence, responsibility, and organization they need to succeed in high school. **Our support with the high school application process will help all scholars to apply for and enroll in a best-fit, college-preparatory high school.** Our goal is for 100% of our scholars to apply for at least one selective enrollment high school and 60% to be admitted to at least one selective enrollment high school. Beginning in 6th grade, Advisory lessons will regularly include instruction around the high school application process, starting with the importance of 7th grade grades and test scores for gaining admission to selective enrollment schools. Lessons will also include exposure to the many different types of high school options in Chicago and offer guidance to scholars on selecting campuses that suit their personal needs, strengths, goals, and interests. In addition, we add a Dean of Community Engagement and High School Placement (DCE) in Year 3 work directly with 8th grade scholars and parents to complete the GoCPS application strategically – based on scholars’ individual profiles and scholar/family goals. With this explicit focus on high school preparation and application, scholars will be more likely to enroll in rigorous, college-

¹¹⁵ Post, Stephen G. “Altruism, happiness, and health: It’s good to be good.” *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 12, pages 66–77 (2005). https://link.springer.com/article/10.1207/s15327558ijbm1202_4.

¹¹⁶ Immordino-Yang, Mary Helen, Linda Darling-Hammond, and Christina Krone. “The Brain Basis for Integrated Social, Emotional, and Academic Development: How emotions and social relationships drive learning.” The Aspen Institute National Commission on Social, Emotional, & Academic Development. The Aspen Institute, 2018.

¹¹⁷ Tough, Paul. *How children succeed: Grit, curiosity, and the hidden power of character*. Boston: Mariner Books, 2012. 151-153.

preparatory, good-fit high schools, and thus more likely to succeed. **Our homeroom structure builds awareness of and interest in college and university options.** Each homeroom at Chicago Prep is named after a college or university. The specific schools are chosen carefully to reflect a variety of college options as a group; i.e., we choose some Ivy League schools, HBCU's, some state schools, and some small liberal arts schools. This will allow scholars to understand the diverse options available to them. In addition, we ensure that all of our chosen homeroom colleges/universities have a graduation rate of at least 80% for students of color, specifically African American students, since this racial group makes up the majority of our target student population. We also go beyond simply naming our classrooms after colleges and universities. At the beginning of each school year, homeroom teachers lead a series of lessons about their class college so that scholars begin to understand the many factors to consider in choosing a college, including selectivity, tuition, location, student life, diversity, graduation rates, and more. We return to these discussions throughout the year, including hosting competitions to see which class knows the most about their homeroom college. **Morning and afternoon Advisory lessons will also include ongoing exposure to colleges and universities.** For example, scholars will use Chromebooks to explore college and university websites to gather relevant facts about each school and take virtual tours, making the college experience more tangible. **We take scholars on at least one college field trip per year.** Each year, scholars will visit schools such as University of Chicago, Northwestern, and University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. Scholars will be prepared for these trips in advance with Advisory lessons and opportunities for independent online research about the schools. Scholars will prepare questions and specific aspects to study. The goal is to get scholars excited about attending college and help them start considering the factors important to them personally when choosing a school to attend. **Our support with the high school application process will help scholars prepare for the college application process.** As we work with scholars and families to explore high school options and apply to a variety of schools, we will make explicit connections to the college application process. Because of Chicago's incredible number and variety of high schools and the competitive admissions process, Chicago students get early practice in navigating college applications. We make this connection explicit, relevant and memorable for our scholars and their families. **We provide opportunities for student leadership.** From formalized positions like scholar ambassadors to daily and weekly opportunities like leading lunch conversations or weekly Assembly, Chicago Prep provides many chances for scholars to step into leadership roles. By incorporating leadership opportunities in middle school, we are preparing students to not only take on, but excel in leadership roles in high school and beyond. High school leadership experience strengthens scholars' college applications for selective institutions and has a positive impact on educational attainment.¹¹⁸

Leadership and Staff Roles. The Head of School (HoS) is ultimately responsible for the success of Chicago Prep's high school and college readiness support programming. The HoS will set the vision for our Advisory program, core values implementation, and student leadership opportunities. The HoS will lead professional development sessions over the summer to train staff in implementing Advisory and prioritizing core values. Professional development on student leadership will take place during a Friday session in October/November. The HoS will work closely with the Assistant Head of School throughout the school year to observe and coach teachers' implementation of these components. A draft of our Professional Development calendar can be found in **Appendix 2.9.**

The HoS will set the vision for high school and college exposure lessons, conversations, and activities. During summer professional development, all staff will see an exemplar PowerPoint and multi-day lesson

¹¹⁸ Rouse, Kathryn, Ph.D. "The Impact of High School Leadership on Subsequent Educational Attainment." Elon University. December 2010. <http://www.elon.edu/docs/e-web/academics/business/economics/faculty/rouse/2010-12-15%20Impact%20of%20High%20School%20Leadership.pdf>.

covering a homeroom college introduction. They will then have time to create their own PowerPoint and lesson for their assigned homeroom college, working in collaboration with their co-advisor. During Friday professional development sessions in the fall, the HoS will work with teachers to plan college exposure activities for Advisory that include brainstorming important factors in selecting a college, reviewing admissions criteria for various colleges, and taking virtual tours of various campuses. During Friday professional development sessions in the spring, the HoS will model Advisory lessons on the high school application process, and homeroom teachers will execute with their scholars over the course of several weeks. The HoS will work closely with the Assistant Head of School throughout the school year to observe and coach teachers' implementation of these components.

Beginning in Year 3, the DCE will work directly with 8th grade scholars and parents to navigate the high school application process. This includes tracking scholars' progress on the application and matches/acceptances to high schools. Goals include 100% of scholars applying to at least one selective enrollment school, and 60% of scholars accepted to at least one selective enrollment school. We also seek feedback from scholars and parents, through surveys and informal conversations, to inform adjustments to high school support in future years.

Monitoring Effectiveness. The HoS will work with the operational and instructional leadership teams to monitor the effectiveness of all high school and college readiness support programs. Observations of the programs will serve as an early indicator, and the leadership team will coach teachers accordingly. The Head of School and DCE will create and monitor systems for tracking high school and college data and share the data with the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will support the HoS in the creation of any improvement plans based on the data. Our for long-term, measurable goals include (a) high school graduation rates, first available in 2028, (b) college enrollment rates, first available in 2028, and (c) college graduation rates, first available in 2034 (for six-year graduation rates, the most commonly used indicator).

2.8.2: PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The proposal demonstrates the capacity and intent to build continued authentic engagement with the parents and greater community.

- *Applicant has explained thoughtful methods to build family-school partnerships to encourage the involvement of parents/guardians in the school and their student's education*
- *A description of the nature and extent of parent and community involvement in the governance and operation of the charter school*
- *Clear mechanisms for parents and community members to provide feedback and/or express an objection or concern to the school and Board on an ongoing basis*
- *Clearly identified staff members to perform all roles and responsibilities described in this subsection, with alignment to their job descriptions, annual and weekly schedules, and the staffing and organizational charts*

Family and community partnerships are an integral part of our school model. It is essential that families feel connected to and respected by the school team, and that they understand and believe in the school's mission and vision. For this to happen, Chicago Prep's team must get to know our scholars' families; we must treat them with care and respect; we must communicate consistently about their children's progress, including highlights and concerns both academically and behaviorally. Below are the key ways in which we plan to engage families:

Parent Advisory Council: During our Planning Year and Year 1, we will establish a volunteer Parent

Advisory Council made up of 10-15 family members who will meet regularly and provide ideas and feedback to school leadership and the Board of Directors. For example, the Parent Advisory Council may share ideas for student culture initiatives, staff appreciation, or adjustments to the school program. Based on community feedback the design team has received so far, one barrier to meaningful parent participation in school events is when events are planned without parent input and thus do not reflect parents' interests and needs or consider their schedules; parents also are not always aware of the engagement opportunities at school. At Chicago Prep, the Parent Advisory Council will, with support from school leadership, lead planning and scheduling of monthly events and will encourage families to participate.

Home Visits: In July, after our enrollment lottery and before our staff professional development, members of the Chicago Prep team will visit the homes of all enrolled students. Our goal is to make each family feel known and valued and to learn more about each scholar and his/her family. We get to know more about scholars' interests, hobbies, hopes and concerns, and dreams for the future. We also share more details about our mission and vision and key elements of our school, such as our homework and uniform policy, plans for robust and ongoing communication, and opportunities for family involvement in the school. The home visits will lay the foundation for strong school-family partnerships throughout the year. **Frequent**

Communication: We will keep families informed about their children's progress at school and about what is going on at Chicago Prep. **Weekly reports:** Each Friday, parents will receive behavioral and academic progress reports. **Biweekly scholar check-ins:** A minimum of once every two weeks, families will receive individualized communication, including calls, texts, and/or emails, from their child's Advisor. This builds and maintains a strong parent-teacher relationship and ensures parents know about their child's successes and challenges, large and small. **Monthly newsletter:** At the beginning of each month, we will send home a newsletter with highlights from the previous month and announcements and events for the month ahead. The Director of Operations and Head of School will work together to create the newsletter.

Electronic communication: Our website, www.chiprepmiddle.org, is updated at least monthly with upcoming school events, and our social media is updated at least weekly with announcements and photos.

Monthly Family Events: At a minimum, Chicago Prep will host one family event night per month on the third Thursday of the month. Setting a consistent day and time will facilitate scheduling for staff and participation from as many families as possible. Examples of family events include Back to School Barbecue, Parent University, Chili Cook-Off, Talent Show, and Career Night, but specific programming will be decided in consultation with the Parent Advisory Council. The goal of monthly family events is to increase the sense of community among our families by providing an opportunity for having fun and making connections. **Monthly Coffee and Doughnuts with the Head of School:** Once a month, school leadership will host an open house for families with free coffee and pastries. Coffee Shop Hours will take place in the morning when school is in session and on the first Tuesday of the month except where otherwise noted on the school calendar in **Appendix 2.6**. The purpose of this forum is to provide a recurring opportunity for families to meet each other and ask questions or share ideas with the Chicago Prep team.

Family Conferences: At the end of each trimester, we will schedule report card conferences with all families to provide a detailed overview of their students' academic and behavioral progress over the course of the most recent grading period. We will celebrate success, identify areas of growth, and set goals for the upcoming trimester and year.

Although parents are not required to attend events or volunteer at Chicago Prep, our hope is that many of them will be eager to do so given the strong connection they feel to the school and the staff. This could include speaking to scholars about their educational and/or career pathways, chaperoning field trips (background check required), hosting fundraisers, hosting donation campaigns to support the needs of scholars and families (e.g. uniform exchanges) or the community (e.g. clothing or canned goods). In addition to engaging families meaningfully and consistently, Chicago Prep is also committed to building

connections with the community, prioritizing community groups and businesses in Bronzeville before expanding outreach to other Chicago neighborhoods. We believe that these connections will benefit not only our scholars by enriching their educational experience, but also the community by strengthening local collaboration and patronizing local businesses. **Local leaders:** As part of our entrepreneurship program, we invite local entrepreneurs to visit the school and speak to our scholars; we also invite other local leaders to share about their career experiences. Learning from local leaders will motivate scholars and help build their sense of pride in the community. **Counseling services:** Services such as the Bright Star Community Outreach (BSCO) TURN Model can provide support to our scholars who have experienced trauma and need additional social, emotional, or therapeutic support. **After-school programming:** Many parents and community leaders have shared with us the importance of positive after-school activities for Chicago Prep students, and local organizations can provide this service. Examples include Mandrake Park, BSCO, and Chicago Youth Center on Wabash. **Family engagement and learning:** Supporting our scholars means supporting our families. Many local organizations provide adult education and engagement opportunities, such as financial literacy classes or job training and placement support. Examples include BSCO, Cara, and Centers for New Horizons. We are eager to bring these organizations into Chicago Prep and/or encourage our parents to take advantage of their programming.

In compliance with Public Act 101-0291, the Chicago Prep Board of Directors will include one parent of a currently enrolled student; the parent will be appointed to the board in the same manner as other Directors, described in **Section 4.4.1**. Additionally, representatives from the Parent Advisory Council will have the opportunity to speak to the Board of Directors and share feedback as desired at monthly board meetings. It is also a priority to have board members with close ties to the Bronzeville community. Our current Founding Board has three such members, and we will continue to recruit community members on an ongoing basis. As all board meetings are open to the public, we also encourage both families and community members to attend monthly meetings; the meeting schedule is posted to our website and in our school building.

Addressing Parent Concerns. Parents or guardians who have a concern or complaint about the school should follow these steps, to be formalized in a Grievance Policy by the Board of Directors during the planning year.

1. Speak directly with the person involved. For example, a concern about a scholar's grades should first be addressed with the teacher(s). Parents can call, email, or schedule a meeting to attempt to address the concern.
2. If the initial outreach does not resolve the complaint, speak with the Head of School. Parents can call, email, or schedule a meeting, and the Head of School will attempt to mediate or correct the situation.
3. If the parent is dissatisfied with the outcome, s/he may submit a complaint in writing to the Board of Directors. The Board will add the concern to the upcoming Board meeting. The Board will discuss the issue and, if applicable, vote on appropriate resolution. The Board will respond to the parent and Head of School within 30 days of receiving the complaint.

Chicago Prep will also conduct annual surveys of parent engagement and satisfaction and will share the results with the Board of Directors.

Leadership and Staff Roles. As the leader of external relations for Chicago Prep, the Head of School will be ultimately responsible for our parent and community engagement strategies and will report back to the Board of Directors. Additionally, the Head of School will delegate responsibilities and duties as follows:

- During our Planning Year and Year 1, the Head of School will set the vision for the Parent Advisory Council and recruit 3-5 interested parent leaders who are in alignment with the vision and willing to serve. These initial parent leaders will then support in recruiting other parents to join the committee. The Parent Advisory Council will also take the lead on planning events for the year, encouraging parent engagement, and sharing feedback and concerns with the Head of School.
- The Head of School will train and support the teachers and all members of the leadership team to help ensure strong teacher-parent communication. This includes leading summer professional development sessions on effective communication, checking in with teachers about their biweekly Advisory calls, and supporting teachers in preparing for and executing difficult conversations (e.g., when a student is failing a class, when a teacher and student or parent need to repair their relationship).
- The Dean of Community Engagement and High School Placement (DCE) is responsible for leading community engagement efforts beginning in Year 3. This includes managing Chicago Prep's website and social media, building and maintaining external community partnerships, and working with parents and scholars on high school placement.
- The Head of School will work with the Parent Advisory Council and the operational team at Chicago Prep to assess the effectiveness of our parent and community engagement. Metrics include parent engagement and satisfaction survey data and attendance at monthly family events (including both numbers and demographics/groups represented).

SECTION 2.9: HUMAN CAPITAL

2.9.1: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The human resources strategy will realistically help the school identify and attract highly effective teachers, leaders, and staff who are committed to fulfilling the school's mission.

- *A staffing plan that includes all instructional and non-instructional positions in the school over the five years of the charter contract and aligns with descriptions of positions and the school model in other parts of the proposal*
- *A clear description of how the staffing plan will support student achievement*
- *Sensible and clear organization-level decision-making authority that delineates the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board, management organization, school administration, and any school advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils*
- *Alignment between the positions cited in the organizational chart, staffing model, and budget*
- *Attached job descriptions that clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities for each position*
- *Strategies for recruiting and hiring staff members who can drive student achievement, including bilingual-certified, special education, and other high-need teachers*
- *Hiring criteria, selection process, and job descriptions that are clearly aligned to the school's mission, educational philosophy, and professional culture (Next Generation applicants specify whether faculty and administrators will be required to have experience teaching in blended learning environments)*
- *Proposed compensation and benefits packages that are competitive and will allow the school to attract and retain highly qualified staff*

Staffing Plan. Our organizational structure supports the mission and vision of Chicago Prep. In Year 1, we begin with 12 FTE employees and at full scale in Year 3 and beyond will employ 26 FTE employees. Our organizational chart reflects the Head of School reporting to the Board of Directors, which holds the charter and is responsible for the academic, financial, and organizational oversight of the school. The

Board of Directors hires and evaluates the Head of School and delegates all management responsibilities to the Head of School, including hiring, supporting, and evaluating all other staff.

In Year 1, we have four administrators (Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Manager of Operations, and Student Supports Coordinator), one special education teacher, six general education teachers, and one teaching fellow. This staff will accommodate 120 scholars, resulting in a teacher-student ratio of 1:15 and a staff-student ratio of 1:10. In Year 2, we have six administrators (the same four roles as in Year 1 plus one Dean of Students and one Office Manager), two special education teachers, nine general education teachers, and one teaching fellow. This staff will accommodate 180 scholars, resulting in a teacher-student ratio of 1:15 and a staff-student ratio of approximately 1:11. In Years 3 – 5, we have seven administrators (the same five roles as in Year 2, with Manager of Operation becoming Director of Operations, plus one Dean of Community Engagement and High School Placement), two special education teachers, twelve general education teachers, one social worker, one teaching fellow, and three electives teachers. This staff will accommodate 240 scholars, resulting in a teacher-student ratio of 1:15 and a staff-student ratio of approximately 1:11.

Our staffing model drives student achievement beginning with the teachers. We have chosen to hire teachers who specialize in content areas because we believe content focus and expertise are critical to student achievement in the middle grades. Our staffing model in combination with our daily schedule allows math and ELA teachers, who lead teach each of their classes, more than two hours of planning time; it allows science and social studies teachers; who have a blend of lead and support teaching, 90 minutes of planning time. This structure provides valuable time for teacher responsibilities key to student achievement, including lesson preparation and internalization, collaborative planning, data analysis and action planning, and parent/family communication.

