



SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

South Carolina Public Charter School Application

Cover Page

Applicant Information

Name of Proposed Charter School: Thornwell Charter School

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State: South Carolina

Zip Code: 29325

Name of Applicant Group: Thornwell Charter School Planning Committee

FEIN: 20-4272566

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Additional Information About Proposed Charter School

Grade levels during opening year: 5K - 12

Grade levels at full student matriculation: 5K - 12

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Executive Summary

Description of the school's philosophy for educating students; plan to provide new, innovative, and more flexible ways to educate children; explanation of key programmatic features of the school; explanation of how the school will close achievement gaps; and any unique features of the school.

The Thornwell Charter School Planning Committee (TCSPC) began formal meetings in the summer of 2017, but the idea of utilizing the campus and serving the Upstate Area of South Carolina on the Thornwell Campus has been discussed since Thornwell School closed in 2007. Thornwell currently operates a South Carolina First Steps 4k, a 3K, and an Early Head Start Program with over 120 students. In addition, Thornwell has a successful afterschool and summer program that serves the campus children and over 40 children from the community. Thus, Thornwell has experience and support as a community education provider. The TCSPC's mission is to create a school that offers each student a personalized academic plan, an individualized health and wellness program, and a life skills program. Thornwell Charter School's life skills program stems from the Teaching Family Association, an evidence-based model that focuses on cognitive, relationship, strength-based behavioral models, and is culturally driven by excellence. The Teaching Family Association is a complete toolkit for front-line practitioners with quality support and management. Thornwell Charter School will be located on the grounds of Thornwell, a 350 plus acres campus with multiple buildings including a school building with eighteen classrooms and a performing arts center, a gymnasium, an athletic center that includes a weight room and locker rooms, two tennis courts, athletic fields (football/soccer/lacrosse, baseball, track, and softball) a dining hall with a commercial kitchen, farm buildings and a swimming pool. The TCSPC plans to open a K-12 school with 295 students, 20 (never more than 25 students in any class) per grade level in grades K5-5 and with 25 students in each grade level 6 through 12. The Thornwell Charter School's facilities will need to be upgraded to meet the Office of School Facilities' requirements, but the TCSPC has had an architect create drawings that can be viewed by the Office of School Facilities to help determine the renovations that need to be made. Financial arrangements have already been made to begin the upgrading process immediately upon approval. Thornwell Charter School will be located in the Laurens County School District 56 attendance area, but anticipates enrolling students from the counties of Newberry, Greenwood, Greenville, Spartanburg, and Union as well as from Laurens School District 55. Greenville County is experiencing tremendous population growth in the Fountain Inn area and that area will be one of the targeted areas for the school's student population. Southern Greenville County is less than 30 miles from the Thornwell Campus, and the school will consider providing some student transportation to and from that area. Thornwell currently owns four state approved vehicles for student transportation. Thornwell Charter School will recruit for diversity and anticipates no problem in meeting the diversity guidelines of the South Carolina Charter School Act. The educational, wellness, and life skills plans for Thornwell Charter School will involve comprehensive personalized plans that will require monthly meetings with each student to evaluate progress, to fine-tune goals, and to ensure all students are providing input and feedback for their goals. The school will ensure all grade level South Carolina standards are comprehensively taught and measured. Each student will have an individualized portfolio that includes results of real-time formative and summative assessments

and both short-term and long-term goals that are parent and student approved. The Thornwell academic support program for residential students and some community students is currently using Read Right which is a personalized learning program and is a very effective, evidenced based program. Four teachers have been trained in Read Right procedures. Thornwell will also explore the expansion of the residential program to serve children from all over the state. Thornwell currently has 76 students living on Campus and has facilities that could house over 100 students. The learning and developmental goals will be rigorous, yet realistic, and will require each student to stretch both academically, physically, and behaviorally. The school will employ a Data Specialist to assist with the maintenance of student records and student progress. A Teaching Family Consultant will be hired to train all teachers in the Teaching Family model and will be available to help the teachers with classroom management, student behavior, and the development of the life skills program. In addition, the school will hire a full-time Physical Education teacher/Wellness Director who will be charged with assisting in wellness goal setting and developing a wellness system that utilizes the comprehensive exercise venues on the campus. Beyond a gym that has a climbing wall already installed, the campus includes an athletic center with weight and resistance training equipment, a track, walking trails, bike trails and a swimming pool. All students will have plans developed to engage them in a physical activity at least five hours per week. The school will join the South Carolina High School League and develop a wide variety of both intramural and interscholastic teams. The overarching plan is to develop students who are both physically, socially and academically excelling. The Personalized Student Plan will foster continuous monitoring of academic and wellness goals, the development and implementation of healthy student standards, and the personalized involvement of students in their goal development and monitoring. Students will move at an academic pace to avoid and/or close academic gaps between students. The TCSPC believes the rigorous personalized program utilizing academic, life skills, and wellness goals will provide a unique educational program for the geographic areas in which Thornwell is located and will appeal to parents seeking academic rigor in a personalized fashion as well as developing lifelong healthy life skills.

Mission Statement

Students at Thornwell Charter School will learn and develop in a rigorous, personalized academic environment that fosters a love for learning, in an individualized health and wellness program that promotes lifelong health, and in the Teaching Family model that helps children develop life skills which will enable them to succeed in higher education, in their careers and to be productive members of their communities.

I. Educational Plan and Capacity

1. Evidence of Need and Support

Evidence of support for the formation of the charter school.

Extraordinary support for implementing the proposed Thornwell Charter School has been offered throughout the planning and exploratory phase leading up to this charter application. Our committee has compiled an impressive list of individuals, parents, businesses, community leaders, and educators who will support our school at a variety of levels and in an assortment of ways. Emails from parents stating they plan to apply to TCS, and letters of support detailing the cooperation, collaboration, assistance, and aid offered by our community are found in **APPENDIX C**. Members of the planning committee will continue to work with Thornwell, the community, parents, and business and educational partners in the formation of the charter school. Thornwell Charter School plans to use the facilities located on the campus of Thornwell. Thornwell has a capacity to house over one hundred children. In **Appendix C** is a letter from Lindy Scott, Thornwell's executive vice-president, stating that all K5 - 12th grade students residing on the campus will have the option to apply Thornwell Charter School.

Outreach conducted by the charter committee.

On Monday, December 11, 2017, a press release was sent out in Laurens County and all bordering counties to radio stations, daily and weekly newspapers, and news websites. A Facebook page and website (www.thornwellcharterschool.org) were launched the same day. As of January 31, 2018, parents have completed information forms for 315 students spanning all grade levels K5 - 12. In addition, Thornwell has 45 school aged students living on campus which brings the total documented student interest to 360. 56 teachers and staff have completed information forms expressing their interest in teaching and working in the school. Two administrators have sent resumes concerning their interest. 11,596 people were reached by the Facebook post, and 404 people had reactions, comments, and shares. The morning show on

WLBG radio in Laurens has given much time to discussing Thornwell Charter School. Golaurens.com ran the press release, and it had 429 shares. The Laurens County Advertiser and the Greenwood Index Journal conducted interviews with the Thornwell Charter School Committee chairperson and published the articles in their newspapers. Copies of the articles are in **Appendix C**. On Friday, January 12, 2018, a boosted Facebook went out to families within a 50 mile radius of the school. On January 17, 2018, a flyer was sent home to the parents of the children in Thornwell's Early Head Start, 3K, and South Carolina First Steps 4K. All but one of these 123 children come from homes in which the children qualify for federal and state funds that support these programs; therefore, they receive the school day program at no charge. A small number of the parents do pay \$15 per week for the after school program.

Table 1.1 shows per grade level the number of students whose parents have completed the interest form on the TCS website as of January 31, 2018.

Table 1.1

Number of Students Completing Interest Forms in Year 1 Collected as of January 31 , 2018	
Kindergarten	43
1st Grade	34
2nd Grade	29
3rd Grade	39
4th Grade	29
5th Grade	31
6th Grade	25
7th Grade	36
8th Grade	26
9th Grade	22
10th Grade	16
11th Grade	16
12th Grade	14

Plan for continued outreach to be conducted by the charter committee.

TCSPC will form an outreach committee (OC) to work specifically on brand awareness and target underserved educational markets in the greater Clinton communities. Below is the OC's marketing program:

Purpose

The TCSPC will form a committee that will work to increase awareness for potential TCS students by creating and implementing marketing and public relations initiatives to enhance the organization's visibility around the greater Laurens County area.

Organization

1. The chair of the committee is appointed by the TCS Chair.
2. The membership of the committee consists of TCS members and community leaders from around the greater Laurens County area.
3. Committee members are recruited by the OC chair.
4. The number of members who serve on the Committee is left to the discretion of the chair.
5. The committee chair reports to the TCSPC.

Functions

1. Create and implement initiatives to embed TCS in the greater Laurens County community's consciousness.
2. Create an outreach marketing and communications plan.
3. Review, revise as necessary, and implement outreach priorities based on TCS Application Committee goals and objectives.
4. Increase members' participation in marketing TCS.
5. Identify issues, problems, and opportunities that can be addressed.

6. Create new marketing materials and update other materials as necessary.
7. Work collaboratively with other TCS committees as necessary.

Expectations of Committee Members

1. Time Commitment: Meeting once per month (or as needed) plus additional time for outreach activities.
2. Keep focus on both increasing membership and brand awareness.
3. Work within the committee's purpose and functions.
4. Meet project deadlines.
5. Work with other committee members to achieve identified outcomes.
6. Work in an atmosphere that is open to suggestions and to creative thinking.

Community members, parents, and leaders who publicly support the school.

Letters of support for the Thornwell Charter School have been written by the following businesses and organizations: National Healthcare of Clinton; The Laurens County Chamber of Commerce; Piedmont Technical College; South Carolina Vocational Rehab of Laurens; The Greenwood Genetic Center; Adams Building Supply; True Value Hardware; State Farm of Clinton; Laurens County Safe Home; United Community Bank; Laurens Police; Bailey Manor; Arthur State Bank; Clinton Rotary; AgriFarm Services; Palmetto Equestrian Therapeutic Riding Program; CCI Industries Inc.; Cox, Ferguson, and Wham, LLC, Gary Crow, D.M.D.; Clinton Dental Care; Representative Mike Pitts; Dempsey's Pizza Restaurant; Presbyterian College; Bethany Presbyterian Church; First Presbyterian Church; Trotters Restaurant; Perfectly Balanced, LLC; Cornerstone Investment Management, LLC; TD Bank; BiLo; Michael W. Payne,

MD; Beverly Jones, a member of the Town Council of Cross Hill, SC; and James T. Morton, Thornwell's Board of Trustees Chairperson. Numerous parents have agreed to go public with their desire to apply for their children to attend TCS, and their names are listed in **Appendix C**. TCSPC has email addresses for all parents who have expressed interest in the school and will use email to help keep these parents updated on the application approval and students enrollment processes. Parents will have regular and ongoing involvement in the school as a result of the personalized education, behavioral, and wellness plans. The plans provide parents with the opportunity to participate in monthly conferences which report their children's progress and goals. As children progress, they will actually lead the conferences. Parents will also have opportunities to volunteer and to participate in PTO. In addition, they will be encouraged to attend all Board of Directors meetings.

Partnerships or plans for community involvement.

Thornwell will be the most significant partnership which will be defined in a Memorandum of Agreement. For a lease and fees yet to be determined, Thornwell will provide the main classroom building, a gymnasium, an athletic center, a dining hall, athletic fields, tennis courts, an additional classroom building, building maintenance, grounds keeping, advancement, marketing/communications, a nurse and financial services. The Memorandum of Agreement is in **Appendix Z**. Educational partnerships will come through Presbyterian College, Greenwood Genetic Center, South Carolina Vocational Rehab, Piedmont Technical College and USC Union. The Palmetto Equestrian Therapeutic Riding Program will provide an additional service to some of our special needs children, a location for service projects, and learning opportunities for students who may be interested in careers in working with animals or in

working with people who have special needs. Greenville Hospital, Clinton Dental, Self Medical Group, Gary Crow, D.M.D., Michael W. Payne, MD, and National Healthcare of Clinton will provide excellent support for the development of the wellness program and great opportunities for job shadowing. Adams Building Supply, Dempsey's Pizza, True Value Hardware, State Farm, United Community Bank, and Arthur State Bank will offer internships and other learning opportunities for students interested in business careers. Laurens City Police have offered their services in teaching the students the value of good character and decision making. CCI Industries, Inc. will offer a choice for students who show a desire to learn about manufacturing. AgriFarm Services and Thornwell will be locations for students to learn about careers in farming. Additionally, TCS has a letter from Lauren McCauley, a Lead Education Associate in Personalized Education at the South Carolina Department of Education, that details training opportunities in Personalized Learning. Some members of the TCSPC have already begun participating in their workshops.

Evidence demonstrating assurance of community partnerships.

Please refer to the Memorandum of Understanding between TCSPC and Thornwell in **Appendix Z** and the many letters of support and assurances of community partnerships presented and evidenced in **Appendix C** of this application. Thornwell is not a private school and does not need to present evidence to support conversion.

2. Curriculum and Instructional Model

a. Educational Model

TCS will implement a Personalized Learning (PL) model. This model tailors learning for each student's strengths, needs and interests, including enabling student voice and choice in what,

how, when and where they learn - to provide flexibility and supports to ensure mastery of the highest standards possible. By giving students ownership over their learning and grounding learning in their interests and passions, they feel valued, motivated and in control. By meeting students at their actual performance level, PL helps the students operate at their points of proficiency, enables them to experience immediate success; and thus, helps to motivate them to move forward in mastery. Practitioners have identified the following essential personalization components: student agency; differentiated instruction; immediate instructional interventions and supports for each student when needed; flexible pacing; personalized learning plans; deeper learning and problem solving to develop meaning; frequent, authentic feedback from instructors and peers; standards based world-class knowledge and skills; anywhere, anytime learning; and performance based assessments to include project based learning, portfolios, etc. Since PL is individualized, all students, whether they have learning disabilities or whether they are gifted and talented will experience high levels of achievement.

Vision

The vision of Thornwell Charter School is to cultivate college and career ready graduates who will achieve success in life and become leaders in our communities, our state, and beyond.

School Values & Beliefs

We believe that...

- **Everyone is unique and has the capacity to learn**

Individuals learn in different ways at different rates.

We believe that students learn best when we:

- Differentiate instruction
- Identify the learning style and interests of each student and review this information when

planning units

- Provide varied opportunities to demonstrate learning
- Use real-time data to inform planning and instruction
- Emphasize mastery of skills and breadth of content

- **Individuals are responsible for their choices and actions**

We believe students and staff practice respect by:

- Being responsible for choices and actions
- Providing a physically and emotionally safe school environment
- Celebrating academic and social milestones and achievements
- Supporting the wellbeing of others and of the school community

- **Everyone thrives in an environment of high expectations and rigor**

We:

- Believe that smart work, conscientiousness, and perseverance are necessary for continuous improvement.
- Design curriculum to build student capacity to meet the rigor and expectations of post-secondary education and careers in a dynamic, 21st-century work environment.
- Design courses and units to train students to solve non-routine problems by applying design strategies, explaining their reasoning, and using evidence.
- Challenge students to analyze problems by drawing conclusions from data, citing evidence, and developing a logical argument.
- Engage students to apply concepts across multiple content areas.
- **Increasingly independent work and collaborative learning help all students build the skills necessary for life in an interconnected global community**

We believe that students thrive in an environment that includes...

