

Great Schools for Connecticut (GSCT)
Charter Schools Planning and Implementation Grant
Edmonds Cofield Preparatory Academy for Young Men (EC Prep) Project Narrative 1

Executive Summary

Initial planning and pre-operational activities are geared toward ensuring EC Prep can recruit the budgeted number of students and staff for the first couple of years, informing the broader community about EC Prep, mapping out its academic and operational plans and ensuring it has legal and financial guidance during the critical phase to implement key systems with ease. This request for funding to finance critical implementation expenses of Edmund Cofield Preparatory Academy for Young Men (EC Prep), specifically equipment, furniture, and technology as well as professional development.

EC Prep's educational program will serve the needs of New Haven's students by providing a high-quality learning environment that puts and maintains the focus on what's best for male growth and development. Our program is delivered with a sense of urgency, has young men continuously moving for full engagement throughout their lessons, and embeds support mechanisms throughout the curriculum and their daily experiences at school. Young men from every walk of life and aptitude are welcomed and nurtured to meet their full potential. We support our young men as partners with their parents as we all explore together the plethora of paths their lives can take, particularly with authentic college and career exposure. They will feel confident that they are prepared for challenges when they graduate as they will have been taught and have practiced dozens of challenging authentic scenarios. Our young men will also have had dozens of new and non-traditional experiences that other schools do not offer.

Our young men will benefit from access to modern instructional technology to support learning in addition to small group instruction, co-teaching and paired team peer learning facilitated by faculty. Action-oriented learning with its elements of adventure brings experience and exposure to young men with real life service-learning opportunities. Additionally, to maximize access to all of EC Prep's learning tools, the young men will have personalized learning plans, career labs, and both an extended school day and school year. The EC Prep learning environment encourages through male-focused literacy, an action-oriented curriculum, and House teams designed to naturally breed curiosity, critical thinking, and friendly competition. The House system represents a safe culture and climate for growth – emotionally, socially and academically - and as the Houses compete for rewards, each House promotes excellence within its ranks. Self-directed engagement is augmented through older students, staff, and even family. Houses have built in motivation to self-police against absenteeism, and a strong house based focus to support at-risk youths in their path to success. Our school framework reinforces a holistic view of young men and allows us to accompany each of them on his journey of growth in a learning space that balances the education of his mind, body, hopes and dreams in the context of his team or network. We will get them out into the real world and provide high quality exposure to new places, people, perspectives and situations, and provide ample opportunity to experience learning in new modalities. For example, our Action Labs will introduce them to different college and career choices.

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Section 1: Board Capacity and Governance Structure: A competent, trained governing board is essential to the success of a public charter school. Describe how your school has developed a strong governing board with a diverse set of skills. Be sure to include how board members understand their roles and responsibilities and have developed a transition plan and ongoing professional development to maintain board strength going forward.

1. Describe the composition (size, roles, committees) and selection process for the governing board. Any gaps in skills are identified and a plan exists to address them through recruiting additional board members or through acquiring board training in specific areas.

The Governing Council consists of the first nine founding team members. The Officers of the Governing Council are the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, each of which is a voting position. Of the Members of the Council, three positions are non-voting. EC Prep has strong Board capacity to provide governance and oversight over the school. Each member brings a high level of expertise in areas necessary for the operations of the institution. Enclosed is the field composition of the governing body to demonstrate that Board members possess ample knowledge and experience in advocacy and social justice, fiscal management, broker relationships with the New Haven community, growth strategy, fundraising and development, real estate, human resources/people management, as well as litigation, supervision and curriculum development, education administration and leadership. These accomplished professionals bring with them an extensive network of people who understand the communities the school hopes to serve, and who invest in local community service.

Proposed Governing Council Officers for Opening Term	
Name	Brings to Board
Dr. Boise Kimber	Visionary founder, community service network, respected leader and trusted community advisor, known for multicultural activities, affirmative action.
Michael A. Briscoe	Organizational and Fiscal Management, Policy and compliance, addiction counseling, human services, behavior intervention, public safety communications.
Larry Conaway	Highly recognized and respected school administrator, clinical therapist, social worker, with fundraising and Board experience. Hiring, supervising, and evaluating staff.
Marcellus A. Edwards III	Mentoring: College and Career Advisor NH Board of Ed, FASFA; leadership, problem solver, integrator; relationship builder with providers.

Deirdre L. Moody	People: Management/human resources; Legal: contracts, immigration, litigation, worker's comp, 42 CFR Part 2, HIPAA, privacy officer; Real Estate.
Lola W.	School administration, Substitute Teacher and Coach, Principal, Special

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Nathan	Education Coordinator/Master Teacher.
Genice T. Nelson	Nursing, health care, teamwork, strategic planning, goal setting.
Dr. Leroy C. Williams	Administrator, Teacher, Special Education, coaching, community & personal affiliations and networks.
Glen Worthy	Team builder, coordinates with leaders/teachers/community; Certified superintendent, counselor; principal.
Parent Rep	To be identified.
Teacher Rep	To be identified.
Authorize Rep	To be identified.

As gaps in skills are identified throughout our planning process, these needs are then captured in job descriptions and a plan exists to recruit additional board members. EC Prep is developing clearly defined criteria for future candidate selection. The priority is to find candidates with the expertise to fulfill specifically targeted responsibilities, with diverse backgrounds, ages and expertise, and constituents that will contribute to and enhance the Council's effective governance. EC Prep is actively seeking to recruit members with charter school, all-boys school, and appropriate education expertise.

2. The board has established clear policies and procedures that guide its oversight of the school • Outlines a comprehensive set of board roles and responsibilities, inclusive of ensuring compliance with Open Meetings and Open Records Law. • Applicant demonstrates clear policies, procedures (e.g. board manual) that guides its oversight of schools (including financial, legal, operational, reporting compliance), including an annual review of policies and annual completion of a Conflict-of-Interest form.

The Governing Council has clear policies that guide its oversight of the school as referenced in the draft by-laws and the draft code of ethics. Both supporting documents are attached to this

application, please refer to Appendices B and C. Appendix B contains the Board Bylaws and Appendix C contains the Code of Ethics. All in all, the Governing Council has set procedures to ensure compliance with Open Meetings Law and Open Records Law. The Governing Council will meet monthly or 12 times a year, following the Open Meeting Law. The Governing Council will comply with applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations relating to the maintaining and handling of information and the public access to public records following the Open Records Law. The By-Laws provide details on the procedures for conducting board meetings, and the procedure for providing *Public Notice of Meetings* to be held at EC Prep as well as posting the schedule, agenda, and minutes of each Governing Board meeting, including any meeting of a subcommittee of the Governing Board. At each meeting of the Governing Council, time is set aside specifically for teachers and parents to address the Council and there

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is a mediation process for conflict resolution through the Compliance Committee. Parental and staff involvement is extended to join Governing Council Committees and sponsored events.