Our administrative team is also designed to support achievement by distributing responsibility, allowing leaders to focus and avoid spreading themselves too thin. The Manager of Operations (who becomes Director of Operations in Year 3) will focus solely on operational systems with the goal of creating an environment in which teachers are free to focus on instruction and students are free to focus on learning. Additionally, the Office Manager added in Year 2 will support him/her with administrative operational tasks. The Assistant Head of School will serve as the primary coach of our general education teachers, with support from the Head of School. The Student Supports Coordinator will lead MTSS, special education, and EL programming, professional development, and compliance and serves as the primary coach of the special education teacher(s) and social worker. Additionally, in Year 1, the Assistant Head of School and Student Supports Coordinator will both support the Head of School in managing the student discipline, behavior management, and intervention system described in **Section 2.7.2**. In Year 2, the Dean of Students takes the lead on discipline and behavior management. In Year 3, the Dean of Community Engagement and High School Placement (DCE) takes on the crucial task of supporting 8th grade scholars and families with the high school application process, as well as managing our community engagement efforts.

Having designated leaders to focus on the key day-to-day areas of operations, instructional coaching, special education, student culture and discipline, and community outreach/marketing, the Head of School will be able to oversee all staff members, maintain the cultural and instructional vision of Chicago Prep, lead the parent engagement and communication efforts we believe are key to success, serve as the external face of the school, and lead fundraising and development efforts. Attached in **Appendix 2.9** are our organizational charts for Years 1 through 5 that outline all reporting relationships and are aligned with our five-year budget, as well as full job descriptions for all administrative and teaching roles.

Recruiting and Hiring. We have a robust recruitment and hiring strategy to support our goal of building a diverse, committed team of highly qualified staff, and funding for these efforts accounted for in line 76 of the attached budget. In the fall of the planning year, the Head of School will continue building community awareness of Chicago Prep with the goal of quickly attracting interested, qualified candidates once the school is authorized and can begin hiring. If authorization in December 2020, the Board of Directors will immediately hire the Head of School. The Head of School will then recruit and hire an Operations Associate by February of 2021, who becomes a core member of the school’s leadership team and will collaborate with the Head of School to recruit and hire all remaining staff. The goal is to be fully hired by May 2021. We believe this timeline is feasible as we need to recruit just eleven staff members for Year 1, and it provides enough time for a strong start to the school year; we will have a complete team before the start of summer home visits and professional development and will be able to share pre-reading with the team to begin building our shared knowledge and vision. Once authorized, we will advertise Chicago Prep career opportunities throughout Bronzeville, the surrounding neighborhoods, and all of Chicago using a variety of methods, including posting fliers in coffee shops, restaurants, and other local businesses; community organizations; and churches; attending networking events and job fairs; posting opportunities on social media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter; posting opportunities on job sites: LinkedIn, Indeed; including a “Careers” page on our website to take candidates directly to the application.

We will also partner with local colleges and universities, particularly but not exclusively the education departments, to tap into a pool of qualified local candidates with ties to the community. Potential fruitful partnerships include the University of Chicago, Illinois Institute of Chicago, Chicago State, Northwestern, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Northeastern Illinois University. We will seek opportunities to speak to their students about the vision of Chicago Prep and open positions to contribute to the mission. The Head of School is responsible for leading hiring outreach. The hiring process will take place simultaneously with the recruitment process. Interested candidates will be able to access our online application on the Chicago Prep website. The outline of our hiring process is as follows:

1. Initial Application. Upload resume and respond to ten questions designed to gauge the candidate’s beliefs about education, alignment to the Chicago Prep mission and vision, and unique capacity to contribute meaningfully to the team.
2. Phone Screen. Head of School (or another leadership team member, such as the Assistant Head of School, starting in Year 3) to probe and follow-up on the written application over the phone.
3. In-person interview. For the final step in the hiring process, the candidate will deliver 30 minutes of a sample lesson (lesson materials provided – Achievement First curriculum), receive and implement feedback in the moment, and afterwards debrief the lesson with school leadership. After the sample lesson and debrief, the school leadership will ask any final questions and provide the candidate the chance to do the same.
4. Reference check. Head of School will call at least three references to ask questions aligned to the hiring criteria outlined below.

We are committed to hiring a diverse team that reflects the demographics of our targeted student body. Additionally, as we recruit and interview candidates, we are cognizant of the requirement that 50% of instructional staff are certified upon school opening, with 75% certified by the beginning of year four. Throughout the hiring process, we assess for the following criteria, which all Chicago Prep staff members must meet:

Mission/vision-alignment: All team members must believe deeply in the Chicago Prep mission to prepare students to succeed in college and positively impact the world. This includes belief in the ability of all

students to succeed academically and the responsibility of adults to provide the necessary supports. Additionally, candidates must demonstrate philosophical alignment with our seven key design elements: academic rigor, character development, financial literacy & entrepreneurship, structured & supportive community, excellent teaching, family & community partnerships, and robust supports. A cohesive team united by one clear mission and vision is essential for our scholars' success. **Content expertise and enthusiasm:** Teachers must be experts in the subject areas they teach. This can be demonstrated in a variety of ways, including undergraduate areas of study, current field, and knowledge gained through independent study. Additionally, teachers should demonstrate genuine enthusiasm for their content area. Having expertise and enthusiasm for your content is necessary for building expertise and enthusiasm in students. For special education teachers, "content" refers to special education legal requirements and instructional best practices. For leadership positions, "content" refers to the fundamental responsibilities of the role; e.g., the Assistant Head of School should have expertise in and enthusiasm for coaching middle school teachers. **Record of achievement:** All team members must have achieved strong results or accomplishments in their previous endeavors. Examples include, but are not limited to, earning a high university GPA/academic honors, driving high academic growth and/or achievement with students, or achieving measurable accomplishments in other career fields. We must ensure that all staff members have what it takes for us to meet our ambitious academic goals; this is best demonstrated through a record of previous achievement. **Coachability/commitment to growth:** Our mission is ambitious, and its fulfillment is dependent on continuous hard work and individual as well as team development. All team members must be receptive to feedback, which requires humility and reflectiveness and an ability to learn and adapt quickly.

The following criteria are preferred but not required: **Connections to and/or knowledge of the Bronzeville community and the South Side of Chicago more generally:** As part of our curriculum, we will teach and discuss the history and culture of Bronzeville. It would be particularly impactful to have educators on the team who are from the community or have close ties to the community and can share personal stories of Bronzeville. Having educators from the community also sends positive messages to our scholars regarding identity and community. **Unique talents, skills, knowledge, or connections that candidates want to leverage in support of our scholars:** Exposure is an important component of a high-quality education; this is something we heard repeatedly from community members and is one reason we have chosen to focus on entrepreneurship. Candidates with a passion for something beyond the classroom, such as poetry or debate, volunteering or activism, coding or engineering, may be able to provide additional educational benefit to our scholars. For example, they may want to start an after-school club, connect with guest speakers, or host events. Such opportunities have the potential to motivate scholars in new and meaningful ways. **Previous teaching experience with similar demographics of students:** Educators who have previously taught in schools with majority students of color and low-income students may be more attuned to the systemic inequities and resulting additional challenges that our students face.

Although candidates with experience in the classroom can bring wisdom and an existing toolbox of cultural and pedagogical strategies, having experience is not a requirement of our application process and does not necessarily mean a candidate will be a more effective teacher. We will be conscious of the composition of the team as a whole and try to avoid having an entire team of teachers new to the profession; however, we do not want to discount talented, passionate candidates simply because they do not have previous teaching experience.

In order to recruit special education and bilingual-certified teachers, we will utilize all of the recruitment methods identified above and the additional methods below. While we may not need bilingual-certified teachers based on our targeted student population, we believe they are valuable and want to be prepared with connections in case our EL percentage is higher than anticipated. **Partnership with TFA Chicago-Northwest Indiana:** Although we will work with TFA as a potential source for all positions, this partnership will be particularly helpful for special education teachers. Out of their 2020 Corps of 230 teachers, 38% are diverse learning teachers.¹¹⁹ Chicago Prep will communicate to TFA that special education teachers are our top priority to help us staff these important roles. Additionally, as a TFA alumnus, Lead Founder Mary Griffin is tapped into TFA's vast network both locally and nationwide. She will leverage these connections to find and attract qualified candidates for special education roles. **Relay Graduate School of Education (GSE):** Lead Founder Mary Griffin is also an alumnus of Relay GSE, a teacher and leader training program with thousands of alumni nationwide and a local campus in Chicago. This impactful network provides another means of recruiting special education, bilingual-certified, and other high-need teachers. **Colleges with Special Education Programs:** We will work directly with universities in and around Chicago that have successful special education programs, including Northern Illinois University, Saint Francis University, Northwestern University, National Louis University, Dominican University, Loyola University, and University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. **Colleges Offering Bilingual Coursework:** We will work directly with universities in and around Chicago that offer English as a Second Language/Bilingual Endorsements, including Chicago State, Columbia College, DePaul University, and the University of Illinois at Chicago. **Transitional Bilingual Educator Endorsement:** We will encourage qualified applicants to pursue their Transitional Bilingual Educator Endorsement, which is valid for five years and requires only a Bachelor's degree and the Target Language Proficiency Test in the desired language. The application fee for Transitional Bilingual Educator Endorsement is \$100, covered through our recruitment budget.

We have proposed average teacher salaries that are competitive with CPS starting teacher salaries, as well as contributing 2% to employees' share of the Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund (CTPF) for certified teachers and 3% match of a 403b plan for staff that does not participate in CTPF. We also propose a baseline 2% raise every year, budget for competitive raises over time, and provide health, life, and dental insurance. We believe that our compensation and benefits, along with the excitement of being a founding member of a new school in Bronzeville, allows us to attract and retain highly qualified candidates.

2.9.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The human resources strategy will realistically help the school develop and retain highly effective teachers, leaders, and staff who are committed to fulfilling the school's mission.

- *An approach to PD that is constructive, reflective, growth-oriented, and based on the provision of meaningful and timely feedback*
- *Clearly delineated roles and responsibilities for facilitating PD opportunities*
- *A plan for identifying PD topics and determining whether PD will be provided internally or externally*
- *Adequate protected time in the school's schedule and calendar to implement the described PD supports and collaboration time*
- *PD costs accounted for in the budget*
- *PD adequately addresses the unique needs of new staff*
- *An induction plan for all teachers that orients staff to the educational program and cultural expectations*

¹¹⁹ "Our Impact." Teach for America Chicago-Northwest Indiana. 2019. <https://www.teachforamerica.org/where-we-work/chicago-northwest-indiana/our-impact>.

- *A plan for using data on student performance and from teacher evaluations/coaching cycles to evaluate the effectiveness of PD and inform future PD content*
- *Clearly articulated characteristics of a professional culture that will promote high staff performance and retention*

Overview of Professional Development. The fulfillment of Chicago Prep’s mission depends upon a well-trained, high-functioning, cohesive team. A large body of research demonstrates the impact of teacher effectiveness on student outcomes, which is why **excellent teaching** is one of the most central aspects of Chicago Prep’s vision.¹²⁰ A key driver of creating and sustaining excellent teaching over time is professional development (PD). As such, we dedicate significant resources to develop our teachers quickly and comprehensively. Our PD prepares teachers to effectively teach their chosen content and engage students, use data to drive instruction, manage student behavior, build warm and trusting relationships with students, and meet the needs of all learners. Ultimately, our approach to PD helps us ensure that an excellent teacher is in front of every child, every day.

Calendar and Cost. Each school year at Chicago Prep will begin with 20 full days of PD before the first day of school for students. Additionally, we have eight additional full days of professional development throughout the school year. On our abbreviated Fridays, we have 90-minute PD sessions. In total, we have 28 full days of PD and 28 afternoon PD sessions. In our Planning Year through Year 2, we include in our professional development expenses (see line 77 of the attached budget) \$10,000 for Follow-On Support from BES. Follow-On Support is an investment in Chicago Prep’s leadership capacity as well as overall school success; two out of three BES schools outperformed their local counterparts in 2018-19.¹²¹ BES staff will support the Head of School and Chicago Prep overall according to their needs. In Year 1, we also plan to send two teachers and the Head of School to NFTE U Teacher Training for a total cost of \$6,000.¹²² This program, led by an organization with a proven track record of success, will prepare our teachers to lead the entrepreneurship portion of our daily Money and Business in Action (MBA) class. Beyond these two fixed costs, our budget allots \$500 per employee per year. Because the majority of our PD is conducted internally and is cost-free,¹²³ this money will be used at the discretion of the Head of School for external professional development opportunities. Examples include opportunities for engagement in the Bronzeville community, such as taking a guided tour, and using funds to send two or three top-performing employees to external conferences. **Summer Professional Development.** During summer professional development, our goals are to deeply internalize our school mission and vision, to build a cohesive team, and to ensure all teachers are ready to lead a strong start in curriculum, instruction, and culture. As such, we have allotted four weeks of professional development before our scholars begin the year, focused on the following topics: team-building; diversity, equity, and inclusion; school culture and behavior management; curriculum; rigorous, engaging instruction; data analysis; family and community engagement; and robust scholar supports, inclusive of special student populations. A complete draft of our PD calendar for the year is attached in **Appendix 2.9. Ongoing Professional Development.** Professional development continues throughout the year with weekly after-school PD on Friday and four full day professional development sessions. Many of our PD topics are based on those used by high-performing schools and networks across the country. For example, many high-performing schools lead a

¹²⁰ King, Jennifer Rice. “Teacher Quality: Understanding the Effectiveness of Teacher Attributes. Economic Policy Institute. 2003. https://www.epi.org/publication/books_teacher_quality_execsum_intro/.

¹²¹ BES Annual Report 2019. <https://bes.org/annual-report/#2019-annual-report/page20-page21>. 20.

¹²² On 1/21/2020, Lead Founder Mary Griffin spoke to Scott Nasatir, the Senior Regional Director of NFTE’s Midwest Region, and was quoted at a cost of \$3,000 per teacher and free participation for the Head of School for attending a two- or three-day summer PD workshop and participating in follow-up sessions throughout the year.

¹²³ Internal PD sessions will require supplies such as copy paper, ink, and chart paper, accounted for under Office Supplies

series of PD based on techniques outlined in *Teach Like a Champion* for setting and enforcing high behavioral expectations and building character and trust. Chicago Prep will lead sessions on these techniques, detailed in **Section 2.7.2**, at the beginning of the year to help us establish our structured and supportive community and create a school culture of warmth and focus. Paul Bambrick-Santoyo’s *Get Better Faster: A 90-Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers* will serve as an anchor text when deciding which professional development topics should be prioritized and in what order.¹²⁴ This resource will serve our staff needs particularly well: although not all of our teachers will be new, we will all be new to Chicago Prep. Several other acclaimed professional texts will guide Chicago Prep leadership in choosing or adapting PD sessions throughout the school year. These texts include, but are not limited to *Teach Like a Champion*, *Reading Reconsidered*, *The Writing Revolution*, and *The Skillful Teacher*.

We also select PD topics and sessions to meet the specific needs of our students and our community. An important part of this is PD to help the team build or deepen an understanding of the Bronzeville community. Because we seek to honor the rich history and legacy of Bronzeville at Chicago Prep, it is imperative that our teachers understand it. We anticipate that we will have local experts on our team given our commitment to hiring staff reflective of the community, and we will rely on these individuals to lead or support Bronzeville-specific PD. Sessions geared toward community understanding will include active engagement with the Bronzeville community; for example, paying a local expert to take us on a guided tour, volunteering at local organizations, and visiting local restaurants and businesses as a team.

As the school year progresses, leadership will continue to choose and revise PD topics based on the specific needs of our students and teachers. For example, if student achievement data (e.g., from Interim Assessments) shows students struggling with literal comprehension, we will lead a PD dedicated to helping students break down meaning paragraph-by-paragraph. If work samples (e.g., from exit tickets) show students using repetitive simple sentence structure, we will lead a PD teaching strategies to incorporate sentence variety. As part of our observation-feedback cycles, instructional coaches will track teachers’ strengths and areas of growth/action steps week-to-week. This data will allow leaders to find trends in teacher performance that will inform PD session topics.

In general, our PD sessions will follow Paul Bambrick-Santoyo’s “See It, Name It, Do It” approach.¹²⁵ Creating a See It, Name It, Do It session begins with identifying the objective: what should participants be able to do as a result of the session? From there, leaders backwards plan to drive participant mastery, ensuring that sessions allow time for these three key components: **See It** - At the beginning of the session, teachers “see” the exemplary implementation of the objective. Examples include a video of a master teacher implementing the technique, a live model by an instructional leader, or an annotated lesson plan that shows the keys to success. Whenever possible, Chicago Prep will leverage high-performing or veteran teachers in executing the “See It” of PD, whether through video or live model. This is one way we celebrate high-performing or veteran teachers and keep them engaged and challenged through professional development. **Name It**-Teachers then discuss what they observed in the “See It” portion. The leader facilitates this portion by asking framing and probing questions, but participants are the ones doing the thinking. They share takeaways and reflections, and when they name key points, the leader “stamps it” by affirming and labeling with common language. **Do It** - This is the time for teachers to lock in their learning by practicing the objective and getting targeted feedback. The “Do It” portion ensures that teachers have the confidence and skill to put the session into practice with students immediately. Veteran or high-performing teachers may also be leveraged during the “Do It” portion of the PD to provide

¹²⁴ Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul. *Get Better Faster: A 90-Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016.

¹²⁵ Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul. *Get Better Faster: A 90-Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016. 80-81.

feedback to other participants. These not only provides a new challenge for our top teachers, but also contributes to an atmosphere of professional collegiality.