- Authentic collaboration among our students, classrooms, and community
- Opportunities to practice responsibility in the school and broader community
- Preparation for life-long learning as active members of society and careers/professions
- Application of 21st century skills in academics and service
- Opportunities to collaborate with diverse learners of differing backgrounds and opinions, facilitated by technology
- Opportunities to use digital tools to make informed decisions in today's society
- Recognition and appreciation of diversity in order to effectively contribute to and interdependent global community
- Respect, honesty, integrity, and humility are the foundation of effective relationship.

School Culture

Students at Thornwell Charter School will feel strongly about their educations. In addition to learning academic material such as math and science, TCS will have classrooms full of joy and encouragement that motivates children to become lifelong learners. TCS will integrate a 4 part plan to create a supportive atmosphere where children can thrive.

This 4 part plan consists of:

1. Engaging Academic Learning

Lessons that are hands-on, child-centered, and actively encourage students to feel excited about going to school. This kind of learning will be evidenced by observing classrooms. Desks may be arranged in groups instead of rows, indicating students often work collaboratively.

TCS will have small class sizes and small student-to-teacher ratios to promote personalized learning. The smaller both class sizes and student-to-teacher ratios are, the more individualized attention students will receive. Students will also receive more support in an environment that uses differentiated learning than in one that standardizes lessons for all students. This is a key to TCS's personalized learning model.

TCS will be child-centered and will often display lots of exceptional student work, inside and outside the classroom. A nurturing classroom will be one that showcases children's interests and honors their differences. Particularly for younger students, engaging learning means that there will be plenty of concrete materials to use, especially for math

and science learning. TCS will have rooms with blocks, games, books, and other such materials to bring lessons to life.

TCS will also focus on technology and will invest in it as a way of making learning engaging. There will be SmartBoards, computers, tablets, or other technology in the classroom to support academic growth.

At TCS, everyone is supported. Communication is respectful, and relationships are genuine among parents, children, teachers, and staff. Rules and values are decided by the strengths and needs of the community. Everyone's culture is respected, and differences are celebrated. It is within the TCS community that everyone will thrive.

2. Social-Emotional Learning and Inclusivity

Students at TCS will feel more comfortable in a classroom that actively focuses on the importance of cultivating social and emotional skills and is inclusive of everyone, regardless of learning differences. TCS teachers will set the tone for the classroom. The level and tone of voice of the teachers when talking to students will create a positive school culture. Conversations will be polite and respectful.

3. Positive Discipline (Teaching-Family Model)

Another important indicator of a positive school culture is how children are disciplined. At TCS, missteps are seen as opportunities to learn. Healthy behaviors are supported and

detrimental behaviors discouraged.

TCS teachers and staff will use positive discipline approaches. Its cornerstone philosophy will be kind, trusting, and respectful relationships among students and teachers. Consequences will be relevant and fitting. Students work together to support each other and celebrate when they do well. The focus will be toward promoting healthy habits as opposed to preventing problems, and children are given productive opportunities to grow.

4. Teacher Turnover

TCS believes that seeing how teachers react to the school's culture is a great indicator of what kind of academic and social environment is encouraged. Teachers and staff members will enjoy coming to work and working with TCS's young people. Our staff is our most important resource. Staff members will not be overworked and will have effective communication with administrators. TCS will work to ensure that staff members do not suffer a poor work-life balance, stress, lack of respect or support, and low pay.

TCS believes that teacher turnover has a significant and negative effect on student achievement in all subject areas. Having many new hires also means that students do not get time to develop strong and healthy relationships with their teachers over time. The culture of a school as a whole certainly depends on its people, and large turnover in staff creates a lapse in institutional knowledge among faculty that is critical for supporting student achievement.

TCS believes that the Teaching Family Consultant's role in classroom management teaching and coaching, and by being available as a consultant will provide much support for teachers. The teaches will have confidence that TCS has an effective program in teaching students behavior skills and in helping them develop excellent habits of mind that lead to success

Thornwell Charter School shall use traditional grade levels and admit eligible students from grades kindergarten through twelve. The enrollment projections for the school during the term of the charter are provided in **Appendix V.** TCS aims to create a diverse learning community that welcomes students from across South Carolina with a focus on Laurens County . TCS will create a diverse learning community of families seeking excellence in education. With high expectations at the center of both academics and behavior management, TCS will attract families who desire a rigorous, experiential, whole-child approach to education. TCS will identify students by grade level and will be open to all eligible kindergarten through twelfth grade students in the fall of 2019. In keeping with its small school philosophy, TCS will have one class per grade level in the early grades, with a projected student to teacher distribution of less than or equal to twenty five to one for all grade levels.

Assessments

Classroom Assessments: Real-time formative, and summative assessments will be designed to evaluate whether a student has mastered a specific objective and/or standard. Each assessment will be based on content that has been practiced multiple times, and will measure the academic performance of each student on a particular standard. The assessments are used in all subjects,

and can be created by teachers or purchased. The assessments can be essays, projects, multiple choice or open response tests, exit tickets, or other forms of evaluating student performance. Formative real-time assessment instruments will include but not be limited to STAR for reading and math, Gates MacGinitie test for Reading Comprehension, and MAP.

Goal Setting

Table 1.3

Goal Setting	
School Level	TCS's leadership will use data to set and monitor school goals for overall proficiency, learning gains, with the lowest 25%, and growth within a specific body of knowledge.
Teacher Level	Teachers will be able to utilize system reports for grading, as well as state assessments, and NWEA interim assessments to determine instructional needs.
Student Level	Personalized Learning Plans will be created for all students based on their performance on formative and continuous assessments. Students, in conjunction with parents and teachers, will develop goals in order to master the SCCCR Standards.

Goal-setting is also used in conjunction with the development of a student's Personalized Learning Plan (PLP).

Data-Driven Instruction

TCS will use the 6 Getting Smart data-driven instruction techniques created by Jason Lange.

1. Keep it simple. TCS will use simple tools and techniques to collect data, such as clickers, response sticks, or exit tickets. These will provide a straightforward process for understanding learning outcomes.
2. Think small. TCS will start with one class, and scale efforts with the progress. Once optimal instructional techniques are mastered in one class, TCS will slowly apply them to all classes.
3. Analyze our efforts. Based on the data, reflect on whether the steps we've taken have had

an impact.

4. Engage students. TCS will involve students in setting goals and tracking progress to invest them in the process. TCS will encourage students to reflect upon their progress to help them determine what worked, what didn't, and what should be done differently next time.
5. Make progress visible. TCS will track progress daily using a graph or chart. This will help students see their progress and, ultimately, be empowered. TCS believes the size of the goal doesn't matter; students need to see what they're working toward and what they've accomplished.
6. Be transparent with class-wide results. TCS will follow pre-assessments tests, and communicate the results to students and parents.

Instructional Focus Plan

To further monitor progress towards mastery of the standards, teachers, in conjunction with TCS's administrative team, will plan together and schedule learning objectives in an Instructional Focus Calendar (IFC).

Cross-Curricular Instruction and Learning

Cross-curricular instruction—which is also called interdisciplinary learning—is a teaching strategy that allows educators to unite concepts and skills from various disciplines. Traditionally, students have studied subjects in isolation, but this leads to fragmentary knowledge and a disconnection of applying the material practically. Students need to see the relationships within

and between disciplines. Each subject is a slice of the whole. Connecting the slices leads to synergistic learning.

Although cross-curricular instruction requires a great deal of planning on the teacher's part, the advantages outweigh the tedium. Furthermore, teacher collaboration is a surefire way to maximize the quality of the lessons and to manage the allocation of time and resources efficiently. Even if a period is not designated for team planning, school leaders can schedule professional learning communities during curriculum days. School leaders should make every effort to ensure that teachers have opportunities to meet. Cross-curricular planning fosters collegiality. Through it teachers can develop a deeper appreciation of each other's expertise. Hence, channeling talents constructs richer lessons and provides a high-quality education for students.

Cross-curricular instruction offers the following advantages to students: increased motivation, improvement of the learning process, genuine teamwork, and pathways for further discoveries. When teachers take the additional step of branching out into other disciplines and relating theory to the real-world, they are able to entice their students to embrace the subject matter. Once students learn how to apply their knowledge, they begin to see the value in learning. A greater appreciation of the learning process leads students to become active-stakeholders and life-long learners.

Regurgitating information may mimic mastery of the material, but it does not mean students truly understand what they are reciting. Memorization is a part of gaining knowledge. However, repeating information without being able to interpret and connect it only hinders current learning and creates future obstacles. Cross-curricular instruction encourages critical thinking, interaction,

and reflection. As the subject matter becomes relevant, the students' ability to analyze and to synthesize information greatly improves. They are able to generate meaning, compare, draw conclusions, and make predictions. The acquisition of these attributes demonstrates higher-order thinking.

Multiple Intelligences

Thornwell Charter School shares the philosophy of multiple intelligences. The theory of multiple intelligences differentiates intelligence into specific modalities, rather than seeing intelligence as dominated by a single general ability. Howard Gardner proposed this model in his 1983 book Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences. According to the theory, an intelligence must fulfill eight criteria: potential for brain isolation by brain damage, place in evolutionary history, presence of core operations, susceptibility to encoding (symbolic expression), a distinct developmental progression, the existence of savants, prodigies and other exceptional people, support from experimental psychology, and support from psychometric findings. Gardner proposed eight abilities that he held to meet these criteria: musical-rhythmic, visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. He later suggested that existential and moral intelligence may also be worthy of inclusion. Although the distinction between intelligences has been set out in great detail, Gardner opposes the idea of labeling learners to a specific intelligence. Gardner maintains that his theory should empower learners, not restrict them to one modality of learning. TCS shares these philosophies and will empower students through instructional models that address its students multiple intelligences and does not restrict them to one modality.

Collaborative Learning

TCS will use collaborative learning strategies devised by Teach Thought. These strategies are researched based and widely used. TCS will be using the following 20 strategies:

1. Establish group goals

Effective collaborative learning involves establishment of group goals, as well as individual accountability. This keeps the group on task and establishes an unambiguous purpose. Before beginning an assignment, TCS teachers will define goals and objectives.

2. Keep groups midsized

Small groups of 3 or less lack enough diversity and may not allow divergent thinking to occur. Groups that are too large create “freeloading” where not all members participate. A moderate size group of 4-5 is ideal.

3. Establish flexible group norms

Research suggests that collaborative learning is influenced by the quality of interactions. Interactivity and negotiation are important in group learning. In the 1960’s studies by Jacobs and Campbell suggested that norms are pervasive, even deviant norms were handed down and not questioned.

4. Build trust and promote open communication

TCS believes that successful interpersonal communication must exist in teams. Building trust is essential. TCS will deal with emotional issues that arise immediately and any interpersonal problems before moving on. Assignments should encourage team

members to explain concepts thoroughly to each other. Studies have found that students who provide and receive intricate explanations gain most from collaborative learning. Open communication is key.

5. For larger tasks, create group roles

TCS will have teachers and students decompose difficult tasks into parts to save time. They can then assign different roles. Students might have turns to choose their own role and alternate roles by sections of the assignment.

6. Create a pre-test and post-test

TCS believes the best way to ensure students learn together would be to engage in a pre and post-test. Many educators use this method to see if groups are learning. An assessment gives the educational team a goal to work toward and ensures learning is a priority. It also allows instructors to gauge the effectiveness of the group. Changes can be made if differences are seen in the assessments over time. TCS plans to use Bloom's taxonomy to further hone in on specific skills.

7. Consider the learning process itself as part of assessment

Many studies such as those by Robert Slavin at Johns Hopkins have considered how collaborative learning helps children develop social and interpersonal skills. Experts have argued that the social and psychological effect on self-esteem and personal development are just as important as the learning itself. TCS plans to focus on the whole child. In terms of assessment, TCS will also grade students on the quality of discussion, engagement, and adherence to group norms. Assessing the process itself provides motivation for students to learn how to behave in groups. It shows students that TCS

values meaningful group interactions and adhering to norms.

8. Consider using different strategies

Students with the same topic from different groups will meet together to discuss ideas between groups. This type of collaboration allows students to become “experts” in their assigned topic. Students then return to their primary group to educate others. Other strategies TCS will use include: clusters, buzz groups, round robin, leaning cells, and fishbowl discussions.

9. Allow groups to reduce anxiety

TCS believes when tackling difficult concepts, group learning may provide a source of support. Groups often use humor and create a more relaxed learning atmosphere that allows for positive learning experiences.

10. Establish group interactions

TCS believes the quality of group discussions is a predictor of the achievement of the group. TCS will provide a model of how a successful group functions. TCS feels shared leadership is best. Students should work together on the task and maintenance functions of a group. Roles are important in group development. Task functions include: Initiating discussions, clarifying points, summarizing, challenging assumptions/devil's advocate, providing or researching information, reaching a consensus, and maintenance involving the harmony and emotional well-being of a group. Maintenance includes roles such as sensing group feelings, harmonizing, compromising and encouraging, time-keeping, relieving tension, and bringing people into discussion.

11. Use of real world problems

Experts suggest that project-based learning using open-ended questions can be very engaging. Rather than spending a lot of time designing an artificial scenario, use inspiration from everyday problems. Real world problems can be used to facilitate project-based learning and often have the right scope for collaborative learning.

12. Focus on enhancing problem-solving and critical thinking skills

TCS educators will design assignments that allow room for varied interpretations. Different types of problems might focus on categorizing, planning, taking multiple perspectives, and forming solutions.

13. Keep in mind the diversity of groups

TCS is committed to embracing diversity throughout the school community. Mixed groups that include a range of talents, backgrounds, learning styles, ideas, and experiences are best. Studies have found that mixed aptitude groups tend to learn more from each other and increase achievement for low performers. TCS educator will rotate groups so students have a chance to learn from others.

14. Groups with an equal number of boys and girls are best

Equally balanced gender groups will be most effective. Some research suggests that boys were more likely to receive and give elaborate explanations, and their stances are more easily accepted by groups. In majority male groups, girls are often ignored. In majority girl groups, girls tended to direct questions to the boy who often ignored them. TCS will specifically discuss or establish gender equality as the norm.

15. Use scaffolding or diminished responsibility as students begin to understand concepts.

At the beginning of a project, educators will give more direction than at the end. TCS

educators will serve as facilitators, such as by gauging group interactions or at first, providing a list of questions to consider. They will allow groups to grow in responsibility as time goes on. In the classroom, this means allowing teams to develop their own topics or products as time goes on.

16. Include different types of learning scenarios

Studies suggest that collaborative learning that focuses on rich contexts and challenging questions produces higher order reasoning. Assignments can include laboratory work, study teams, debates, writing projects, problem solving, and collaborative writing.

17. Technology makes collaborative learning easier

TCS will incorporate free savvy tools for online collaboration such as Stixy, an online shared whiteboard space, Google groups, or Mikogo for online meetings.

