



SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**South Carolina
Public Charter School Application**

Cover Page

Applicant Information

Name of Proposed Charter School: Rosewood Classical Charter School
Mailing Address (*if known*): 2901 Rosewood Drive
City: Columbia
State: SC
Zip Code: 29205
Name of Applicant Group: Rosewood Classical Charter School, Inc.
FEIN: TBD

Contact Information

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Additional Information About Proposed Charter School

Grade levels during opening year: Kindergarten through Second Grade
Grade levels at full student matriculation: Kindergarten through Eighth Grade
Sponsor Name: Charter Institute at Erskine

Executive Summary

The mission of Rosewood Classical Charter School (RCCS) is to cultivate a learning environment in Richland County that produces model citizens who embrace ongoing achievement in education and service. RCCS strives to create a regional model for establishing a school climate that fosters the values of classical education to support the growth and development of leadership-caliber students. RCCS intends to integrate classical literature, Latin, and rhetorical arts into the study of existing subjects. The development of the skills required to master these demanding disciplines advances students that think with order, depth, and complexity beyond the educational environment and into the modern marketplace.

RCCS formed a Planning Committee, which comprises a diverse mix of professional experience, and reached out to other groups that have the same goals for education in their communities. The RCCS Planning Committee has liaised with other Planning Committees toward the end of advancing classical education in South Carolina. The result of these joint efforts is this application. Each member of the Planning Committee has shown a sincere interest in seeing the children of South Carolina as competitive contenders in the global marketplace. RCCS's effort has received significant local community support, including indications of interest from a variety of families in the targeted area. The prospective location of RCCS will be at Rosewood Baptist Church located at 2901 Rosewood Drive, Columbia, SC 29205. RCCS intends to replicate the demographics of Richland County. The target geographical areas are based on the interest of parents/guardians that are currently living in these areas. RCCS's curriculum and core programmatic features will offer this community a choice of education that is currently unavailable.

RCCS believes that young students progress most rapidly when paired with a curriculum that is not only based on challenging content, but also closely aligns with their cognitive development that prepares them for consistent, performance-based assessments. The RCCS curriculum emphasizes memorization of facts in the primary grades, establishing an initial base of knowledge from which students may expand and practically apply that knowledge. Intermediate grades emphasize evaluation, analysis, and integration of information, delving deeper into the facts memorized in the earlier grades. Proper development of a core knowledge creates analytical thinkers that possess remarkable oral and written communication skills that will be useful in later grades as they transition into institutions of higher learning and career-oriented positions.

RCCS will use the Core Knowledge curriculum, which was developed and made available by the Core Knowledge Foundation. Core Knowledge is a highly regarded and proven effective curriculum that is used by some of the highest achieving charter schools in the nation. Liberty Common Charter School in Fort Collins, Colorado uses the Core Knowledge curriculum and is ranked as the top high school in Colorado, as well as one of the top 50 high schools in the nation, according to the U.S. News and World Report¹. RCCS will supplement the Core Knowledge curriculum to fulfill the core programmatic features of classical literature, Latin, and rhetorical arts. Students will engage in classical works such as *D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths* (3rd grade),

¹ <http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/colorado/districts/poudre-school-district-r-1/liberty-common-charter-school-4145>

The Trojan War and *Horatius at the Bridge* (6th grade), *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* (7th grade), and *The Aeneid* (8th grade). RCCS will use Classical Academic Press curricula for Latin. Some of the most successful schools in America use these same programmatic features such as Walnut Hills High School in Cincinnati, Ohio (the number one school in Ohio²), Boston Latin School (the number two school in Massachusetts³), and Nova Classical Academy Charter School in St. Paul, Minnesota (the number one school in Gaminess⁴).

With an emphasis on educational achievement, RCCS wants to do more than produce students that excel academically. Student participation and behavior will be governed by RCCS's 15-point Code of Conduct, which instills responsibility, respect for authority, and consideration for fellow students. The daily utilization of the Code of Conduct, and age appropriate discipline for violations, will enable an instructor-led classroom that is calm, welcoming, invigorating, and respectful towards all students. The vision of RCCS is to foster a school climate that molds the development of individual character, sets the stage for academic achievement, and establishes a lifelong pattern of success.

RCCS has a projected enrollment of 20 students per classroom during the first year of operation to accommodate kindergarten through second grade students in a traditional, grade-level structure. In the opening year, RCCS will feature two kindergarten classes, two first grade classes, and one second grade class. RCCS will offer differentiated instruction beginning in kindergarten, allowing students to either advance to the next grade level or continue necessary remedial instruction and support. The model will grow during subsequent years of implementation, expanding annually by adding one grade level each year through the eighth grade. The total target population for the first year is 100 students. The student population is projected to increase 40-50 students each year through the eighth grade, with additional classes as required. At full capacity, RCCS hopes to serve 400 students in the 2024-2025 school year.

In assessing the need for this school in the community, the Planning Committee studied achievement data from the three closest elementary schools to the proposed location. The 2017 Accountability data reveals that the elementary schools in the area are making little progress towards meeting the applicable standards. The average 2017 SC READY test scores for the reviewed schools indicate a 53.1% failure to reach grade-level standards on the English portion of the exam, and a 55.5% failure to reach grade-level standards on the Mathematics portion of the exam⁵. While RCCS recognizes that there are many factors that affect educational achievement, the 2017 SC READY test scores of these schools in the targeted service area indicate room for improvement. Moreover, there are no public schools in the area that offer the type of education proposed by RCCS, which the Planning Committee believes would be a beneficial addition to the students of the Richland County community.

² <http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/ohio/districts/cincinnati-public-schools/walnut-hills-high-school-15134>

³ <http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/massachusetts/districts/boston-public-schools/boston-latin-school-9285>

⁴ <http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/minnesota/districts/nova-classical-academy/nova-classical-academy-upper-school-92037>

⁵ <https://ed.sc.gov/data/test-scores/state-assessments/sc-ready/2017/school-scores-by-grade-level/?ID=4001055>

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EDUCATIONAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

Evidence of Need and Community Support

In assessing the need for a charter school in the Richland County community, the RCCS Planning Committee studied achievement data from the three closest elementary schools to RCCS's proposed location. The 2017 Accountability data reveals that the elementary schools in the area are making little progress towards meeting the applicable standards. The average 2017 South Carolina College-and-Career-Ready (SC READY) test scores for the reviewed schools indicate a 53.1% failure to reach grade-level standards on the English portion, and a 55.5% failure to reach grade-level standards on the Mathematics portion of the exam⁶. While RCCS recognizes that there are many factors that affect educational achievement, the 2017 SC READY test scores for schools in the targeted service area indicate room for improvement.