The Governing Council has distinct roles and responsibilities to provide oversight of EC Prep. It provides external accountability, internal oversight, and leadership. The Executive Director is responsible for day-to-day school operations, management of priorities and the overarching implementation of the instructional vision and is directly accountable to the Council's Education Committee for achieving the school's mission and goals. The Executive Director meets monthly with the Education Committee for discussions and updates on student centered progress, needs, and initiatives as well as issues and initiatives for parent engagement. The information gathered is presented at the monthly Executive Committee by the Education Committee Chair for discussion and an oral report is presented at the monthly general meeting by the Executive Director for parents and all stakeholders to add to the discussion with questions and comments. The Council conducts a review of the Executive Director's effectiveness twice a year. It also conducts annual surveys that solicit and collect feedback from parents, students, and other stakeholders designed to confirm other data points for accountability.

3. Applicant provides resume of board members, personnel occupying key leadership positions, governing council members • Existence of training plan for school leadership, board members, and governing council (e.g. evidenced through inclusion in operating budget, including copy in application packet). • Clear criteria and procedures for selecting officers and members of the governing council exists, no member or employee of governing council has financial interest in the school's assets (real or personal).

The resumes for EC Prep's initial Governing Council are attached to this application, please refer to Appendix A to review detailed experience, and qualifications relevant to each member's capacity to found and sustain a high-quality charter school, manage public funds effectively and responsibly, and develop and strengthen ties within New Haven's diverse community.

The clear criteria and procedures for selecting officers and members of the Governing Council are as follows: the Nominating Committee will search for matches in the New Haven community, in Council networks, at VolunteerMatch, Education Leaders of Color, the National Charter Collaborative and at non-profit Council recruitment fairs.

Following the receipt of the Charter, the Governing Council established a training plan for its members that include but are not limited to Council orientations, workshops, self-development and professional retreats. Holding itself accountable to all stakeholders and to develop and maintain a unified focus, the Council participates in on-going training provided on general governance as well as male child development, hands-on and thematic-based learning, and interpreting data in the school environment. Council members are to undergo training on oversight for charter schools. In Years 1-5, a threshold of \$10,000 has been budgeted to this end. Each Governing Council member receives a binder or digital file containing the charter, school policies and procedures, and additional guiding documents from training and workshops. These are intended to keep existing Council members focused and orient new members. Contingent on funding, members will attend charter school conferences, and host Governing Council training retreats to improve their collaboration and oversight capabilities, and to understand how to conduct an effective self-evaluation.

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The training plan for school leadership occurs in August of every year during the pre-opening Summer Institute. The plan is for the Governing Council Chair and the Executive Director to confer during pre-opening to set goals, mid-year to review formative evidence, end of year to review summative evidence of performance, and a final time to discuss the evaluation results and set summer professional development plans for the leadership team if needed. Following the Governing Council Chair and the Executive Director's training plan creation, the summertime will be used to meet with the Curriculum team, conduct a data driven review of the efficacy of the curriculum as it relates to the prior school year, and host professional development. Teachers will have the opportunity to plan on curriculum updates as a grade team and have professional conversations around all pertinent standards. Teachers will collaborate on and across grade levels on horizontal and vertical alignment of themes, concepts, big ideas, resources, assessments, and timelines. Grade level mapping and accompanying unit plans will be completed with the state standards matched, rubrics outlined, and clear goals set. This will be done with input from specialty teachers and the coordinators, who will take a final walk through of the curriculum with their own checklist of checks and balances. Ultimately, teachers will walk away with clear expectations for implementation and the advance planning needed for smooth instructional delivery for the school year.

Section 2 – School Leadership and Management: Describe the intended leadership structure of the proposed school. A strong leadership and staffing plan are essential to ensure high-quality implementation and sustainability of a new school.

- 1. The leadership and administrative roles at the school are well-defined, and comprehensively cover the broad set of responsibilities required of charter school leadership. • Presents a complete organizational and management plan (including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities) for the school that includes clear division of roles and management responsibilities (including role of Charter Management Organization if applicable). • Articulates a process that will be used by the board to evaluate the performance of the school leadership including identification of appropriate protocol for addressing performance***

concerns. • Demonstrates how the school has designed its leadership team to ensure sufficient expertise to manage charter school- specific compliance, operations, finance, and legal matters.

- 2. The school demonstrates sufficient leadership and governance capability to implement and sustain the new school or expansion project(s) outlined in this application • The school has sufficiently identified any material operational challenges / key risk factors and has demonstrated process to identify and mitigate key risk factors. • The school’s leadership team demonstrates the ability to operate soundly, strategically and in ways that staff and stakeholders can understand and follow (e.g. demonstrated through previous successful expansions, mitigation of existential risk). • School has identified a school leader for the new / expansion /replication school and provided complete bio as part of application OR School has not identified a leader but has a robust recruitment plan, clearly articulating the profile (qualifications, skill set).**

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The founding team of EC Prep has not yet identified an Executive Director. The founding team has a job description for the position that identifies the roles, responsibilities, and ideal characteristics to lead an all-boys school. We will have a competitive salary, retirement plan, professional growth opportunities, and other incentives, budget allowing. There is a thoughtful plan in place around finding a passionate, inspirational head of school that meets our high expectations. The recruitment plan is as follows for this crucial role: the Governing Council has formed a Nominating Committee to identify potential candidates for the Executive Director role, the search was launched with the guidance and assistance of charter school consultants and the extensive network available through the founding team. EC Prep has contracted with an executive recruitment firm, Edgility Consulting. Founded by charter school operators, Edgility Consulting is widely known for nationally recruiting candidates of color.

Once identified, candidates will be vetted by the Nominating Committee. Vetting will include verifying candidate credentials and work experience, hosting virtual and face-to-face interviews that include meeting the founding team, visiting with the community, and discussing scenario based issues to be solved. Ideal candidate credentials are sent to the full Council who arranges the opportunity to collectively interview the candidate. Once found, the Council votes to make a formal offer of hire. EC Prep’s goal is to have an Executive Director hired by January 2024.

The proposed leadership structure of EC Prep is as follows: Executive Director, Director of Teaching and Learning, the Dean of Students, and Director of Finance and Operations. These four administrators form the leadership team and will be responsible for implementing and executing the program and charter. The Executive Director is responsible for day-to-day school operations, management of priorities and the overarching implementation of the instructional vision and is directly accountable to the Council’s Education Committee for achieving the school’s mission and goals. The Director of Teaching and Learning (DOTL) has the lead in using data to drive both teacher and student support, including curriculum scope, design and implementation; tracking various cohorts; and evaluating teachers, the efficacy of support methodologies used and professional development (PD). The Dean of Students will conduct ongoing training on social emotional issues and compliance with components of State Anti Bullying Laws and Regulations. The Dean of Students will form part of an EC Prep School

Based Support Team (SBST) that will ensure the appropriate student accommodations and appropriate assessment tool is in place in accordance with the state exam, the Connecticut Smarter Balanced assessment guidelines for usability, accessibility, accommodations and the Planning and Placement Team process. The DFO will be primarily responsible for the administration of EC Prep's day-to-day operations and business transactions such as reconciling bank and credit card accounts, preparing payroll for processing, preparing for the annual audit, and modifying the budget as deemed necessary with recommendations and Governing Council approval.