18. Keep in mind the critics

As with any learning strategies, it's important to have a balanced approach. TCS will take a balanced approach to learning and will allow some individual time to write notes before group activities begin.

19. Be wary of "groupthink"

While collaborative learning is a great tool, TCS understands it is always important to consider a balanced approach. At times, group harmony can override the necessity for more critical perspectives. Some new research suggests that groups favored the more confident members. Changing up groups can help counter this problem.

20. Value diversity

TCS believes collaborative learning relies on constituent buy in. Students need to respect and appreciate each other's viewpoints for it to work. TCS will create classroom environments that encourage independent thinking. TCS educators will teach students the value of multiplicity in thought.

Leadership Initiatives and Community Service

Due to the nature of Authentic Project Based Learning, leadership initiatives and community service opportunities are an integral part of our program. These activities may include adopting highways for litter removal, going to local assisted living homes and spending time with residents, or assisting local churches with food or clothing drives.

Grading

Thornwell Charter School will use a 10-point grading scale for students in grades K-12. The 10-point scale is required by the state of South Carolina for high schools. TCS will also use the 10-point scale for grades K-8 to ensure consistency and a smooth transition for students as they move from elementary and middle school to high school.

The 10-point grading scale is listed below:

A 90-100

B 89-80

C 79-70

D 60-69

F Below 60

Reporting

Reporting in the student information system will offer TCS the capability of disaggregating data by individual student, class, and grade level. Powerschool will be the student data software used by TCS.

Decision

Decision is the final action. Teachers and administrators will make a decision based on the data. These decisions are determined through data chats and team meetings and guide the standards that are taught in the Instructional Focus Plan.

Class Descriptions

K-5 Math: Grades K-5 will successfully master all SC Common Core Curriculum State Standards annually.

K-5 English Language Arts: Grades K-5 will successfully master all SC Common Core Curriculum State Standards annually.

K-5 Social Studies: Grades K-5 will successfully master all SC Common Core Curriculum State Standards annually.

K-5 Science: Grades K-5 will successfully master all SC Common Core Curriculum State Standards annually.

K-5 Physical Education: Grades K-5 will successfully master all SC Common Core Curriculum State Standards annually.

6-8 English Language Arts: Middle school students will complete three annual courses in Language Arts.

6-8 Mathematics: Middle school students will complete three annual courses in mathematics.

6-8 Science: Middle school students will complete three annual courses in science.

6-8 Social Studies: Middle school students will complete three annual courses in social studies.

6-8 World Language: The primary goal of the world language program, aligned to the Next

6-8 Technology: Technology instruction in grades 6 – 8 continues to employ national standards, benchmarks, and grade-level expectations.

6-8 Fine Arts: The primary goal of the art program is to provide instruction in the following domains/strands of art: critical thinking and reflection; historical and global connections; innovation, technology, and the future; organizational structure; and skills, techniques, and processes.

6-8 Physical/Health Education: Middle school students will complete one semester of Physical Education in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.

6-8 Media Program: TCS's Media Program will be focused on maximizing the classroom as the center of learning with provisions for each class to have a classroom library and access to computers.

8-12 English I-V: Students in G/T will have the option of English I in 8th grades. All other students will take English I-IV each year in grades 9-12.

8-12 Math: Students in G/T will have the option of Algebra I in 8th grades. All other students will take Algebra I in 9th grade, then Geometry, Algebra II, and Pre-Calculus each year in grades 9-12. G/T will take Calculus in 12th grade.

9-12 Science: Students will take Biology I in 9th grade, then Biology II, Chemistry, and Physics each year in grades 9-12.

9-12 Social Studies: Students will take World Geography in 9th grade, then World History, U.S. History, Government/Economics each year in grades 9-12.

9-12 Business Education: Students will take Keyboarding/Introduction to Computers at some time during grades 9-12, with a focus on 9th grade.

9-12 Physical Education: Students will take Physical Education with required Sexual Education unit at some time during grades 9-12, with a focus on 9th grade.

Additional elective classes will be added as school culture and community needs develop.

Plans to provide new, innovative, and more flexible ways to educate children.

TCS will be innovative and flexible in its education of students via the implementation of a personalized learning environment and a focus on data-driven instruction. In addition to the utilization of many new and innovative ways to educate children, TCS will also emphasize blended learning, student-centered learning, project-based learning, response to intervention techniques, and as it grows, much more.

Blended Learning

TCS will also offer students the unique experience of blended learning. Blended learning is important because it breaks down the traditional walls of teaching. Often traditional delivery styles don't work for all students. With new technologies, access to present day blended learning resources is nearly unlimited, and can be tailored to enhance the learning experience for each student. Blended learning also offers flexible time frames that can be personalized to each

student. This offers students the ability to learn at their own pace. Other examples of online programs that may be used are SC Virtual, Apex, Reading Plus, and Plato. Students and staff will have access to technology through multiple blended models.

Student-Centered Learning

Thornwell Charter School's student-centered learning philosophy will use a wide variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic-support strategies. These strategies are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, and cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students. Administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, and other educational specialists will employ a wide variety of educational methods, from modifying assignments and instructional strategies in the classroom to entirely redesigning the ways in which students are grouped and taught.

Project-Based Learning

Consistent with TCS's vision to provide a rigorous personalized learning environment in order to close the achievement gap, this method provides all students with the opportunity to learn content and master standards through real-world activities. Project-Based Learning is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. In Gold Standard PBL, projects are focused on student learning goals and include the following Essential Project Design Elements:

- Key Knowledge, Understanding, and Success Skills - The project is focused on student learning goals, including standards-based content and skills such as critical thinking/problem solving, communication, collaboration, and self-management.

- Challenging Problem or Question - The project is framed by a meaningful problem to solve or a question to answer, at the appropriate level of challenge.
- Sustained Inquiry - Students engage in a rigorous, extended process of asking questions, finding resources, and applying information.
- Authenticity - The project features real-world context, tasks and tools, quality standards, or impact – or speaks to students’ personal concerns, interests, and issues in their lives.
- Student Voice & Choice - Students make some decisions about the project, including how they work and what they create.
- Reflection - Students and teachers reflect on learning, the effectiveness of their inquiry and project activities, the quality of student work, obstacles and how to overcome them.
- Critique & Revision - Students give, receive, and use feedback to improve their process and products.
- Public Product - Students make their project work public by explaining, displaying and/or presenting it to people beyond the classroom.

Differentiated Response to Intervention (RtI)

Response to Intervention (RtI) is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and intervention matched to student need, monitor progress frequently to make decisions about change in instruction and goals, and applying the student's response data to important educational decisions.

RtI is the practice of meeting the academic and behavioral needs of all TCS students through a variety of services containing the following key elements:

1. High-quality instruction and scientific research-based tiered interventions aligned with individual student need.
2. Frequent monitoring of student progress to make results-based academic and/or behavioral decisions.
3. Application of student response data to important educational decisions (such as those regarding placement, intervention, curriculum, and instructional goals and methodologies)

The instructional approaches used within the general education setting will result in academic and/or behavioral progress for the majority of TCS students. Struggling students are identified using data-based student progress monitoring and provided intensive instruction. The use of scientifically validated curricula and teaching methods expected in an RtI model leads to databased school improvement.

The primary focus of RtI is designed as an early intervention to prevent long term academic failure.

- RtI meets the goals of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation by helping with early identification of struggling learners and by providing immediate intervention using scientifically research-based instruction and teaching methods in order to improve educational outcomes.
- RtI is a prevention approach used to intervene early when students show signs of not meeting grade level standards.
- RtI generates high-quality instruction/interventions matched to student needs. RTI uses the student's learning rate over time and level of performance to make educational

decisions.

- RtI can be used to make referral decisions for those students who do not respond to intensive intervention in the general education setting.
- RtI provides data that can be used in the identification of students with specific learning disabilities as opposed to the traditional discrepancy model used to determine eligibility for special education services.
- RtI meets the educational needs of all students by providing direct, focused instruction to address the academic and/or behavioral needs.

What are the major components of RtI?

1. Data-Based Decision Making – Critical educational decisions are based on assessment results. Data will be carefully analyzed to determine why academic or behavioral problems exist.
2. Universal Screening – Universal screenings are assessments administered to all students to determine as early as possible which students are at risk or not meeting academic universal assessments. These screenings will occur three times per year in order to meet early intervention needs of all students.
3. Tiered Model of Delivery – The RtI process incorporates a tiered model of delivery of instruction. The tiers reflect increasing levels of intense interventions to meet the individual needs of students.
4. Progress Monitoring – Progress monitoring is a scientifically research-based practice that shows data about student growth over time. Progress monitoring will be used to

determine the effectiveness of instruction and/or interventions.

5. Fidelity of Implementation – Fidelity of implementation is the delivery of instruction in the way in which it was designed to be delivered. Fidelity must also address the integrity with which screening and progress monitoring procedures are completed.

Tier 1 Guidelines

All students in Tier 1 receive high quality, scientific, research-based instruction in the general education setting. Teachers use high-quality core class instruction aligned with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in which 80% or more of the students are successful. This tier is the crucial foundation of the RTI instructional model. Schools will provide intervention to students exhibiting need and teachers will differentiate instruction in grade level classes for 4-6 weeks. Students in grades K-9 will be screened with valid and reliable reading and mathematics assessments to determine areas of intervention.

Tier 2 Guidelines in Addition to Tier 1 Support

Students are identified for individual or small group intervention in addition to core class instruction. This level includes scientific research-based programs, strategies and procedures designed and employed to supplement, enhance, and support Tier 1 activities. Students who are performing at Tier 2 levels will receive strategic instruction.

Tier 3 Guidelines in Addition to Tier 2 Support

Students who have not responded adequately to Tiers 1 and 2 receive specific custom-designed individual or small group instruction (designed by problem-solving model) beyond the instruction in Tier 1. Students who are performing significantly below grade level at Tier 3 will

receive intense, comprehensive intervention in addition to their grade level curriculum in addition to Tier 1 and 2 supports. Time based on intervention implemented.

Implementation to Response to Intervention Plan Overview

The primary focus of the Response to Intervention Process is the identification and consideration of educational opportunities in the general classroom setting which may resolve student's academic, social, emotional, communication or behavioral problem(s). At this point, Thornwell Charter School is addressing interventions in the Reading, Mathematics and Behavioral (Tier 1) areas; other areas such as written expression and behavior are still being developed.

Through the implementation of general education classroom intervention strategies and/or specific targeted instruction from campus support services, the student's Response to Intervention must be reviewed before a referral for special education assessment is made.

The Response to Intervention Process is a multi-phased three-tiered model based on the dual criteria of significantly low achievement and insufficient Response to Intervention. The model ensures students with specific needs will receive support in general education in a timely manner. Support services require collaboration with campus personnel such as Counselors, Title I, tutors, Dyslexia Teachers, ESL Coordinator, and other available campus support.

Thornwell Charter School Non-negotiables

1. The responsibility of the Student Assistance Team within each school will be the school's administrator or his/her designee.
2. Implement RtI for Reading and Mathematics for grades K-9.

3. Regularly Scheduled Student Assistance Team (SAT) Committee Meetings
4. Administer Universal Screenings according to district schedule three times a year.

Universal screenings will be administered to all students in grades K-9.

5. Provide services to students who have not met state assessment standards in Reading or Mathematics 7th –9th grade students who did not meet standard on the state assessment will be provided remediation.
6. Service Tier 2/3 interventions for students assigned to ISS
7. Identify needs through data
8. Student privacy is a highest priority with the SAT, requiring all Core Team members to take an oath of confidentiality.
9. Implement interventions with fidelity.

How the charter school will meet or exceed academic performance standards.

Thornwell Charter school will meet or exceed academic performance standards by focusing on the whole child. Through its three part philosophy of teaching strong academic achievement through a personalized learning model, character education through its family wellness program, and realizing the needs of the whole child through its Teaching-Family Association model, Thornwell Charter School is destined to become one of South Carolina’s best charter schools and help countless children and families achieve their goals.

Key programmatic features of the school.

In order to accomplish the mission of providing a rigorous, personalized learning environment, TCS will implement a data-driven Education Model that allows teachers to use different

instructional strategies to tailor instruction to the individual needs of students.

Teaching -Family Association Model

Thornwell Charter School will implement the Teaching-Family Association Model. The Teaching-Family Association (TFA) was founded in 1975 to ensure the quality of care provided by professionals who actively pursue the goals of humane, effective, individualized treatment for children, families, and dependent adults using the common framework of the Teaching-Family Model for treatment and support. What is learned in one agency can be shared with other agencies within the Association and incorporated into the standards of quality assurance processes within the Association. TFA's goals are to accredit members, recognize programs, standardize useful training and evaluation procedures, supervise program replication, and provide yearly conferences for sharing new material and program development. The Teaching-Family Association is the only entity in North America that defines and implements standards and review procedures related to the actual performance and quality of treatment and service delivery systems at all organizational levels.

Personalized Growth Plans

All students are special, therefore a PGP will be created monthly for each student. These growth plans will match a mentor teacher with a student and a guidance counselor to create a team of educators, parents, and students working together to create the best collaborative personalized educational growth plan. The purpose of the Personalized Growth Plan is to strengthen and to deepen the individual learning experience for all students while helping them understand the importance of setting goals for growth and developing and developing and implementing a plan to meet these goals. PGPs are consistent with Thornwell Charter School's

philosophy of treating students as individuals who are invested in the learning process and their life-long goals.

Read Right

Read Right is a method of teaching children to read by focusing on complex cognitive processing. The method creates an environment that compels struggling readers to figure out all the implicit aspects of the reading process. Excellent readers implicitly (below the level of conscious awareness) use more than alphabetic clues to read excellently. They implicitly integrate phonetic clues with pre-existing knowledge of language and its structure, knowledge of punctuation, and more as they seek to answer the question: “What does the text say?” Read Right methodology creates the right kind of environment to help struggling readers make new discoveries about what works to produce reading excellence. This work cannot be explicitly taught. Struggling readers must have appropriate and precise guidance that helps them figure out for themselves, at the level of their own neural processing. Read Right methodology is evidence based, integrating scientific information from reading theory, learning theory, language acquisition theory, cognitive psychology, neural development, and more into a complete and cohesive view of what is required to achieve efficient and effective reading ability. It works because it goes beyond the words on the page, considering instead all that is required for every reader to construct efficient and effective neural networks to guide the process of reading. Read Right helps students move from struggling with simplistic reading skills to efficient complex cognitive processing focused on the construction of meaning.

Thornwell trained four teachers and has been using Read Right since January, 2017. Over this past year, Thornwell has seen students grow as readers at a rate that is far above and beyond

what most programs can deliver. Data to support the success of Read Right is included in **Appendix G**. In addition, a copy of a report made to Thornwell's Board of Trustees in November of 2017 is included in **Appendix G**. This report documents tremendous gains made by students over a relatively short period of time.