The formation of RCCS in no way negates the leadership and faculty efforts of the district as they continue to make strides in progressing education in each school. However, the Committee cannot overlook the challenges and areas of improvement that are apparent in the test data. The local school districts have a history of underperforming academically. RCCS believes that the addition of a new school climate, curriculum, and structure will provide an opportunity for students that will not only improve test scores, but provide a new era of quality education that has not yet been introduced to this geographical area.

Outreach methods will continue to take place throughout the implementation process to engage parents and community members to establish ongoing support and involvement for families in the area. The Committee believes that the best way to reach a diverse group of families and potential students for RCCS is by staying in the community to build awareness and support

⁶<https://ed.sc.gov/data/test-scores/state-assessments/sc-ready/2017/school-scores-by-grade-level/?ID=4001055>

for the school's mission. The Planning Committee wants to ensure that the enrollment of RCCS reflects the targeted population of Richland County. As a result, multiple attempts have been made to reach out to all residents, including outreach to other local community leaders and media appearances. RCCS welcomes all children without regard to their background or experience with appropriate staffing that are trained in identifying, notifying, and supporting students with disabilities.

Resources have been expended to launch the educational social media campaign as an ongoing effort, through flyers, community meetings, and other outreach methods to inform and engage students, parents, and community members during the entire implementation process. RCCS will continue these efforts in the coming months to include updates on their results and progress as needed (*See Appendix C*). Each outreach platform provides a variety of ways to not only build demand and strengthen support for implementation, but to engage the community every step of the way. RCCS will provide updated figures related to community support at its hearing.

Should RCCS be granted a charter, the Planning Committee will retain Greenhouse Solutions (Greenhouse), a demographic data company, to analyze the local population and identify families with school-age children. Such identification will be made without regard to race, national origin, religion, or other such cultural factors. For all households that have children residing there, RCCS intends to inform them of its efforts.

Upon identification, Greenhouse will oversee contact with the families in relative proximity to RCCS's proposed location, approximately 20 miles in all directions. Greenhouse will inform them of the charter school and ascertain any interest on the part of the families in having their children attend RCCS. A follow-up phone survey system will allow recipients to request more information. Finally, RCCS volunteers will then contact interested families with more information

regarding the proposed opening schedule. In addition, 21,400 vehicles go past RCCS's proposed facility every weekday. RCCS will be able to advertise directly to the individuals who will be most likely to appreciate a new educational opportunity in the area.

RCCS will require mandatory parental involvement in its operations. In addition to parental service hours, RCCS intends to use email and other software tools to ensure that parents are aware of the school's operations, their child's daily study requirements, academic progress (as needed), and upcoming opportunities for the RCCS community to join together for social/charitable purposes. RCCS also intends for the sports component of RCCS to have parents heavily involved in both skill development as well as competition.

Curriculum and Instructional Model

Instructional Model

The RCCS Planning Committee believes that student learning can be enhanced through the implementation of a well-documented and well-researched academic program known as the Core Knowledge curriculum, which was developed and made available by the Core Knowledge Foundation. Core Knowledge is a classical, education-styled curriculum that is designed to provide approximately 75% of the school's curriculum. As a proven curriculum that is adaptable to a number of instructional methodologies, RCCS plans to integrate the use of Core Knowledge with stronger emphasis on classical literature, Latin, and rhetorical arts.

This curriculum is employed by some of the most successful schools in America that have adopted the same programmatic features such as Walnut Hills High School in Cincinnati, Ohio (the number one school in Ohio), Boston Latin School (the number two school in Massachusetts), and Nova Classical Academy Charter School in St. Paul, Minnesota (the number one school in

Gaminess). Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy (the number four school in North Carolina⁷) is also an award-winning, classical public school that has benefited from the implementation of Core Knowledge into their school's curriculum.

The layered, history-centered and comprehensive approach of the Core Knowledge curriculum follows a classical model of education that provides a strong, grade-by-grade knowledge base. This will enable RCCS to exceed both local and state academic gains, building upon the confidence of students and their understanding of great literature and comprehension of historical documents. Students will study the great minds of Western Civilization as outlined below:

Grade	Classical Works
Third Grade	<i>D'Aulaires' Greek Myths</i>
Fourth Grade	<i>Famous Men of Rome</i>
Fifth Grade	<i>Famous Men of the Middle Ages</i>
Sixth Grade	<i>Famous Men of Greece</i> <i>The Trojan War</i> <i>Horatius at the Bridge</i>
Seventh Grade	<i>Book of the Ancient Greeks</i> <i>Iliad and Odyssey</i>
Eighth Grade	<i>Book of the Ancient Romans</i> <i>The Aeneid</i>

Table 1: Outline of Classical Literature (By Grade Level)

RCCS believes that young students progress most rapidly when paired with a curriculum that is not only based on challenging content, but also closely aligns with their cognitive development that prepares them for consistent, performance-based assessments. The RCCS instructional model emphasizes memorization of facts in the primary grades, establishing an initial base of knowledge from which students may expand and practically apply that knowledge. Intermediate grades emphasize evaluation, analysis, and integration of information, with

⁷ <http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/north-carolina/districts/thomas-jefferson-classical-academy/thomas-jefferson-class-academy-14252>

progressively more detailed study of the facts and concepts introduced in earlier grades. Proper development of a core knowledge creates analytical thinkers that possess remarkable oral and written communication skills that will be useful in later grades as they transition into institutions of higher learning and career-oriented positions.

The Core Knowledge curriculum is based on the idea that knowledge builds on top of knowledge. It provides a central, detailed course of instruction that ensures a solid foundation in English, history, geography, mathematics, science, and fine arts. The course of instruction also emphasizes written communication and other similar skills. Core Knowledge focuses on cultural literacy, defined as a shared knowledge base that facilitates expression through reference. As reading assignments are layered upon writing assignments, which in turn serves as a student's demonstration of reading comprehension, Core Knowledge allows each layer to build upon skills that transfer into others such as verbal communication.