Coaching and Collaboration. Chicago Prep takes a comprehensive approach to PD. Beyond our summer and ongoing PD sessions, we also commit to developing teachers through robust coaching and opportunities for meaningful collaboration. Teacher observation at Chicago Prep has one core purpose: to help teachers improve their craft so that students grow and achieve at high levels. Thus, 95% of the time, teacher observation is not evaluative but collaborative, akin to a coach working with athletes to improve. Coaches (in Year 1, the Head of School and Assistant Head of School) will use observations to highlight what teachers are doing well and provide actionable feedback for specific areas of improvement.¹²⁶ The feedback will come in multiple forms: **“Real-time”** - Coaches give teachers feedback in the moment as they observe instruction. This can be accomplished by providing nonverbal cues that the teacher can clearly understand; by whispering to the teacher while students work on a task independently or in groups; or by modeling a specific instructional or management strategy that the teacher should immediately incorporate. Research has found that teachers experience real-time feedback as useful and that it improves their pedagogy.¹²⁷ **Observation Feedback Meetings** - The coach meets one-on-one with the teacher after the lesson (within a day or two to ensure the teacher can easily remember the lesson) to debrief the observation and provide feedback. Chicago Prep school leadership will leverage *Get Better Faster* as a resource to help novice and/or struggling teachers grow quickly. Specifically, leaders use the See It, Name It, Do It observation feedback template, which functions much like the PD template described above. The See It, Name It, Do It observation feedback template includes providing precise praise on what the teacher has done well, ideally something aligned to PD goals or a recent action step, and asking probing questions to help the teacher identify his or her highest leverage action step. The coach and teacher then lock in the action step by writing it down, and the teacher practices the action step, which could include execution practice, planning practice, or both. Finally, the teacher and coach schedule a time within the next week for the coach to come observe, specifically looking for the implementation of the action step. For more successful teachers, observation feedback meetings may use the same structure or may be more flexible, allowing the teacher and coach to have an organic conversation and brainstorm ideas about how to most effectively improve student growth, achievement, and culture.

As noted in the PD Calendar Draft attached in **Appendix 2.9**, many of the scheduled afternoon PD sessions will include time devoted to team meetings to discuss scholars’ progress or school culture trends or other relevant topics. Additionally, we include several professional book clubs in our PD calendar. During book club, teachers meet in small groups to discuss a mutually agreed upon text. This practice will encourage teachers to continuously seek out new learning opportunities and to engage in meaningful dialogue with colleagues. It will also help teachers develop leadership and facilitation skills, as one person from each book club group will lead at least one small-group meeting throughout the year.

Meeting the Needs of New Staff. Our PD scope and sequence has been designed with new teachers in mind. Our anchor professional development text *Get Better Faster* lays out topics and coaching strategies to ensure that new teachers are better “able to meet students’ most immediate needs” within the first 90 days of school.¹²⁸ The scope and sequence includes a management trajectory and a rigor trajectory.

¹²⁶ This coaching philosophy aligns with a Core Idea from *Get Better Faster*: “The purpose of instructional leadership is not to evaluate teachers but to develop them.” Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul. *Get Better Faster: A 90-Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016. 5

¹²⁷ Sharplin, Erica J., Garth Stahl, and Ben Kehrwald. “It’s about improving my practice: The learner experience of real-time coaching.” *Australian Journal of Education*. Volume 41, Article 5, Issue 8. 2016. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1102072.pdf>

¹²⁸ Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul. *Get Better Faster: A 90-Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016. 13.

For management, the first two buckets to master are “Develop Essential Routines & Procedures” and “Roll Out and Monitor Routines.” For rigor, the first two buckets are “Write Lesson Plans” (which includes “Internalize Existing Lesson Plans,” as will apply for Chicago Prep) and “Independent Practice.” *Get Better Faster* will help the entire team to develop baseline proficiency with the core skills needed to teach effectively. Our PD, both coaching and team sessions, also includes significant time for teachers to practice and receive individualized feedback, a practice which has been shown to accelerate teachers’ growth.¹²⁹

Evaluation of Professional Development. We will evaluate the efficacy of our PD program in several ways:

1. Student data: The goal of professional development is to prepare teachers to help scholars achieve high growth and mastery. Thus, if our student data is strong, our professional development was effective. If student data is weak, we need to adjust our approach.

2. Classroom observations: If we have led a PD session that included opportunity for the introduction of new knowledge, discussion and application of the knowledge, and practice implementing what was learned, then we should see the skill/knowledge in action in teachers’ classrooms. Instructional coaches will use internally created Google sheets to track teacher observations and action steps. If there are significant gaps in skills covered leadership know that we need to adjust our approach.

3. Teacher and staff surveys: Three times a year (at the end of each trimester), all staff will take a survey designed to evaluate our staff culture. On this survey, several questions will ask about staff’s opinion on PD. For example, teachers will be asked to what degree they agree (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) with statements such as the following:

- a. Friday PD sessions improve my ability to engage all students.
- b. Summer PD prepared me to teach effectively at Chicago Prep.

Positive Professional Culture. At Chicago Prep, we want to cultivate a positive professional culture characterized by mission and vision alignment, commitment to continuous growth, strong trust and teamwork among all staff members, and an outlook of joy and gratitude – choosing to look for and acknowledge the good in our daily lives. Professional development is a key driver of these characteristics, but the following strategies will also help us to cultivate this culture: **Coaching** - Our weekly/biweekly coaching schedule builds teacher investment by allowing them to see their progress.¹³⁰ Additionally, it strengthens relationships by providing regular opportunities for teachers to share celebrations, concerns, feedback, and suggestions. **Strengths focus** - We focus explicitly on helping teachers to discover and/or nurture their individual strengths. Research has demonstrated that the best managers help people to reflect on their strengths and do more to capitalize on or develop those strengths.¹³¹ Example strategies include having all staff take a free Strengths Finder test during Summer PD and ensuring that leaders make teacher strengths a regular focus of coaching meetings. **Daily morning huddles** - Each morning from 7:15-7:20am, the entire Chicago Prep team meets for morning huddle. Team members will have the opportunity to give gratitude, hear and share daily announcements, and practice key skills. **Staff surveys** - Three times a year (at the end of each trimester), all staff will take a survey designed to measure job satisfaction and reveal common areas of strength and growth for our team. The Head of School will analyze the results, share highlights, and work with the team to problem solve. **Sustainability and fun** - Approximately once per month, staff will be released after students’ early dismissal on Friday instead of

¹²⁹ “The Mirage: Confronting the Hard Truth about our Quest for Teacher Development.” TNTP, 2015. https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP-Mirage_2015.pdf. This study of four large school districts, including one charter management organization (CMO), found that teachers in the CMO, who grew more than teachers in the other districts, were significantly more likely to have opportunities to practice teaching outside the classroom and to receive regular feedback.

¹³⁰ Pink, Daniel H. *Drive: The Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2009. In *Drive*, Pink describes “mastery” as one of the most important motivators.

¹³¹ Buckingham, Marcus and Curt Coffman. *First, Break All the Rules: What the World’s Greatest Managers Do Differently*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

staying until 4:00pm for PD. We chose the early release Friday to align with three-day weekends whenever possible to help staff take advantage of the holiday. Additionally, we will plan a monthly staff outing or activity as a fun teambuilder. **Leadership opportunities** - Chicago Prep teachers will be encouraged to lead in various ways: planning monthly “Merit Madness” parties for scholars; planning the monthly staff outings; modeling during PD or leading book club discussions; or leading afterschool enrichment activities for scholars.

Professional Development Facilitation. The Head of School and Assistant Head of School will be primarily responsible for leading PD, inclusive of coaching collaborative opportunities. The Head of School will lead the majority of summer PD sessions in order to set a strong vision and tone for the year; however, during this time she will also directly train the Assistant Head of School to lead effective PD. If and when the Assistant Head of School is ready, he/she will lead some of the remaining summer PD sessions and some Friday PD sessions throughout the year. Additionally, the operations team will lead operations PD sessions as needed throughout the year. Examples include helping teachers navigate Schoolrunner or similar data system as well as other technology resources.

2.9.3: STAFF EVALUATION

The human resources strategy will realistically help retain highly effective leaders, teachers, and staff.

- *Schedules and processes for teacher observation and evaluation*
- *Explanation for how teacher evaluations are tied to PD, compensation strategies, staffing decisions, etc. (Next Generation applicants specify how evaluation procedures will be adapted for blended learning and online teachers)*
- *The proposal provides clear criteria for evaluating school leaders(s), specifies a process for providing an annual performance review, and describes mechanisms for offering school leader(s) consistent feedback*

Teacher Observation and Coaching. All teachers at Chicago Prep will be observed for a minimum of fifteen minutes weekly. School leadership will also spend additional time in our top-performing teachers’ classrooms to study in detail what they do that makes them so effective and help them continue to capitalize on their talents.¹³²

Teacher Evaluations. The purpose of teacher evaluations at Chicago Prep is to provide teachers with meaningful, comprehensive, personalized feedback on their growth and accomplishments throughout the year. Teachers have strong relationships with the instructional leaders built through the foundation of summer professional development and ongoing coaching; our hope is that these relationships maximize the impact of the evaluations. Because all teachers receive regular coaching designed to help them improve their craft, evaluations should be neither intimidating nor surprising. Rather, they are a tool for providing more big-picture feedback than what is provided during regular coaching throughout the year.

Teachers are evaluated twice a year by the Head of School in collaboration with the teachers’ direct supervisor as identified in the attached organizational charts for Years 1 through 5. Evaluations include a formal midyear and end-of-year evaluation. Several factors are included in the evaluation: (1) student growth and achievement, with teachers held accountable to the metrics outlined in our accountability plan for the appropriate year and subject; (2) a rubric evaluation from the leader based on observations

¹³² This practice is recommended in the seminal management book *First, Break All the Rules*, based on the finding that the best managers spend their time with the best people. Buckingham, Marcus and Curt Coffman. *First, Break All the Rules: What the World’s Greatest Managers Do Differently*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

throughout the year; and a self-evaluation rubric completed by the teacher. The rubric for evaluation is directly aligned to Chicago Prep PD topics covered throughout the year: team-building, classroom culture and behavior management, curriculum, rigorous and engaging instruction, data analysis, family and community engagement, and student supports. The process for evaluations is as follows:

1. Teachers set 2-3 major goals for their development over the course of the year. They set goals once at the beginning of the year to inform midyear evaluations and once during midyear evaluations to inform end-of-year evaluations. They share these goals with instructional leaders who support them and discuss progress during regular coaching meetings.
2. Teachers complete a self-evaluation. They score themselves in all key areas of the rubric (which is aligned to professional development and coaching) and write open-ended responses regarding their self-identified strengths and areas of growth. Teachers reflect on their progress against the goals they have set. For a sample rubric, see **Appendix 2.9**.
3. Without reviewing teachers' self-evaluations, instructional leaders (Head of School and Assistant Head of School, supported by the Head of School) complete the same rubric for each teacher. Leaders also include open-ended responses regarding strengths and areas of growth.
4. The leader reviews data from assessments in the teacher's content area. The midyear evaluation data includes Spring-to-Winter (or Fall-to-Winter) NWEA and Interim Assessments 1 and 2. The end-of-year evaluation includes Spring-to-Spring (or Fall-to-Spring) NWEA and Interim Assessments 3 and 4. This data – the students' growth and attainment – is also evaluated using a rubric, based on the goals in **Section 2.4.1**.
5. The teacher and leader take time to review each other's evaluations.
6. The teacher and leader meet to discuss and debrief.

Evaluations provide time and space for teachers and leaders to reflect, celebrate progress, and set goals for areas of growth. They also provide an objective measure to consider for teachers who are interested in taking on leadership roles within the school. Those who perform extremely well on evaluations may be encouraged to take on informal leadership roles or to apply for open leadership positions.

Leadership Team Evaluations. Leadership team members, including the Assistant Head of School, Manager/Director of Operations, Dean of Students, Student Supports Coordinator, and DCE, are also evaluated twice a year by the Head of School: once in January as a midyear evaluation and once in June as an end-of-year evaluation. Additionally, the Office Manager is evaluated on the same schedule by the Manager/Director of Operations. The Head of School conducts evaluations for all leadership team members. The process for evaluation is as follows:

1. Leaders set 2-3 major goals for their development over the course of the year. They set goals once at the beginning of the year to inform midyear evaluations and once during midyear evaluations to inform end-of-year evaluations. They share these goals with instructional leaders who support them and discuss progress during regular coaching meetings.
2. The leaders complete a self-evaluation. They score themselves in all key areas of the rubric, which is aligned to the responsibilities of their specific role and write open-ended responses regarding their self-identified strengths and areas of growth. Leaders reflect on their progress against the goals they have set.
3. Without reviewing leaders' self-evaluations, the Head of School completes the same rubric for each leader. The Head of School also includes open-ended responses regarding strengths and areas of growth.

4. The Head of School reviews specific data depending on the leader's focus. Like teachers, the Assistant Head of School, Student Supports Coordinator, and Dean of Students are evaluated based on the data of the teachers they coach and students they support. The Student Supports Coordinator is also evaluated on special education compliance data. The DCE is evaluated on a variety of data including community collaborations and high school application data. The Manager/Director of Operations is evaluated on operational metrics including attendance and enrollment systems.
5. The teacher and leader take time to review each other's evaluations.
6. The teacher and leader meet to discuss and debrief.

The Head of School is evaluated once annually at the end of the year by the Board of Directors. The Head of School is evaluated based on the academic, financial, and organizational health of the school, as described in **Section 4.4.2**.

SECTION 2.10: DESIGN TEAM EXPERIENCE AND CAPACITY

2.10.1: EXPERIENCE

The design team's (or existing school network's) experience and track record demonstrate the capacity to open and operate a high-quality charter school.

- *A summary for each design team member with details on each person's experience and credentials, role during the design phase, and intended role in the proposed school*
- *Design team members and founding board members that possess the wide-ranging skills and experience needed to open, operate, and sustain a high-quality charter school, including previous experience serving the school's targeted population*
- *Clear explanations of the role(s) of consultant(s) in developing the proposal or implementing the proposed model (if approved to open)*
- *Clearly delineated roles and responsibilities for each member of the instructional leadership team that are reflected in the attached job descriptions*
- *Quantitative evidence of instructional leaders' individual track records of driving significant academic gains with similar student populations in a school setting*
- *A well-rounded leadership team that collectively has the qualifications and track record necessary to ensure the successful implementation of the academic, operational, and financial operations of the school*
- *Clear plans to provide sufficient leadership development and support to address any gaps in skill or experience to ensure success in a given role*
- *(Existing National Operator only): Student demographic information and quantitative academic growth, attainment, and behavioral performance data for every existing school in the network (N/A)*
- *(Existing National Operator only): Half of the schools in an existing operator's national network meet the criteria for demonstrating a proven track record for academic growth, attainment, and behavioral metrics, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the Resource Guide (N/A)*
- *(If an existing operator does not currently have any schools in its network that serve a similar student population to the anticipated student body in Chicago) A clear rationale as to why the design team believes the model will translate to the targeted student population with a description of the additional supports to meet the needs of the targeted student population (N/A)*

The Chicago Prep design team is comprised primarily of our Lead Founder, Ms. Mary Griffin, and our Founding Board of Directors. The design team's work has been heavily influenced by several key advisors and community stakeholders, all of whom have provided sound guidance on the design of Chicago Prep.

The Chicago Prep design team is a diverse group of community members with a wide range of professional experience and skills. We have individuals with expertise in finance, law, real estate and facility acquisition, marketing, development, governance, and education (school leadership, curriculum and instruction, assessments, data analysis, policy, and postsecondary student affairs). Five of nine members of the design team have experience serving the school's targeted population. All design team members are deeply committed to the Chicago Prep mission and vision, and our diverse backgrounds and perspectives will help to ensure that we make thoughtful, well-informed decisions on behalf of the school. Collectively, the design team has experiences and skills necessary to design, found, and oversee a high-quality charter school.

Ms. Mercedes Bender, a Bronzeville native and resident, is a partner at Kantar Group, a global research, data and insights consultancy. She is responsible for managing the regional client portfolio within the brand strategy practice. Prior to joining Kantar, Ms. Bender was a Brand and Experience Strategist at IBM iX, where she was responsible for the creation of strategies aimed to excite and inspire, building brand belonging throughout every touchpoint within the customer experience. She has served as Vice Chair of Events and Programming on the Chicago Public Library Foundation's Junior Board, an Associate Board Member of City Year, and on the GenWex Host Committee for the Wexner Center for the Arts. A proud Chicagoan, Ms. Bender holds a B.S. from Xavier University of Louisiana and a M.B.A. from the Kellogg School of Management and brings expertise in marketing and brand strategy, governance, and entrepreneurship to the Board.

Mr. Ken Dickerson has a keen understanding of cultures, traditions, global business practices, and global market trends. Most recently, Mr. Dickerson is a franchisee of a Seva Beauty Spa and previously a franchisee for The UPS Store at Lake Meadows Shopping Center in Bronzeville. Mr. Dickerson has over 30 years of success as a Senior Sales Executive in increasing revenues, market share and earnings, building successful sales teams, achieving cost reductions, and improving client satisfaction in various industries. Mr. Dickerson has served on the board for The Bronzeville Little League and is currently the Chairman of The Trinity Senior Housing Board for Long Range Planning. Mr. Dickerson holds a B.S. from Chicago State University. Along with his expertise in marketing, he has experience in both board governance and business development within the Bronzeville community, where he has lived since 1999. Mr. Dickerson is the proposed Vice Chair of the Chicago Prep Founding Board.