A Wellness Program

In our efforts to serve the whole child, TCS plans to include a health and wellness component into each student's personal growth plan. The health and wellness program will be led by our physical education teacher who will help students and parents develop their plans. TCS also has individuals and organizations in our community who have pledged to support our efforts in this area. Greenville Hospital, Clinton Dental, Self Medical Group, Gary Crow, D.M.D., Michael W. Payne, MD will be available to speak to classes and provide educational materials. Evidence shows that the health of students has a direct link to their academic achievement. Proper health habits can affect a student's concentration, memory, and moods. Therefore, TCS will give special emphasis to helping children develop healthy dietary behaviors and to integrating more physical activity into their lives. According to a report of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (**Appendix G**), students who have healthy eating and physical activity habits experience reduced absenteeism, less tardiness, improved cognitive performance, better grades and better performance on standardized test scores.

Description of how the educational program is research-based and data-driven.

The Thornwell Charter School educational program is founded on a large and consistent research base that delineates what is effective at maximizing student achievement. Strategies

will include: small school and class sizes; extended time for teacher planning and professional development; inquiry-based core instruction; personalized learning; extended time for teacher planning and professional development; Response-to-Intervention (RTI) through an Intervention and Advancement Team process; and additional time for recess and instruction of the arts, character education, and physical education. Teachers will participate in various workshops and supplemental staff training to help incorporate character education and leadership development into everyday curriculum.

How the proposed teaching methods will enhance the quality of instruction.

TCS will emphasize data-driven instruction in order to accommodate all learners, including SPED, gifted, and ELL students. Differentiated instruction is defined by: 1) a teacher's response to student needs, 2) the recognition of students' diverse background knowledge, cultures, languages and preferences, 3) student-centered learning, 4) instruction that addresses students' learning style differences, and 5) a blend of whole-group and small-group instruction.

b. Educational Structure

Description of any unique features, grade levels to be served, the grade levels upon opening, and the growth plan. The size of the school at full capacity, including the number of classes per grade level and the number of students per class.

Thornwell Charter School plans to open with all grades 5K through 12 so there is not a growth plan regarding the addition of grade levels. TCS is planning on one class per grade level. 20 students per grade level in 5K-5, and 25 students per grade level in grades 6-12. Total enrollment at full capacity will be 295 students.

Description of the basic learning environment. Explain how the instructional design, learning environment, class size and structure, curriculum, and teaching methods will enable each pupil to achieve the standards per S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-60 E(5).

Thornwell Charter School will be housed in a traditional school setting, and the school will follow a traditional bell schedule. Students in grades K-5 will have individual classrooms with a single teacher, and they will move to related arts classrooms as needed. Students in 6-12 will take classes in teacher-specific classrooms. Class sizes will not exceed 25 students at any time. This small class-size is important as teachers implement Project-Based Learning approaches in instructional design and delivery. Fewer students allow for more space in the classroom for hands-on activities for students. Smaller class-sizes enable teachers to more easily modify instruction to individualize student learning. And, lower student-teacher ratios give teachers better opportunities to monitor student growth and implement assistance plans to help struggling students.

Description of the average school day for a prospective student.

The school year will consist of 190 days. The school will use 180 days for student instruction. The school will use the 10 remaining days for professional development that is based on, but not limited to: academic achievement standards; teacher preparation and planning; development of academic plans; and parent conferences. TCS will follow the Laurens School District 55 academic calendar unless special circumstances arise. The Principal of TCS and his/her staff will establish daily schedules after in-service training with experts in each research based model it will implement to improve student achievement. State laws and regulations require that the

length of the school day for elementary and middle school students must be six hours, or its weekly equivalent, including lunch. The length of the instructional day for secondary students must be at least six hours, or its weekly equivalent, excluding lunch. Schools may reduce the length of the school day to not less than three hours for no more than three days each school year for staff development or for the purpose of administering end-of-semester and end-of-year examinations. The school will consult with parents and faculty and obtain Board approval before varying the length of the school day. TCS will give priority to teaching and learning tasks and may interrupt classes only for emergencies.

A description of the teacher lesson planning process.

Thornwell Charter School will use the WIPPEA Model for developing teacher lesson plans. The WIPPEA Model, an acronym that stands for Warm-up, Introduction, Presentation, Practice, Evaluation, Application, is a lesson plan model that represents a continuous teaching cycle in which each learning concept builds on the previous one, serving as an instructional roadmap for instructors. This six-step cyclical lesson planning approach has learners demonstrate mastery of concepts and content at each step before the teacher proceeds to the next step. The six steps are as follows:

1. Warm-up – Assesses prior knowledge by reviewing previous materials relevant to the current lesson. Introduce an activity that reviews previously learned content and also include an activity that focuses on the topic to be taught.
2. Introduction – Provides a broad overview of the content and concepts to be taught and focuses the learners' attention on the new lesson. Introduce the purpose of the lesson by

stating and writing the objectives for learners and discussing the lesson content and benefits by relating the objective to learners' own lives. Assess learners' prior knowledge of the new material by asking questions and writing learners' responses on a chalkboard or flip chart.

3. Presentation – Teaches the lesson content and concepts. Create an activity to introduce the concept or skill and then introduce information through a variety of modalities using visuals, realia, description, explanation, and written text. Check for learner understanding of the new material and make changes in lesson procedures if necessary.
4. Practice – Models the skills and provides opportunities for guided practice. Introduce a variety of activities that allow learners to work in groups, in pairs, or independently to practice the skills, concepts, and information presented. Integrate technology into activities as available.
5. Evaluation – Assesses each learner's attainment of the objective. Include oral, aural, written, or applied performance assessments. For example, ask students to fill in the blanks on a cloze activity using the four medicine warning labels that were discussed in class. For lower level learners, provide a word bank at the bottom of the worksheet. Omit the word bank for more advanced students.
6. Application – Provides activities that help learners apply their learning to new situations or contexts beyond the lesson and connect it to their own lives. Choose activities that learners can relate to or have expressed concern about. For example, have learners read the label of a medication they or a family member may use at home to make certain they understand the meaning of the words on the label. Gather feedback from learners in

follow-up classes and help them assess what additional support, if any, they may require.

In this cyclical approach, teachers assess prior knowledge, provide a broad overview of the content/concepts to be taught, introduce vocabulary, teach content/concepts, check comprehension, combine the content and vocabulary through guided practice, evaluate student performance, and provide an application activity. Instructional strategies will vary depending on the lesson content, skill areas, and the needs of the learners.

c. Professional Development

Identify the position(s) responsible for overseeing professional development (PD).

The principal, supported by school-based curriculum specialists, will be responsible for overseeing professional development. Teachers will be required to follow school regulations and best practices to ensure student achievement is the focus of instruction. Professional development will be both comprehensive and target the specific needs of students as determined by the school's testing data analysis.

Discuss the core components of the school's PD plan for all staff.

Professional development is learning to earn or maintain professional credentials such as academic degrees to formal coursework, conferences and informal learning opportunities situated in practice. It has been described as intensive and collaborative, ideally incorporating an evaluative stage. There are a variety of approaches to professional development, including consultation, coaching, communities of practice, lesson study, mentoring, reflective supervision

and technical assistance.

Thornwell Charter School's professional development plan will be comprehensive. Included in the appendix of this application is a copy of TCS's 2018-2019 professional development schedule that includes biweekly full staff meetings, professional learning communities meetings, and instructional leadership meetings. TCS will maximize its Title II funds to ensure that consultations and coaching of teachers and administrators is efficiently used to target desired student achievement outcomes. TCS will also create a mentor teacher program for all of its new teachers, matching them with a veteran teacher.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Thornwell Charter School will employ professional learning communities. A professional learning community (PLC) involves much more than a staff meeting or group of teachers getting together to discuss a book they've read. Instead, a PLC represents the institutionalization of a focus on continuous improvement in staff performance as well as student learning. Many educators call PLCs the most powerful professional development and change strategy available. PLCs often lead to reliable growth in student learning.

PLCs use whole-staff involvement in a process of intensive reflection upon instructional practices and desired student benchmarks, as well as monitoring of outcomes to ensure success. PLCs enable teachers to continually learn from one another via shared visioning and planning, as well as in-depth critical examination of what does and doesn't work to enhance student achievement.

Schedule and explanation of PD that will take place prior to school opening.

Teaching quality and school leadership are among the most important factors in raising student achievement. For teachers and school and district leaders to be as effective as possible, they continually expand their knowledge and skills to implement the best educational practices. Educators learn to help students learn at the highest levels. Many people may not be aware of their local school system's methods for improving teaching and student learning. Professional development is the only strategy school systems have to strengthen educators' performance levels. Professional development is also the only way educators can learn so that they are able to better their performance and raise student achievement. TCS plans to provide PD in Teaching Family and in Personalized Learning prior to the start of school. Upon hire, teachers will be given materials in Teaching Family and in PL to study. In the days leading up to the start of school, teachers will be trained in the Teaching Family Model by our Teaching Family Consultant, and TCS will contract for training in PL. The office of Personalized Education at The South Carolina State Department of Education is now providing training in PL for the Chairperson of TCSPC and two other directors. The training dates are January 30, February 27, March 20 and April 12. This office will also offer a three phase plan and coaching to assist in TCS's implementation of PL. A letter from their office concerning their training and support is in **Appendix C**. In addition to Teaching Family and PL training, all teachers and staff will need training in school policies and procedures. A sample schedule of that training is below.

Sample Summer Professional Development Week

Agenda

(All meetings are in the library unless otherwise specified)

Day 1

8:00 – 9:30am	<u>All Employees Report to Library</u> Welcome Breakfast (Provided by PTO) Meet the new Faculty Mission & Vision Issue Employee Handbooks Issue Shirts Agenda for Professional Development Week
9:30 – 11:00am	Teachers Work in Classrooms
11:00am – 12:00pm	Expectations for teachers Teacher Duties, staff dress code, staff meetings Parent Communication Expectations All teachers teaching School 101 for scholars the first day. School Assembly First Day Clubs and Activities
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch on your own
1:00pm – 3:30pm	Teachers Work in Classrooms Prepare Pretest/Post-test Prepare classroom discipline rules/rewards and make copies for students for first day of school.
2:00pm – 3:30pm	(If you have not done so already!) New Employee Registration Mandatory Employment Reviews
3:30pm	Teachers Dismissed

Day 2

8:00am – 8:30am	All Employees Report to Library Faculty/Staff Photos (School Shirt Required!!!)
8:30am – 9:15am	All Employees Report to Library “Red Book” - Employee Handbook Review Sexual Harassment Policy

Blood Borne Pathogen Training Video

9:15am – 9:45am	Computer/Copier/Scanner/Printer Needs Passwords Internet Acceptable Use Policy Process for Issuing Student Laptops
9:45am – 10:00am	Break
10:00am – 10:30am	School Counseling
10:30am – 11:00pm	Review of the Student Handbook Writing a Discipline Referral Scholar Tardy Procedure
11:00am – 11:30am	Teacher Evaluations Teacher Mentoring program Collects ALL <u>Acknowledgment Forms</u>
11:30am – 1:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm – 1:30pm	Behavior Management Center (BMC) Procedures Virtual Learning Center Procedures
1:30pm – 2:30pm	PowerTeacher Grades Substitute Procedures
2:30pm – 3:15pm	Google Classroom
3:15pm – 3:30pm	PowerTeacher Attendance
3:30pm	Teachers Dismissed

Day 3

8:00pm – 9:30am	Textbook Procedures Issue Emergency Kits Emergency Preparedness
9:30pm – 9:35am	School Facilities and Maintenance
9:35pm – 9:45am	School health and injury procedures

9:45pm – 10:00am	Finance procedures
10:00pm – 12:00pm	Teachers Work in Classrooms Decorate Classrooms
11:30am – 12:00pm	Teacher Attendance and Sick Leave Procedures
12:00pm – 1:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm – 3:30pm	MAP Testing Training
3:30pm	Teachers Dismissed

Day 4

8:00pm – 12:00pm	School Culture
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch on your own
1:00pm – 2:00pm	All Employees Report for Special Education Services Training
2:00pm – 3:30pm	Autism Training for <i><u>New Employees Only</u></i>
2:00pm – 3:30pm	All Employee Reviews continued if needed New Employee Registration continued if needed Teachers Work in Classrooms Get Copy Machine Codes Get Kelly Services Codes Prepare lesson plans for first week of school Organize lessons for first week of school
3:30pm	Teachers Dismissed

Day 5

8:00am – 9:00am	1 st Day of School Procedures and Expectations Review of First Week of School Expectations
9:00am – 1:00pm	Teachers Work in Classrooms
1:30pm – 3:30pm	“Celebrate School Luncheon”
3:30pm	Teachers Dismissed

Expected number of days/hours for PD. How PD aligns with the vision and core academic priorities of the school? How will the effectiveness of PD be evaluated? When do teachers have time for common planning or collaboration? How will this time be used? An explanation of how the school calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure will help facilitate sufficient time to conduct reviews and provide guidance on professional development and growth.

Teachers meet with administrators, CRTs, curriculum specialists, or peers to receive PD based on data, survey results, teacher demand, or other areas needed for school improvement. Meetings are conducted after school, on professional development days, or during planning. One meeting per month is devoted to topics associated with professional standards. In addition, these meeting times are used to discuss, evaluate, and update/modify PD as necessary.

3. Serving Students with Special Needs

Requirements of the IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the ADA, and Title III of ESEA and plans to comply with these requirements

TCS's admission policy welcomes and encourages the enrollment of students of all learning profiles. Students with disabilities (SWD) shall have an equal opportunity of being selected for enrollment in TCS. TCS's enrollment application does not request information on disability status. TCS does not discriminate or limit enrollment based on race, religion or disability. Furthermore, TCS's marketing strategy materials will reflect that it is a "tuition-free" public charter school and that it serves all students. TCS will provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to all students with disabilities in accordance with all district, state, and federal special education guidelines and regulations as provided by the Charter Institute at Erskine (Erskine), IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the ADA, and Title III of the ESEA.

TCS personnel will identify students with special needs as noted below. Students will be identified for special education services if (a) the student has a significant skill deficit relative to peers, (b) he/she meets South Carolina State Eligibility Criteria, and (c) he/she is not showing a significant response to scientifically-validated interventions. Evaluation procedures will be in accordance with federal regulations regarding how to determine whether a student is disabled and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the student needs.

Plan to provide a variety of service delivery and placement options.

Special education services will be provided through a model of inclusion for the majority of students with disabilities. TCS personnel will develop Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) via collaboration among the regular education teacher, special education teacher, parents, a representative of the school district who can commit resources, related services personnel where appropriate, and other individuals (at the discretion of the parents or TCS) who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student. This multidisciplinary team will determine appropriate services for the student, including transition, assistive technology, and related support services, and the IP will reflect the required elements. The IEP must include:

1. appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
2. the transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.

Due to the philosophy of the curriculum, all students will be included in the regular education curriculum. However, in addition to the regular instructional time special education services may also include specialized, research-based interventions in small groups, as deemed appropriate by the multidisciplinary team. TCS also ill individualized transition services, assistive technology, and other support services deemed necessary by the multidisciplinary team. TCS classrooms and buildings will be fully equipped to address the needs of students with physical disabilities, such as, but not limited to visual impairment, auditory impairment, and/or mobility problems.

Plans for transitioning students out of special education.