Beginning in the third through eighth grade, RCCS students will begin the study of First Form Latin. Approximately half of the English language is derived from Latin. The study of this foreign language has been demonstrated to increase proficiency in vocabulary-related disciplines. The 2010 College Board Report indicated that, among students who took a foreign language, Latin students achieved the highest scores in reading comprehension and writing, and the fourth highest scores in mathematics.

RCCS will be open to welcoming diversity on all levels. A school's academic program should allow for individualized assessments and educational adjustments that address abilities and disabilities in a way that returns full circle to the same results – educational achievement. RCCS will use a Response to Intervention (RTI) school-wide model to meet the developmental requirements of all students and meet or exceed the South Carolina State Board of Education

(SCBOE) requirements. RCCS instructors will track students' progress throughout the school year to ensure that remedial or advanced instruction is provided where applicable. Such assessments will supplement their weekly decisions regarding student learning and retention. RCCS will use the instructor's weekly assessments to, in consultation with parents, address any need by individual students for advanced or remedial subject work on a continuous basis. Students needing either supplemental instruction or additional challenges will be provided with such, both during the school day, as well as before and after. RCCS already has a team of community volunteers to help tutor students needing remedial or advanced instruction at no cost to the students or their families. Further, should any student need additional instruction past the normal school year, RCCS will make arrangements available for them to receive supplemental instruction during the summer break to ensure that they are prepared for the following year.

RCCS will comply with all updates to federal and state assessments. Evidence of increased student academic achievement for all groups of students described in Section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) of the ESEA will be provided through summative assessments. RCCS understands that increases in student achievement for all students as described in ESEA is the most important factor in determining renewal or revocation of a charter. Ongoing formative assessments and benchmarks will provide student progress markers toward summative goals.

Since its development by University of Virginia professor, E.D. Hirsh, Jr., Core Knowledge has been studied in a variety of settings and locations. One of the most recent studies was conducted in New York in 2011. The study looked at the impact of the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) through a pilot program conducted at ten (10) demographically-matched, low-income schools in grades K-2 for a three-year period that started during the 2008-2009 school year. The schools were a range of urban, rural, and suburban schools, which covered 172

classrooms, 200 teachers, and 4,466 students. From school-to-school, the percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch ranged from 30% to 99%.

The study found that CKLA students had significantly greater gains in the third year of the program than students in compared schools in nearly every measure. In fact, the student also found that the spring test scores for second grade CKLA students were greater than that of compared students on all tests. Most importantly, the study found that 1) students with the lowest incoming scores saw the greatest impact; 2) students who had been in the program the longest scored the highest; and 3) classes which implemented the CKLA program showed statistically higher scores than compared classes within one school year. The New York research confirmed earlier research that had been done by Johns Hopkins University in 2000. No curriculum is a guarantee of educational success. It is only one tool among others. However, the success observed in the New York and Johns Hopkins studies has been seen in many schools that have adopted the Core Knowledge curriculum. Given these facts, RCCS believes the Core Knowledge curriculum will allow it to drive success with the students in the surrounding area due to demonstrated success of Core Knowledge in other disadvantaged areas.

The state of Colorado is one of the states with the greatest use of the Core Knowledge with 65 schools that have adopted its curriculum. Ridgeview Classical Charter School in Fort Collins, Colorado implements Core Knowledge, ranking as the third best high school in the country in 2015 and in the top thousand high schools in the nation. Liberty Common Charter School is another premier charter school in Fort Collins, ranked as one of the top 50 high schools in the country. As the ACT is a fairly neutral, unbiased arbiter of educational success in the subjects that it tests, it should be noted that Colorado is one of the 18 states that requires all 11th graders in the public school system to take the ACT. Within its first four years of operation, juniors at Liberty Common

had the highest composite ACT test scores in the state for two consecutive years (2012 and 2013). In 2014, Liberty Common not only had the highest scores in the state, but also broke the record for the highest scores ever in the state of Colorado. That record was previously held by Vanguard Charter School in Colorado Springs, another success story of the Core Knowledge curriculum. The level of success shown by Liberty Common and Vanguard is not simply built in four years of high school alone. Instead, it is the result of a solid foundation that is laid in grades K-8.

This type of foundational success is also seen in elementary schools such as Woods Charter School in Chapel Hill, North Carolina⁸. This school utilizes the Core Knowledge curriculum in grades K-8. Woods ranks as the best elementary school in Raleigh-Durham and the surrounding areas, and the fifth best elementary school in state. North Carolina uses End of Grade (EOG) tests for their elementary learning assessment. Over 55% of Woods' students scored *Superior* on the 3rd grade EOG math portion. An additional 36% scored a *Solid* understanding of grade-level mathematics for a total of 91% between the two scores. Woods Charter School students also scored a combined *Superior* and *Solid* score of 88% on the 3rd grade EOG reading portion. These excellent scores continue through the later grades as well, with 8th graders from Woods scoring a combined 80% on the EOG mathematics portion and 96% on the reading portion. There is more than enough statistical evidence that constitutes Core Knowledge as a successful curriculum. Core Knowledge has a proven track record of excellence and achievement results. Within this region alone, schools in Georgia, North Carolina, and even South Carolina are using this curriculum and obtaining noteworthy results.

⁸ <http://www.carolinaschoolhub.com/woods-charter-school-chapel-hill-nc.cfm>

Educational Structure

RCCS has a projected enrollment of 20 students per classroom during the first year of operation to accommodate kindergarten through second grade students in a traditional, grade-level structure. In the opening year, RCCS will feature two kindergarten classes, two first grade classes, and one second grade class. RCCS will offer differentiated instruction beginning in kindergarten, allowing students to either advance to the next grade level or continue necessary remedial instruction and support. The model will grow during subsequent years of implementation, expanding annually by adding one grade level each year through the eighth grade. The total target population for the first year is 100 students. The student population is projected to increase 40-50 students each year through the eighth grade, with additional classes as required. At full capacity, RCCS hopes to serve 400 students in the 2024-2025 school year. Students on a waiting list will be added as spaces open up through attrition if capacity is reached each year.