Dr. Andrea Elzy has over 15 years of experience working in education with a focus on postsecondary student affairs and the development and design of programmatic support initiatives for students nationally. Dr. Elzy currently serves as the Director of Postsecondary Strategies at Thrive Chicago and most recently served as the Director of the Postsecondary Navigator program at the City Colleges of Chicago. Dr. Elzy serves on the Higher Education Advisory Board for the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP), is a Founding and Faculty member for the National and Junior National Honor Society's (NHS and NJHS) youth summit team, and is a writer and contributor for the nationally published Advise magazine. Dr. Elzy holds a B.A. from the University of California, Santa Cruz, a M.A. in Postsecondary Administration Student Affairs from the University of Southern California, and an Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration and Leadership from the University of Southern California. A member of the Academic Committee Dr. Elzy brings expertise in K-12, postsecondary, and policy, along with her research focus on entrepreneurship and governance experience.

Ms. Mary Griffin is the Lead Founder and Proposed Head of School for Chicago Prep, Ms. Griffin brings to the team years of experience and training in education as well as an unwavering commitment to the school's mission and vision. She is a committed, mission-driven educator with years of experience as a teacher and school leader on the South Side of Chicago. Ms. Griffin began her career as a 2012 Teach for America Corps Member at Chicago International Charter Schools (CICS) – Avalon Middle School. At Avalon,

Ms. Griffin progressed from the role of English Language Arts Teacher to Principal Fellow to Principal, a role she held for three years. During Ms. Griffin's years at CICS Avalon, students consistently outperformed the national average on NWEA MAP by more than 13 percentile points in both Reading and Math, and as many as 28 percentile points in Reading (2019). Students also consistently outperformed the CPS average on PARCC/IAR, by as many as 19 percentage points in ELA and 17 percentage points in Math (in 2018). Currently, Ms. Griffin is a Fellow with BES, a highly selective nonprofit that trains school leaders to found and sustain successful charter schools in high-need areas throughout the U.S. She holds a B.A. from Tufts University and a M.A. in Educational Leadership from Columbia University, where she completed the Summer Principals Academy at Teachers College. Ms. Griffin also completed the National Principal Academy Fellowship (NPAF) from the Relay Graduate School of Education.

Mr. Brandon Kimble is the Managing Director of ReGeneration Schools, where he coaches teachers and principals to accelerate student growth and achievement through data-driven instruction and effective implementation of engaging, rigorous college-preparatory curriculum. Prior to becoming Managing Director, Mr. Kimble led the turnaround of CICS Avalon as the Middle School Principal, bringing the school from a Level 3 to a Level 1+, with student achievement above the 90th percentile in both reading and math. These exceptional results earned Mr. Kimble a Principal Achievement Award from Mayor Rahm Emanuel. He holds a B.S. from The Ohio State University and an M.A. in Educational Administration from the University of Scranton. As the proposed Chair of the Academic Committee, Mr. Kimble brings extensive experience and highly successful track record in education to the Board, with specific expertise in curriculum and instruction, educational leadership and coaching, and transformational school culture.

Mr. Mitchell Newsome is a lifelong resident of the Bronzeville neighborhood who has seen and taken part in the large-scale transformation the community has experienced over the past 35 years. While in real estate, Mr. Newsome focused on the investment in and rehabilitation of various properties in the Bronzeville area. He then transitioned to the technology sector, with a specific focus on Data Analytics, Business Intelligence, Data Warehousing, and Software as a service (SaaS) solutions. Most recently he has joined Oracle's Construction & Engineering Business Unit, where his area of focus is State & Local Government and Education. Mr. Newsome volunteers with re:work Training, a Chicago non-profit. Mr. Newsome recently purchased a property in Bronzeville and plans to redevelop it into a mixed-use development. He holds a B.A. from the University of Michigan. Proposed Board Secretary and a member of the Academic Committee, Mr. Newsome brings expertise in real estate, data, and technology.

Mr. Jack Pritchett is a reformed professional services provider who helps entrepreneurs build and scale businesses. He started his career at UBS Global Asset Management in New York and Chicago. At the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, Mr. Pritchett pursued the operator path and start-ups offered the best opportunity to learn. Mr. Pritchett found success as the CFO of Prism Analytical Technologies and the CEO of MAX Analytical Technologies, two VC-backed start-ups in the environmental testing space. Currently, Mr. Pritchett heads finance, legal, and HR at Buildout, Inc., a commercial real estate technology company in Chicago. Mr. Pritchett holds a B.A. from Vanderbilt University and a M.B.A. from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. A member of the Finance Committee, he brings expertise in finance and entrepreneurship to the Board.

Ms. Rupa Ramadurai, formerly a high school English teacher and Teach For America Corps Member, practices education law and policy. In her five years practicing, she served as a school district attorney at a private law firm and as an Assistant General Counsel in the Office of the General Counsel at the Illinois State Board of Education, specializing in special education, discipline, supports of transgender, homeless and foster care students. Currently, Ms. Ramadurai serves as a Director of Policy and Advocacy at Leadership for Educational Equity, supporting former educators to pursue pathways in elected leadership, organizing, and/or policy and advocacy. She volunteers with high school students through a program called Minds Matter and has previously coached young people with the Obama Foundation. Ms.

Ramadurai holds a B.A. from the University of Michigan, a M.S. in Education and Social Change from the University of Miami, and a J.D. from the Loyola University Chicago School of Law. Born and raised in Chicago, Ms. Ramadurai brings a wealth of diverse expertise in law, education, youth advocacy, and governance to the board and is the proposed Board Chair.

Ms. Julia Strauch is a native Chicagoan and a strong supporter of public education. In 2004, she started her career as a first-grade teacher and Teach For America corps member. She then earned her JD and practiced law in Cook County from 2011-2014 before joining the Teach For America staff. Ms. Strauch is the as Director of Finance and Compliance for Teach For America in Chicago, Northwest Indiana regional team. As a volunteer, she serves on the Local School Council at Stone Academy in the Rogers Park neighborhood of Chicago. Ms. Strauch holds a B.A. from Lawrence University, a M.A. in Elementary Education from Loyola Marymount University, and a J.D. from Loyola University Chicago School of Law. Ms. Strauch, proposed Board Treasurer, brings to the Board valuable experience in nonprofit sector financial oversight along with her legal expertise and background in education.

The Chicago Prep design team has been meeting on a monthly basis since December 2019 and corresponding regularly between meetings. All members have provided their insights and feedback on various sections of the application, notably the key design elements, the annual budget, community engagement and support, governance, and operations. Additionally, all design team members have played and will continue to play a key role in community engagement, including participating in events and outreach activities and building community connections.

Advisors, Consultants, and Partners. In addition to the core of ten design team members, several individuals have served as informal advisors, consultants, or partners and will continue to provide guidance and support upon authorization. We are working with the training and support of BES, a highly respected national nonprofit that specializes in charter school incubation and leadership development. BES has specifically provided support in preparing for effective board governance, action planning for robust community engagement, drafting a sound and mission-aligned budget, and thought partnering on all elements of school design. If authorized, Chicago Prep will be supported by BES throughout the planning year and the first two years of operation. BES is not a formal partner and has no legal or financial interest in the school.

Beyond the robust and comprehensive consulting provided by BES, the design team has collaborated with a number of local leaders to revise and refine our vision, ensuring that Chicago Prep responds to the strengths, needs, and desires of the community. Pastors, nonprofit leaders, and business owners in Bronzeville have provided insight on what children and families in Bronzeville need in a new middle school, as well as forged meaningful connections with potential community partners and families with age-eligible children. These individuals include Pastor Michael Neal of Glorious Light Church and CEO of Timothy Community Corporation; Pastor Chris Harris of Bright Star Church of God, the Greater Bronzeville Community Action Council, and Bright Star Community Outreach; Nichole Carter at Bright Star Community Outreach; Harold Lucas of the Black Metropolis Convention and Tourism Council; and Senabella Gill, the Bronzeville Diva and Chief Administrative Operator at Urban Broadcast Media. Local education leaders, including experts in community nonprofits and charter school operations, have provided guidance on many elements of our application, including governance and operations, student supports, and school culture. These individuals include Greg Richmond, former President and CEO of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and Founder of Richmond Strategy Group; Allison Jack of the Illinois Network for Charter Schools; Nina Smith of LEAP (Language Empowers All People); and Shannon Donnelly,

Chief Operating Officer at Chicago Collegiate Charter School. Leaders such as these have provided invaluable feedback, both on what the community needs and on specific elements of our school design, and we plan to continue collaboration during our planning year and into operation.

2.10.2: LEADERSHIP

In Year 1, Chicago Prep’s leadership team includes the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School, the Manager of Operations, and the Student Supports Coordinator. The Head of School will report to the Board of Directors, and all other leadership team members will report to the Head of School. The Assistant Head of School will be the primary coach for all instructional staff, will assist the Head of School in leading professional development, and will collaborate with the Head of School and Student Supports Coordinator to manage student discipline. The Manager of Operations will lead the school’s operational systems, including but not limited to supplies, transportation, technology and data analysis systems, facility maintenance, and record-keeping. The Student Supports Coordinator will lead MTSS, English Learner programming, and special education programming, as well as professional development and compliance in these areas, and will collaborate with the Head of School and Assistant Head of School to manage student discipline. For a full description of the Year 1 leadership roles and responsibilities as well as the leadership structure in Years 2 through 5, see **Section 2.9.1**.

Our proposed Head of School, Ms. Mary Griffin, has seven years of experience as an educator on the South Side of Chicago. Ms. Griffin began her career as a 7th and 8th grade ELA teacher and 2012 Teach for America Corps Member at Chicago International Charter Schools (CICS) – Avalon. After spending three years as a teacher and team leader, Ms. Griffin went on to serve as CICS Avalon Middle School’s Principal Fellow for one year while earning her master’s degree in Educational Leadership at the Summer Principals Academy of Columbia University’s Teachers College. As Principal Fellow, Ms. Griffin was responsible for teaching coaching the school’s ELA teachers, and leading key cultural school-wide systems, including morning arrival, lunch, and the weekly community meeting. She also had the opportunity to learn under the leadership of experienced and effective Principal Brandon Kimble. In 2016, Ms. Griffin became CICS Avalon’s Middle School Principal, a role she held for the next three years. As Principal, she served as the instructional and cultural leader of the school. Ms. Griffin coached and managed eleven teachers in all content areas (math, reading, writing, science, social studies, special education, art, and physical education/health); led professional development for the entire team; and set and maintained the vision for student and staff culture. In her second year as Principal, Ms. Griffin completed the year-long National Principal Academy Fellowship (NPAF) through the Relay Graduate School of Education.

Ms. Griffin is now completing the BES Fellowship, a rigorous and highly selective program that leaders to found and sustain successful charter schools in high-need neighborhoods throughout the U.S. Through the Fellowship, she has studied over 40 successful charter schools across the country and completed a month-long leadership residency at The Collegiate School of Memphis. BES has also provided Ms. Griffin with training in key areas critical to school founding and executive leadership, including budgeting, operations, facilities, and board governance. Ms. Griffin’s experience and training have prepared her well to launch and lead Chicago Prep Middle School. Through three prestigious school leader training programs, she has gained expertise in what *Leverage Leadership* describes as the seven levers of highly effective school leaders: data-driven instruction, observation and feedback, instructional planning, professional development, student culture, staff culture, and managing school leadership teams.¹³³ As a principal, she gained three years of experience putting all seven levers into action to effectively lead a middle school of over 200 students and 18 staff members. Ms. Griffin’s extensive experience and training

¹³³ Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul. *Leverage Leadership: A Practical Guide to Building Exceptional Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012. 10.

in educational leadership have helped her develop a clear understanding of what it takes to provide students with an excellent college-prep and character-building education. She is a mission-driven leader who is committed to learning from the Bronzeville community and ensuring that Chicago Prep is highly responsive to community needs, strengths, and desires.

Ms. Griffin does not have experience in founding a new school or managing a multimillion-dollar budget. To address these gaps, Ms. Griffin will lean on her extensive professional network of educators, the collective wisdom of the community, and the expertise of the Board of Directors. Through her connections at Columbia, Relay, and BES, she has a network of hundreds of educators who have founded schools and managed large budgets to support her in the work. She will also receive Follow-on support from BES targeted to Ms. Griffin's areas of growth as a leader. She will receive coaching not only in financial management but also in other areas of growth identified in collaboration with her coaches. Ongoing community engagement will help support her gaps in school founding, as local community leaders can provide valuable insight on key factors like parent engagement, school culture, and extracurricular programming. Finally, the Board of Directors has expertise in areas critical to school founding, including finance, governance, development, education, and law. They will support Ms. Griffin through effective oversight, including monthly meetings and annual retreats, as well as access to external professional development and coaching. The other members of the leadership team have not yet been identified.

2.10.3: EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

Lead Founder and Proposed Head of School Mary Griffin has a track record of driving academic achievement and growth among students similar to those Chicago Prep will serve. Ms. Griffin worked as a teacher, Principal Fellow, and Principal at CICS Avalon, part of ReGeneration Schools. As of the 2018-19 school year, CICS Avalon's student population was 97.9% Black, 87.7% low-income, and 13.9% diverse learners, compared to Chicago Prep's projection of a student body that is 80% Black, 80% low-income, and 15% students with disabilities.

During the years Ms. Griffin served in various roles at CICS Avalon, the school consistently outperformed the national average on the NWEA MAP and outperformed the CPS average on the IAR (formerly known as the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career or PARCC), outperforming schools in the surrounding area by a large margin. Below are some highlights of academic growth and achievement that she has led.

As ELA Teacher :In 2015-16, Mary led her students to grow an average of **284%** from Fall-to-Spring on the Reading NWEA. **As Principal Fellow**: In 2015-16, Mary was the instructional coach of all ELA teachers at the school and led students to the **88th** percentile for attainment and the **97th** percentile for growth on the Reading NWEA. **As Principal**: On the 2017 PARCC, Avalon outperformed Illinois non-low-income students in 7th/8th grade Math and 7th grade ELA; In 2017-18, led students to the **77th** percentile for attainment and the **75th** percentile for growth on the Reading NWEA; In 2017-18, led Diverse Learners to achieve the **90th** percentile for growth on the Reading NWEA; In 2018, Ms. Griffin accepted an award from CICS on behalf of CICS Avalon for having the highest NWEA attainment of all ten elementary schools in the CICS network; In 2018-19, led 8th grade students to the **80th** percentile for attainment and the **73rd** percentile for growth on the Math NWEA, and 7th grade students to the **89th** percentile for growth on the Math NWEA; in 2018-19, led Diverse Learners to achieve the **78th** percentile for growth on the Reading NWEA; in 2018-19, led students to the **78th** percentile for attainment on the Reading NWEA, with 7th grade students in the **88th** percentile and 8th grade students in the **86th** percentile.

No other proposed instructional leaders of Chicago Prep are currently part of the Design Team; however, Founding Board Member Brandon Kimble has a proven track record of success driving academic achievement and growth among students similar to those Chicago Prep will serve. As Principal of CICS Avalon from 2012-2016, Brandon led the turnaround of the school, bringing it from a Level 3 rating to a Level 1+. Brandon earned a Principal Achievement Award from Mayor Rahm Emanuel for his exceptional results at CICS Avalon. Additionally, Brandon is now the Superintendent of ReGeneration Schools, which has demographics overall similar to CICS Avalon but with a higher percentage of Hispanic students; the CICS Basil campus is 16.8% Hispanic.

DOMAIN 3: FINANCIAL PLAN

SECTION 3.1: SCHOOL BUDGET

The financial forms are complete, include clear and reasonable assumptions, reflect sustainability and financial health, and are aligned with the school's mission and priorities.

- *A reasonable multi-year budget that reflects financial health, includes all schools and the central organization structure (if applicable), and maintains (at a minimum) a positive cumulative cash position*
- *A contingency budget that meets all criteria below, remains solvent, provides essential services, and aligns with the mission and goals of the school.*
- *Reasonable assumptions with sufficient detail and specificity to allow for an assessment of fiscal viability*
- *An explanation for how all spending aligns with the school's mission, vision, and philosophy*
- *Sound revenue projections and planned expenditures that reflect all aspects of the school model (including blended learning costs, if applicable)*
- *Capital funding for school facilities with clearly identified sources of funding*
- *Adequate reserves and contingency plans based on the minimum enrollment needed for solvency, especially during the start-up years of the new school(s)*
- *Reasonable fundraising plans that clearly identify the amount of additional revenue needed to maintain financial viability over the five-year contract*
- *Evidence of existing relationships with potential funders and current levels of interest that suggest the fundraising plan is viable*

3.1: SCHOOL BUDGET

Chicago Prep has developed a mission-aligned, balanced five-year budget using conservative assumptions for both revenue and expenses. We take seriously the responsibility of educating students and ensuring the appropriate use of public funds to do so. To develop this budget, we have consulted local charter schools to ensure accurate assumptions, as well as the experienced staff at BES. We have only included secured revenue and project a positive cash position in all years as well as a growing fund balance each year that would be leveraged for long-term facilities planning and/or to address any unforeseen circumstances. The fund balance in Year 5 is \$535,952.

Alignment to Mission, Vision, & Educational Philosophy

The budget, found in **Appendix 3.1**, ensures we are able to deliver the academic program set forth in our mission, vision, and educational philosophy. Examples of this alignment are:

- **All scholars can achieve academic excellence.** To ensure all scholars achieve at high levels, we allocate approximately \$1000 per pupil each year in Direct Student Costs. These costs include purchasing student materials and supplies, research-based curricula, digital subscriptions to software such as IXL,

assessments including Accelerated Reader, and a 2:1 Chromebook to student ratio. We also allocate resources to support students who are behind academically including Summer School and Saturday Academy. Our instructional staff are the primary drivers of student academic outcomes; therefore, about 60% of our expenses cover personnel costs.