Transition services are intended to prepare students to move from the world of school to the world of adulthood. Transition planning at TCS will begin during middle school at the latest. IDEA requires that transition planning start by the time the student reaches age 16, but South Carolina requires age 13. Transition planning takes place as part of developing the student's IEP. The IEP team develops the transition plan. The student must be invited to any IEP meeting where postsecondary goals and transition services needed to reach those goals will be considered. In transition planning, the IEP team considers areas such as postsecondary education or vocational training, employment, independent living, and community participation. Transition services must be a coordinated set of activities oriented toward producing results. Transition services are based on the student's needs and must take into account his or her preferences and interests.

The definition of transition services mentions specific domains of adulthood to be addressed

during transition planning. These are:

- postsecondary education,
- vocational education,
- integrated employment (including supported employment),
- continuing and adult education,
- adult services,
- independent living, or
- community participation.

These are the areas to be explored by the IEP team to determine what types of transition-related support and services a student with a disability needs. TCS will plan for each of these areas, and develop goal statements and corresponding services for each special education student, will greatly assist each student in preparing for life after Thornwell Charter School.

Plan to include needed staff, adequate funding, evaluation of programs' success, flexibility to add contracted services, and specific services the sponsoring district is expected to provide.

When students with disabilities enroll, the Registrar will advise the lead Special Education Coordinator of the student's enrollment. TCS will employ at least Special Education Coordinator, certified in multicategorical special education services, and will maintain a case load no greater than 32 per special education student. Obviously due to the small size of TCS, it will contract out specialized special education services as needed. These services may include, but are not limited too speech, occupational therapy, etc. TCS will comply with all required hours of services as specified by IEPs. TCS expects the sponsoring district to provide guidance when needed in special cases, facilitate the flow of federal funds in a timely manner, and

maintain school level access to Enrich software.

Plan to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services.

We recognize the benefits and value of inclusion and will take the necessary steps to provide non academic

and extracurricular services and activities to students with disabilities by providing supplemental aids as appropriate and necessary.

4. Goals, Objectives, and Assessment Plan

In compliance with the SC Charter School Act, the educational goals of Thornwell Charter School reflect the school's mission statement. Each objective indicates specific student-centered outcomes and strategies are included with the related objective to accomplish each educational goal. TCS' goals and objectives will bring the mission of the school into action.

a. Goals and Objectives

Goals and measurable objectives with benchmarks.

We understand and are dedicated to ensuring that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education. Therefore, Thornwell Charter School will implement a curriculum that focuses on Project Based Learning (PBL) because of its proven record of improved learning. Students are more engaged in personalized learning, and they develop a sense of purpose that helps them create connections to real-world experiences in their unique lives. These connections create a better understanding of material, and they are able to retain information for longer periods of time. In addition, these students are better equipped to

apply information to new situations.

PBL has better academic outcomes than traditional methods in math, science, and language, and students develop better 21st Century Skills. Students in a PBL classroom take responsibility for their learning, and they develop better organizational, critical-thinking, and problem-solving skills. In addition, PBL leads to better communication as students work with each other and their teachers, learning to collaborate in both leader and team member roles. Often times, students may also work with members of the community on projects, which enhances their exposure to new career options.

Finally, students find the process of learning in a PBL classroom to be more engaging, leading to a more-enjoyable learning experience for all. This leads to improved attendance than in traditional schools, which is one reason PBL is proven to close the achievement gap.

Goal 1: Students at Thornwell Charter School will show academic improvement in reading.

Rationale: There is a strong correlation between reading comprehension and academic success in all content areas. Additionally, elementary-aged students considered “below level readers” are less likely to graduate from high school and are more likely to end in poverty.

Objective 1.1: All students will meet or exceed State standards in reading by the end of the 3rd grade.

Objective 1.2: 70% of students in grades 4-12 will meet or exceed State standards in reading.

Objective 1.3: All students will improve scores in reading on a quarterly basis.

Assessments: SC READY, MAP Growth, Teacher-generated formative and summative assessments

Goal 2: Thornwell Charter School will educate the whole child and prepare students to become personally and socially responsible, engaged citizens.

Objective 2.1: TCS faculty will implement a character education program with 100% of students engaging in classroom guidance lessons.

Objective 2.2: All students will participate in a grade-level community service project on an annual basis.

Assessments: The Teaching Family Model is a professionally-recognized, evidence-based treatment program. TCS will utilize this model to evaluate individual student need in the personal and emotional domains.

Staff-generated pre- and post-tests will be utilized to determine the effectiveness of guidance lessons. These assessments will include evaluations of process, perception, and outcome data.

Goal 3: Thornwell Charter School will prepare students for a global society.

Rationale: TCS recognizes that we are not educating students for jobs, but for a role in a global society. This requires that students develop personalized post-secondary goals and develop plans to meet their individual needs. Students at TCS will also be encouraged to explore career options in real-world scenarios.

Objective 3.1: 100% of students in Grades 8-12 will develop an individualized graduation plan in conjunction with their personalized learning plan.

Objective 3.2: 100% of students in Grades 5-7 will complete a career interest

inventory.

Objective 3.3: 100% of students in Grades 6-12 will complete an internship, apprenticeship, work-study, or other work-based learning experience.

Assessments: ACT and SAT will be used for college-entrance and college-readiness purposes. The PSAT will be used with 8th, 10th, and 11th grade students for college-readiness purposes. The ASVAB will be utilized as the military aptitude test. The WorkKeys will be used to determine career readiness. The Rick Trow Career Game Self-Assessment Workbook will be utilized to assist students in identifying personal and career interests.

Goal 4: TCS will provide a supportive learning environment for all students.

Rationale: Students perform better academically when they feel their primary needs like safety and security are met. Furthermore, a positive school climate leads to improved retention rates and decreased discipline referrals. TCS strives to provide an emotional environment in which students feel supported and appreciated.

Objective 4.1: At the completion of the first year, 90% of students will report satisfaction with the physical learning environment.

Objective 4.2: At the completion of the first year, 90% of students will report satisfaction with the social environment of the school.

Objective 4.3: At the completion of each academic year for years 2-5, 85% of students will report satisfaction with both the physical and social environments

of the school.

Assessment: TCS will utilize the results of the annual South Carolina Department of Education Student School Climate Survey.

Goal 5: TCS will provide a positive work environment for all employees.

Rationale: A positive working environment improves teacher morale, attendance and retention, which leads to improved home-school relationships.

Objective 5.1: At the conclusion of each year for years 1-5, 90% of teachers will report satisfaction with the learning environment.

Objective 5.2: At the conclusion of each year for years 1-5, 90% of teachers will report satisfaction with the social environment.

Assessments: TCS will utilize the annual South Carolina Department of Education Teacher School Climate Questionnaire for annual goals. Administrators will utilize formal and informal surveys during the academic year. These surveys will be confidential when possible.

Goal 6: TCS will exceed a 90% the average membership attendance in all grades.

Rationale: Attendance is crucial for student success. TCS understands that some students have unique circumstances that may cause them to be more transient than others, which is why we emphasize the importance of being present when possible.

Objective 6.1: All students will have fewer than two unexcused absences in one week.

Objective 6.2: All students will have fewer than four unexcused absences in

one month.

Objective 6.3: All students will have fewer than ten unexcused absences in one school year.

Strategies: All employees of TCS will contribute to ensuring students are attending class. Teachers will make contact with parents and guardians if a student is absent on consecutive days. The administrative team will monitor attendance regularly, and they will develop appropriate interventions, including attendance contracts, with the student and their family if a student misses five days or more of school. The administrative team will monitor student attendance and intervention goals.

b. Assessment Plan

A description of the diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments with baseline data gathering and details on the types of assessments.

TCS will utilize a MAP Growth assessment for baseline data gathering purposes. The assessment will also be utilized for quarterly testing in Mathematics, Reading, and Language in Grades K-8. MAP Growth is a dynamic test that allows educators to evaluate student progress over one academic year and over multiple years. It uses assessment data “norms” that allow educators to adjust instruction in order to provide students with personalized learning or to begin an RTI plan.

Teachers will also be required to develop and administer examinations to measure student knowledge at the beginning of the year and at the end of each semester. These assessments can also be utilized to determine the content base of students who are new to the school. These

assessments

Teachers will be encouraged to use formative and summative assessments, as well as project based learning projects, as they see fit throughout the year to determine student knowledge and/or improvement. Teachers will be allowed to adjust these assessments to personalized learning plans to that student success can be measured based upon the unique characteristics of each child.

State Summative Assessments

TCS will adhere to all state accountability and testing requirements, including administration of the SCPASS in Science and Social Studies, SC READY in math and ELA and End-of-Course Assessments in Algebra, English, US History and Biology as soon the student population supports advanced coursework.

A plan to monitor progress toward meeting the goals and objectives of the school and how the school will make modifications based on data.

TCS will establish an Instructional Team, which will be comprised of administrators, department chairs, teacher volunteers, and any other persons who may directly or indirectly impact student learning. The team will be tasked with monitoring progress toward goals and objectives, and they will be allowed to make suggestions for modifications to the school structure and/or the curriculum when data supports such changes. The administration will determine the changes and process for such changes, and they will relay this information to employees.

TCS will develop Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and teachers will be assigned by content area. PLCs will meet regularly to discuss content-area plans and initiatives to assist the

Instructional Team in meeting goals.

An explanation of data collection, analysis, and management.

Upon enrollment, TCS will obtain a student's previous records from the student's previous school or PowerSchool, including past performance on state assessments such as SCPASS, SC READY, MAP Growth, ACT Aspire, and/or End of Course Assessments.

PowerSchool

Our student information system provider offers a dedicated, secure rack for all hardware, battery backup, and all networking hardware located within their secure facility. The Pearson- provided storage facility also uses a 128-bit SSL transport mechanism.

An explanation of how student assessment and progress will be communicated.

Student assessment and progress information will be shared with staff, students and parents in multiple ways. School-level test results will be shared with the faculty during appropriate staff development meetings. This information will also be used to drive decisions in the Instructional Team meetings. School-level data will also be posted in public places of the school, and it will be shared with stakeholders in relevant communications.

Individual results will be shared with students and their families as soon as reasonably possible, and every attempt will be made to also explain to families with the results mean. Individual outcomes will also be disseminated to teachers on an "as needed" basis in order to protect the educational rights of the students and their families. Examples of this may be the sharing of MAP Growth results between teachers with overlapping students and content areas or sharing

outcomes with the RtI team.

II. Organizational Plan and Capacity

1. Governing Body

Profile of each member of the charter committee.

The TSCPC has a certified school administrator with 34 years experience in education as a teacher, coach assistant principal, and principal; seven certified teachers covering special education, early childhood, elementary, middle school, CATE, high school math and science; one media specialist; one with over 20 years of experience in accounting, financial, and operations management; four who are Teaching Family practitioners; one with a Masters in Social Work; one paralegal; one attorney; one marketing and communications director; four with experience serving on administrative boards; one medical doctor; one registered nurse; one former business owner; one engineer who works in information technology; and eight parents. These committee members are listed below.

Norman Dover, Chairperson - Certified School Administrator, M.Ed. and Ed.S. in School Administration

Lindy Scott – Vice Chairperson, Masters in Social Work, Developed the Teaching Family Model at Thornwell

Marianne Hollingsworth – Secretary, Certified teacher in Early Childhood Education and in Special Education

Greg Haselden – Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer at Thornwell

Brianna Booker - Four-year-old kindergarten teacher

Tony Cunningham - Parent and former chairman of the Early Head Start parent policy council at South Carolina First Steps. Currently is a member of the board of trustees of Head Start, Region IV

Jill Eaton – Certified Media Specialist

Craig Garner - Attorney

Kay Goodson – Teaching Family Evaluator, Certified Teacher, CATE Certified, M.S. in Instructional Design and Technology

Ken Heywald – Family Teacher, Parent

Kerry Goodson – Teaching Family Consultant

Adam Hucks – Family Teacher, Parent

Katie Lawson – Parent, Registered Nurse

Tea Madden – Paralegal, Member of Thornwell Board of Trustees

Scot O’neal – Parent and National Board Certified teacher in Math, Science, and STEAM

Cynde O’Rear – Certified Elementary Teacher, Guardian ad Litem

Sharon Pedigo – Parent, Foster Parent, Five years of experience as owner and director of a child development center

Brooke Robinette – Parent and Certified Early Childhood Education Teacher, Director of Thornwell Child Development Center

Kevin Robinette – Parent, Information Technology

Monica Turner – Communications Director at Thornwell

Stan Walsh, MD – Parent and Family Physician with Self Medical Group

Betsy Washam – Certified Math and Science Teacher, National Board Certified

A copy of each charter committee member's resume, letter of support for the school, and attributes to contribute to the success of TCS are in **Appendix K**.

Process in which the charter committee formed and developed the proposed school.

For over ten years, Thornwell and members of the community have been discussing the need for a charter school in Clinton, SC, and housing the school in Thornwell's educational facilities. During those ten years, Thornwell has operated an academic support/tutoring program and a summer education program for the Thornwell residential children and children from the local community. In addition, Thornwell operates an Early Head Start program, a 3K program, and a South Carolina First Steps 4K program for Thornwell children and children from the community. Thus, Thornwell possesses a reputation of providing excellent and vital educational and childcare services to the citizens of Laurens County.

For the past few years, Thornwell students have been testing around the 20th percentile rank in reading in math according the STAR assessments. This low level of skill often leads to frustration and poor performance in the classroom; however, Thornwell's personalized Read Right, after school, and math programs have proven to significantly help the children close the gap between actual performance and grade level requirements. Adding to the culture of achievement is Thornwell's use of the Teaching Family Model which helps students develop personal behaviors that lead each child to the attainment of skills and attitudes that lead to success.

The TCSPC holds to the belief that the Thornwell children and many children from the

community who are also struggling in school will be well served in a school that immerses the students in an environment that has a personalized education program and implements the Teaching Family model. A personalized approach meets students where they are and, thus, puts them in a position to succeed. The Teaching Family Model emphasizes and teaches habits of mind, such as grit, perseverance, conscientiousness, curiosity, and gratitude. This combination of the personalized approach and the Teaching Family model will create a school that helps students close the gap between actual performance and grade level requirements and then helps them move on to success in post-high school education and in their careers.

Description of the model or philosophy of governance which will guide the board.

Thornwell Charter School will govern with the focal philosophy that all decisions of the Board of Directors be in the best interest of the children that attend TCS. The Board will use Robert's Rules of Order to conduct meetings and will instill a philosophy of transparency with its constituents at all times. All board members will sign a code of ethics that covers adherence to all applicable laws, regulations, and the TCS bylaws; conflicts of interest; professional excellence; equal opportunity for all students and employees; the handling of confidential information; and the need for collaboration and cooperation. A copy of this code of ethics is in **Appendix K**.