The average school day at RCCS will begin with a 7:00 a.m. early drop-off for parents that need it. There will be a hired staff member to open and monitor a designated classroom for applicable students. Regular drop-off begins at 7:30 a.m. with a designated area available for inclement weather. The actual school day will begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. and school dismissal will vary by grade level. A low-cost, afterschool program will be offered to assist parents with carpooling and siblings, which is based on similar procedures in surrounding private and public schools (*See Appendix F*).

All RCCS students will receive daily, high-quality, research-based instruction. English Language Arts and math will be taught every day, with the Core Knowledge features (classical literature, history, science, Latin, and rhetorical arts) built into the curriculum. In addition, students will have a varied schedule of weekly Core Knowledge material in geography, visual arts, and

music. Class time for students will be varied, but most of the instructional blocks will either be an hour or 40-minute periods.

Teachers will have great flexibility in teaming activities and other special grouping strategies to move students forward academically. They will primarily plan with and use Core Knowledge materials to instruct their students. Reading and comprehension is key to students' doing well with the Core Knowledge curriculum. As such, large blocks of instructional time will be dedicated to reading in the primary grade levels. The addition of Latin⁹ in the intermediate grades has consistently been proven to greatly improve components such as reading achievement and vocabulary, as well as Grade Point Averages (GPAs) and SAT scores¹⁰.

Collectively, the school culture of RCCS will be one of academic excellence, self-respect, and respect for others. Student participation and behavior will be governed by RCCS's 15-point Code of Conduct, which instills responsibility, respect for authority, and consideration for fellow students. The daily utilization of the Code of Conduct will enable an instructor-led classroom that is calm, welcoming, invigorating, and respectful towards all students. RCCS will be a school that is also welcoming to parents and the community members with frequent open houses and community events to ensure all moving parts are involved in the success of students. The school is committed to working with parents to support their child's education and assist with instructional and behavioral strategies. The curriculum and instructional staff will accommodate all students regardless of their academic pace. This includes understanding the procedural requirements for IDEA and Section 504, as well as understanding how to meet the needs of students who have the academic ability to move at an accelerated pace. Core academic skills will be measured through state and school assessments. The individual academic profiles will be shared with students and

⁹ <https://classicalacademicpress.com/series/latin-for-children/>

¹⁰ <https://www.bolchazy.com/Assets/Bolchazy/extras/LatinAdvantageandSATscores.pdf>

parents as well. Teachers at RCCS will be able to articulate the relevant academic levels of students and their academic needs to produce growth moving forward. RCCS also intends to recruit a team of community volunteers to help tutor students needing remedial or advanced instruction at no cost to the students or their families. Further, should any student need additional instruction past the normal school year, RCCS will make arrangements available for them to receive supplemental instruction during the summer break to ensure they are prepared for the following year.

Professional Development

The RCCS Planning Committee strongly believes in preparing teachers for success in the classroom. The small class sizes (none larger than 25 per classroom per grade level) and use of such a prestigious curriculum creates a purpose-driven environment for teachers to excel as an instructor and for students to excel academically at his or her maximum level. Each teacher will be allotted a planning period and/or opportunity for team meetings each day. There is no other public school in the Richland County area that provides the programmatic features that RCCS intends to offer. As a result, new forms of accountability must be established to make substantial academic progress. Teachers will be exposed to more professional development opportunities than most traditional public schools as they have the opportunity to really be involved in the development of this program.

Core Knowledge is not a teaching methodology, but a systematic-leveled curriculum that offers each student a base of knowledge that “levels the playing field.” Teachers who utilize the Core Knowledge curriculum go through an extensive training program, which outlines the materials with suggested teaching. Each teacher using the program will have five days of initiation training and an additional hour of training each month. Teachers will also receive additional training in classical teaching through the Core Knowledge Foundation.

During the first year, all teachers will be required to have 15 days of professional development, and 10 days thereafter. In subsequent years, any new teachers that join the RCCS community will be required to have 15 days of initial training during their first year as well. The outcome of all professional development will better prepare teachers for success in many settings as it relates to the chosen curriculum. RCCS wants teachers to be able to develop intellectual activities that integrates the programmatic features of Core Knowledge as they will have great flexibility in teaming activities and other special grouping strategies to move students forward academically. All time classified as professional development will prompt for a participation survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the training, workshop, or conference. Student goal assessments will provide guidance on professional development and growth moving forward. Teachers will help develop these programs and effective teaching methods into a model of excellence, as the RCCS community works together to improve learning opportunities in the Richland County and surrounding areas.

The Planning Committee has identified a certified Core Knowledge training expert, Cathy Kinter, as a contractor for the initial and annual training. Kinter is based in North Carolina and has a robust history with Core Knowledge in a variety of capacities. She previously served as a second grade teacher in a new charter school that created and implemented original lessons that met the Core Knowledge guidelines. Kinter has assisted teachers in creating Core Knowledge lesson plans and projects, served as her school's curriculum director, trained new and veteran teachers in Core Knowledge, and monitored its implementation in kindergarten through the eighth grade. She also instituted and oversaw suggested improvements in practice and guided staff towards achieving status as a Core Knowledge School of Distinction. Kinter presented at the Core Knowledge National Conference and served as a network Curriculum Advisor. She is specifically experienced

in grades K–8 Core Knowledge implementation in rural charter schools and state and federal assessment requirements.

The school’s principal will be charged with ensuring that the planning, implementation, and follow-up of professional development takes place. RCCS is committed to establishing professional development opportunities that trains all staff in the identification, notification, and support of all students with disabilities. Training in differentiating and individualizing educational plans for students will be a key aspect of all professional development opportunities at RCCS. The administration will hire a full time special education coordinator in the first year of operation to ensure that the identified needs of students with disabilities are addressed on a daily basis with frequent communication between faculty and staff members, as well as parents/guardians. The RCCS Planning Committee has secured an agreement for initial and ongoing training through Chad Lawrence, Headmaster of a highly successful classical school in Beaufort, South Carolina.

Virtual Offerings - Additional Requirements

This section is *not applicable* to the RCCS application.