- **Strong character leads to lifelong growth and success.** In Year 2 we hire a Dean of Students who will oversee all aspects of school culture. We account for student culture expenses to include incentives and celebrations each year, growing from \$1800 to \$3600 as enrollment increases.
- **Scholars thrive in a structured and supportive community.** We hire an Operations Team (Operations Associate Years 1-2, Director of Operations Years 3 and beyond, Office Manager Y2 and beyond) to support with all school operations to ensure our instructional staff can focus their efforts on instruction. We will hire a Social Worker in year in Year 3 to support the social-emotional needs of our students. We believe in the importance of strong family relationships and have allocated \$100 each month for our family events and will purchase one full uniform for up to one-third of our scholars.
- **Effective education motivates scholars and prepares them to excel in the real world.** To ensure our scholars receive an engaging, motivating education in entrepreneurship, we budget \$6000 in Year 1 for teachers to receive training and curriculum from the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), a program with years of demonstrated success serving similar student demographics. We also include financial literacy curriculum in our expenses for educational materials to provide scholars with a solid background in personal finance. To support our scholars beyond the walls of our school we hire a Dean of Community Engagement and High School Placement in Year 3. We also allocate \$13 per pupil each year for field trip expenses.

Revenue. In implementing a slow-growth model, our total revenue will increase in alignment with our enrollment increase. We will enroll 120 5th and 6th grade students in Year 1 with 60 students per grade, adding one grade of 60 students until we reach full enrollment in Year 3 with 240 students, grades 5-8. We will backfill all seats, and therefore have not anticipated student attrition in our assumptions. We have estimated our per-pupil revenue at a flat rate year over year. Based on locally available averages, we anticipate 15% of the student population will have identified special education needs (75% LRE 1, 20% LRE 2, 5% LRE 3), 3% of the student population will be identified as English Language Learners, and 80% will qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) in Year 1 & 2, 75% in Year 3 and beyond. We used all figures provided by CPS and the federal government for Title I and Title II funds and did not assume any rate increases during the first charter term to deliberately plan for the uncertain federal and state funding levels. We have also included Supplemental Aid at \$920 per qualifying student and a Facilities Supplement at \$1458 per pupil. In the incubation year, we anticipate receipt of \$325,000 in start-up monies categorized as a grant from the Walton Family Foundation (WFF) with dispersed \$250,000 in Y0 and the remaining \$75,000 Y1. Our board will set and reach annual fundraising goals, but for conservancy we have not included revenues or assumptions on unsecured funds.

Expenses. In alignment with our mission of providing a rigorous education to place students on a path to success in college and beyond, we prioritized Personnel costs. Our total Personnel costs range from 65%-73% of our expenditures, or \$7,600-\$8,200 per pupil. We have budgeted for a competitive teacher salary, with an average starting salary of \$54K. We have 12 staff members in Year 1 and will grow to reach 26 FTE by Year 3. We will contribute an additional 2% to the CTPF for each employee that participates and match up to 3% for a 403b for employees not participating in CTPF. We have accounted for Social Security and FICA at the current rates, 8.7% of salaries for employee health, dental, and life insurance, and 2.0% for state unemployment tax. We have accounted for Direct Student Costs to include Classroom Supplies, Educational Materials, Student Assessments, Instructional Equipment, Technology (including 2:1

Chromebook ratio at \$200 per Chromebook), Furniture, & Technology, averaging \$1000 per student each year. We have included costs for Uniforms, Student Culture, Field Trips, and Family Engagement in alignment with our mission and philosophy, ensuring that we build a strong school community. We also believe that excellent teachers will lead to results for our students and have allocated \$500 for the recruitment of each staff member and \$500 per staff member for annual Professional Development. We have allocated \$10K per year for our Student Information Systems and \$10K per copier lease. Our administrative costs ensure we can execute our core academic program and remain in strong fiscal standing. We have allocated \$40K per year to work with a Back-Office Provider and \$5K for an annual audit. We have accounted for \$8 per square foot for a move-in ready facility based on a quote for a lease and have included \$3 per square foot for Utilities and \$2.50 per square foot for maintenance. We have also accounted for Contracted Custodial Services at \$1.50 per square foot plus \$15 per student for custodial supplies. Our facilities costs begin at 14.8% of our total expenditures and as we grow, decrease to 11.7% of our total expenditures. To ensure we have flexibility to account for unforeseen expenses, we have set aside 2% of all revenue as a contingency in each year. We have included a summary of Revenues, Expenses, Operating Income, and fund balances in **Figure 3.1**.

Figure 3.1: Budget Summary

Fiscal Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Revenue	\$250,000	\$1,486,990	\$2,074,786	\$2,799,383	\$2,799,383	\$2,799,383
Total Expenses	\$179,054	\$1,394,876	\$2,012,006	\$2,668,420	\$2,690,747	\$2,728,870
Beginning Cash Balance	\$0	\$70,946	\$163,058	\$225,840	\$356,802	\$465,439
Budgeted Surplus/Deficit	\$70,946	\$92,113	\$62,780	\$130,963	\$108,637	\$70,513
Ending Cash Balance	\$70,946	\$163,059	\$225,840	\$356,802	\$465,439	\$535,952

Facilities. We have estimated facility costs based on estimates for a lease at 1012 E 47th Street. This includes \$8 per square foot in base rent, \$3 per square foot in Utilities, \$2.50 per square foot for Maintenance and Repairs, and \$1.50 per square foot in custodial services plus \$15 per pupil for custodial supplies. In Year 1, we would occupy 13,525 square feet of the building (first floor) and in Years 2 and beyond the 20,801 square feet (first and second floors). The landlord would be responsible for capital repairs of the facility. Our total facilities costs range from 14.7% of expenditures in Year 1 to 11.7% of expenditures in Year 5. We anticipate minimal costs for renovations as this site is a school building.

Fundraising. Over the five-year charter term we are able to operate on our public dollars beginning in Year 2 of operation. We have secured \$325,000 in start-up funding upon authorization through the Walton Family Foundation (WFF) dispersed by BES and categorized as a grant. This grant will cover costs incurred during the incubation year and Year 1 necessary for start-up to include the salaries and benefits of staff during Y0, staff and student recruitment in Y0, and furniture and technology purchases. To plan conservatively, we did not include any fundraising monies in the budget outside of this start-up grant. Upon authorization, we will create a robust fundraising plan that would be used for expenses that are not core to our program and could include moving to a 1:1 Chromebook ratio, additional field trips for students, and support programming for our Alumni once they enter high school. The board minimally commits to raising \$30,000 annually, which includes a personal meaningful contribution from each board member. In addition, we will seek fundraising and grant opportunities from organizations such as The Chicago Public Education Fund, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Chicago, and A Better Chicago.

Contingency Budget - 75% Enrollment

The Contingency Budget, attached in **Appendix 3.1**, assumes 75% enrollment and was prepared to ensure mission alignment and demonstrates our commitment to our core academic program. We maintain the same number of classes with a smaller class size for each grade, assuming 45 students per grade, split between two classrooms, operating with slightly reduced staffing. We have included secured revenues and project a positive cash position in all years as well as a growing fund balance each year. The estimated fund balance in Year 5 is \$430,037. To maintain a positive cash balance, we reduced the following costs.

Direct Student Costs. Our overall Direct Student Costs remain at approximately \$1000 per student in the Contingency Budget. We reduced Direct Student Costs in non-essential areas, ensuring we can still implement our full academic program. We have reduced costs in Technology by moving to a 3:1 Chromebook ratio and not including IXL as a software platform. We have reduced \$5 per pupil for Student Culture expenses and reduced \$500 in Physical Education Materials. We have also removed costs for Extracurricular Programming as it is non-essential. We have tripled our Student Recruitment costs from \$25 to \$75 per pupil to continue in our recruitment efforts. **Personnel & Employee Related Expenses.** Our largest reduction in expenditures is through a reduction in staffing. With that reduction, our overall Personnel costs still account for between 58-68% of our expenditures. For School Leadership we reduced the Head of School salary by 25% in Y1-5, delay hiring the Assistant Head of School until Y2 and the Dean of Students until Y3. We eliminate the roles of Social Worker and Dean of Community Engagement and High School Placement. We also delay the promotion of an Operations Associate to a Manager of Operations until Y3, and no longer promote that position to the Director level.¹³⁴ We delay adding the Officer Manager role until Y3. For instructional staff, we reduce the Students Supports Coordinator and Special Education Teacher to .5 each in Y1, moving to 1 FTE each in Y2, and will have 5 teachers and a teaching Fellow in Y1. In Y2 we will have 8 Teachers and 1 Teaching Fellow. In Y3 and beyond, we will have 10 Teachers and one Electives Teacher. We maintain \$500 per new role for staff recruitment but will not hire Teach For America Corps Members and reduce Professional Development to \$250 per staff member. **Office Administration.** We reduce the Office Supplies from \$250 per employee to \$200 per employee. **Occupancy Costs.** In renegotiating our lease, we would delay taking on the second floor to Y3 and would maintain 13,525 square feet in Y1-Y2 and 20,801 square feet in Y3 and beyond.

SECTION 3.2: FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND MONITORING

The proposed financial controls are sufficient to ensure proper use of public funds.

- *Comprehensive fiscal management, monitoring, and oversight policies and controls that clarify who has authority of the school's fiscal affairs, internal controls, accounting practices, purchasing, and payroll policies*
- *A function for receiving revenue, paying expenses, disbursing payroll, maintaining financial records, and generating reports*
- *Financial reporting structures that make cash flow clear, provide budget-versus-actual numbers, and plan for annual external audit*
- *A description of how the Board will receive updates and monitor the school's financial position, including a list of all financial reports generated, the frequency of generation, and responsible party*
- *A clearly identified staff member responsible for directly managing and overseeing the school's budget*
- *A clear and adequate catalog of financial reports generated and to be generated, indicating frequency and responsible party*

¹³⁴ In our 100% budget, as outlined in our Organizational Chart attached in Appendix 2.9, our Manager of Operations (Years 1 and 2) becomes a Director of Operations in Year 3. In Year 0, this role is Operations Associate.

Chicago Prep takes very seriously its responsibility to manage public funds. The Board of Directors provides financial oversight, and the school management team (Head of School and Director of Operations) works with a back-office provider (see Budget line 92), to manage the day-to-day finances of the school. The back-office service provider, hired by the Board, will ensure that records are legally compliant and maintained in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Standards (GAAP). In compliance with Illinois Charter School Law, Chicago Prep also contracts with an independent, external contractor each year to conduct an audit of the school, also accounted for in budget line 92. Below is a list of the school's major financial controls. Chicago Prep's Draft Financial Policies and Procedures Manual and list of financial reports generated are attached in **Appendix 3.2**.¹³⁵

Financial Planning: Annual Budget. The Head of School takes the lead on drafting the annual budget each year, with support and input from the Manager of Operations and the back-office provider. The Head of School and back-office provider presents the draft budget to the Board's Finance Committee in January of each year as indicated on the Board Calendar draft attached in **Appendix 4.4**. The Finance Committee reviews the draft carefully and provides detailed feedback to the Head of School/back-office provider; the budget then goes through multiple iterations of revisions and feedback before being presented to the full Board of Directors in March of each year. The iterative process of feedback and revisions then starts again. During this process, both the Finance Committee and the full Board are reviewing to ensure that the budget is mission-aligned, has clear and reasonable assumptions, and is balanced and builds a cash reserve. The Board of Directors approves the annual budget in May; the Head of School may continue to make minor edits to the annual budget throughout the year as needed.

Financial Statements: Statement of Activity/Balance Sheet and Cash Flow. Each month, the back-office service provider will prepare a statement of activity, balance sheet, and cash flow projections for the Head of School and Board of Directors. The statements include budget-to-actuals, with variances of \$5000 or 5% of the budgeted monthly amount will be explained in the notes section. The Head of School thoroughly researches any significant differences to identify them as temporary or permanent. Each month the Head of School is responsible for sending to the Finance Committee (1) the budget vs. actual report for the operating budget; (2) the budget vs. actual report for the capital budget; (3) the balance sheet; and (4) the enrollment budget vs. actual report per grade for general education and special education students. The Finance Committee reviews and presents the statements to the full Board of Directors.

Audit Compliance. Each year, the Board will select an independent contractor to conduct an audit of the school to ensure Chicago Prep meets professional accounting standards. The Board will carefully select the auditor, considering factors such as price quotes, services provided, timeline for completion, and whether the auditor is available for pre- and post-audit consultation. The Head of School and Manager of Operations will provide all forms and documentation required for the audit, including but not limited to monthly financial statements, vendor invoices and payments, and reconciled bank statements. In compliance with Illinois state law, a copy of the audit and Form 990 will be filed with the state by December 1 annually.

Bank Account Management: Issuing and Signing Checks. The Board of Directors will establish check signing procedures to be followed by Chicago Prep staff. The Head of School signs all checks less than \$10,000. Checks over \$10,000 require signature from both the Head of School and the Board Treasurer or, if the Treasurer is not available, the Board Chair. The Manger of Operations will prepare checks for signature by the Head of School but will not have check signing authority or withdrawal authority.

¹³⁵ Our Financial Controls and Monitoring are modeled after Great Lakes Academy.

Bank Account Management: Opening/Closing Accounts. Board approval is required for the opening of all new bank accounts. The Board will discuss the reason for opening a new account, the purpose of the account, and signatories and signatories' authority. The vote to approve and all associated determinations must be recorded in the Board minutes. Should the school wish to close a bank account, Board approval is also required and will be documented in Board minutes.

Bank Account Reconciliation. The Head of School shall reconcile all bank accounts monthly within sixty (60) days of receipt of bank statements. The Head of School will open all bank statements, review cancelled checks and monthly bank statement activity, and compare the cash receipts log to the deposits listed on the bank statement. The Board Treasurer will review.

Contracts. Chicago Prep may contract with vendors (for example, for professional services or rentals) in alignment with the school's mission, goals, and annual plans. All contractual agreements shall be in writing, signed and dated by the Head of School. All vendor contracts in excess of \$20,000 require quotes from at least three vendors and must be approved by the Board of Directors.

Purchasing Controls. Chicago Prep uses sound business practices when procuring all goods and services, including obtaining price quotes from at least three vendors for contracts greater than \$20,000. Contracts will be awarded to the responsible vendor offering the supply or service for the lowest price. The Manager of Operations and/or Head of School solicits the quotes and the Board provides final approval. The contract may be awarded to a vendor other than the lowest bidder in circumstances where the higher bid demonstrates the best value contracting procedures to the school. In such instances, the Head of School prepares a justification statement with a brief explanation of the factors leading to such a decision, to be approved by the Board. For smaller purchases, all staff members complete a Purchase Request Form to be reviewed and approved by the Director of Operations, ensuring adherence to the school's procurement. The form is then signed by the Head of School, who grants final approval for all purchases approved in the budget for up to \$10,000. Purchases over \$10,000 in the fiscal year budget are approved by the Head of School and the Board Treasurer.

DOMAIN 4: OPERATIONAL PLAN

SECTION 4.1: OPERATIONS

The school start up and operations plans will ensure that the school provides a safe and secure environment for students starting on day one.

- *A plan and dedicated staff who will be able to effectively perform the wide range of operational duties required to run a school, including but not limited to transportation, food service, building operation, purchasing processes, student records, school safety*
- *Clear roles for leadership, faculty, and staff to participate in operational decision-making processes, including the development of personnel policy*
- *A feasible, detailed start-up plan with key milestones, tasks, owners, and completion dates covering the array of activities required to successfully open a new school on time and ready to serve students on day one*
- *A clear explanation of the roles and responsibilities of any staff in the incubation year and a plan to compensate them during this time*

4.1.1: OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Chicago Prep understands that strong operations are essential for our school to fulfill its mission and vision. School operations must be driven by clear, detailed systems designed to maximize teaching and learning. Therefore, we hire full-time administrators to focus 100% on school operations: the Manager of Operations¹³⁶ and the Office Manager, added in Year 2. The Manager of Operations is primarily responsible for the implementation of operational systems at Chicago Prep, including transportation, asset inventory, and student records. S/he also manages our food services, building operation, and purchasing processes (as described in our Financial Policies in **Appendix 3.2**), teacher and student supplies, and technology distribution and use. Hired in Year 2, the Office Manager assists and reports directly to the Manager of Operations by assuming some operational administrative duties, such as greeting families and visitors to the school, answering phone calls, managing petty cash, and distributing supplies. The Office Manager role allows the Manager of Operations to focus on executing the strategic and big-picture elements of operations. Detailed job descriptions for the Operations Associate and Office Manager are attached in **Appendix 2.9**. In Years 1 and 2, the Manager of Operations will take the lead on operational decision-making but will always confer with the Head of School before making strategic decisions. In Years 3 and beyond, the Manager of Operations becomes the Director of Operations, and the Head of School steps into more of an oversight role, allowing the Director of Operations to fully own the operational systems at Chicago Prep. In addition to the Head of School and the school operational team, the Board of Directors plays a key role in the organizational health of Chicago Prep through operational oversight. Specifically, the Board drafts, reviews, and approves policies related to finance and personnel.

4.1.2: START-UP PLAN

Chicago Prep has created a comprehensive start-up plan to guide our work post-authorization and ensure that we are ready to serve scholars on day one. During the planning year, the Board of Directors, Head of School, and Operations Associate are primarily responsible for all tasks related to start-up. Upon authorization, the Board of Directors plans to immediately hire the proposed Head of School, Mary Griffin. Because strong operational systems are key for a strong school launch, the Operations Associate is the first hire we make after the Head of School. Both the Head of School and Operations Associate will be employed full-time and will be compensated with start-up funds through the Walton Family Foundation dispersed by BES, as shown in line 16 of the budget, **Appendix 3.1**.