Description of the charter committee's authority to develop policies, make decisions, and execute its responsibilities:

The Thornwell Charter Committee consist of twenty three excited community leaders, each of whom is excited to work collaboratively to create a one-of-a-kind charter school to meet the individual needs of a thriving community. The Charter Committee has under South Carolina law

the rights to develop the model for an Local Education Agency (LEA) approved charter school. More importantly, the Committee has been empowered by the local community with the responsibility of creating a great charter school and protecting the public trust. The Board has designated one member of the Committee as its Chairperson, Mr. Norman Dover, a SC certified school administrator. Upon approval of the charter, the charter committee will move forward with preparations for founding Board elections. This will occur based on the procedures outlined in this charter. During the short interim as Thornwell opens the school and enrolls students, the charter committee will serve as Board. Until inauguration of the first Board, the charter committee will function in the same manner of a Board, following well established precedents of local school boards. In the event of a tie vote on any issue, the chairperson's vote shall decide the issue. The chairperson may temporarily delegate his responsibilities to the vice-chair if he is not available to perform them. The Committee may, in its discretion, delegate all or a portion of its duties and responsibilities to a subcommittee of the Committee. The Committee shall have the resources and authority appropriate to discharge its duties and responsibilities, including the authority to select, retain, terminate, and approve the fees and other retention terms of special consultants, staff, teachers, etc., as it deems appropriate. With respect to consultants or search firms used to identify Principal/Executive Director candidates, this authority shall be vested solely in the Committee with support from all stakeholders. Upon hiring of the Principal, the Committee, with the guidance of the Principal, will continue to review and develop policies that are in the best interests of students.

Plan for ongoing board training and capacity building aligned with the budget.

The governing board will also strictly adhere to the guidelines outlined in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50 (B)(9). As such, at least 50% of the members of the governing board will be elected by the employees and parents or guardians of students enrolled in the charter school. This allows all stakeholders, including parents, to be involved in the governance of the school.

Description of the ongoing parent and community involvement.

Stakeholder support is vital and cherished at Thornwell Charter School, and we want to create mutually-beneficial partnerships with parents and educational partners.

Parents are greatly encouraged to be active in their children's education. Teachers will be encouraged to initiate contact with parents for positive referrals as often as for addressing concerns. In addition, parents will be provided an opportunity to meet teachers at the start of the school year, and at the completion of each quarter. Parents can also be involved with the school as volunteers during the school day or through organized after-school activities sponsored by the Parent-Teacher Organization.

Community connections are a necessary component of any school with a Project-Based Learning format. TCS will establish partnerships with the local community as student projects extend beyond the walls of the school. Those connections will help create individualized learning opportunities for students to apply classroom knowledge to real-world experiences. TCS also hopes to utilize those partnerships in career development and career readiness lessons.

2. Education Management Contracts

Evidence that the service provider has successfully managed other schools.

Not applicable as Thornwell Charter School will not have an EMO/CMO service provider.

Evidence that the EMO/CMO is authorized to conduct business in South Carolina.

Not applicable as Thornwell Charter School will not have an EMO/CMO service provider.

A description that conveys clear understanding of financial obligation to the EMO.

Not applicable as Thornwell Charter School will not have an EMO/CMO service provider.

3. Leadership and Operations

How lead administrator will be hired and transition of charter committee responsibilities.

Thornwell Charter School will hire a principal to begin his/her duties of taking over administrative responsibilities on July 1, 2018. TCS is fortunate to have its current Project Manager and educational consultant available to educate and transition the leadership role to the new lead administrator over the month of June 2018. TCS plans to advertise for the position in March 2018, after the charter is approved, to ensure that it gets the best and most qualified applicants. Advertisements on the school website, district website, CERRA website, SCASA website, and social media will assist TCS in notifying the largest pool of applicants possible and ensure excellent quality leadership. The Project Manager will form a committee with the founding Board members and will collaboratively rate applicants based on a rubric of qualifications, experience, and educational background. Applicants will be selected for interview with the hiring committee. TCS has a sample principal wage agreement and will use it to secure the principal. Over the month of June 2018 and into the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the Board will continue to transfer responsibilities to the Principal. This gradual method is designed to move the

Board from a hands-on role to a governing role, while ensuring that the Principal is not initially overwhelmed.

Overview of the administrative and operational functions at the school.

Thornwell Charter School will work in many ways similar to a traditional school from an administrative and operational perspective. The administration will run the day-to-day activities of instructional supervision and leadership, while the Board will serve in a governing role. “District level” tasks will be shared by the Principal and various outsourced independent contracts. Finance, maintenance, and information technology for example, will be administered by the Thornwell Church. This will alleviate many of the struggles that new charter schools face and free more quality time for the Principal to focus on teaching and learning.

Administration

The capacity and experience of the school leadership and management team along with job descriptions of the administrative positions.

Thornwell Charter School is committed to hiring and retaining the most qualified school leadership team to ensure academic excellence. The leadership team will be made up of a Principal and Assistant Principal. The Principal will be a certified and highly qualified educator as licensed by the South Carolina Department of Education.

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION:

Principal

The Principal is responsible for planning, coordinating, and supervising the day--to--day business operations of a school office, and serves as administrative aide to the school principal, relieving him/her of administrative details.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Supervises the enrollment, transfer, discharge, and readmission process for students and the preparation of related records and files.
2. Supervises the preparation of student enrollment and attendance report.
3. Supervises the maintenance of student records, including assessment results, test scores, discipline citations, medical reports and records, and other documents.
4. Supervises student medication dispensation and injury reports.
5. Supervises Requisitions, receives, and distributes/stores classroom, school office and Work Room materials and supplies; maintains ongoing inventory; processes packing slips.
6. Prepares and processes field trip requests.
7. Maintains school website.
8. Assists in writing, publication, and distribution of weekly school newsletter.
9. Coordinates the development of, and prepares, school site General Fund and special projects budgets; prepares budget transfers as appropriate; monitors charter school budget.
10. Prepares and maintains purchase orders and other expense records; approves, logs, and monitors expenditures; reconciles site records with monthly District Office reports; resolves discrepancies; and ensures expenditures are within budget allowances for the month and year.
11. Prepares necessary forms for District Department of Human Resources to hire, upgrade, terminate or authorize special payments to staff.
12. Prepares yard supervision schedule.
13. Prepares certificated prep schedule.
14. Recruits appropriate prep teachers.
15. Prepares and communicates weekly memo to staff.
16. Organizes interview process for hiring certificated and classified staff.
17. Plans, assigns, trains, and evaluates classified staff in accordance with District standards, timelines, and procedures.
18. Processes, assigns, trains, and directs work of volunteers.

Involvement with the replication of existing successful public charter schools.

Thornwell Charter School is opening from the ground up, but with an amazing community partnership with one of the strongest and most well-known churches in the state, and an infrastructure that includes pre-existing classrooms, gymnasiums, technology services, and maintenance. Replication is not applicable for this charter application.

Any proposed management company responsibilities.

Thornwell Charter School is not proposing to use a management company and therefore this section of the charter application is not applicable.

The nature and extent of parental, professional educator, and community involvement.

Parental, professional and community involvement are the cornerstone of Thornwell Charter School's philosophy to a strong, quality education for all students. For our parents, open communication and involvement are the keys. Thornwell will work collaboratively with parents and students to create Personal Growth Plans (PGPs). These plans will be thorough and individualized to meet the specific needs of the learner. TCS will also require monthly progress reports that will be specific and thorough. Individualized Graduation Plans (IGPs) will also take place each spring. Powerschool App will be distributed to parents to monitor grades in real time. TCS will recommend 20 hours of volunteerism to the school and its students for every TCS parent. Extracurricular booster clubs, such as band boosters, athletic boosters, and academic boosters will help engage parents and enroll parents into the Thornwell school community. TCS will also create a School Improvement Council and Parent Teacher Organization. In addition, TCS will have parent-teacher conference nights and open house nights regularly. Professional educators will be engaged in the mission of the school and the decision-making process. Educators will be active members of PTO, booster clubs, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs), and actively involved in extracurricular activities. C

Capacity building plan for leadership and staff development.

Staff development will begin in August of each school year, when all staff members will

participate in professional development opportunities. Staff development will continue throughout the year through bi-monthly faculty meetings and/or educational briefings. Staff will also be expected to participate in monthly, content-specific training. Faculty and staff are encouraged to seek out professional learning opportunities in areas they are interested in, and paid professional leave will be granted to those employees seeking to attend conferences and seminars during school hours.

All teachers will be expected to maintain certification with the State.

School leader evaluation and succession plans.

The Board and Principal shall meet at least once annually and may include other appropriate school officials for the purpose of establishing TCS' goals and objectives for the ensuing school year. Said goals and objectives shall be reduced to writing and be among the criteria by which the Principal is evaluated as hereinafter provided. This annual meeting shall normally be held during the summer; the initial such meeting shall be scheduled for July of 2018.

The Board shall evaluate the performance of the Principal at least once a year during the term of this agreement. For this purpose, the Principal shall submit to the Board a recommended format for conducting the evaluation. The Board shall meet and discuss the proposed format, attempting in good faith to reach consensus with the Principal as to a mutually agreeable evaluation format. Thereafter, the Board shall adopt an evaluation format and shall evaluate the Principal pursuant thereto.

To conclude the evaluation, the Board shall meet in executive session for the purpose of discussing the results of the evaluation and any related matters, such as the terms of the

Principal's contract. The results of the evaluation and any conclusions drawn by the Board shall be shared with the Principal, both verbally, in executive session, and in the form of a written summary. The Principal shall have the right to respond to the results either during the executive session, or in writing, following the executive session. Any written response, along with the written summary of the results, shall be made a part of the Principal's personnel file. Following the Principal's evaluation or his written response, and at the request of either party, the Board may meet with the Principal in executive session to discuss the matter further.

The annual evaluation shall normally be conducted during the spring, with the first annual evaluation scheduled for the spring of 2019. The Board, however, reserves the right to conduct an interim evaluation of the Principal's performance during the winter of 2018-2019.

All evaluations will have numerical weightings for each individual evaluation item. Each evaluation cycle will consist of one individual evaluation from each Board member (7 individual evaluations if the Board is fully staffed) and one comprehensive evaluation from the Board. The comprehensive evaluation will be an average score of each individual evaluation item from each Board member and will be the controlling evaluation for legal purposes. All individual and comprehensive evaluations will be presented to the Principal for each evaluation cycle.

This annual process will be used each year. TCS will require its leader to notify the Board of resignation by February 1st each year. TCS will also employ an Assistant Principal in future years. In addition, TCS' community partner, Thornwell Church, employs a full time educator with an education administration degree that can assist at any time.

4. Employees

Process to be used to advertise for, select, and employ instructional staff and employees.

Instructional staff positions will be advertised in newspapers, on social media, the school website, SCASA website, sponsor's website and CERRA website. Applicants will be reviewed by the Principal and his/her team using a rubric to weight applications based on experience and qualifications. Selected applicants will be interviewed by the administrative team and a candidate will be selected. The selected applicant will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval. After Board approval, the Principal will sign and execute the wage agreement. A copy will be given to the employee and the original placed in the employees permanent personnel file.

How the school will communicate its employment policies and any changes.

Every employee at TCS will receive a copy of the Employee Handbook, Teacher Handbook, Parent-Student Handbook, Discipline Code, and all other relevant documents. These documents will also be posted on the school's website: <http://thornwellcharterschool.org/>

Description of the grievance and termination procedure for charter school's employees.

Grievance and Termination Procedures

TCS will not adopt the procedures for the employment and dismissal of teachers outline in Code Ann. § 59-25-410. TCS staff will be considered "at-will." Employees voluntarily enter into this agreement and are free to resign at any time, and similarly, TCS may terminate employees at any time.

5. Enrollment

Description of how the school intends to enroll students, including the proposed timeline to

reach a diverse student population, processing of applications, lottery process if needed, and the appeal process for a student who is denied admission for a reason other than the lottery.

In accordance with Section 59-40-50 (B) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, Title 59, Chapter 40, the Charter Committee of TCS will provide access and equity for all eligible students.

TCS will admit eligible students (as defined below) subject to space limitations and based on grade levels served.

1. Students requesting entrance into TCS must complete and return the approved Enrollment Packet within published time limits. Enrollment packets for the 2019-2020 school year, will be accepted at TCS beginning November 1, 2018. Applications may be submitted in paper or electronically. Each completed application shall include, for each student applicant, a card (the “Card”) which specifies (i) the name of the applicant, (ii) the grade level of the applicant, (iii) the name of each sibling of the applicant who is also applying to TCS, and (iv) the grade level of each sibling.
2. If the sum of the qualified applicant children of TCS employees and the qualified applicant children of the TCS Charter Committee members or TCS Directors exceeds 20% of the planned enrollment of TCS, a lottery will be held among those applicants to identify the children who will be enrolled, as follows:
 - a. TCS will communicate the time, date, and place of the lottery to all employees, Charter Committee members and Directors whose child is identified as the applicant on a Card.
 - b. At the designated time, date, and place, TCS will deliver the Card to the parent or other representative of the named applicant. These Cards will be used in a

physical drawing. TCS will confirm the total number of Cards to be accounted for in this drawing, and the Notary Public will demonstrate that the box is empty and will then lock the box.

- c. Each such parent or another person acting for such parent will be asked to seal the Card into an envelope provided by TCS, and to deposit the envelope into the locked box. All Cards and envelopes will be uniform. No Card or envelope shall be folded or manipulated to make it distinct from others in the locked box.
- d. The contents of the locked box will be thoroughly shuffled by a TCS representative.
- e. A SC Notary Public will draw one Card at a time, and the applicant and each sibling named on that Card will be entered on the roster for the appropriate grade level(s). Except as provided in subsection (f) or (g) below, that applicant and each sibling will be considered conditionally accepted for his or her grade level.
- f. If the conditional acceptance of an applicant and all that applicant's designated siblings causes the number of accepted students in a particular grade level to exceed the capacity of that grade level, then the parent or other attending representative of that applicant will have the option to (i) withdraw such applicant and all designated siblings of such applicant, or (ii) move to the waiting list the applicant and sibling(s) whose acceptance would cause that grade level to exceed its capacity, with or without withdrawing some or all of the remaining siblings as that parent or other representative may determine.
- g. If the acceptance of an applicant and that applicant's designated siblings would

result in the total number of applicants accepted by this lottery exceeding 20% of the planned enrollment at TCS, the parent or other representative of such applicant shall have the option to (i) place the applicant and/or some or all siblings on the waiting list, (ii) withdraw the applicant and/or some or all siblings from this lottery, or (iii) specify the siblings of the applicant to be withdrawn or placed on the waiting list in order for the 20% cap not to be exceeded.

- h. Once that 20% cap is reached, all remaining Cards will be drawn. Each applicant, but not that applicant's siblings, will be added to the waiting list for his or her grade level in the order drawn.
- i. Once all Cards have been drawn and the roster has been confirmed, the results will be announced and posted. The Notary Public shall document confirmation of the roster by signing and sealing the rosters generated as the envelopes were opened, and the Notary Public will demonstrate that the box is empty.
- j. Until the commencement of the public lottery described in Sections 3 and 4 below, applicants may move from the waiting list to accepted as slots become available.
 - i. A random public lottery for the 2019-2020 school year (should the school receive more applications than available student slots) is tentatively scheduled for April 15, 2019. TCS will announce the place and exact date of the public lottery. TCS anticipates that the public lottery for subsequent school years will be held in mid-April each year. The public lottery process will be conducted following the procedure set out below and in a

public location. Parents who have previously submitted an enrollment application within the deadline limits will receive public notification of the time, date and location of the public lottery. The public lottery will be conducted at a public meeting and representatives of TCS and a SC Notary Public will conduct and oversee operation of the lottery. A TCS representative will generate a roster for each grade level, as described below. TCS will pay the costs of the Notary Public who will otherwise be independent of TCS and Thornwell. TCS may also engage an attorney to provide advice for conducting the lottery, who may be counsel for TCS and/or Thornwell.