School leadership and teacher quality and effectiveness are the critical levers to achieving our mission of high student engagement, success, and creating stable programming. The Executive Director and those in school leadership are evaluated in accordance with the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support (2023) which includes 1) a cyclical process of continuous improvement; 2) Professional Learning and Action Research; and 3) Reflective Practice, Feedback, and Support. The practice standards are based on national, or state performance standards agreed upon by the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC). Leader evaluation and support is an ongoing, cyclical progress monitoring process with evaluator and leader conferences in the fall/winter/spring. Multiple

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measures of student learning, growth, and achievement are mutually agreed upon during the goal setting process. Single point competencies, which are a description of a standard of behavior or performance that is framed only as a single set of desirable outcomes as opposed to a traditional rubric, are utilized. Goals and standards are consistent with the goals of the organization. The goal setting process will follow the timelines and frameworks created by the PDEC consistent with the standards established during this process. Goals and feedback will be based on evidence, observations, and artifacts of professional practice as aligned to the lens of the agreed upon standards. The PDEC will determine protocols for each level of leader (novice, provisional, professional, transfers from another district, part-time, or leader in need of support). All leaders will be assigned a primary evaluator (092 or 093).

Feedback to the leader will consider multiple and varied quantitative and qualitative indicators of evidence. Dialogue through the professional growth process begins with educator self reflection/self-assessment of impact of professional learning and educator practice on student growth, as well as the identification of next steps. The PDEC will create the plan for the nature and number of observations and/or reviews of practice and artifacts that are required. There are multiple pieces of evidence, which may include artifacts, observations of practice, student feedback, and reflections of the educator on student growth as part of the educator feedback process. Feedback is tied to standards and identifies strengths and areas of focus for advancement using clear timelines for written and verbal feedback as determined by the PDEC. The PDEC also determines the process for feedback as well as how to use formal and informative feedback from stakeholders. The cycle of check-ins to discuss what is happening in the organization includes opportunities for discussion linking organizational growth and development with observations of practice and performance. The evaluation plan includes differentiated supports and is responsive to leader needs.

Section 3 – Student Demand and Community / Local / Family Support: School must demonstrate that a Community Needs Analysis has been completed in planning for the new school / expansion / replication. This includes demonstrated presence of community demand, and that the proposed new school / expansion / replication school is in tune with community needs and priorities, and how management intends to engage with parents / families / community to enhance access and equity for at-risk populations.

- 1. School vision and design communicates high standards for student success • Applicant articulates how school will positively impact school and community stakeholders (describes community need demand for school and the educational model, e.g. by including information on waitlists for proposed / existing charter schools). • Describes specialized focus clearly and provides data to justify the key instructional and curriculum design elements (e.g. by providing data e.g. waitlists / community surveys, showing family interest in specialized instructional approaches proposed to be implemented at the charter school).**

EC Prep’s vision and design communicates high standards for student success because we believe our school will be a place where excellent teachers prepare diverse cohorts of young men to be resourceful critical thinkers who have achieved mastery of their learning. Through experience of and exposure to real world choices and responsibilities, our young men will gain

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pride in themselves, their peers, and their work. Our graduates will have entrepreneurial outlooks, a positive impact on society, a lifelong passion for learning, will be ready to excel in high school and college, and will be career oriented. Our school will positively impact school and community stakeholders because we seek to be part of the solution within the New Haven School District that is actively striving to offer children in our community a well-rounded set of choices for schooling. Our specialized focus is on action and adventure learning. As students’ question, form a thesis, and acquire knowledge they must act on it by experimenting, testing, or doing something. Thematic units and all curriculum in general will have an element of action beyond EC Prep’s Action Labs and Houses. “The House System” is a schoolwide technique to motivate young men to excel whether in the classroom, on adventures outside school, in the community, as individuals or with their Housemates. There are four to eight Houses depending on need, to which students are randomly appointed, and which will be managed through the House Points application designed at the Ron Clark Academy. The Ron Clark Academy has been using the House system effectively for 13 years. House members work together as teams on tasks, providing another level of mutual support for those who need additional discussion, explanation and assistance with content such as reading or writing assignments. Teachers or assigned House mentors monitor how such assistance is delivered, and Houses can earn points for positive classroom collaborations—within a House, and across House lines. A student who feels disengaged from a class, is engaged in his House and with his Housemates, giving him an entry point into the thematic subjects being covered. The House system discourages any sense of isolation, as rewards come more easily when an entire House collaborates. Collectively these real-world experiences, interaction with role models, serving the community, and opportunities

to go ‘beyond the block’ are embedded in the curriculum as adventure learning. This includes working on extended Action Lab projects such as building tiny houses (wood and electric shop), developing and implementing solutions to real community problems, and engaging in on-site learning with outside organizations under the concept of learning without walls.

Families have demonstrated interest in these specialized instructional approaches proposed to be implemented at EC Prep. The Founding Team has completed significant outreach to get buy in from the community and families for the All-boys academy concept dating back to 2017. A Strategic Focus Group was formed that included: Pastor Boise Kimber, Dr. Reginald Mayo (Former Superintendent of New Haven Public Schools), Leroy Williams (Former Principal, New Haven Public Schools), Maysa Akbar - Founding President Integrated Wellness Group, Glenn Worthy - (Former Principal, NHPS). The Focus Group engaged the community on several occasions, including at specific community meetings at King Robinson Interdistrict Magnet School, (former) Columbus Elementary School, Greater New Haven Clergy Association, and New Haven Public School Council of Education Meetings. Throughout the extensive community outreach, the Founding Team has engaged directly with families and members of the New Haven community that are impacted and concerned by our young men’s need to be uplifted and supported. Unequivocally, EC Prep’s mission and vision to enhance access and equity for at risk populations is in tune with the needs and priorities expressed from all stakeholders. Former New Haven Mayor Toni N. Harp, in his letter of support for EC Prep, iterated that, *“Black and Hispanic males (from 2016 to 2020) had low full-time employment rates of less than 43 percent (%) of majority males. Greater educational attainment is strongly associated with higher employment rates and greater earnings. It is important that urban Boys’ educational needs are addressed early if they are to become positive contributing members of their families and their communities.”*

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The Focus Group engaged the community on several occasions, including at specific community meetings: King Robinson Interdistrict Magnet School, former Columbus Elementary School, Greater New Haven Clergy Association, and the New Haven Public School Council of Education Meetings. More so, the founding team has engaged directly with families and members of the New Haven community that are impacted and concerned by our young men’s need to be uplifted and supported. We conducted a thorough Community Needs Analysis in planning for the school to open its doors that consisted of letters of support, petitions of support, and interest surveys to develop the concepts for the school that was focused on the young men in the community. Parents, business owners, organizations and politicians all participated and shared their hopes and dreams for this new school. Please see Appendix E for Community Outreach material that demonstrates our key instructional and curriculum design elements are in fact meeting community needs and priorities. As a result, the New Haven Community has rallied around the mission and vision of EC Prep in anticipation of impacting the lives of our city’s young men.

The presence of community demand is also evident in the following data collection: student demographics in the New Haven area show low achievement and significant numbers of at-risk students. During the 2022–2023 school year, Connecticut reported 21 public charter schools serving 10,936 students, while New Haven only reported six, serving 3,329 students. Overall, there are 18 all-boy private schools serving 4,834 students in Connecticut, and one all-boys public school. The average Connecticut private school tuition is \$23,481 for elementary schools,

and \$41,875 for High Schools. Half the all-boys private schools have a religious affiliation.