Our start-up plan assumes authorization in December and is divided into the following categories: Student Recruitment and Enrollment, Facility, Governance, Financial Management, School Operations, Academics, School Culture, Personnel, Family Engagement, Community Partnerships, Purchasing, and Fundraising. Each category includes key milestones, tasks, owners, start dates, and deadlines. Our complete start-up plan is attached in **Appendix 4.1**. In most categories, the Head of School takes the lead on setting the vision, creating detailed action plans, and executing with the support of other stakeholders (the Board, the Operations Associate, families, community members, and volunteers). During the incubation year, the Head of School will train the Operations Associate to understand the academic, cultural, and operational vision of Chicago Prep and delegate to him/her operational tasks with clear instructions and expectations. This six-month period will help the Operations Associate and Head of School develop a strong working relationship and prepare strong operational systems in service of Chicago Prep's mission and vision.

The Founding Board, which transitions to a Governing Board upon authorization, will also play a key role in the planning year. The Board of Directors will prepare to govern Chicago Prep effectively by reviewing and approving draft policies (board, fiscal, personnel, and student/family), electing Board Officers (Board

¹³⁶ As outlined in our Organizational Chart attached in Appendix 2.9, our Manager of Operations (Years 1 and 2) becomes a Director of Operations in Year 3. In Year 0, this role is Operations Associate.

Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary), and formally establishing and mobilizing Board Committees (Academic, Finance, Governance, and Development). The Board will also continue to support community engagement efforts: forging community partnerships, building awareness of and support for the school, and supporting student recruitment and enrollment efforts. The Board will also advise the Head of School in areas aligned to their expertise, both as individuals and as a collective Governing Board.

Throughout the planning year, our proposed Head of School will also continue to receive coaching and support from BES through Follow-On Support (see Budget Assumptions, line 77). Specifically, BES will assign an experienced charter school leader to provide support with planning related to school start-up, student recruitment, curriculum and assessment, staff and student orientation, and access to a wide network of BES school leaders. BES is included in the start-up plan in an advisory/support role.

SECTION 4.2: STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT

Plans for student recruitment and enrollment will provide all students an equal chance at admission and ensure that the school serves a diverse student population.

- *Realistic student enrollment targets that align with other relevant parts of the proposal, including the five-year budget, staffing plans, facility plans, etc.*
- *A detailed student recruitment plan that is realistic, aligned with the school mission, and likely to position the school to meet its enrollment targets in each year of five-year contract*
- *Strategies to recruit and retain the targeted student population, as well as students with disabilities, students with Individualized Education Plans, students who are English Learners, and students in at-risk situations, including, but not limited to, students who are homeless*
- *Clear application, enrollment, and registration policies and forms that ensure the school is accessible to all students and families and is in compliance with the Illinois Charter Schools Law*
- *A plan to administer the lottery in a way that provides each student an equal chance at admission and does not create a barrier to application, enrollment, or registration*
- *Clear policies to maintain a waitlist and overseeing student withdrawal, reenrollment, and transfers*

4.2.1: STUDENT ENROLLMENT

We plan to enroll 60 scholars per grade each year, beginning with 60 5th graders and 60 6th graders in 2021-22 and adding a cohort each year for the next two years. At full capacity, we will have 240 scholars, 60 per grade level. We have prioritized a small school community in order to provide the structure and support central to our mission. Additionally, because we have a 5th grade start, we plan to enroll new scholars through 8th grade if necessary, to backfill seats. This practice aligns with our commitment to being a community school for Bronzeville; we do not want to turn away older scholars who have had to transfer for any number of reasons and whose families are in search of a high-quality educational option. We will maintain a waitlist through ongoing community outreach, described in more detail in **Section 4.2.2**.

Figure 4.1: Student Enrollment

Grade	Number of Students					At Capacity
	Year 1 2021	Year 2 2022	Year 3 2023	Year 4 2024	Year 5 2025	
K						
1						
2						
3						
4						
5	60	60	60	60	60	60

6	60	60	60	60	60	60
7		60	60	60	60	60
8			60	60	60	60
9						
10						
11						
12						
Total	120	180	240	240	240	240

4.2.2: STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Chicago Prep is committed to being a Bronzeville community school; therefore, our recruitment plan focuses 80% of efforts and resources within Bronzeville. The remaining 20% of our recruitment efforts will focus on the residential communities surrounding Bronzeville that share the same zip codes: South Loop, Pilsen, Chinatown, Bridgeport, Oakland, Kenwood, Hyde Park, and Washington Park. This strategy aligns with the demonstrated need for a high-quality, open-enrollment school for students who live in Bronzeville region, as described in **Section 1.1**. Additionally, our expanded outreach will help us to meet our enrollment targets in the context of declining student enrollment district-wide and will allow us to increase the diversity of our student population.¹³⁷ Our recruitment strategy is designed to recruit the targeted population, including:

- 80% low-income students, 15% students with disabilities, 3% ELs, and 6% homeless students
- 80% Black, 7% Hispanic, 5% Asian, 5% White, and 3% other

These targets closely mirror the demographics of Bronzeville schools with slightly more racial diversity, a reflection of plans to recruit from South Loop, Pilsen, Chinatown, and Bridgeport. Throughout our recruitment efforts, we make clear to families and residents that Chicago Prep welcomes all students, including students with disabilities and English Learners. We include this information on fliers and other marketing materials, and we share it with families and residents we speak to as part of our ongoing outreach efforts, described in more detail below. We are also committed to protecting the rights of homeless students, or Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS), and will comply with the CPS policy regarding STLS. We know that STLS in particular need access to a rigorous education in a structured and supportive community, and we commit to ensuring that families in temporary living situations know about Chicago Prep and are encouraged to apply.

Recruitment Plan. Chicago Prep is aware of the significant enrollment challenges currently facing CPS, and we are proactively strategizing to overcome these challenges and ensure that we meet our annual enrollment targets, beginning with 120 students for the 2021-22 school year. Members of the design team have been engaging in the Bronzeville community since September 2019. Efforts have included meetings with local residents and leaders, attending community events and meetings, tabling at local events and hosting information sessions/community focus groups, and posting information about Chicago Prep on social media. Three members of the design team have close ties to Bronzeville and are committed to leveraging local connections to help ensure enrollment. More detail about community engagement to this point is available in **Section 1.3**. Below are the efforts we have taken and/or will take in the months ahead in order to build family awareness of Chicago Prep.

- **Tabling events:** We have tabled at local events and festivals, as well as Bronzeville’s Walmart Neighborhood Market, and we will continue to table at events and businesses throughout the

¹³⁷ Wells, Amy Stuart, Lauren Fox and Diana Cordova-Cobo. “How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students.” The Century Foundation, February 9, 2016. <https://tcf.org/content/report/how-racially-diverse-schools-and-classrooms-can-benefit-all-students/?session=1>.

application process and planning year. We have already scheduled a booth at the Bronzeville Art Market outside Mariano's and the Soulful Chicago Book Fair. Intent-to-enroll forms (prior to authorization) or enrollment forms (post-authorization) will be available at all events.

- **Print Advertisements:** We will advertise the opportunity to enroll at Chicago Prep in local newspapers and magazines, including *South Side Weekly* and *Bronzeville Life*.
- **Social media:** Chicago Prep has an active Facebook page (247 followers as of 5/1/2020), Instagram account (103 followers as of 5/1/2020), and website. We will post on social media a minimum of twice weekly encouraging families to access intent-to-enroll or enrollment forms on our website.
- **Radio Advertisements:** We will advertise Chicago Prep on local radio stations in both English and Spanish encouraging families to apply and providing information about how to do so.
- **Community Connections:** We rely on the connections we have made through community engagement, including elected officials, pastors, business owners, and community leaders to spread the word to families.
- **Community Meetings:** We will continue to attend community meetings, including the GAP Community Organization, the Greater Bronzeville Community Action Council, and Aldermen Ward Nights/Town Halls, and request to present information about Chicago Prep and provide enrollment forms to interested families.
- **Canvassing:** The design team, along with recruited volunteers, will go door-to-door in all recruitment neighborhoods, prioritizing Bronzeville, to inform families about Chicago Prep and share marketing materials/enrollment forms. We leave door hangers if families are unavailable.
- **Visiting local organizations:** We visit churches, businesses, and community organizations within the recruitment area to distribute fliers and, with permission of owners/leaders, speak with residents and families.
- **Newsletter:** At least once every three months we send a newsletter updating subscribers on Chicago Prep and linking our enrollment forms. Our newsletter currently goes out to 174 subscribers and we will continue to add subscribers through intentional community engagement.
- **Chicago Prep Events:** We will host events a minimum of twice per month. Events include, but are not limited to, information sessions at local libraries, ice cream socials for enrolled or interested families, and enrollment fairs in partnership with local organizations or businesses.
- **Post-Enrollment Communication:** We recognize the importance of building meaningful relationships with enrolled families through consistent communication. Families who submit intent-to-enroll forms, applications, and registration forms (depending on where we are in the enrollment timeline; more information below) will receive communication from Chicago Prep once per week. From the beginning, we want families to receive the message that they are valued members of the Chicago Prep community. These touchpoints are essential for keeping families engaged and excited and ensuring enrollment.

In addition to the above recruitment strategies, we have planned additional efforts to recruit students from low-income families, STLS, students with disabilities, and ELs. Our strategies to recruit students from our target populations include:

Students from Low-Income Families and Students in Temporary Living Situations. Direct mailing to high-poverty Census tracts, including tract 3504 which includes Bronzeville's Dearborn Homes Public Housing.; Establish relationships with the Chicago Housing Authority, as well as managers at mixed-income and low-income apartment complexes, to help us conduct outreach to residents, including door-to-door canvassing and hosting events; Partnerships with local community organizations to host youth- and family-facing events such as back-to-school supply drives and food drives; Frequent engagement at public

libraries, homeless shelters, and soup kitchens to post fliers and connect with families. We proactively inform families of our intent to serve students from low-income families and STLS at Chicago Prep.

Students with Disabilities. Create marketing materials specifically highlighting Chicago Prep’s special education plan and commitment to individualized and robust student supports; Partner with community organizations that advocate for students with special needs, to share our school model and spread the word; Collaborate with Chicago Public Schools’ Diverse Learner Parent Advisory Council to spread the word about the school and seek parent feedback.

English Learners. Create marketing materials, translated in Spanish (high-frequency language in Pilsen target recruitment area) and Mandarin (high-frequency language in Chinatown target recruitment area), communicating our desire to welcome English learners and describing how our school model will support all students; Establish relationships with local organizations providing English language classes to adults.

In light of the constantly evolving COVID-19 situation as of April 2020, we plan to enact the following alternative/additional recruitment strategies should the stay-at-home order extend through the summer 2020 or beyond:

- **Virtual Information Sessions:** We will livestream, via Facebook and Instagram, information sessions that include the same messaging and materials we would use during an in-person information session. These sessions will be advertised on our social media accounts and website and included in our quarterly newsletters and marketing materials.
- **Zoom Meetings for Prospective Families:** We will host private (invitation-only and password-protected) Zoom meetings for families with age-eligible children who are interested in learning more about Chicago Prep.
- **Student-Friendly Virtual Sessions:** Lead Founder Mary Griffin will host online events for students. Examples include reading aloud from children’s/young adult novels or sharing an activity or project for students to complete at home.

Our proposed Head of School is primarily responsible for leading recruitment efforts during the planning year. She will be supported by the Board of Directors and the Operations Associate, once hired. The Head of School also takes the lead on student recruitment in Years 1 and 2, with support and input from the Operations Associate/Manager of Operations. In Year 3 and beyond, the Dean of Community Engagement and High School Placement takes the lead on recruitment efforts, with oversight from the Head of School. Throughout start-up and operation, the Board of Directors oversees student recruitment efforts by carefully tracking enrollment data through dashboards.

Student Retention. The Chicago Prep team believes that our school model is the right fit for the Bronzeville community, with key design elements designed specifically to respond to community strengths, needs, and interests. We believe that our program will allow all students, including students with disabilities, ELs, and STLS, to succeed academically. As part of our efforts to retain at least 85% of our students each year, we seek frequent family and community stakeholder feedback through surveys as well as monthly events. Additionally, we disaggregate data, including NWEA MAP, Interim Assessments, and IAR, by student subgroups to identify and address any opportunity gaps.

Enrollment and Registration Policies. Chicago Prep will follow application, enrollment, and registration policies in compliance with the Illinois Charter Schools Law and ensure the school is accessible to all students and families. Our enrollment policy does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, creed, disability, intellectual ability, home language, nation of origin, ancestry, religion, housing status, need for special education services, or any other unlawful basis. Any student who lives within the

geographic boundaries of the area served by the local school board may enroll at Chicago Prep. Enrollment forms will be available on our website at and school, once our facility is ready, and the team will bring enrollment forms with them at all community engagement events, including canvassing, tabling, and visits to local libraries and shelters, to minimize barriers to enrollment. To avoid discrimination and ensure no parents are discouraged from applying, enrollment/application forms will only ask for the student and family's name and contact information, age and grade level, and whether the student has sibling(s) enrolled at Chicago Prep or was enrolled at Chicago Prep the previous year to determine enrollment priority. Preference for enrollment will *only* be given to siblings of students who attend Chicago Prep and to students who were enrolled at Chicago Prep the previous year.

If there are more applicants than seats available, then we will conduct a lottery that provides each student an equal chance at admission. Our lottery will be recorded with CPS officials present or shared with CPS officials to watch live. After we reach our capacity for enrollment, we will continue drawing names to create a waitlist until all names have been called. We aim to maintain a waitlist that is 50% of our annual 5th grade enrollment and at least 20% for all other grades; we share this waitlist quarterly with CPS as required by Illinois Charter School Law. Families who are enrolled but withdraw their application may be re-enrolled; the student(s) will either be added to the waitlist or immediately offered a seat if the waitlist is empty. When a student withdraws or transfers, we contact the first family on our waitlist within five business days. In the event that we do not have a waitlist or the students on the waitlist do not wish to enroll, then the leadership team immediately ramps up recruitment strategies, including but not limited to canvassing, tabling, speaking with families at local shopping centers, and advertising on social media.

After applicants have been offered a seat, we will administer registration forms and request information from families to ensure we are prepared to meet all students' needs. Specifically, we ask if the student has a known disability, IEP, or 504 and administer a home language survey to determine if we will need to assess the student's English language proficiency. We also request transportation surveys, emergency contact information, all required medical records including immunization status, and records from previous schools including grades and test scores. However, none of this information will serve as a barrier to enrollment.

Enrollment and Registration Timeline. The enrollment process and timeline described below will be posted on our website upon authorization. Additionally, through our community outreach efforts, the Chicago Prep team will share materials with families that include the timeline below.

- **Application Window:** Beginning on January 1 during our planning year (or within five business days of authorization), and October 1 each year thereafter, families can apply for admission at Chicago Prep for the following school year. The application window will be open until April 1 at 5:00pm, or the first business day after if April 1 is a Saturday or Sunday. Applications received after April 1 will be placed at the end of our waitlist after the lottery is conducted.
- **Lottery:** If there are more applicants than seats available for any grade level, we will hold the lottery on April 5 or the first business day after if April 5 is a Saturday or Sunday.
- **Family Notification:** Families of all students, both accepted and waitlisted, will be notified of their status via phone, email, and mail. Emails and paper letters will go out within two business days, and families will receive phone calls within five business days.
- **Waitlist:** Families have until April 23 at 5:00pm, or the first business day after if April 23 is a Saturday or Sunday, to provide to the school, in hand, a complete registration form and acceptance of enrollment. If the registration form is not received by 5:00pm within two weeks, we will remove the student and begin offering spots to families on our waitlist. Students who are

removed may reapply at any time and will be added to the end of the waitlist. Families on the waitlist have five business days from the time of notification to provide to the school their completed registration form.

SECTION 4.3: OPERATIONAL COMPLIANCE

The proposal presents realistic plans to comply with legal requirements.

- *The transportation plan specifies how the school will identify the transportation needs of its student body, what supports and services the school will dedicate to meet student transportation needs, and which staff member(s) will be responsible for overseeing transportation services and supports. If transportation services and supports require funding, costs are included in the five-year budget.*
- *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance plan clearly articulates how the proposed school will ensure compliance with requirements under the ADA.*
- *The proposal outlines the technology, equipment, processes, and/or personnel it will use to ensure the ongoing safety and security of students and staff.*
- *The application specifies the types of insurance the school will secure and at what levels of coverage.*

4.3.1: TRANSPORTATION

Chicago Prep is committed to meeting the transportation needs of all scholars, including scholars with disabilities and scholars who are in temporary living situations (STLS). Aligned to our recruitment plan to serve mostly scholars who live in the Bronzeville community, we anticipate that the majority of our scholars will walk to school, be dropped off by their parents and guardians, or take public transportation. We know that daily attendance and on-time arrivals are critical for scholar growth and achievement, and we will collaborate with parents and the community to eliminate any barriers to transportation.

As part of our registration packet, attached in **Appendix 4.2**, Chicago Prep includes a transportation survey asking families how they plan for their child to get to and from school each day. The survey asks parents if they are interested in carpooling with other Chicago Prep families, and it includes a place to indicate if scholars have transportation services as part of their IEP. The registration packet also includes a survey for parents to indicate if they are interested in volunteer opportunities with the school, such as the drop-off volunteer roles described below. This information, along with the attached residence questionnaire (designed to identify STLS), will help the school develop an effective plan to meet the needs of all scholars. Below are the methods we will use to ensure that all scholars have adequate daily transportation:

- Ensuring that all families know about and have access to Student Ventra Cards, which allow school-aged students to pay a reduced fare of \$0.75 per ride, twice a day.
- Working with our Parent Advisory Committee to coordinate family carpools.
- Working with our Parent Advisory Committee to recruit parent volunteers to station at key points on the path to school. The purpose is to help ensure scholar safety by providing supervision and a positive touchpoint even before arrival on campus.
- Working with local bus and van services, such as A Family Affair, to offer families safe and reliable transportation at a low cost.