Serving Students with Special Needs

All core content teachers at RCCS will use the Core Knowledge curriculum to build a strong academic base for all students. This curriculum has been proven to work with a wide range of student abilities. The baseline data will include reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Each student at RCCS will have an academic baseline developed during the school’s first year of operation, using an assortment of school and state assessments. The school will use national utilized assessments such as DRA2+, iReady, MAP, and/or W-APT. The school will also use Core Knowledge’s teacher-made assessments that will be standardized at grade levels to serve as an additional academic growth model. This addition will be especially helpful in science, as there is

a lack of existing standardized science measurements in education. Each student will develop an academic goal that will be shared with all teachers and their parents.

RCCS will use the national model of Response to Intervention (RTI). The principal will identify a teacher as a part-time RTI Coordinator and provide that individual with two unencumbered teaching periods per day during the first year of operation to establish the program. The teacher will be trained in RTI methodologies and represent the school at local and state meetings relevant to RTI. The major components of the identified RTI model are identifying potential learning problems through multiple assessments, analyzing the problem, using a multi-tiered approach to establishing a goal(s) for the student, developing a monitoring plan to gauge progress, and continuously collecting data to make decisions about adjustments, if necessary. The three-tiered approach provides classroom screening and a group academic analysis. The use of Core Knowledge as a unified, base-level curriculum will fit perfectly at this level. Students showing little or no progress will receive Tier II interventions. These may include interventions such as tutoring, curriculum adjustments such as re-teaching a literature section to an individual/group, student pairings for teamwork, parental assistance at home, mentoring and/or extra help in an afterschool program. Students who still are not making adequate progress are referred for Tier III interventions for a comprehensive evaluation and consideration for being eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA). RTI will be part of the school's professional development program at the beginning of the year for all staff.

As a public charter school, RCCS will be open to all students who apply regardless of disability status, label, or services needed. Students with disabilities who attend RCCS will be served in the same manner and will receive the special education and related services and support,

as defined in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The IEP will be the guiding document that defines all services and accommodations deemed necessary by the RCCS team. The implementation of the IEP will be monitored and reported to the student, parents, and related staff on a regular basis. The purpose of special education and related services is to provide students with disabilities a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). RCCS will do this by following eligible students' IEPs.

RCCS will comply with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which include appropriately certified personnel, documentation, assessments, adaptations and modifications. RCCS will abide by the provision of a FAPE, under the requirements of IDEA and Section 504. RCCS will comply with all federal and state laws, per IDEA 613(e) (1) (B), regarding accommodations for students with disabilities and will not discriminate against individuals who are believed to have disabling conditions. RCCS will adhere to the criteria for eligibility, reporting, and official records for accommodations under the IDEA and Section 504.

Child Find and Initial Evaluation

RCCS will comply with all processes stipulated by the Charter Institute at Erskine in the Child Find procedures for school-aged charter school students, from referral through eligibility and re-evaluation, to exiting the child from special education through re-evaluation or revocation of parental consent. The school will publicly post information regarding the Child Find process in its school and on its website. All parents will receive procedural safeguards at the onset of the evaluation process to ensure that parents are not only aware of the process of special education, but also of their rights at any point during the process. RCCS will comply with all state and federal

statutes, laws, regulations, and sponsor specific policies/procedures when it comes to serving students with special needs.

Identifying Students with Special Needs

RCCS faculty and staff will receive professional development related to laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regarding the privacy of educational records and health records that are defined through the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Training will also be provided on services for students with disabilities on an ongoing basis so that students who may qualify are identified in a timely manner, and so that instructional delivery and interpersonal relations are conducted appropriately and effectively. Identifying children through RTI and referrals from teachers, parents, and administrators will all be a part of the training to staff and faculty for identifying children to be evaluated for a disability. A parent of a child may initiate a request for an initial evaluation. Additionally, when there is reason to suspect that the child may have a disability, an employee of RCCS is obligated to initiate a request for an initial evaluation. Staff members will be trained in both the identification and reporting of students with disabilities. Within the required amount of time from the receipt of a request for an evaluation, RCCS will obtain parental consent for an initial evaluation through an evaluation-planning meeting, or provide the parent written notice on why there is not going to be an evaluation. The written notice will provide a plan of appeal for the parent/guardian if an evaluation is not deemed necessary. The requirements for initial evaluation timelines are found in 34 CFR §300.301(c) and (d). The requirements for determining eligibility are found in 34 CFR §300.306.

Under 34 CFR §300.301(c)(1), an initial evaluation must be conducted within sixty (60) days of receiving parental consent for the evaluation, or within the timeframe established by the State

in which the evaluation must be conducted, if applicable. The IDEA 60-day timeline applies only to the initial evaluation. Public agencies are not required to make the eligibility determination, obtain parental consent for the initial provision of special education and related services, conduct the initial meeting of the IEP team to develop the child's IEP, or initially provide special education and related services to a child with a disability during the IDEA 60-day initial evaluation timeline. The evaluation is complete when all observations, rating scales, assessments, interviews, forms, and outside evaluations have been gathered, scored, and interpreted. This all must be completed within sixty (60) calendar days of receiving the signed parent consent. The team then has fifteen (15) business days to determine eligibility. The team determines eligibility based on a two-prong question:

1. Does the student meet the criteria?
2. Does the student need special education/related services in order to gain access to and progress in the general curriculum?

State Regulations 243.1

RCCS will obtain parental consent before conducting an evaluation. The evaluation team consists of the members similar to those of the IEP team and other qualified professionals. The requirements for parental consent for initial evaluations are found in 34 CFR §300.300(a). The requirements for parental consent for the initial provision of special education and related services are found in 34 CFR §300.300(b)(1)-(2). All initial referrals and all re-evaluations have a team meeting to review existing information and a team meeting to determine eligibility/continued eligibility.