The New Haven School District encompasses 28 schools, which include middle school grades. Of these 14 are public, and 14 are Magnet schools. Twenty-six include Grade 4, 27 include Grade 5, 28 include Grade 6, 27 include Grades 7 and 8, and one includes Grade 9. Of the 18 private schools in New Haven (2,541 students), nine include middle school grades, serving some 1,733 students. There are only two all-boys schools, both are grades 9-12 and are Yeshiva-managed. There are no private or charter all-boys, exclusively middle school options in New Haven. There are six charter schools in New Haven, with 3,329 students, of which four include middle school grades, none of which are stand-alone middle schools, and none of which are just for boys. This may be why the EC Prep is receiving tremendous support from the local community.

In New Haven, we are in a situation where of the approximately 20,000 students, 14,006 live near or below the poverty line, of whom 40.5% are considered chronically absent students. New Haven's rate of chronic absenteeism is almost double the State average (34.3% vs. 19.0%). Male students make up 50.4% of the enrolled students and 36.5% of the students with chronic absenteeism. Most devastating is that 4,175 students, a quarter of those enrolled, were qualified as truants under state statute in the most recent pre-COVID 2019-2020 data. The stressors in New Haven schools reach beyond students as our district's teachers have higher rates of absences than across the state.

2. Enrollment forecast is well articulated with clear data, and rationale for enrollment growth (includes grades and ages of students to be served, clear picture of community demand for school).

EC Prep has chosen to target the middle years, ages 9-14 in grades 5-8, of growth and development of young men as it is a pivotal time of transition. Children, often black and brown

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males, are no longer seen as “kids” due to height and weight growth spurts that occur during this time. It is also a time when children want to test the limits and enter the ‘I know it all’ phase. David Schwartz LMFT, in his article Teenagers Don't Know Everything (Psychology Today, 2019) described this phenomenon and others as a time of uneasiness and defensiveness during which adults should be in the role of facilitators, not disciplinarians. These factors coupled with the reality of our youths' poverty, academic struggles, and disillusionment in New Haven requires a new approach that is targeted to these issues and the demographic struggling the most.

EC Prep will continue and elevate the work of the elementary school experience our young men have had and target the academic, social, and emotional needs they will have during the middle years. We look to eliminate chronic absenteeism and dissolve the notion of dropping out of school as an option by mitigating the elements that cause it before they reach the 9th grade, where the dropout numbers begin to climb. EC Prep will provide multiple reasons for New Haven's young men to stay in high school and graduate productive members of society such as the Ron Clark Academy House System that encourages teamwork and cooperation, social emotional support, role models and mentorship, as well as engaging curriculum that is aligned to interests like Action Labs, and culturally responsive teaching. There are also leadership

opportunities for our young men to establish a positive relationship with the community and give back to society. Additionally, our young men will have extracurricular opportunities such as sports, clubs, etc.

The EC Prep enrollment forecast supports slow controlled growth and firmly establishes a school culture that engages in continuous improvement with adequate time to map and analyze progress in student, staff, curriculum effectiveness and school-wide goals. We will grow one grade per year starting with 5th grade. By starting with 5th grade, EC Prep is engaging with young men entering the developmental benchmark of adolescents rather than the societal benchmark. Developmentally, early adolescence begins to manifest around age 9 when a young man starts detaching and differentiating from childhood and parents to start developing more independence and individuality.

Projected 5-year Target Enrollment Plan						
Grade Level	Ages	1: 2024-2025	2: 2025-2026	Y3: 2026-2027	Y4: 2027-2028	Y5: 2028-2029
05	9-11	75 Students	75 Students	75 Students	75 Students	75 Students
06	10-12	N/A	100 Students	100 Students	100 Students	100 Students
07	11-13	N/A	N/A	100 Students	100 Students	100 Students
08	12-14	N/A	N/A	N/A	100 Students	100 Students
Grand Total # of Students		75 Students	175 Students	275 Students	375 Students	375 Students

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As shown in the above table above, we will enroll 75 5th grade students in Year 1. There will be three classrooms of 25 young men each, with a lead academic teacher and a specialist teacher in each class. We will maintain this measured growth each year, with the aim of 375 students enrolled by Year 4, while working toward a student/teacher ratio of 12:1.

New Haven appears to be demographically stable, but we expect around 5% attrition each year for a range of reasons including parents exercising school choice to advocate for their children. As previously described, we will actively market the school in the immediate area, as well as in greater New Haven. We are confident that by creating an Optimal School Environment¹, small class sizes and a strong student to teacher ratio, we are providing our young men with consistent opportunities for genuine interactions.

•Analysis of the proposed school’s projected student demographics and a

description of the demographics of students attending public schools in the local community in which the charter school would be located and the school districts from which the students are, or would be, drawn to attend the charter school. • Impact of the proposed charter school on the racial and socio-economic diversity of public schools and school districts from which children would be drawn to attend the charter school.

The characteristics and demographics of New Haven, Connecticut (CT) appear to be deeply influenced by the presence of two Universities, given the median population age of 30.7 years as opposed to 41.1 years in CT and 38.2 years in the US. There is a strong increase in Latin and South American residents, with a high percentage of households in which a language other than English predominates.

New Haven has a high percentage of households led by women, which suggests there may be low presence of male role models. While there is stability in housing, with relatively few people moving out of their neighborhoods (80.4% of persons lived in the same house as in prior years), there is a low rate at 28% of owner-occupied houses. This is accompanied by New Haven having the highest poverty rate in New Haven County, at 25.6%, and in 2022 it continued to rank as the second poorest city in Connecticut behind Hartford. The dropout rate in New Haven is 14%, as opposed to 9% in Connecticut and 12% in the US.

In the New Haven School District, there is close to a 50/50 distribution between males (10,096 or 50.35%) and females (9,955). Among the nearly 22,000 students, 49.6% are eligible for the federal free and reduced-price meal program and 14.5% of students are English Language Learners⁶⁸. The Teacher to Student ratio is 13:1, with 99% of teachers certified, and an average of 89.5% with 3 or more years of experience. There are 27 full-time school counselors. The average math proficiency score is 38% (the CT public school average is 47%) and reading proficiency score is 48% (versus 58% as a statewide average). Minority enrollment is 94% of the student body (majority Black), higher than the Connecticut public school average of 50% (majority Hispanic).

¹Cotton, K. (2001, December). *New small learning communities: Findings from recent research*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Education Laboratory; Gettys, J. M. (2003). *The effect of school size on school climate variables in middle schools of South Carolina*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of South Carolina, Columbia; White, S. M. T. (2005). *The relationship of school size and school climate in public elementary schools in South Carolina*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

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Chronic absenteeism has historically been a major issue in New Haven public schools, although recent numbers are difficult to gauge because of COVID closures. Beginning in Kindergarten, New Haven students have a chronic absenteeism rate of 26%, never falling below 8%, which hovers around 30% for all of 9th through 12th grades. Students in grades 5-8 average 16% and between 8th and 9th grades, the chronic rate jumps from 16.9% to 31.7%. By that point, we have lost them. Thus, there is clearly a need in the local community for boys to be willing to go to middle school, learn how to leverage education in their lives, and see school as a building block for a successful future. Poverty, low access to male role models, language issues, and isolation caused by several external factors are substantiated by the numbers above. EC Prep

is intentionally designed as a school that builds the individual as part of a community of individuals, with consistent role models, and where they can learn to be resourceful, resilient, reliable, and responsible. Our hope is to open the world up for the boys, and introduce them to all the opportunities it contains, so that they can already begin to be intentional and purposeful about future careers through our relevant and accessible curriculum.