3. Procedures for the public lottery will be as follows:

- a. On the advertised hour and date, a representative of TCS will verify the number of Cards for this lottery and will announce the number of slots available at each grade level. The Notary Public will demonstrate that all boxes to be used for the drawing are empty and will then lock them.
- b. TCS will deliver the Cards and one blank envelope to the parent or other representative of the applicant shown on the Card. All Cards and envelopes will be uniform.
- c. That parent or other representative will be asked to seal the Card in the envelope provided, and deposit that envelope in the locked box for the appropriate grade level. No Card or envelope shall be folded or manipulated to make it distinct from others in the same locked box.

- d. After one hour, submission to the applicant pool will be considered closed to all persons who are not then in line to deposit an envelope in a locked box. Promptly after all such persons then in line have deposited all their envelopes, the number of verified applications will be compared to the number of open slots on a per grade level basis.
- e. For purposes of this description of the lottery procedure, each grade level for which TCS receives no more applications than the number of open slots is referred to as an “Uncontested Grade Level”, and each grade level for which TCS receives more applications than the number of open slots is referred to as a “Contested Grade Level.”
- f. All applicants for an Uncontested Grade Level will be considered conditionally accepted and entered on the roster.
- g. If any grade level is a Contested Grade Level, the lottery will proceed for all Contested Grade Levels. In that event, each envelope for each Uncontested Grade Level will be opened by the Notary to determine if acceptance of that applicant creates a priority as a sibling for one or more applicants in a Contested Grade Level. If so, the sibling will be considered conditionally accepted to his or her Contested Grade Level, and the sibling’s Card will be disregarded when it is subsequently drawn in the lottery.
- h. The contents of the locked boxes containing the Cards for the Contested Grade Levels will be thoroughly shuffled by a TCS representative.
- i. The Notary Public will draw one envelope at a time and the applicant who is

named on the Card will then be entered on the roster as a conditional acceptance.

j. If acceptance of an applicant creates a priority as a sibling for one or more applicants in a Contested Grade Level, the sibling will be considered conditionally accepted in his or her Contested Grade Level, and the sibling's Card will be disregarded when it is subsequently drawn in the lottery.

k. A representative of TCS will record the order in which the applicants' names are drawn.

l. If acceptance of an applicant creates a priority as a sibling for an applicant who is already on a waiting list, that sibling will be moved from the waiting list onto the conditionally accepted list, and the last accepted applicant at that grade level who has no siblings applying to TCS will become the first name on the waiting list for that grade level. This process may be repeated multiple times, and in each instance the order of the students moved to the waiting list will remain the order in which their names were drawn in the public lottery. These changes will be noted on the roster.

m. This process will continue until all of the envelopes have been drawn, opened, and recorded.

n. Students not receiving an enrollment slot will be added to a waiting list in the order drawn, subject to intervening priority students.

o. Once all grade levels and all waiting lists have been populated, the results will be confirmed by the Notary Public and, after that confirmation, announced and posted. The Notary Public shall document that confirmation by signing and sealing the rosters generated as each envelope was opened, and will demonstrate that each locked box is

empty.

p. Enrollment is for the upcoming school year only.

q. Enrollment appeals may not be made based on lottery outcomes. This system will remain in place unless otherwise changed by TCS's Board of Directors.

r. TCS will not limit or deny admission or show preference to any eligible student or to any individual group, except that priority will be given to children of the charter school committee, children of charter school employees, and siblings of a pupil already enrolled or accepted for enrollment. The given priority will not exceed any allowable limit established by applicable SC law.

4. Acceptance of an applicant through the procedures described above does not guarantee the applicant's enrollment. Enrollment at TCS will be conditioned on that applicant being an eligible student as of the first day of the school year, and the prompt submission of all documentation and fees generally required with respect to each student at TCS. TCS's confirmation that an applicant is an eligible student is for the sole benefit of TCS for its administration and planning purposes.

An explanation of how the community will receive information about the formation of a new charter school and any upcoming lottery and enrollment deadlines.

Thornwell's prior experience in reaching out to all segments of the community regarding the Early Head Start, 3K, and South Carolina First Steps 4K programs will be beneficial to the TCSPC as is it continues to promote the school and all information regarding the educational plan, enrollment details, and the lottery. As Thornwell did with the preschool programs, the

TCSPC will use press releases to all local media, Facebook posts, posters in strategic locations (Convenience stores, doctors offices, laundromats, the Laurens County DSS offices, restaurants) the Thornwell Charter School website, a banner on Broad Street, and community meetings. Currently, parents who are considering applying to Thornwell Charter School are asked to complete an interest form on our website. The form asks for their email address, and the TCSPC is using those addresses to send out updates to all the families.

An explanation of the notification of placement and the timeline for parents to accept the placement or not. A definition of any group receiving priority enrollment in the lottery.

In accordance with S.C. Code § 59-40-50(B)(8), TCS may give priority enrollment to the following populations:

- A sibling of a pupil currently enrolled and attending or accepted for enrollment.
- Children of a school employee and children of the charter committee/governing board (not to constitute more than 20% of the enrollment of TCS).
- For purposes of TCS enrollments, an “eligible student” is a student who is eligible to attend a regular public school in South Carolina, has not been adjudicated a juvenile delinquent and is not awaiting disposition of charges that may result in that adjudication, has not been regularly attending another school for the current school year, except this requirement shall not apply to prospective first graders, has not been expelled from another school, does not have a documented history of personal use of alcohol or other controlled substances, does not have a documented history of personal involvement with a street gang and does not have an immediate family member with a documented history of street gang involvement, and has not been adjudicated a felon

and is not awaiting a disposition of charges that may result in that adjudication.

For purposes of TCS enrollments, a “sibling of a pupil currently enrolled and attending or accepted for enrollment” shall include the following:

- a. One or more children otherwise under the care of the same foster family as the pupil;
- b. One or more un-adopted step-children sharing the same primary residence with the pupil;
- c. One or more cousins sharing with the pupil the same primary residence or the same primary care giver or guardian;
- d. One or more children under the care of the same person or entity as the pupil pursuant to an order from a court having jurisdiction or an in loco parentis contract then in effect.

An explanation of how the school intends to enroll out-of-district students.

This question is not applicable since Thornwell Charter School is applying to the Charter Institute at Erskine as the sponsor.

A description of how the proposed charter school intends to ensure that enrollment reflects that of the local school district in which the charter school is located or that of the targeted student population of the local school district that the charter school proposes to serve.

Neither Laurens School District 56 nor Erskine are under a desegregation order. In compliance with § 59-40-50(B)(7), S.C. Stat., TCS will endeavor to reflect the racial/ethnic composition of the Laurens School District 55 (differing by no more than 20%), via the comprehensive marketing plan. TCS will focus its efforts on recruiting students in a manner consistent with the racial/ethnic balance of the community or within the racial/ethnic range of other public schools

in the district. This effort will include marketing to under-represented populations with direct mail, community postings, public service announcements, and the availability of bilingual literature. We are committed to enrolling a diverse student population and shall forbid any forms of discrimination.

6. Student Conduct, Rights and Responsibilities

A process and timeline for developing a student handbook and related policies.

The Parent-Student Handbook will be provided to parents and students prior to the start of the school year. The TCSPC will work with the TCS project director to develop a student handbook and related policies during the planning phase of the school. The Handbook details school policies as well as student rights and responsibilities to ensure all families are aware of the possible consequences faced if a student chooses to misbehave at school. The Discipline Policy within the Parent-Student Handbook outlines and defines the infractions that may lead to in-school consequences and/or suspension and expulsion.

Description of student rights and responsibilities.

TCS will establish a school-wide system of discipline that utilizes positive behavioral supports.

The following list of student responsibilities is not all-inclusive:

1. Engagement
 - 1.1. Create connections and build relationships with faculty, staff and students (visit during office hours, join clubs and organizations, participate in student activities, etc.)
 - 1.2. Stay informed of policies, procedures, deadlines and events for academic and co-curricular activities
 - 1.3. Complete all requirements for admission, registration, and payment by deadlines
 - 1.4. Complying with all federal, state and local regulations and procedures

- 1.5. Meet all federal, state and local health care regulations.
2. Communication
 - 2.1. Seek guidance from faculty, advisors or counselors for questions and concerns in regards to academic plans, academic status, grades, and issues impacting academic success
 - 2.2. Develop a peer support system to identify student contacts for questions, group assignments, etc. regarding academic and co-curricular activities
 - 2.3. Communicate with personnel promptly regarding academic or co-curricular concerns and assistance requests
 - 2.4. Carefully consider the information provided by school personnel and make decisions using that information
 - 2.5. Check the school's website and social media sites for school updates
 - 2.6. Submit documentation if seeking services and request academic accommodations in advance of each semester.
3. Academic Success
 - 3.1. Complete courses with passing grades and maintain in good academic standing (2.0 GPA) status
 - 3.2. Read and follow all syllabi
 - 3.3. Purchase required supplies in a timely manner
 - 3.4. Attend classes regularly and on time, with as few absences, late arrivals, and early exits as possible
 - 3.5. Arrive to class with all needed materials and completed assignments for that class period
 - 3.6. Be attentive in class and actively participate as appropriate
 - 3.7. Devote sufficient time for studying
 - 3.8. Ensure integrity in all aspects of academic and career development
 - 3.9. Accurately represent one's own work and that of others used in creating academic assignments.
 - 3.10. Notify faculty in advance or as soon as possible about absences and provide documentation as appropriate
 - 3.11. Consult faculty members in advance when unable to complete projects, assignments, or take examinations as scheduled.
4. Self-Responsibility and Responsibility to Others
 - 4.1. Maintain accurate and complete Powerschool contact information including name, address, phone number and emergency contact
 - 4.2. Balance personal obligations and educational pursuits. Work with a counselor / advisor to design a realistic schedule that dedicates adequate effort to be successful in academic studies
 - 4.3. Know and follow the regulations and guidelines outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and Parent-Student Handbook
 - 4.4. Maintain respectful and appropriate behavior within and outside the classroom
 - 4.5. Ask for help when needed. Use all available resources and facilities provided by

- the school to enhance the learning experience
- 4.6. Attend scheduled advising sessions, tutorials, and other appointments

TCS will comply with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-63-235, which provides for the expulsion of any student who brings a firearm to TCS. Additionally, we may, upon recommendation of the principal, permanently expel any student from TCS older than 14 years of age whose behavior indicates that the student's continued presence in TCS constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees.

Students will be granted due process rights, including the opportunity for a hearing before the governing board, in accordance with the state law for suspensions and expulsions. A due process hearing will be conducted by a hearing officer, who reviews the student's discipline record, allows testimony from the student and school staff, and makes a determination of whether the student is removed from school or if other disciplinary action is taken.

EXPULSION PROCEDURES

- A. If expulsion is recommended by the school administration, the administrator must immediately notify the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Thornwell Charter School who represents the school as its Hearing Officer. This expulsion hearing will occur as soon as possible to the time of the recommendation.
- B. The Administrator will facilitate the scheduling of a mutually convenient date and time with the parent/guardian, school officials, and Hearing Officer. The parent or legal guardian of the student recommended for expulsion will be notified in advance and in writing of the time, date, and location of the expulsion hearing. The parent will also be

notified that they may be represented by legal counsel if they so desire. Parents/guardians have the responsibility to attend expulsion hearings.

C. If the parent/guardian has been properly notified as described above and chooses not to attend and does not request the hearing to be rescheduled, the hearing will proceed as planned. Hearings of this nature will automatically be private hearings. Students are considered minors and will not be allowed to speak on their behalf without a parent/guardian present.

1. School administration will present discipline records to the Hearing Officer.
2. Parent/guardians, student, and/or legal counsel will have the opportunity to rebut.
3. The Hearing Officer will have the opportunity to ask questions.
4. The Hearing Officer may deliberate privately and call legal counsel if needed.
5. The Hearing Officer will then decide to accept or reject the administration's recommendation for expulsion.
6. Parents/guardians will be informed of their due process rights, as appropriate.
7. Students that are expelled are expelled immediately and will not be allowed to return to school grounds or school activities for the remainder of the expulsion.
8. Students that are not expelled will have a 5 day out of school suspension placed on their records. All subsequent absences awaiting the hearing will be excused. All academic work will be made up by the student within 10 days of his or her return.

Appeals: Both the Executive Director and the Parent/Guardian have the opportunity to appeal the decision of the Hearing Officer. Appeals must be made in writing to the Board Chairperson within 5 days of the decision. Appeals will follow this same process as listed above, but with the full Board voting as to the expulsion of the student or return to school. The Chairperson will abstain from voting, unless there is a tied vote, in which case the Chairperson's vote will be the deciding vote.

Full Board of Directors decisions are final.

Expulsion Procedures for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities (SWDs) are not exempt from the disciplinary process as long as the offense is not a manifestation of the disability. The student's disability will be considered when deciding whether or not a particular form of discipline is to be utilized.

1. If a SWD commits an offense which may lead to suspension, the administrator will first consider the student's special need and what alternative punishments, if any, are justified.
2. If suspension without expulsion is justified, the administrator will follow standard Thornwell Charter School suspension procedures, including written notices to parent/guardians.
3. If a SWD is recommended by the administration for an expulsion hearing, the administrator must immediately notify the Director of Special Education who will

arrange a manifestation/IEP meeting. The multi-disciplinary team will review the list of discipline concerns committed and if the offenses are related to the disability. If the committee finds the expellable offense(s) was/were related to the student's disability, expulsion will not be administered. However, the committee may recommend a more or less restrictive educational placement. If the committee finds the expellable offense(s) was/were not related to the student's disability, the administrator will notify the Hearing Officer to schedule an expulsion hearing.

4. The expulsion process will then be the same as for regular education students and is described above in this handbook.
5. The Administrator will notify the Hearing Officer to ensure that a mutually convenient date and time is scheduled with the parent/guardian, school officials, and Hearing Officer. The parent or legal guardian of the student recommended for expulsion will be notified in advance and in writing of the time, date, and location of the expulsion hearing. The parent will also be notified that they may be represented by legal counsel if they so desire. In no case may the student be suspended for more than ten (10) days. Parents/guardians have the responsibility to attend expulsion hearings.

Ensure that the discipline policy complies with the FERPA.

TCS and its discipline policy will comply with provisions of the revised Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. This law protects the accuracy and privacy of student educational records. In compliance with FERPA provisions, information about disciplinary actions taken against students may be shared, without prior consent of the parent, with officials in other education institutions.

Process for addressing IDEA compliance regarding student discipline, suspension, and expulsion for students with IEPs and the continued provision of FAPE, and a description of how the school will identify and address significant behavioral concerns.