As a part of the initial evaluation and any re-evaluation, the designated team will develop an evaluation plan that will provide the following and be summarized in an evaluation team report:

1. A review of existing evaluation data on the child, including:

- a. Prior evaluations and information provided by the parents/guardians of the child;
 - b. Current classroom-based, local, or state assessments and observations;
 - c. Observations by teachers and related services providers;
 - d. Data on the child's progress in the general curriculum, or, for the preschool-aged child, data pertaining to the child's growth and development; and
 - e. Data from previous interventions or MTSS.
2. A decision based on the aforementioned review and input from the child's parents, which identifies what additional data, if any, are needed to determine:
- a. Whether the child is a child with a disability, as defined in South Carolina Board of Education Regulation 43-243.1, and the educational needs of the child;
 - b. In the case of a re-evaluation of a child, whether the child continues to have such a disability and the educational needs of the child;
 - c. The present levels of academic achievement and related developmental needs of the child;
 - d. Whether the child, as a result of the disability, needs special education and related services; or
 - e. In the case of a re-evaluation of a child, whether the child continues to need special education and related services; and
 - f. Whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the child to meet the measurable annual goals set out in the IEP of the child and to participate, as appropriate, in the general education curriculum.

RCCS will administer assessments for evaluations or contract with the appropriately certified and credentialed professionals to complete and interpret the necessary assessments and other evaluation measures, as needed, to produce the data identified above. RCCS will provide prior written notice to the parents/guardians of a child with a disability that describes any evaluation procedures the school proposes to conduct and obtain written consent prior to conduction. In conducting the evaluation, RCCS will:

1. Use a variety of appropriate assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent that may assist in determining:
 - a. Whether the child is a child with a disability, as defined in South Carolina Board of Education Regulation 43-243.1; and
 - b. The content of the child's IEP, including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum (or for a preschool child to participate in appropriate activities);
2. Not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child; and
3. Use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors.

RCCS will ensure that:

1. Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child:
 - a. Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;
 - b. Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form that is most likely to yield accurate information about what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer;
 - c. Are used for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;
 - d. Are administered by trained and appropriately credentialed personnel; and
 - e. Are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.
2. Assessments and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.
3. Assessments are selected and administered so as best to ensure that if an assessment is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the assessment results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills (unless those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure);

4. A school age child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status and motor abilities;
5. Preschool children are assessed in the following developmental areas: adaptive behavior, cognition, communication, hearing, vision, sensory/motor function, social-emotional functioning and behavioral function.
6. Assessments of children with disabilities who transfer from one school district to another school district in the same school year are coordinated with the children's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary and as expeditiously as possible, consistent with South Carolina Board of Education Regulations 43-243, to ensure prompt completion of the full evaluations.
7. In evaluating each child with a disability, the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related service needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.
8. Assessment tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the child are provided.

The parents will receive a formal written report of evaluation results including:

- Assessment results and educational implications;
- Procedural Safeguards, otherwise known as Parental/Guardian Rights that is provided by the Charter Institute at Erskine;
- A statement of any other factors relevant to the proposed action;

Individualized Education Plans

Developing the Individualized Education Plan (IEP): If a determination is made that a child has a disability and needs special education and related services, after seeking the consent for the initial provision of services, RCCS will develop an IEP for the child within thirty (30) calendar days of the date eligibility is determined as required by South Carolina Board of Education Regulations 43-243. RCCS will use the South Carolina Enrich system to develop and monitor IEPs. The special education teacher will progress monitor the special education students in order

to have accurate, up-to-date information on the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance to determine if the IEP goals are appropriate and achievable. RCCS will form an IEP team that will include all of the following:

- The child's parents
- At least one general education teacher of the child
- At least one special education teacher of the child
- A LEA Representative from the Charter Institute at Erskine
- Someone who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results, who may be one of the team members noted previously
- The child, whenever appropriate

Parents/guardians will receive two forms of written notification within a reasonable timeframe in order to determine if they are able to attend.

The present levels statement is intended to comprehensively describe a child's abilities, performance, strengths, and needs. It is based on all of the information and data previously collected and known about the child, and in large part, the full individual evaluation of the child that must be conducted in accordance with IDEA's evaluation/eligibility provisions of §§300.301 through 300.311. Present levels will describe:

- The child's strengths and weaknesses,
- What helps the child learn,
- What limits or interferes with the child's learning,
- Objective data from current evaluations of the child, and
- How the child's disability affects his or her ability to be involved and progress in the general curriculum.
- A statement that discusses the child's future and documents planning information;

- A statement of the child’s present levels of academic and functional performance, including:
 - A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals if needed,
 - A description of the child’s progress toward meeting the annual goals described in the IEP will be measured; and when reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals will be provided;
- A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child,
- An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular classroom and in activities;
- A statement of any individual appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on state and district-wide assessments;
- If the IEP team determines that the child must take an alternate assessment instead of a particular regular state or district-wide assessment of student achievement, a statement of why;
- The projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications described in the IEP and the anticipated frequency, location and duration of those services and modification;
- For children age 13 or over, appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and the transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.

Developing a Section 504 Plan

If a determination is made that a child has a disability that meets the wider definition of disability under Section 504, the student typically receives accommodations in the general education classroom, but may require out-of-class accommodations that do not rise to the level of special education services. Accommodations under Section 504 are required to *level the playing field* for students who qualify. Students under Section 504 are also afforded procedural safeguards, and while similar to IDEA, are not the same.

Ongoing Services

Transfer IEPs: RCCS will provide comparable services to all children who enter RCCS with an IEP in place. Within thirty (30) days, RCCS will gather data and have an IEP team meeting to determine if the IEP is appropriate for RCCS's environment and can be accepted as is, or amended according to the data gathered to provide access to RCCS's general education.

Service Delivery and Placement Options: In accordance with IDEA, "children will be treated as individuals with unique abilities and disabilities that need to be addressed by providing unique support services, which are explicitly articulated in the IEP." RCCS will ensure that students with disabilities receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and will utilize a variety of strategies to address student needs. RCCS will create a system to ensure that a continuum of alternative placements, including inclusive classrooms, is available to meet the needs of students with disabilities for special education and related services and that least restrictive environment (LRE) issues are considered in placement decisions. LRE considerations will be based on meaningful evaluation data, in consideration of appropriate placement options, and determined, at a minimum, annually. The considerations will be determined by the child's IEP team and will consider any potential harmful effect on the child or on the quality of services that he or she needs, including the medium through which the instruction is delivered.

Re-evaluations: During the three-year re-evaluation, the IEP team will determine if the student does or does not continue to meet the criteria to be a student with a disability under IDEA. At that time, if the student does not meet the criteria for disability, the IEP team will determine if the student meets the wider definition of disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which does not require the full level of special education services. If at the re-evaluation a student

is determined to no longer qualify for or require services, the student will be exited from special education.