- **Description of how the applicant plans to ensure Access and Equity for at-risk student populations and establish and maintain a racially and socio-economically diverse student body, including proposed strategies (consistent with state statute and legal requirements) to recruit, admit, enroll, and retain a diverse student body.**
- **Applicants that are unlikely to establish and maintain a racially and socio-economically diverse student body must explain why this is the case, and outline how the anticipated racial and socio-economic makeup of the student body would promote the purposes of the CSP to provide high-quality educational opportunities to all students.**
- **Clear admission policy compliant with C.G.S §10-66bb(d)(8), defining student recruitment and retention plan that includes students as defined in C.G.S (10-66bb(c)(3) (page 2/27).**
- **Description of how school will identify, engage and accommodate families from various backgrounds, including English learners, students with disabilities, and students of color, (this could include increasing access by holding enrollment and recruitment events on weekends or during non-standard work hours, making interpreters available, and providing enrollment and recruitment information in widely accessible formats e.g., hard copy and online in multiple languages; as appropriate, large print or braille for visually-impaired individuals through widely available and transparent means e.g., online and at community locations).**

Pursuant to the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-15c², EC Prep will maintain an open enrollment policy and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity or expression, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. While we are an all-boys school by design, we would not exclude any girl who sought to enroll. The school will develop a transgender policy to accommodate transgendered students enrolling based upon their gender identity. We will deliberately concentrate recruitment activities to high-need communities and do not intend to apply to the State Board of Education for a waiver of the requirements of the

²Ensure that the school complies with the provisions of section 10-15c and that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability, athletic performance or proficiency in the English language, provided the school may limit enrollment to a particular grade level or specialized educational focus and, if there is not space available for all students seeking enrollment, the school may give preference to siblings but shall otherwise determine enrollment by a lottery, except the State Board of Education may waive the requirements for such enrollment lottery.

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enrollment lottery (C.G.S. § 10-66bb(j)).³ Please refer to Appendix G to review the Admissions Policy.

Marketing and recruitment efforts will focus primarily within New Haven but will be expanded to include surrounding communities. The marketing, recruitment, and outreach process will be staged in three phases: Phase I. Raising initial public interest and awareness, Phase II.

Engaging the community (meetings with local and surrounding districts and community-based organization representatives), Phase III. Hosting public forums, announcements, discussions, and meetings (hosting open houses and meetings with potential students, families, and community members).

In the school's inaugural year, EC Prep will accept applications from legal guardians of new students qualifying for Grade 5. Enrollment is determined by lottery, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes, and we will be part of the New Haven Public School choice lottery system. In subsequent years, enrollment preference is given to returning students and siblings of returning students in that order and will accept applications from legal guardians for all age and grade eligible students. **Application and Enrollment Procedures and Schedule**-EC Prep will participate in the New Haven city wide school choice lottery. If EC Prep does not participate in the school choice lottery a full school-based system will be implemented. The school will accept completed applications from mid-January through April 1 of each year. As the approval of our charter is contingent upon funding appropriations by the General Assembly, EC Prep will likely accept applications until June of 2024 for the first year of operation. **Mid-Year Enrollments and Back-Filling Seats**-Applications may be submitted electronically through the school's website, or in hard copy. Once all vacancies are filled through the lottery, a waiting list is created. If vacancies arise during the school year, the school will backfill any open seats from the waitlist. Applicants who have siblings already attending the school are given preference for any vacancies that occur. Enrollment packets will clearly articulate required documentation, to include appropriate proofs of identification, residency, and health records, etc. **Building a Diverse and Inclusive School Community**-In order to build a diverse and inclusive school community, EC Prep will make every effort to welcome families whose home language is not English. There will be targeted outreach to specific populations such as families with children identified with special needs or English learners with specifics on our programs. Diverse strategies will be deployed to attract a diverse student body and broaden the scope and depth of outreach, including: • Establishing a positive rapport with representatives of the local and surrounding districts and with community-based organizations to cultivate a collaborative relationship. • Attendance at a variety of events, including ESL⁴ programs for adults with school-aged children (EL/MLs⁵), county health centers (FRPL⁶, SWD⁷), doctors' offices, libraries, family service providers (FRPL, SWD), housing associations (FRPL), counseling centers and support groups (history of social/behavioral problems), tutoring groups (history of low academic performance), and places of worship (churches, mosques, temples, etc.) • Neighborhood canvassing in areas with higher concentrations of public housing developments

³ A charter school's governing council may apply for a waiver from the lottery process.

⁴ English as a Second Language

⁵ While the federal legal term remains English learners, the Connecticut State Department of Education is transitioning to using the term Multilingual learners in order to be more asset-oriented and acknowledge the strengths that these students bring. Multilingual learners (MLs) and English learners (EL/MLs) are used synonymously in this application.

⁶ Free or reduced lunch price (FRLP)/economically disadvantaged (ED)

⁷ Students with Disabilities

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(FRPL) and multicultural communities (EL/ML) • Distribution of flyers and mailings in English, Spanish, and prevailing languages (EL/ML) • Local media stations (radio and internet) that

target both English and non-English speaking audiences (EL/ML).

EC Prep proposes to enroll 5th graders, who will have academic or behavioral records, and who may have previously received early screening and interventions for academic, social, or behavioral difficulties. We will continually emphasize to all families that the school's policies support open enrollment, non-discriminatory practices, and an inclusive educational model.

As a school of choice, EC Prep recognizes that parent satisfaction is critical to student retention. We plan to maintain high levels through excellent achievement outcomes, retention of students, engagement of families, ongoing communication, individualized instruction, personalized support, and comprehensive services. Parents can have an active role in their son's education, provide feedback and participate in mobilizing school-wide efforts as mentioned previously. The founders recognize that the school is a service organization, and embraces its responsibilities to the children, families, and community, and the importance of satisfied families as a means of drawing in other boys and their families.

3. Demonstrates significant planning and effort, can provide examples of strategies to meaningfully engage current and prospective families and community members (including current or former teachers and other educators) in implementation and operation of school • Outlines specific and concrete role of parents, community members, including current and former educators in school's decision making on an ongoing basis. • Includes community / parents/ current and former teachers in developing an instructional model to best serve targeted student population including SWD and ELLs, foster youth, and unaccompanied homeless youth, educationally disadvantaged children, i.e. children whose educational achievement has been, or is being, restricted by economic, social or environmental disadvantages) • Ensures the school makes available to parents' information about educational options and the school's state report card must be publicly available on the school's website.

EC Prep finds it is critical for our teachers, young men and their families to be fully engaged and aligned in the outcome of each child's education. Relationships are built with entire family units, especially as families grow and siblings matriculate in the program. Our partnership with parents and guardians is central to our values. We will continue to foster these vital partnerships by providing multiple opportunities for families to actively engage and participate in the school community. Additionally, families will have access to important updates online: our website will ensure that families know about free, public, and open to all educational options available at our school. Our school's state report card will also be posted on the school's website in a timely manner in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-66pp.