The Manager of Operations is responsible for overseeing transportation services and supports, with special attention to STLS and students qualifying for transportation services through their IEP or 504. The Director of Operations will provide subsidized bus cards to STLS and their parents/guardians in compliance with CPS Policy. The Manager of Operations will notify the Student Supports Coordinator of any scholars who qualify for transportation services as part of their IEP or 504, and together they will ensure that all transportation needs are provided. The Student Support Coordinator will work closely with the Office of

Diverse Learner Supports and Services (ODLSS) as outlined in the ODLSS Transportation Guidelines regarding scholars with transportation services on their IEP.

4.3.2: ADA COMPLIANCE

Chicago Prep is committed to ensuring the full inclusion of scholars, families, and staff members with disabilities. We will be in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Chicago Public Schools ADA Act Policy. Chicago Prep will:

- Provide accommodations to applicants and employees with disabilities: Chicago Prep will develop the policies and procedures to ensure that qualified applicants can participate fully in the hiring process and that employees can perform all essential job duties. The Head of School will work with the Board of Directors, who will review and approve these policies.
- Ensure that facilities are in full compliance with ADA: Chicago Prep will work with local real estate advisor(s) and architect(s) to remove any barriers in our facility and ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities. The Head of School, overseen and supported by the Board, is responsible for working with the necessary experts to ensure ADA-compliant facilities.
- Ensure reasonable modifications to activities so that individuals with disabilities have full access: Students with disabilities will have the same access to all academic and extracurricular programs as their non-disabled peers, including field trips and physical education classes. The Student Supports Coordinator takes the lead on this and collaborates with the Head of School and Operations Associate to ensure compliance.
- Provide auxiliary aids and services necessary for effective communication and program access for individuals with vision, hearing, and speech disabilities. The Student Supports Coordinator takes the lead on this, supported by the Head of School and the Manager of Operations.
- Follow CPS policy and the ADA manual on accommodation request and complaint procedures.
- Ensure that meetings and events are accessible to individuals with disabilities, including through the provision of auxiliary aids and services as necessary.

4.3.3: SAFETY PLAN

At Chicago Prep, protecting the safety of our scholars and staff is one of our highest priorities. As such, we will implement the following safety plans and protocols.

- **Security Technology:** Chicago Prep will contract with Information Technology (IT) consultants, as indicated in the attached budget line item 40, to ensure that all data electronically stored is safe and secure, and to block inappropriate sites, such as social media and pornography, on student Chromebooks. We will also ensure a robust technology policy for both students and faculty that includes expectations for use of school technology that will be included in both the Employee Manual and Student Handbook each year and developed during the Planning Year.
- **Secure Facilities:** During the Planning Year, as indicated in the Start-Up Plan attached in **Appendix 4.1**, Chicago Prep will undergo a fire inspection and building inspection for the facility and develop an emergency drill policy, schedule, and route. Chicago Prep will install a security system as well as surveillance cameras and will keep external doors locked at all times. All visitors to the school, including families, will be buzzed in by staff and will sign in and out in the front office or at the main entrance. In addition, we will purchase cabinets and drawers with locks to ensure the safety of student records, medical supplies, and other confidential or sensitive items.
- **Safety and Health:** Chicago Prep will create health and safety policies for both students and staff that will be included in our Employee Manual and our Student Handbook and distributed annually. We will collect and secure student health records and immunization charts upon enrollment and any students who need to take medication at school must have an authorization to dispense

medication form on file, completed and signed by a licensed physician; this form is included in our student registration materials attached in **Appendix 4.2**. We provide access to nurses as related service providers for students who require nursing services as part of their IEP or 504. We will ensure that first aid resources and sanitary supplies are always available.

- **District and Community Collaboration:** Our first partner in student safety is the CPS Office of Safety and Security. We will reach out to the Network Safety Team to establish a relationship with our network-identified point of contact. We will work with the Clinical and Crisis Team to discuss prevention of and preparation for crises and to discuss our plans to protect scholars' social, emotional, and mental well-being. We will work with the Safety Operations Team to ensure we have met district standards for school safety and integrity, including conducting audits and confirming emergency preparedness. We also comply with CPS' rigorous background check policy to implement background checks for all employees and volunteers including parent volunteers. Additionally, Chicago Prep will also establish a proactive and positive relationship with the local police and fire departments to support us in maintaining school safety.
- **Staff Training:** Each year, Chicago Prep staff will receive safety training including but not limited to first aid training, Mandated Reporter Training, and emergency preparedness training.
- **Data Regarding School Safety:** Chicago Prep will carefully document all safety-related incidents and continually review safety-related data including but not limited to dates, performance, and feedback for emergency drills, date, time and incident reports completed by parties involved with any health or safety related matter. This data input and review will be led by the Director of Operations and used to continually update all safety measures and protocols.

4.3.4: INSURANCE PLAN

Chicago Prep is committed to the long-term fulfillment of our mission and will secure insurance to protect the school from a variety of liabilities. We have sought an insurance proposal from Scholastic First Insurance through Arthur J. Gallagher and Co. for our planning year and first year of operation. Two tables indicating the types of insurance and levels of coverage for the Planning Year and Year 1 are presented in **Appendix 4.3.4**. As indicated in the attached budget, we have estimated insurance costs beyond Year 1 to increase in alignment with our enrollment increase.

4.3.5: ASSET INVENTORY PLAN

The long-term fulfillment of our mission requires the responsible management of assets. Chicago Prep will ensure proper documentation, monitoring, and disposal of all assets as outlined below. This Asset Inventory Plan is also included in **Appendix 3.2**, Financial Policies.¹³⁸

Background. The Director of Operations and the Head of School are responsible for ensuring that accurate inventories are maintained so that all assets are safeguarded.¹³⁹ The school's Director of Operations is responsible for maintaining the equipment and all necessary asset inventories. All assets must be recorded both in the accounting system's general ledger under the fixed asset category and in a separate fixed asset inventory spreadsheet, created in Excel. All property and equipment subject to the school's Capitalization policy must be recorded in the manner described below and depreciated according to the school's depreciation policy.

Upon receiving any property that qualifies as a fixed asset, the Director of Operations is responsible for

¹³⁸ Our Asset Inventory Plan is based on Great Lakes Academy Charter School's Asset Inventory Plan.

¹³⁹ As outlined in our Organizational Chart attached in Appendix 2.9, our Manager of Operations (Years 1 and 2) becomes a Director of Operations in Year 3. In Year 0, this role is Operations Associate.

recording the following into the fixed asset inventory spreadsheet:

- Asset number (use sequential numbers, no lettering); Asset name and description; Classification (i.e. land, building, equipment, leasehold improvements, furniture, fixtures, computer hardware and software, etc.); Serial number, model number, or other identification; Whether title vests with Chicago Prep or a governmental agency; Vendor name and acquisition date; Location of the asset; Purchase Date; Purchase Value; Capitalization Date; Book Value; Accumulated Depreciation; Useful Life; Disposal Date; Disposal Reason.

In addition, the asset name, inventory number, and book value must be entered in the accounting system's general ledger under the fixed asset category. Each item is also physically tagged in a visible area on the item and with the asset number and indication whether the item is property of Chicago Prep. All government-furnished property and equipment is also recorded and tagged, with identification information indicating it has been acquired through a government contract. Because the governmental agency owns the item, it is recognized as an expense and is not capitalized. In the event of charter revocation, the item is returned as property of the governmental agency. No employee may use any of the school property, equipment, material, or supplies for personal use without the prior approval of the Head of School. No item of property or equipment shall be removed from the premises without prior approval of the Head of School. All lease agreements for real property will be evidenced by a lease or sublease agreement approved by the Board of Directors and signed by the Head of School. The agreement will identify all the terms and conditions of the lease. Any real estate agreement to rent or sell will require a beneficial interest disclosure.

Capitalization Policy. The cost threshold for items purchased by Chicago Prep to capitalize is \$1,000. Items with an acquisition cost of less than \$1,000 or a useful life of less than one year are expensed in the year purchased. Items with an acquisition cost of more than \$1,000 are capitalized and are subject to the school's depreciation policy, outlined below. There may be instances where depending upon the nature of the purchase, and the expected useful life of the purchase, an item costing less than \$1,000 may be capitalized. For example, a piece of software, which costs \$500 and comes with a license for three years, may be capitalized even though the cost was less than \$1,000. The choice to capitalize an expenditure will be at the discretion of the Head of School.

Inventory Audit. The Director of Operations performs annual inventory audits, verifying and updating the data contained in the Excel fixed asset inventory spreadsheet. The Director of Operations should also note if inventory appears to be impaired, damaged, or obsolete. Once complete, this inventory is compared to the fixed assets listed in the general ledger to ensure the value of the assets per the accounting system matches the value of the assets per the spreadsheet. Differences are reconciled by the Director of Operations and communicated to the third party service provider for adjustment in the general ledger. The Head of School should be notified if any inventory items are lost, damaged, stolen, or in any way impaired.

Depreciation Policy. Any items subject to the Capitalization policy described above are subject to depreciation. The third-party service provider will account for depreciation based on the school's inventories and Depreciation policy. Depreciation associated with the fixed assets will be calculated based on the fixed assets' useful lives using the straight-line depreciation method. Any item that is rendered obsolete (damaged beyond use) will be taken out of service and fully written off the accounting records.

Figure 4.2: Depreciation Policy

Depreciable Asset	Depreciable Life
Software	3 years
Computers	4 years
Office/Classroom Equipment	5 years
Office/Classroom Furniture	7 years
Leasehold improvements	Life of lease or 5 years, whichever is greater

Disposal of Property and Equipment Policy. Chicago Prep has adopted standard disposition procedures for staff to follow. The requester fills out and signs the Asset Disposal Form, which identifies the asset and the reason for disposition. This form is submitted to the Director of Operations, who takes photos of the asset, determines the asset’s book value and documents the condition of the asset. Disposal of any asset requires the approval of the Head of School. Once approved for disposal, the book value of the disposed asset is written down to zero in the general ledger. The disposed asset is also removed from the Excel fixed asset inventory spreadsheet. The treatment of any proceeds from the disposition, and the recognition of any gain or loss on sale of the disposed asset, is also recorded in the general ledger by the third party service provider, subject to review by the Head of School.

4.3.6: STUDENT RECORDS

Chicago Prep is committed to the proper maintenance of students’ permanent and temporary records. We will follow the CPS Policy Manual on Student Records Retention, including the definition, retention, maintenance, and disposal of student records as summarized below.

Definitions:

Permanent Records include students’ school transcripts and health records.

Temporary Student Records include any document or data record, whether in paper or electronic form, directly related to a particular student and of clear relevance to the education of that student, that do not otherwise qualify as a Permanent Student Record. Temporary Student Records include without limitation a student’s cumulative folder, enrollment records, state assessment scores, special education records as defined below, bilingual education records, program participation records, records of serious disciplinary infractions, DCFS reports, reports of a serious student injury and other information and correspondence of clear relevance to the education of the student, including electronic correspondence.

Temporary Special Education Records any document or data record, whether in paper or electronic form, related to the identification, evaluation or placement of a student for special education services or 504 Plan or to the implementation of a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan and include, but are not limited to, the IEP and the 504 Plan in all their parts, eligibility determination and screening forms, consent forms, waiver forms, evaluations and assessments, parent notices, referrals, planning and meeting records including assessment assignments, progress notes, manifestation determination review, behavior plans, health-related information (e.g. medication logs), transition plans and service plans for private school students.

Figure 4.3 Retention Period

Record Category	Minimum Record Retention Period	Destruction Authorized When
Permanent Student Records	82 years after the student’s date of birth	Student Age – 83
Temporary Special Education Records	27 years after the student’s date of birth	Student Age – 28

Temporary Student Records	20 years after the student’s date of birth	Student Age – 21
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Record Maintenance. The Director of Operations will be responsible for the maintenance, care, security, and proper disposal of all student records. Chicago Prep will take all necessary steps to ensure the confidentiality of student records, including keeping records with information such as social security numbers and/or mental health information in a secure locked area to prevent unauthorized access. Chicago Prep will not transfer student records until the student’s transfer has been verified or confirmed by the student’s new school. Once the new school has confirmed, Chicago Prep will send all required records and will appropriately record all transfers and releases of records in accordance with CPS Policy. We will also generate record copies of student transcripts for students who graduate, withdraw or transfer to another school or otherwise cease to be enrolled (at the end of the school year). For long-term storage, Chicago Prep will send record copies of students who have transferred, graduated, or otherwise withdrawn from the school to the CPS Board’s offsite facilities storage.

Record Disposal. Chicago Prep will retain all student records until the end of the retention period as indicated above, will obtain authorization to destroy records, and will follow the appropriate protocols to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

SECTION 4.4: GOVERNANCE

4.4.1: GOVERNANCE START-UP

The board will have the capacity and supports to provide strong academic, financial, and operational oversight of the school.

- *Qualified board members (with at least the Board Chair and most officer positions identified) who have the wide range of relevant knowledge, skills, and commitment needed to oversee a successful charter school, including but not limited to: Educational, financial, legal, fundraising, prior governance experience, community experience (at least one board member has strong ties to the community), and special skill sets for unique school models (e.g. blended learning models)*
- *Complete Board Member Forms and Economic Interest Forms from all proposed board members*
- *Proposed board members who display a robust understanding of their roles and responsibilities in providing academic, financial, operational, and legal oversight of the proposed charter school*
- *Viable plans and clear procedures to recruit and select diverse Board members, both to fill any remaining gaps in skills prior to school opening and continually once in operation*
- *A thorough plan to build the capacity of the board by providing orientations and trainings for the inaugural board leading up to school opening, all new members, and continually for the established board once in operation*
- *A clear action plan for establishing the “working” Board in the incubation year*

Chicago Prep currently has a Founding Board comprised of eight high-capacity members. The Founding Board Members, including Board Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary, are identified in **Figure 4.4**.

Figure 4.4: Chicago Prep Founding Board Members

Board Member	Current Job Title and Employer	Relevant Areas of Expertise	Close Ties to the Community
Mercedes Bender, B.S., M.B.A.	Partner of Client Engagement & Brand	Marketing, Brand Strategy,	Yes: Born and raised in Bronzeville; current resident

	Strategy, Kantar Group global research, data and insights consultancy	Entrepreneurship, Governance, Community	
Ken Dickerson , B.S. <i>Proposed Board Vice Chair</i>	Franchise Owner, Seva Beauty Spa; President, KGF Enterprises, Inc.	Development, Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Governance, Community	Yes: Resident since 1999; current Board Chair of Trinity Acres Retirement Community; former business owner; former Board Member of Bronzeville Little League
Dr. Andrea Elzy , B.A., M.A., Ed.D.	Director of Postsecondary Strategies, Thrive Chicago	Education, Entrepreneurship, Governance	No
Brandon Kimble , B.S., M.A.	Superintendent, ReGeneration Schools	Education	No
Mitchell Newsome , B.A. <i>Proposed Board Secretary</i>	Application Sales Manager, Oracle Corporation	Data, Real Estate, Technology, Community	Yes: Born and raised in Bronzeville; current resident; new business owner; volunteers with re:work training
Jack Pritchett , B.A., M.B.A.	Head of Legal, Finance, and HR at Buildout, Inc.	Finance, Entrepreneurship	No
Rupa Ramadurai , B.A., M.S., J.D. <i>Proposed Board Chair</i>	Director of Policy and Advocacy, Leadership for Educational Equity	Legal, Education, Governance	No
Julia Strauch , B.A., M.A., J.D.; <i>Proposed Board Treasurer</i>	Director of Finance and Compliance, Teach for America	Finance, Legal, Education	No

Each Founding Board Member’s experience and qualifications are summarized in their biographies found in **Section 2.10.1**. In addition, all Founding Board Member resumes are attached in **Appendix 4.4**.

Board Member Recruitment. The Chicago Prep Founding Board members were recruited by Lead Founder Mary Griffin in consultation with BES, an organization that supports Fellows to recruit, vet, and train Founding Board members for over 175 existing charter schools. Ms. Griffin sought to build a diverse board both demographically and in terms of expertise and experience; currently Board members bring expertise in education, finance, law, real estate, development, governance, and marketing. Additionally, as a school proposed for Bronzeville and focused on entrepreneurship, the Chicago Prep Founding Board has multiple individuals with strong ties to the community and entrepreneurial experience.

Prior to school opening, Chicago Prep will add to the Board one parent of an enrolled scholar in compliance with requirements of 105 ILCS 5/27A-5. During and after student registration in April and May, the Governance Committee will recruit potential parent Board members and follow steps three through seven as outlined below. In addition, by July 2020, Chicago Prep will recruit and add to the Board another individual with expertise in real estate and/or facilities. This experience is needed to assist with our facilities acquisition and renovation. We do not anticipate the need to add additional Board members,

beyond these two roles prior to school opening. To recruit new board members, the Governance Committee will lead the following process:

1. Each spring, identify the needs of the Board, including the skill sets of members whose terms are expiring and any other necessary expertise.
2. Lead the search for new Board candidates with the necessary expertise by seeing recommendations from our Bronzeville community connections, including local business owners, pastors, and nonprofit leaders; accept recommendations from any current board members; advertise via the Chicago Prep website, LinkedIn, and social media accounts for the identified skill-sets needed; actively search for qualified candidates via LinkedIn, company websites, nonprofit Boards of Directors, etc.
3. Review resumes and interview qualified candidates to assess mission-alignment and potential to contribute meaningfully to the Board.
4. Discuss and rank all possible candidates with the full Board.
5. Invite strong candidates to serve for a trial period on the Board of Directors to further ensure mission-alignment, expertise, and commitment.
6. Recommend candidates to the full Board of Directors.
7. Invite the full Board of Directors to vote to approve new members no later than June each year; 2/3 vote with quorum present is required in accordance with our bylaws.