Staff and Support Services: To fulfill its obligation, RCCS will have a full-time special education teacher in place the first year of operation whose job is to provide services for students already identified and to assist in the identification of students not yet identified, but meet the state and/or federal criteria of a student with a disability. The teacher will attend all school and Charter Institute at Erskine meetings for special education coordinators/teachers and all trainings provided by the Charter Institute at Erskine to provide better services to the school, students, and parents. The teacher will serve as the contact person between RCCS and the Charter Institute at Erskine and/or agencies on special education matters, including state and federal reporting. Further, RCCS will have under contract an appropriately credentialed Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) to serve students with speech language services in their IEP beginning the first year of operation. RCCS will contract, as the need arises, with an appropriately credentialed School Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, and/or other providers to better service students.

The student's IEP will specify any special circumstances (equipment, supervision, etc.) that need to be provided to meet the student's needs. RCCS will work with local districts' Special Education Services to contract for any special services needed to fulfill any child's IEP that cannot be provided by the school. If services are unavailable through the district, RCCS will contract with the appropriate service providers, including but not limited to: occupational and physical therapy, orientation and mobility, speech therapy, and psychologist for testing in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in school activities.

Students' needs and services are determined by the IEP team, but the school must be prepared before the beginning of school to serve students with more significant disabilities in the

event that such student requests to be enrolled. RCCS will not wait to see what services are required before establishing a contract with Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists and related services providers to ensure that services can begin immediately if determined by the IEP team or need as comparable services.

RCCS will also provide English as Second Language services for students who are determined eligible via the Charter Institute at Erskine or State-approved screening assessments. This service will be contracted out on an as-needed basis, or if enough students require services, a part-time or full-time person will be employed.

Gifted and Talented (GT) Students: RCCS will identify intellectually gifted students through ongoing assessments and classroom observations. Homeroom teachers will work closely with the school's GT program coordinator and parents to identify and develop individualized plans to meet the needs of academically and intellectually gifted students. In particular:

1. Teachers will work with identified gifted students to go beyond state and national standards and with accelerated activities. Teachers will strive to teach gifted students from where they are academically, not from where the curriculum states they should begin. GT students will not be pulled from the classrooms, but will have accelerated plans developed for them by the classroom teachers. It is the Committees belief that general education and GT education should be connected. However, the desire with gifted students is to allow these students to move academically as fast as their academic skills will allow. Teachers will work to keep up-to-date on teaching gifted children by frequently reviewing instructional methods that target the gifted and attending seminars offered by the various gifted associations. RCCS teachers will be encouraged to work with other teachers through social media and school visits that have been successful in teaching and motivating gifted students. RCCS also plans to provide and guide GT students to utilize web-based artificially intelligent assessment and learning programs such as Aleks and SRA Reading Laboratory. Those programs provide the advantages of self-paced one-on-one instruction, 24/7, beyond levels of classroom differentiation.
2. RCCS will comply with South Carolina state regulations regarding identification and serving of gifted and talented students. In addition, national data for working with gifted students will be part of the professional dialogue as teachers meet and share best practice ideas. Students will be identified, monitored, and evaluated as gifted children through ongoing formative and summative assessments, classroom observations, student performance, parental input at the initial enrollment conference and future conferences and

as needed, talking to past teachers, grades, sample work (portfolio), comparing to typical characteristics of gifted children, test scores, and other criterion. Teachers will use the gathered information to assure that gifted students are working to meet their full potential. Homeroom teachers will meet regularly with gifted students' other teachers to receive feedback on the progress of these students. RCCS is aware of parents as their children's first teachers and will include them as a part of their children's educational plan. Effective communications between teachers and parents will be an important part of plans for supporting, monitoring, and evaluating the progress and success of intellectually gifted and talented students.

Members of the Planning Committee have noted that timelines for the initial evaluations have been a concern in some charter schools in the state. The Governing Board of RCCS will hold the principal of the school directly responsible for insuring that all evaluative, instructional, re-evaluations, and reporting timelines and procedures for the special needs program are strictly adhered to. RCCS will also have a plan in place to provide services to students who enroll at the school who already have an IEP. The 30-day time limit for an IEP team to be in place after enrollment will also be strictly adhered to. RCCS anticipates enrolling students who will be identified as English Language Learners (ELL) and will appoint a staff member as an ELL contact. The entire staff will receive professional development before school begins the first year in ELL identification and support. The initial enrollment packet will include a Home Language Survey, which has become the most common means to determine who might need further evaluation for services. Parent, student, and staff referrals for ELL services might also indicate further assessment. Nationally noted assessments such as the Bilingual Syntax Measure (BSM), or the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT) will be used to identify ELL students, their academic needs, and their proficiency level. RCCS anticipates contracting for the assessment services for these students, but has not entered into a contractual arrangement to date. All identified ELL students will have an interview/conference to gather relevant background information. Parent interviews will also be arranged when possible.

Goals, Objectives, and Assessment Plans

RCCS's goals are premised on instilling a solid foundation of knowledge for students with objectives that are specific and measurable and strategies that are research-based and driven by student performance. Assessment results will be used annually (at a minimum) for student progress, curriculum evaluation, and a comprehensive analysis will be conducted to determine any areas which may need improvement. Internal evaluation will occur in nine-week intervals throughout the year, and will spur a collaborative effort of the administration, teachers/staff, parents, students, and Board members to achieve the academic progress desired. The RCCS educational efforts will consistently be aimed at significant student achievement by developing and implementing a continuous improvement plan. The Board will be aggressive in monitoring and insuring that the school's improvement plan is implemented in order to sustain a high level of student performance. RCCS's intends to produce knowledgeable students who are capable of achieving excellence in whatever endeavor they pursue by ensuring reading proficiency for studying and understanding, as well as writing proficiency for communicating that understanding. RCCS's goals will be constantly monitored and measured. The Planning Committee believes that each goal is attainable with a reasonable amount of effort, reflect the school's mission, and are ethically and academically responsible. All educational goals will be measured by the applicable federal accountability guidelines. RCCS has developed two student achievement goals. These goals are based on student need and are aligned with the characteristics of high-quality charter schools.