Parents are encouraged to read the subject novels, support the House system, and assist with finding hands-on real-life opportunities for their sons. Family engagement is crucial during study, in the excitement of discovery, and as participants in school-wide activities. As partners, there are opportunities for families to volunteer, express ideas and voice concerns.

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EC Prep's open-door policy for families is part of the school leaders' engagement in

collaboration. A Parent Association (PA), parent task forces, parent workshops, and a reserved seat on the Board are some of the ways that EC Prep engages family members. This is solidified through open and ongoing communication via report cards, progress reports, emails, phone calls, meetings, and communication folders, and is augmented by a parent survey covering all aspects of the school. Communication plans between the parents and the advisor also include frequency (weekly, monthly, etc.), style (email, phone, etc.) and will be established at the initial welcome interview in August each year. The *Home Language Survey* will help identify families whose primary home language is not English. EC Prep will communicate with parents in the language the parents best understand or authorize. Translated forms and documents will be distributed by mail and posted on the school website. EC Prep will ask one of its bilingual teachers, a fellow parent who speaks the same language, a family member, a community volunteer, or, if all other measures are exhausted, a paid translator, to provide clear communication with the parent/guardian in the parent's native language. Public meetings, parent conferences and parent workshops will include translators on an as needed basis.

At EC Prep, parents are viewed as partners in the achievement of their sons because education begins at home. With frequent updates from teachers, opportunities to be in the classroom, and optional times to learn together, parents will be engaged in their young man's education, and have a reserved seat on the EC Prep Governing Council. The Executive Director will host families monthly to discuss emerging issues from both the family and the school's perspectives. Parents are invited guests at House events and at six-week cycled meetings where students take the lead in presenting relevant, grade level specific topics such as "Me then and Now", after which any information and new understandings of our young men's growth can be carried home to build stronger parent and son interactions. An active Parent Organization is provided with workshops on how to support their young man's educational growth: the unique techniques of parenting young men, male growth, development, and milestones, understanding the pieces of the EC Prep curriculum, the points to access curriculum with their son (includes providing copies of thematic novels in English and in the parents preferred language when available), understanding school reports; and, pointing to resources that are accessible in the community such as job opportunities, resume prep help, extracurricular activities, and more.

School staff or parent volunteers are made available who can translate during school events. EL/ML student data will be reported in the same manner and with the same frequency as for general education students, but we will indicate availability of this information in a language the parent can understand. If needed, we will seek staff or student family members who can provide direct translations. Strong rapport with families lets us engage early in even the most delicate and difficult conversations to overcome any possible concerns proactively and collaboratively. Families have easy access to staff, the Council and to other engaged community members. Their feedback will be captured and analyzed when we evaluate our programs and used in teacher and school leader valuations.

4. Applicant details comprehensive approach to achieving / sustaining equitable access, including mitigating barriers, including in practices around discipline, transport, enrollment and retention that could impede access to their programs.

New Haven's achievement gap, language concerns, and high levels of truancy have been documented throughout this application. As described previously, EC Prep intends to offer more equitable opportunities for young men with disabilities, English Learners/Multilingual Learners, **Great Schools for Connecticut (GSCT)**

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and those with other differences, to allow them to succeed at their own pace throughout and beyond their academic careers, and to do so supported by their House cohorts. Ethnic and economic isolation is reduced by targeted recruitment of students in areas beyond the immediate school location. This has been shown to be effective with other charter and magnet schools, who attract a larger number of suburban students.

Closing the achievement gaps currently prevailing in New Haven public schools should help counter the isolation experienced by many young men. In seeking to ameliorate achievement disparities, EC Prep delivers an approach focused on building cohorts of young men who collaborate on real world projects, adventures, and experiences that reflect the adult working world. This inclusive model is structured through programs that deliberately individualize instruction to meet the needs of every learner, while looking at each young man in terms of his curriculum, framed through the novel-based approach, his need for hands on action lab experiences, his need to belong with other young men in a competitive house system, and framed by his real-world engagement. This delivers the foundational skills necessary for success in later grades and will support learning on a wide spectrum of proficiency levels while reinforcing common linkages without focusing on perceptions of difference. The diverse student body will be introduced to a variety of materials, activities, and experiences to expose students to a wider array of cultures, backgrounds, beliefs, and traditions.

The school uniforms help to reduce socio-economic tensions that might otherwise distract students, while providing a public symbol of unity and pride, differentiated according to House. The small learning environment and reduced student-to-teacher ratios allow more frequent and personalized interactions between students and staff members. Throughout their daily discourse, teachers will continually endorse the school's core values which exemplify our emphasis on helping each student understand that he is a valued member of a larger community.

5. Applicant outlines transportation plan for students (meeting requirements of C.G.S 10- 66ee(f))(page 11/27).

We will request student bus services from the New Haven School District which will provide student transportation to and from a bus stop and the school. EC Prep will provide student transportation for field trips during the year and for Saturday Academy, 24 sessions throughout the school year, to any participating students that reside within the district. The transportation costs over the 5 years are based on Type C, 72-passenger buses at less than capacity so that AM and PM routes for Saturday Academy do not exceed an hour. The school will use centralized stops patterned after the weekday district transportation schedule. EC Prep will require any bus vendor to document and maintain the levels of insurance, levels of maintenance and driver screening standards as required by the State of CT.

Section 4 – Instructional Practices, Student Academic Achievement: Fully describe the design of the academic program (including specialized focus, if any) of the school. Provide data that justifies / supports the school’s mission and overall goals, providing a brief description of key instructional and curriculum design elements and how these will be leveraged to meet the school’s performance objectives and community needs. Be sure to include data / references supporting the instructional and curriculum design and how these align to state and federal requirements. Include a description of why

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this educational model was chosen and how students will be assessed, how assessment practices are aligned to state standards and state assessment requirements.

As a Charter School with the autonomy to implement an educational program that differs from the traditional district school, EC Prep’s smaller learning environment coupled with reduced student-to-teacher ratios will facilitate more individualized instruction with more frequent, meaningful, personalized, and thought-provoking interactions among students as they represent their Houses, and between students and staff members. The school’s framework and curriculum are designed to meet the changing needs of young men in middle school and young men socially and emotionally. EC Prep would be the first dedicated middle school for young men in New Haven. Our program is focused on transforming today’s boys and guiding them to be tomorrow’s men. While Connecticut has several special purpose schools serving this age group, and many highly acclaimed all-boys high schools, none address New Haven’s current dilemma of how to close our male students’ achievement gap. However, EC Prep’s design of the academic program is a proven school model. The elements of the EC Prep model are currently in use in many schools across the country, including its Action Labs. Integrated curriculum, action-oriented learning, the House system, and specific best practices have been effectively used by The Ron Clark Academy. Located in Atlanta with a school population reflective of ours in New Haven, it encapsulates the core vision of what is possible for us. The Ron Clark Academy⁸10 (RCA), an award-winning middle school started by a multi-award-winning national teacher of the year recipient, has been able to combine these transformative methods and techniques. With both national and international recognition, 100% of their students graduate, 60% of them go on to prep schools and 90% of them successfully graduate from college. Throughout the past 13 years more than 80,000 educators including superintendents, district level administrators, and teachers have participated in RCA professional development and replication workshops. Our faculty will participate in both online and in-person professional development provided by Ron Clark Academy, as reflected in our multi-year school budget. Additionally, during the EC Prep planning year, the curriculum team will thoroughly engage with resource options in a hands-on manner, using focus groups, when possible, to ensure our young men are exposed to motivational and adaptive instruction.