TCS's philosophy related to student behavior and discipline is to foster a school-wide culture that promotes a safe and orderly environment. The belief is that using positive and proactive approaches to student behavior and discipline will result in fewer disciplinary incidents within TCS. School staff responsible for overseeing student discipline will receive training on FAPE requirements to ensure that state policies are followed related to the discipline of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities enrolled at TCS will be expected to follow TCS's Discipline Policy. However, they do have certain protections when it comes to school discipline.

If a student's behavior is having a negative impact in the school environment, the IEP team will convene a meeting to discuss if a functional behavior assessment is warranted and may obtain necessary consents to conduct such an assessment. As a result of the assessment, a positive behavior intervention plan may be developed to assist the student in working on the targeted behaviors identified by the plan. While it may be necessary for students with disabilities to be suspended or expelled from school, before those students can be suspended for more than ten

school days in a given school year, a manifestation determination meeting will be held by the IEP team to decide if the student's disability caused the misbehavior. The outcome may impact any further disciplinary action taken related to the student, as to ensure the student will not be denied FAPE per federal law.

7. Transportation

Description the school's transportation plans. Description of the service if the school intends to contract with the local school district or a third party.

Thornwell Charter School does not plan to provide transportation for any of its students. All students will be required to provide their own transportation to and from school. Thornwell Charter School will seek to add an activity bus in the future to provide for school sponsored field trips, but will outsource these field trip transportation needs in the interim.

III. Business Plan and Capacity

1. Budget and Finance

The financial narrative below references Thornwell Charter School (TCS) the applicant as well as another organization named Thornwell that is a well-known non-profit in the Clinton, SC area. The non-profit organization provides various services to families and children that will compliment TCS. Thornwell has many resources and has offered to assist TCS in the development of the School.

TCS has prepared conservative five and ten year budgets which reflect the School's mission and educational priorities to prepare students for success. TCS developed the budgets with the assistance of McCay Kiddy and Thornwell's Chief Financial Officer as well as with members of the planning committee. McCay Kiddy is a Certified Public Accounting firm that

has over 15 years of experience with charter schools by providing auditing and/or back office accounting services to those schools. They currently work with approximately 25 charter schools in South Carolina. Thornwell's Chief Financial Officer has 24 years of experience in accounting, financial, and operations management and is offering his expertise in the creation and management of the School's budget. TCS will establish a development committee to include board members as well as some of management to evaluate various grants and fundraising efforts for the School. This information will be evaluated annually with McCay Kiddy, the treasurer, and TCS management as the annual operating budget is created and vetted. The School will also rely on McCay Kiddy and Thornwell's CFO to assist with making sound financial decisions for the school including developing a financial management policy that details procurement and internal control structures ensuring TCS has the appropriate segregation of duties and monitoring in place to safeguard assets. McCay Kiddy will provide the school's management and board of directors several key monthly reports, to include: a balance sheet, profit and loss, budget to actual comparison, and cash flow projections to ensure the School is on track and is fiscally solvent not only currently, but into the future. This monitoring is a key control for the success of TCS.

TCS focused on the proposed educational priorities, which are mission-centric, while preparing the budgets. The School will implement a personalized educational program that meets the children at their point of proficiency and moves them forward to close the gap between actual performance and grade level standards, which is accomplished by using technology. Students will each have their own technology device and TCS will invest in various instructional software so that students continue to grow at their level. According to research by the Rand Corporation (Appendix G), students who started the school year below national norms

approached them by the end of the year. Rand also notes that after two years in a personalized program, the students surpassed national norms. Thornwell uses the personalized Read Right and Accelerated Math programs in its after school and summer programs and has data (Appendix G) to demonstrate that students are making significant gains to close the gap between performance and national norms. TCS also will employ the Teaching Family model which will teach and guide the students in developing behaviors and habits of mind the lead to success in school and in careers. These are key attributes to TCS' mission and have been incorporated to the budget.

Included in Appendix X and Y are the 5 year detailed budget, cash flow analysis, 10 year summary, enrollment data, as well as the assumptions used during the budgeting process. TCS began the budgeting process with estimating revenue. The School obtained the SCDE per pupil estimate for Charter School Funding (\$3,600) and Education Finance Act base student cost (\$2,415) to calculate base revenue. The School estimated enrollment at 295 students, assuming 19% of those students would qualify for special needs and 77% expected poverty which is based on the report card for Laurens County School District 55. This results in weighted pupil per units (WPU) of approximately 393. The School also estimated revenue for Fringe Benefits Employer Contributions using a rate of \$721 WPU which was the amount allocated to schools through the state district in FY16-17. The School has intentionally left out other potential revenue, such as federal and state funds/grants, donations, and fundraising efforts, even though the School intends to pursue these funds. Once approved TCS will apply for the Planning and Implementation grant, E-Rate grant, ensure eligibility of nurse and reading coach funding, evaluate federal opportunities such as Title I and IDEA as well as solicit for contributions and

hold fundraising events. Such funds once known will be incorporated in the annual budget and evaluated in the monthly cash flow analysis. Any soft funds received during the planning year and/or during the operation of the school will be managed according to state and federal regulations.

TCS carefully considered what expenditures are necessary to ensure the School meets their educational initiatives. A primary focus will be hiring the appropriate personnel and ensuring those individuals are trained accordingly to implement the personalized education program. The budget includes 31 full-time equivalent employees which consists of 20 instructional staff, 2 special needs teachers and 2 special needs assistants, 2 administrative staff, a principal, guidance counselor, nurse, custodian, and a Teaching Family consultant. Some key starting salaries include instructional and special needs teachers at \$47,000, the principal at \$85,000, and the data clerk for student reporting at \$35,000. The Teaching Family consultant will be a key role in implementing the Teaching Family model and personalized education program, therefore TCS included \$40,000 in the budget for this position. Additionally, the School set aside \$85,000 for staff development to secure outside experts to ensure success of the program and the employees. The School budgeted for employee benefits and taxes by using an average of the state health plan insurance premiums for each employee, the current social security and Medicare rates, and a 5% match on a retirement plan to start in year two. TCS has budgeted for a private retirement plan versus the cost associated with the South Carolina Retirement System. Other significant budgeted costs include instructional services to assist with the personalized education program, exceptional services to ensure all needs are being met with special needs students, and fiscal management services to ensure finances are a priority. The first year of operations

includes a significant amount of expenditures for students related to supplies, technology, furniture and fixtures, etc. The key to successfully implementing the personalized learning model is to invest in technology devices and software so the curriculum can be tailored to the student. The budget includes funds allocated for each student to have their own device as well as an allocation for a computer lab and instructional software. Budgeted amounts for these items and services are approximately \$328,000. The last significant portion of the budget relates to facilities keeping in mind that the operational budget is earmarked to run the building. TCS is negotiating a lease arrangement with Thornwell (the non-profit) regarding facility rent at \$5,000 per month with the School paying operating needs such as utilities and maintenance. TCS has currently budgeted for a custodian, but will evaluate whether an outside service or in house personnel is appropriate. The one area that TCS did not currently budget for is food service. Although the School does intend to provide a breakfast and lunch program, it will do so through Thornwell's existing food service program, which utilizes various USDA funding. Thornwell's current facilities include a commercial kitchen and dining hall that our students would be able to use. TCS would assist Thornwell in collecting the information needed for the program, but because Thornwell's staff would operate it independently, this would result in no food service revenue or expenses for TCS. TCS has intentionally structured the budget to be conservative by understating our expected revenues while including all expected costs for the School. TCS management, board, and McCay Kiddy will continually evaluate and monitor the budget to actual results and cash flow analysis to ensure fiscal solvency. If it appears that TCS is behind or will not meet budget expectations due to either lower enrollment or unforeseen expenses an amendment will be made to the budget. TCS management, the treasurer, and McCay Kiddy will

develop an amended budget based on the new events and will submit to the full board for approval. The School understands that an amended budget in the first few years of operations is not uncommon as there can be unexpected expenditures and needs with a new school, therefore TCS has budgeted for surpluses that are at least 8% of revenue or more to prepare for the unknowns. The School is cognizant of the South Carolina Department of Education's (SCDE) requirement for a general reserve fund of at least one month of general fund operating expenditures included in unrestricted fund balance and these surpluses far exceed the requirement giving the School room to make changes should the need arise.

TCS has not negotiated any services to be provided by our potential sponsor, the Charter Institute at Erskine. However, the School will evaluate any opportunities that our sponsor is able to provide.

TCS will keep their accounting records on an accrual basis of accounting which is consistent with General Accepted Accounting Principles. The School also intends on using fund accounting in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards as well as adhere to the funding manual and audit guide provided by SCDE. The School is aware that accurate accounting is crucial to success and will ensure both management and the board are trained and versed in these areas with the assistance of McCay Kiddy. McCay Kiddy regularly prepares and audits financial statements under generally accepted accounting principles and understands the SC funding manual and guidelines, as well as the dynamics of school finance and charter schools. Due to their experience as current fiscal management providers to SC charter schools and auditors of SC charter schools they will be able to advise the School and the board of directors on the best financial structures as well as provide trainings to any members of

management or board that need assistance on understanding the requirements. McCay Kiddy will also assist in developing an internal control structure to include segregation of duties as well as management and board monitoring. Key controls will include no one person having the ability to control an entire process, for instance the individual who receives cash or checks for the School will not be the one to prepare the deposit, take to the bank, and reconcile to the general ledger. There will be appropriate checks and balances in place so that management is aware and signing off on transactions and the board will provide oversight. Because TCS recognizes the critical importance of Student Accounting, the School has budgeted for a qualified data clerk to compile and maintain the appropriate financial data in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the South Carolina Pupil Accounting Manual and the South Carolina Student Accountability Manual. The clerk's submission will be reviewed by the Principal as well as the Special Needs coordinator to verify the accuracy of the data.

Currently the School intends on engaging McCay Kiddy as our fiscal management provider if the application is approved. Included in Appendix Z are the back office accounting details. We have not negotiated any other services at this time, but will be continuing to research our options for professional development, food services, custodial maintenance, curriculum, library and media services, and so forth. We intend on seeking competitive bids for significant contracts based on state procurement or as the board deems necessary. We will thoroughly examine all opportunities and proceed with the best options that meet both our educational and financial needs.

TCS will undergo an annual audit, adhere to all federal and state financial requirements, and fully disclose all matters of financial management to our sponsor, the Charter Institute at

Erskine. TCS will solicit at least three bids from independent Certified Public Accountant (CPA) firms and select the firm that best suits our needs. We will take into account whether the firm has prior charter school auditing experience, the location of the firm, and their pricing structure. The audit will be facilitated through McCay Kiddy and the school management and will be conducted in the same manner as all schools in our district. The Board of Directors will receive, review, and approve the Auditor's Report prior to official reporting. The audit will be distributed to our sponsor and required state agencies in a timely manner, no later than the stated deadlines.

TCS does not intend on offering the South Carolina Retirement System benefits to our employees. The School understands that the South Carolina Retirements System is a substantial cost and continues to increase on an annual basis. If it appears that teacher recruitment is suffering by not offering state retirement the School would evaluate with the assistance of McCay Kiddy whether TCS could absorb that cost both currently and in the future as the cost continues to increase.

If the school opens with lower enrollment than expected, TCS will immediately amend the budget and evaluate reducing staff, contracted services, and supplies and at the same time pursue local income sources such as grants and contributions to offset the budget shortfall. The School will also discuss options with Thornwell (the non-profit) who have the resources to loan funds for a cash flow shortfall as well as provide additional services or potentially share staff to reduce expenditures. The School needs minimum enrollment of 200 students to be fiscally solvent without hurting the School's academic initiatives. We understand as a start-up charter school that it may take a year or two of proven results and a positive environment to attract the additional students and are dedicated to achieving this initiative.

On an annual basis starting late winter or early spring the School will start their budgeting process for the new fiscal year with at least the principal, treasurer, and McCay Kiddy. There may be additional financial minded board members who would participate in the process as well. The School will begin the budget process by evaluating current enrollment, returning student applications, and new applications to establish a student count for the new school year. Any grants, fundraisers, and contributions will be reviewed as well as any other state and federal funds that were received during the year to ensure whether they are appropriate to include in the current year budget, need adjusted, or removed all together. Once revenue is projected the School will then include all known expenses based on signed agreements/contracts, needs of the students and teachers, and the necessities to operate the School. Careful consideration will be used based on current student's academic performance ensuring the School continually invests in appropriate technology and software to further each student's personal education plan. If it appears that a certain method or software is not adequate it will be replaced and the corresponding cost will be reflected in the budget. Once a draft of the budget is developed it will be sent to the other board members for review. Any questions will be addressed, updates will be made and the budget will then be read and discussed in open session at a board meeting. Typically there will be additional information needed or items to adjust and a 2nd or 3rd reading may be necessary before the Board passes the budget. The budget will be approved before the start of the new fiscal year and evaluated monthly for a potential amendment. An amendment may result if enrollment does not meet expectations by either having fewer students than planned or the special needs population could be significantly higher and expenses would need to adjust to fit this population. There also may be unexpected expenses that materialize that would result

in a budget amendment, for instance the heating/air conditioning unit suddenly stopped or a storm damaged the roof and a major repair needs to be completed. Regardless of the event triggering the budget change, the Principal, Treasurer, and McCay Kiddy will quickly address the change and draft an amended budget to present to the board for approval.

Although TCS has budgeted conservatively, intends on surpluses, and has key individuals within finance to assist with financial decision making, the School knows that there may be times that is not enough and cash flow becomes a challenge. As a last resort the School would receive assistance from Thornwell (the non-profit) to bridge the cash flow gap. They are also willing to assist the school during the planning year by loaning the school funds if necessary to move towards opening.

2. Facilities

Describe the basic facilities requirements. Identify any other significant facilities needs not already specified. If a facility has not been identified, specify a plan for obtaining the facility and include a description of the facility needs, a statement as to whether an existing facility will be remodeled or a new facility will be built, and a schedule for completing or obtaining a suitable facility. A discussion of the planning committee's process for obtaining facilities. A description how the school's facilities plan is aligned with the projected enrollment growth outlined in the charter application.

Thornwell has an academic building with 18 classrooms, a 375 seat performing arts center, office space, storage rooms and a library; a second academic building that could contain four classrooms upon renovation, a gymnasium with boys and girls locker rooms, restrooms, showers, a horizontal climbing wall, office space, storage space, and a canteen area for selling concessions; an athletic center with boys and girls locker rooms, a training room, an office, an equipment room, storage space, and a weight training room with equipment for athletes; a dining hall with seating for approximately 300 people, a commercial kitchen, a commercial

dishwasher, a walk-in freezer, two walk-in refrigerators, storage space for non-refrigerated food items, restrooms, and a small dining room for meetings. The campus also has lighted baseball and football/lacrosse/soccer fields, a press box on the football field, a softball field, a track with long jump, pole vault, high jump and discus/shot-put areas, a swimming pool, and two tennis courts. In addition, the campus has a 315 acre farm with barns, shelters for heavy equipment, five ponds, two lake houses, a pavilion, and a free range pasture with several chicken coops.

Thornwell has sought out the services of R. Bradley Van Name, Architect, PA. He is an architect from Taylors, South Carolina who has experience working with public schools. His building plans and campus master plan are in Appendix BB.

3. Insurance Coverage

All requirements for this section will be in the appendix items.