Founding Board Training. The Founding Board has been preparing for effective oversight of Chicago Prep through regular meetings since December 2019. All Board members have begun to read *Charter School Board University: An Introduction to Effective Charter School Governance* by Dr. Brian L. Carpenter, Ph.D., and will finish reading all relevant chapters prior to school opening. Additionally, we will participate in a day-long Board Retreat prior to the submission of our Tier III Application, including training from a national governance expert from BES. The training will cover the roles and responsibilities of Board members, the distinction between governance and management and guidance on strong collaboration between the two, and the function of Board Committees. Within 30 days of authorization, the Board will conduct its Organizational Meeting and Committee Action Planning.

Ongoing Board Training. The Governance Committee will take the lead on ensuring the Board receives ongoing training necessary to ensure effective oversight, including providing orientation for new Board members. In compliance with 105 ILCS 5/27A-5, all Board members will, within the first year of his or her term, complete a minimum of four hours of professional development leadership training to ensure that all members are sufficiently familiar with the Board's role and responsibilities, including financial oversight and accountability, academic oversight, evaluation of the school leader, adherence to the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act, and compliance with education and labor law. In each subsequent year of his or her term, each board member will complete a minimum of two hours of professional development in the same areas. The training may be provided or certified by a statewide charter school membership association or other qualified providers approved by State Board of Education.

The Governance Committee will arrange additional training to complement the state-required training, including sharing additional books and articles related to governance, and observing the meetings of other high-performing boards. New Board Members will participate in orientation and will receive a board policy manual which includes a contact list with the names, phone numbers and email addresses of the school's executive and all current board members, the offices they hold (i.e., president, vice-president, etc.), and when their terms on the board are set to expire, bylaws, Conflict of Interest Policy, documents governing the board's formal arrangement with management, Board member job descriptions, board minutes from the previous six months, most recent financial statements, and the annual audit report.

Board Transition. Upon authorization, the Founding Board will immediately transition to a Governing Board, and one of its first actions will be to hold its inaugural Governing Board meeting in which we:

- Formally vote to approve our drafted bylaws, Conflict of Interest Policy, and Code of Ethics
- Vote on elected positions within the board
- Formalize our Finance, Academic, Governance, and Development Committees
- Form a Facilities Task Force to oversee the procurement of a viable facility prior to school opening
- Hire the Head of School

4.4.2: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND ONGOING OVERSIGHT

A clearly explained governance structure and clear plans and policies are likely to ensure meaningful and effective oversight of the school.

- *An explanation for how the governing body's size, regular meeting schedule, explicit powers and duties, committee structure, process for expansion, terms, and succession plans (as outlined in the bylaws) will ensure that the school is equipped to meet its mission and goals*
- *Defined roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority for each Governing Board officer position and committee, as well as differentiation of roles and responsibilities between the board, school administration, and MO (if applicable)*
- *A clear mechanism to ensure that parents, community members, and key stakeholders will be active in the governance of the school; a forum for parent, teacher, and community input; and strategies for communicating board priorities and decisions to all stakeholders*
- *(If applying as an existing non-profit organization) A plan to establish a new separate and distinct non-profit corporation to oversee the school. If the non-profit's existing board plans to govern the school, robust plans to ensure that the board will be transformed to provide proper oversight of a public charter school with clear guidelines to avoid co-mingling of funds between the school and the partner organization – **Not Applicable***
- *Formalized procedures for the Board to run effective, outcomes-focused meetings to monitor the school's academic, financial, operational, and organizational progress on a consistent basis, including by setting clear goals, metrics, and rubrics for evaluation prior to the school year*
- *Clearly defined systems and protocols for the board to consistently monitor academic, operational, and financial performance metrics, including a description of how the board will receive this information and from whom*
- *Policies, metrics, and goals that the Board will use to evaluate its own effectiveness on at least an annual basis*
- *Well-defined accountability policies for the board, including attendance and committee service requirements*
- *Clearly articulated triggers and a defined process to remove Board members if they are not meeting expectations.*

Board Structure. Chicago Prep will have a Board of Directors comprised of seven (7) to eleven (11) members. Seven is the minimum to ensure that we have the depth and diversity of expertise needed to govern effectively. Eleven is the maximum to ensure that we are still able to work efficiently as a team. Founding Board Member terms shall be staggered so that no more than 1/3 of the Board of Directors will be up for election annually; starting in 2021, all new Board Members will serve three-year terms.

The Board of Directors is responsible for the financial, academic, organizational, and operational oversight of Chicago Prep. The Board ensures that Chicago Prep delivers on its mission and vision throughout the

terms of its charter. The Board will establish and approve policies that oversee the execution of all management responsibilities, including but not limited to, fiscal, personnel, student and family policies. The Board hires, supports, and annually evaluates the Head of School, who is responsible for day-to-day management and execution of the mission and vision. The Board ultimately holds the Head of School accountable for the academic growth and achievement of Chicago Prep's students, and for the fiscal management and organizational health of the school. The Head of School hires, supports, and evaluates all Chicago Prep staff and teachers. Upon authorization, the Board will vote on Board Officers: Board Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. Board Officers serve a one-year term of office, renewable for three consecutive terms by approval of a majority vote of the Board in accordance with our bylaws. Board Officers uphold all responsibilities of members along with the additional responsibilities inherent in their elected roles. The purpose and primary responsibilities of each Board Officer are as follows:

The Board Chair is the senior volunteer leader of Chicago Prep who presides at all meetings of the Board of Directors and other meetings as required. The Chair is an ex officio member of all committees of the organization. The Board Chair oversees implementation of board and school policies and ensures that appropriate administrative practices are established and maintained. The Board Chair reports to the full Board of Directors and supports the Head of School. The Board Chair serves as the Chair of the Governance Committee. **The Vice Chair** is the secondary volunteer leader of Chicago Prep and as such, discharges the duties of the Chair as required in the Chair's absence. The Vice Chair supports the activities of the Chair including sharing responsibilities as appropriate. **The Treasurer** provides direction for the financial management of the school and facilitates the board in meeting its financial oversight responsibilities. The Treasurer reports to the Board Chair and the full Board of Directors and supports the Head of School, Back-Office Provider, and auditors as necessary. The Treasurer serves as the Chair of the Finance Committee. **The Secretary** provides direction for the keeping of legal documents including minutes of all Board meetings. The Secretary reports to the Board Chair and the full Board of Directors and supports the individual taking minutes at Board meetings.

Upon authorization, the Board will also formalize its Academic, Finance, Governance, and Development Committees. Each committee will include at least three members. The primary responsibilities of each committee are as follows: **The Academic Committee** has primary responsibility for working with the Head of School to define academic achievement, ensure that all Board members know the charter promises made to the community and the authorizer, and to devise clear and consistent measures to monitor enrollment, student demographics, and achievement of academic outcomes. **The Finance Committee** has primary responsibility for working with the Head of School to: create the upcoming fiscal year budget; present budget recommendations to the Board; monitor implementation of the approved budget on a regular basis and recommend proposed budget revisions; and recommend to the Board appropriate policies for the management of the organization's assets. **The Governance Committee** has primary responsibility for building and maintaining an effective Board for Chicago Prep. The Committee will establish and drive a continuous improvement process to help the Board and individual Directors to become more valuable as strategic assets of the charter school, contributing to long-term success. **The Development Committee** has primary responsibility for ensuring that the organization's total development program is in concert with the organization's strategic direction and needs. The committee serves as the mechanism by which board members and other volunteers are involved in fundraising.

Parent, Community Member, and Educator Involvement. Prior to school opening, the Board of Directors will include one parent of a Chicago Prep scholar, in compliance with 105 ILCS 5/27A-5. The Board of Directors will recruit a parent to join the Board during and after the scholar registration process as

described in **Section 4.4.1**. Additionally, we will form a Parent Advisory Council in our Planning Year. The Parent Advisory Council will be composed of 10-15 family members who help to lead family engagement at the school and share feedback with the Chicago Prep team. Representatives from the Parent Advisory Council will also provide ideas and feedback to the Board of Directors. Additionally, Chicago Prep will also conduct annual surveys gauging parent engagement and satisfaction and share the results with the Board.

It is a priority for the Board of Directors to include professional educators as their expertise is needed to ensure the academic success of Chicago Prep. Four out of eight Founding Board Members have educational expertise across diverse areas, including K-8 instructional leadership, education law and policy, special education law, education finance, and postsecondary strategies and supports. The Governance Committee will continue to recruit professional educators and ensure its representation on the Board of Directors. Although Chicago Prep staff members will not serve as Board Members, they are invited to attend our monthly meetings conveniently located at the school. Furthermore, Chicago Prep staff will take a survey designed to evaluate staff culture three times a year; the Head of School will share this data with the Board to ensure staff feedback is considered and incorporated appropriately.

The Board of Directors also prioritizes representation from the Bronzeville community, including residents, business owners, and/or leaders of local organizations. Four out of eight members of the Founding Board have close ties to the community, and the Governance Committee will continue to prioritize community membership in recruiting new members in the future. Additionally, community members, families, and Chicago Prep staff are always welcome at our public monthly Board meetings and will be able to voice concerns or feedback. Community members and Chicago Prep families and educators who reach out in advance will be given a spot on the agenda, while those who are not on the agenda will be able to share during open comments time.

Self-Evaluation. The board will complete an annual self-evaluation to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Board and to address areas for improvement. The Governance Committee will lead the evaluation of the Board, including the Board Chair, individual Directors, and Board meetings/sessions. The Governance Committee will also evaluate and monitor governance structures and processes, including policy development and processes for Board monitoring/oversight of operations. The self-evaluations are distributed, collected, synthesized and the results presented to the rest of the Board by the Governance Committee. The Board creates an action plan in response to the self-evaluations during the annual retreat; any systematic or policy changes are put to a vote and implemented during the annual retreat as well. A draft self-evaluation tool is included in **Appendix 4.4**.

Monitoring Performance. The Board will oversee Chicago Prep in three major areas: academic, financial, and organizational. **Academic.** The Board will hold the Head of School accountable to achieving the Academic Goals outlined in **Section 2.4.1**. To ensure that Chicago Prep is making progress towards these goals, the Head of School will share monthly Academic Dashboards with the Academic Committee. The Academic Committee will review and discuss the data (including data from NWEA, Interim Assessments, and Achievement First curriculum assessments) with the Head of School and will report back to the full Board of Directors at monthly meetings. **Financial.** The Board will hold the Head of School accountable for effective fiscal management, as demonstrated by an annual audit reports conducted by an independent, external contractor demonstrating that the school meets or exceeds professional accounting standards and budgets for each academic year demonstrating effective allocation of financial resources to ensure effective execution of the mission as measured by yearly balanced budgets submitted to CPS. To ensure fiscal responsibility throughout the year, the Financial Committee will review monthly

financial statements, such as budget versus actuals, and report back to the full Board of Directors at monthly meetings. **Organizational.** The Board will hold the Head of School accountable to strong operations that support the mission and vision of Chicago Prep. Metrics include:

1. Student enrollment: Fully enrolled and maintains waitlist
2. Average daily attendance: 95% or higher
3. Student retention: 85% of students who begin the school year remain throughout the year; 85% of students who complete the school year re-enroll the following year.
4. Parent satisfaction: 80% of parents are satisfied with school-family communication; 80% of parents are satisfied with their child's education as measured by annual parent surveys.
5. Teacher retention: 70% of teachers return each year who are offered a contract
6. Teacher satisfaction: 80% of teachers are satisfied with their job as measured by the staff surveys three times a year.
7. Data tracking systems: Data Quality Index Score is at least 95% on annual SQRP.

The Board's academic, financial, and operational/organizational oversight of the school will inform its annual evaluation of the Head of School, who is ultimately accountable for all school results.

Meetings. In order to ensure Board meetings are efficient, effective, and outcomes-focused, the Board will rely on our Committees structure. All Committees will meet monthly, outside of full board meetings to dedicate time to their specific responsibilities and committees will report back to the full Board of Directors. Board meetings will be for discussion and review of school academic and fiscal performance, as well as overall organizational health and compliance. Board members, on an annual basis, will evaluate the organizations academic goals and set new goals for continuous student improvement. All board meetings will adhere to and be fully compliant with Open Meetings Act as described in **Section 4.4.3**. Following all Board meetings, the minutes will be publicly accessible on the Chicago Prep website and will include all decisions made in the meeting.

Resignation and Removal. A member of the Board of Directors may resign his or her post at any time by filing a written resignation with the Board Chair. Additionally, the Board may remove any Officer or Director for cause by majority vote of the entire Board of Directors at any regular or special meeting of the Board, provided that a statement of the reason or reasons shall have been mailed by Registered Mail to the Officer or Director proposed for removal at least thirty (30) days before any final action is taken by the Board. This statement shall be accompanied by a notice of the time when, and the place where, the Board is to take action on the removal. The Officer or Director shall be given an opportunity to be heard and the matter considered by the Board at the time and place mentioned in the notice. Triggers for removal include:

- **Self-dealing:** All members are expected to act in the duty of loyalty and care on behalf of Chicago Prep. There is absolutely no tolerance for self-dealing on the Board of Directors. Any Board member suspected of self-dealing or having failed to disclose a perceived or actual conflict of interest will have the opportunity to address these concerns with the Board. However, if it is determined that an individual failed to disclose a perceived or actual conflict of interest, he or she will be removed in accordance with our bylaws.
- **Board attendance:** As outlined in our Attendance Policy in **Appendix 4.4**. All members are expected to attend full board meetings and assigned committee meetings to ensure full board engagement, discussion and vote. All Board members will receive a copy of the Board Attendance Policy defining attendance expectations.

4.4.3: BOARD LEGAL, COMPLIANCE, AND ETHICS POLICIES

The proposal describes clear policies and procedures for the board to govern the school in a lawful and ethical manner.

- *Plans for the board to operate in compliance with the Illinois Charter School Law, Open Meetings Act, and the Freedom of Information Act*
- *An Ethics Policy that holds the proposed school’s Board members, directors, officers, and employees to high standards of ethical conduct. At a minimum, the Ethics Policy provides guidance on the following topics:*
 - *Nepotism*
 - *Financial interests in contracts*
 - *Gifts, loans, and favors*
 - *Secondary employment*
 - *Postemployment and postmembership restrictions*
 - *Political activities*
- *A Conflict of Interest policy that describes clear procedures to identify and address or mitigate any perceived or actual conflicts of interest among Board members, directors, officers, employees, agents, or family members. The formal Conflict of Interest Policy at a minimum:*
 - *Provides a clear definition of a private interest, direct or indirect, in quantifiable terms (if financial in nature) for Board members, directors, officers, employees, agents, or family members;*
 - *Establishes a clear policy and procedure to disclose conflicts of interest;*
 - *Specifies procedures to address or mitigate a conflict of interest; and*
 - *Provides a method to determine disciplinary or corrective actions if a conflict of interest fails to be disclosed for Board members, directors, officers, employees, agents, and others.*

Chicago Prep will operate in full compliance with Illinois Charter School Law. In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Chicago Prep will provide public access to requested documents and records including but not limited to reports, forms, writings, letters, and electronic communications, “pertaining to the transaction of public business, regardless of physical form or characteristics, having been prepared by or for, or having been or being used by, received by, in the possession of, or under the control of any public body.” Records not subject to FOIA include those containing private information or personal information. In full compliance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act, the Board will meet monthly and post the annual schedule of meetings, including the dates, times, and places of the meetings on the Chicago Prep website and in a visible location in the front office. Any changes to the schedule will be published in the same locations at least a month in advance, as well as advertised on the Chicago Prep website and social media accounts. Prior to school opening, we will continue to meet in a public place in Bronzeville, such as a Bronzeville library or park district and after we will meet at Chicago Prep.

Meeting agendas will be posted in the main office and on the school website at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Agendas for Emergency Meetings will be posted as soon as possible, and immediately after the decision to hold an emergency meeting is made. The board will reserve specific time at the opening of each meeting for public comment, as well as provide clear signage, seating, and agendas for any members of the community that want to attend the meeting. The Board Secretary will record minutes during each meeting. Meeting minutes will be posted on our website upon approval (no later than immediately following the next meeting, at which the minutes are approved from the previous month’s meeting). Committee meetings will uphold the same open meetings standards as general board meetings.

At times, the Board may need to hold closed meetings (executive session) to discuss topics including, but not limited to personnel matters, contract negotiations including real estate, threatened or potential litigation, student disciplinary cases, and threats to school safety, in compliance with Open Meetings Act. In the event of an executive session, the Board will vote in the open meeting to go into executive session and state the general reason, which will be reflected in the minutes. For all executive sessions, the Board will keep a verbatim record in the form of an audio or video recording in addition to recording meeting minutes. The Board will conduct a semi-annual review of closed meeting minutes to determine whether closed session meeting recordings and closed session meeting minutes still require confidentiality, and, for any that do not, make them available to the public. The Chicago Prep Board of Directors takes its Conflict of Interest policy seriously. The policy was developed in consultation with BES and is included in **Appendix 4.4**. All Board members must review and sign the Conflict of Interest policy annually. The Board of Directors does not have any perceived conflicts of interest at this time. If a Conflict should arise, we will immediately implement our Conflict of Interest policy.

DOMAIN 5: BUSINESS PLAN

Not Applicable. Chicago Prep is an Operator New to Chicago.

DOMAIN 6: MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS (MOs)

Not Applicable. Chicago Prep is not contracting with, or proposing to contract with, a Management Organization (MO).