The main criteria for choosing curriculum resources are that they are aligned to the Connecticut

state standards and are proven successful in practice as related to educating boys through the EC Prep mission and vision. Therefore, EC Prep will work with Sofara International to help align the curriculum with education standards adopted by the Connecticut State Council of Education, which include Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) for English language arts and mathematics, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for science, National School Library Standards and Connecticut State Frameworks for all other areas of study. Along with Sofara International, the EC Prep curriculum team will compile and create a map of the core concepts and student benchmarks for the Connecticut 9th grade standards, gaining a clear understanding of where our young men are expected to be when they graduate. A backwards map is done for 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th and 4th grades standards from there. Of significance is a walk-through of the NGSS for our STEAM based Action Labs. NGSS are cross referenced with our College and Career Action Lab STEAM modules provided through Paxton Patterson Labs.

⁸<https://ronclarkacademy.com/>

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The EC Prep Curriculum Team (Director of Teaching and Learning, Executive Director, Coordinators) will use Understanding by Design Learning⁹ to form the curriculum framework and Universal Designs of Learning to plan out units, lessons, activities, rubrics and assessments. The EC Prep curriculum will cover each of the standards' key design considerations such as the use of integrated literacy and blended research and media skills and goes beyond them to what we know must be added to ensure maximum student achievement.

Overall, EC Prep's integrated curriculum will weave a common 5 themes each year across all subjects. For English language arts (ELA), EC Prep will use a novel-driven curriculum to provide a rich literacy program and to introduce universal challenges and rites of passage. Each grade level will have its individual themes that flow through a novel and is reinforced with a component of hands-on action-based modules of learning driven by the career and adventure focused STEAM Action Labs. In books, change-makers, adventurers, thinkers, and doers use the tools they acquire to move forward. These tools often include the ability to calculate, read, engage in logical thinking, understand complex formulas, use muscles trained in sports, or be flexible in forming teams and relying on teammates. For our young men, gaining knowledge becomes a quest, as those with the most diversified knowledge or best team often succeed, as may the hero in the book.

For mathematics, EC Prep intends to utilize the world-class, Singapore Math curriculum. Singapore Math is an internationally recognized math and science program that has ranked in the top scoring international tests for decades and is CCSS aligned¹⁰ as it was one reference point for the creation of the Common Core State Standards. A recent study¹¹ of Singapore Math conducted with fourth graders in New Jersey found that students improved an average 12 points and proficiency increased 22%. Both direct instruction and integration into crossover content will be implemented using the Singapore Math curriculum. Mathematics at EC Prep will not be taught in isolation because our core program will foster rigorous college readiness skills including forming conjectures and drawing real-world links to content. Direct instruction will be anchored by a series of lessons from pre-algebra to data analysis to advanced mathematical topics: concepts reinforcement with the EC Prep STEAM Action Lab's career and college ready

focus. Students must think through concepts and apply them in new ways. Math lessons will be based on real world scenarios making it easy to integrate with our themes, novels, and labs. Support mechanisms are embedded in line with Universal Design for Learning framework¹² (UDL) principles as well as added differentiation for reteach and enrichment purposes. Video lesson retakes give students independence to review concepts as needed from school or home and support multilingual learners and students with disabilities in accessing concepts as many times as they need to.

The EC Prep science program will revolve around the use of its Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) aligned STEAM Action Lab modules. It is aligned with the goals, modules of learning and the standards for Connecticut's new 2022 release of their Model Middle School Science Curriculum¹³. Thirty-two (32) career and college focused labs are currently available to

⁹ Understanding by Design, Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, 1998

¹⁰ https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0603/7487/6349/files/Scope_9.pdf?v=1635780325

¹¹ https://www.hmhco.com/~media/sites/home/education/global/pdf/white-papers/mathematics/elementary/math-in-focus/MIF_Research_Efficacy_LR.pdf

¹² <https://www.cast.org/impact/universal-design-for-learning-udl>

¹³ [GoOpen CT](#)

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our young men and share learning topics such as their financial literacy to our personal finance modules. The Paxton Patterson lab series will be used as the foundational resource to bring the EC Prep vision to life. The modules provide the foundation for our workstations which we further enhance to align with curriculum needs, meet student needs, and adjust to standards and goals. Labs are accessed as part of thematic instruction and literacy instruction. Young men choose two labs to explore with a partner with the purpose of deepening their knowledge of a topic and as exposure to, and experience in, authentic careers. Additional labs are accessed during student genius research time or to freely explore during Saturday Academy as an independent enrichment activity. Normally career and college prep labs or classrooms are only found in a Career and Technology Education (CTE) environment for students in high school and above. EC Prep will be exceptional in this area as a middle school. Our labs will serve as a boy-focused intervention in being action oriented and as an excellent approach to science instruction as each lab is part of a STEAM curriculum, but at their core the labs are CTE. Experience, exposure, and authentic hands-on learning are the goals of using Action Labs in the Middle School Science Curriculum. Longitudinal studies conducted by the New Hampshire Department of Education¹⁴ confirm that in addition to parents self-reporting high satisfaction with their child's program and level of engagement, CTE students were also satisfied and enrolled in postsecondary education after graduating from high school at a rate of 75% and had a 10% higher graduation rate than the non CTE students.

All the above considered, our integrated ELA, Math, and Science curriculum will be based on hands-on learning modules that decrease barriers by supporting tiered conceptualization, sparking imagination and creativity and challenging all at-risk/at-promise students to expand their thinking and create a frame of reference for further knowledge acquisition. This can be said about the emerging at-risk student as well as the student who has mastered his lesson and is at-risk of disengaging without enrichment. As an action focused school geared toward boys

where everything is reinforced with doing, in a learn/apply/action cycle young men are challenged developmentally. They will learn a concept or skill, apply it in a variety of practical assignments, and use it in a real-world scenario or context.

EC Prep will ensure that every young man receives the needed support within the purview of the school to promote maximum success. We recognize that addressing special needs applies to all students at-risk whether there is an IEP or 504 in place and make monitoring through our tiered intervention protocol a priority. All special education services will comply with federal laws and regulations and address the needs of our students with disabilities (SWDs) by aligning ourselves closely with Connecticut's Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) for Response to Intervention. EC Prep will use the three-tiered approach of Connecticut's SRBI framework as a basis to provide services, personnel, and resources. For maximum success, each student accesses interventions when he needs them. A student with academic delays is given one or more research-validated interventions, and his academic or behavioral progress is monitored frequently to confirm their effectiveness relative to specific and measurable goals. Interventions are based on valid information about current performance, realistic implementation and include ongoing student progress monitoring. If a student fails to show significant improvement despite several well-designed interventions, this may point to an underlying disability. Interventions will be provided by both special and general educators, with direct and indirect instruction. EC Prep will also seek to collaborate with local district and support organizations such as the Connecticut Alliance of Regional Education Service Centers (RESOC)

¹⁴[CTE Data Story](#)

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and local BSEs, as well as attend regional, statewide, and national conferences. Special Education teachers will work closely with general educators in training and in practice to ensure that every student receives effective support. Finally, teachers and staff will receive training on the school's SRBI program, referral process, IEP implementation strategies, reporting requirements, and discipline policies.

To ensure that EC Prep students are continually receiving the best education in line with its mission, as such, a crosswalk of high performing schools in Connecticut in the public, private, and charter sectors will be created and maintained for curriculum structures. Our curriculum team will establish peer-based relationships to be able to engage in sharing best practices. The same will be accomplished for high performing all boys' schools in and around Connecticut to adopt curriculum resources that enhance our planned curriculum design and structure. EC Prep has a plan to ensure that ongoing development, improvement, and refinement of the curriculum is front and center. In August of every year, the Curriculum team will conduct a data driven review of the efficacy of the curriculum as it relates to the prior school year and hosts professional development in the pre-opening teacher training Summer Institute. Teachers will have the opportunity to plan on curriculum updates as a grade team and have professional conversations around all pertinent standards.

Assessments will be aligned to state standards and state assessment requirements and as such, will be used to inform instruction such as formative and summative assessments. Formative assessment practices focus attention on teachers gauging the impact of their

teaching by eliciting evidence of student learning, providing feedback, and adjusting their teaching. Tier 2 supports are offered to students based on the information derived from the formative assessment practices. The support can be either embedded in the classroom or provided separately based on student need. At the end of the unit, teachers administer an aligned, on-grade IAB as a means of evaluating learning mastery. At the end of the school year, on-grade summative assessments are administered to evaluate overall achievement on the state standards. At the core of EC Prep assessment is the student-centric Standards Referenced Grading Protocol (SRGP) that finely maps academic progress as attached to benchmarks in the state standards. Evidence of reaching benchmarks in the standards is collected and stored as a digital assessment folder in the CDM system. The CDM system is used to generate reports and to analyze how categories such as behavior or attendance affect achievement in particular classes and subjects, either individually or within cohorts. This aids with curriculum planning, assessment and reporting, attendance and behavior, and parent engagement. The CSDE 2022 Sensible Assessment Practices will be used to guide our protocols and will be applied to all students, including those with disabilities and English learners.

The Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment system of Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) will be implemented as shown here. Each school year a detailed assessment calendar is planned for each grade and with mindful consideration of students in need of additional assessments or modified assessments. IABs are scored immediately to provide actionable data. Outside of testing, IABs also enable teachers to use the system as do-now's that are incorporated into the curriculum and inform teachers what parts of lessons to adjust or reteach. Validated assessment is used for its intended purpose with a continuous feedback loop that helps modify and fine-tune instruction. **Progress Toward Achieving Goals**-EC Prep's assessment protocols focus on what a learner can do at the time of assessment. Protocols gauge authentic learning, give value to diversity, and support and inform change. Through the implementation of a **Great Schools for Connecticut (GSCT)**

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Standards Referenced Grading Protocol (SRGP) assessment system, driven by goal setting and the evidentiary data, we will clearly know where each student is in meeting grade level benchmarks and standards. **Reliable and Valid Assessment**-EC Prep faculty choose additional unit assessments to administer and utilize formative tools such as exit tickets during lessons and maintain a log of anecdotal notes and more as multiple measures. Analysis of all data is used as a check-and-balance to confirm patterns and suspected causes of both growth and stagnation in student learning. The Data Analysis Team works together to analyze data and confer with teachers regularly in a coaching capacity to ensure teachers are mastering the use of data.

Section 5 – Financial Management, Monitoring: Describe how the school intends to achieve financial stability and viability through implementation of proposed activities, keeping in mind federal guidelines around Allowable Costs. Refer to 2CFR 200 as the guiding document for a comprehensive understanding of allowable costs, non regulatory guidance, and the Allowable Cost Guide when constructing a school budget. In this section explain the school's plan to be strategic, compliant and a responsible fiduciary of federal funds. All proposed expenditures and grant-supported activities will need to align with at least one of the SMART Goals applicant indicates in Section 7 (SMART Goals).

Budget template and narrative: Please refer to GSCT's Survey Monkey grant system for completed budget template and narrative.

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Section 6 – Grant Project Goals: Identify 3-5 SMART grant project goals. Justify each goal through its value in supporting the planning and implementation of the proposed school. All grant spending, including future budget revisions must fit clearly within your stated project goals. All proposed expenditures and grant-supported activities need to align with at least one of the SMART Goals outlined in your Project Narrative.

SMART Goal #1: ECP will be in a strong academic position to ask for a renewal and high school extension at the end of the charter term.

Rationale for Goal - As renewal and potential growth is the goal of any public charter school, there are academic conditions that need to be in place to renew and grow. These start with a higher success rate on Connecticut (CT) State Assessments in grades 5-8 for our young men. By the time we apply for renewal, we intend to have made a positive (quantitative) impact on the middle school males who chose our school. This success will be primarily measured by how well they perform against their district male peers - on the same CT assessments. If after the first charter term, our male students do not perform better than their district male peers, we will have not made the impact we intended. Charter schools can innovate and be different if they wish. But while being innovative and different, they must also prove they are better than existing options. The expenses in our CSP grant that can be reasonably aligned with this will be labeled SMART goal 1.

SMART Goal #2: ECP will be in a strong organizational position to ask for a renewal and high school extension at the end of the charter term.

Rationale for Goal - There are organizational conditions that need to be in place to renew and grow. These include three factors that indicate strong evidence of organizational strength. The CSP grant will significantly support this goal through training across our entire group of stakeholders. 1. Our board needs to be well-trained, diverse and carry out their duties effectively. 2. Teachers recruited to ECP will join us because they believe in single-gender education and will remain with us because we invest in their growth as teachers. 3. Our school will be a well-known single-gender brand in New Haven and will be fully enrolled each year. All these goal components are achievable and measurable. The expenses in our CSP grant that can be reasonably aligned with this will be labeled SMART goal 2.

SMART Goal #3: ECP will be in a strong financial position to ask for a renewal and high school extension at the end of the charter term.

Rationale for Goal - There are financial conditions that need to be in place to renew and grow. These include two factors that indicate strong evidence of financial strength. 1. ECP must show structural fiscal surpluses during operating years 3-5. Once CSP expires in July 2026, ECP will begin relying only on general per pupil funding and limited federal entitlement aid (i.e. Title 1 and Title 2). This means that during years 3-5, ECP must prove it can run positive

surpluses on only government funds, which is the baseline revenue for any charter school. 2. ECP must be liquid cash flow positive for at least 90 days by operating year 5. This assumes 90 days of unrestricted cash can be used to pay all obligations if there was an interruption to revenue. This shows not only liquidity strength but is an optimistic sign for a future high school. The expenses in our CSP grant that can be reasonably aligned with this will be labeled SMART goal 3.

Great Schools for Connecticut (GSCT)

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Section 7 – Priority Points: To earn priority points applicants must articulate how they will carry out the following:

- 1. Collaborate with at least one traditional public school or traditional public school district (up to 2 points) – N/A**
- 2. Promote high-quality educator and community centered charter schools to support underserved students (up to 2 points) – Included in Section 4.**
- 3. Provide services to high school students (up to 2 points) – N/A**
- 4. Provide services to rural communities (up to 2 points) – N/A**