As indicated, the baseline for RCCS goals represents the average test scores of three elementary schools, within Richland County School District 1, that are the closest to RCCS's proposed location. The SC READY assessments will be administered in accordance with state requirements. The baseline data are as follows:

Goal 1 Mathematics				Baseline
Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year baseline, RCCS’s first 3 rd grade class SC READY state assessment results will annually increase by 3%, as measured by the Mathematics portion, until achieving at least 20% improvement over the local baseline of students who <i>Meet</i> or <i>Exceed</i> the grade standards. Classes in the grade levels thereafter will follow the same trajectory of improvement, maintaining a 20% improvement at all grades once achieved.				The baseline number represents the average of 3 rd grade students’ <i>Meet</i> or <i>Exceed</i> scores on the 2017 SC READY assessments from the elementary schools within the Richland County School District 1, as detailed above. RCCS students will <i>Meet</i> or <i>Exceed</i> the local district’s met performance means, as determined by state assessments.
Rationale: A major component of academic excellence is increased student progress. Local district results from the 2017 SC READY assessments reveal both achievement gaps and a large percentage of students within the RCCS geographic area underperforming in Mathematics. By beginning with the primary grades and building one grade each year, RCCS will be comparing academic achievement between similar populations rather than averages across grades and populations that are different from the RCCS student population, and have a better assessment of whether student progress is increasing.				
Annual Targets				Strategies
1.	2017-2018	Baseline	44.5%	Student progress will be monitored through initial baseline assessments and periodic benchmarks using Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and/or assessments aligned with the state assessment. Teachers will develop an individual progress plan for students as necessary, detailing student strengths and areas of needed improvement. Students who are not achieving adequate progress will be provided with additional instructional support during and before/after regular school hours.
2.	2019-2020	Met ≥	N/A	
3.	2020-2021	Met ≥	47.5%	
4.	2021-2022	Met ≥	50.5%	
5.	2022-2023	Met ≥	53.5%	
6.	2023-2024	Met ≥	56.5%	
7.	2024-2025	Met ≥	59.5%	
8.	2025-2026	Met ≥	62.5%	
9.	2026-2027	Met ≥	65.5%	
10.	2027-2028	Met ≥	65.5%	

Table 2: Average Baseline for Mathematics

Goal 2 Reading/English Language Arts (ELA)				Baseline
Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year baseline, RCCS’s first 3 rd grade class SC READY state assessment results will annually increase by 5%, as measured by the Mathematics portion, until achieving at least 30% improvement over the local baseline of students who <i>Meet</i> or <i>Exceed</i> the grade standards. Classes in the grade levels thereafter will follow the same trajectory of improvement, maintaining a 30% improvement at all grades once achieved.				The baseline number represents the average of students’ <i>Meet</i> or <i>Exceed</i> scores on the 2017 SC READY assessments from elementary schools within the Richland County School District 1, as detailed above. RCCS students will <i>Meet</i> or <i>Exceed</i> the local district’s met performance means, as determined by state assessments.

Rationale: A major component of academic excellence is increased student progress. Local district results from the 2017 SC READY assessments reveal both achievement gaps and a large percentage of students underperforming in Reading/ELA. By beginning with the primary grades and building one grade each year, RCCS will be comparing academic achievement between similar populations rather than averages across grades and populations that are different from the RCCS student population, and have a better assessment of whether student progress is increasing.				
Annual Targets				Strategies
1.	2017-2018	Baseline	46.9%	Student progress will be monitored through initial baseline assessments and periodic benchmarks using Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and/or other state assessments. RCCS will include at least two reading instruction periods (using one of the supplemental periods) per day in 1 st and 2 nd grade, and as needed in the later grades. The Core Knowledge curriculum emphasizes reading and constantly presents age-appropriate material from classic literature, which facilitates the assessment of reading skills. Periodic benchmarks will be conducted each nine-week period. Teachers will develop an individual progress plan for struggling students, detailing their strengths and areas of need. Students who are not achieving adequate progress will be provided with additional instructional support during and before/after regular school hours.
2.	2019-2020	Met \geq	N/A	
3.	2020-2021	Met \geq	51.9%	
4.	2021-2022	Met \geq	56.9%	
5.	2022-2023	Met \geq	61.9%	
6.	2023-2024	Met \geq	66.9%	
7.	2024-2025	Met \geq	71.9%	
8.	2025-2026	Met \geq	76.9%	
9.	2026-2027	Met \geq	76.9%	
10.	2027-2028	Met \geq	76.9%	

Table 3: Average Baseline for Reading/English Language Arts (ELA)

Formative assessments will be used during daily instruction to monitor student progress, guide instruction, and provide direction for corrective action. Internal benchmark assessments will be administered at nine-week intervals throughout the school year. Evaluations (summative) will be used annually (at a minimum) for program evaluation and as a measure of overall student academic improvement. Faculty will use monthly meetings to monitor student uptake of instructional efforts and specifically utilize data to amend or modify student instruction.

RCCS's assessment plan relies on the use of internal assessments designed to measure student progress towards goals. Since RCCS's student population will likely be made up of local students in the proposed geographical area, academic baseline measures were determined for each goal using the most current local district's summary results. Teachers will use instructor-made

assessments, curriculum assessments, and other assessments to measure individual student progress. Each month, teachers and support staff will meet to discuss student progress and plans for accelerating student learning. Internal assessments will be integrated into the regular instructional day and will be administered according to the schedule determined in monthly data team meetings. Benchmark assessments, teacher-generated and/or commercial, will be administered every nine weeks, and will include Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments for the fall, winter, and spring.

The SC READY or required state assessment program will be administered in May to all RCCS students in the third through eighth grade for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. In compliance with the S.C. State Board of Education Regulation 43-220, RCCS first and second graders will be evaluated using the STAR during February-March for gifted and talented education. All accountability measures detailed above will be administered by RCCS in compliance with federal and state requirements, including any amendments to or evolutions of the formal assessments detailed above. SC READY was chosen as the benchmark assessment to provide a ready comparison with area schools and to avoid additional testing days taking away from instructional days.

The RCCS principal, faculty, and staff will communicate directly with the Board and parents/guardians regarding the academic and social progress of the school and individual students, as deemed appropriate. The principal of RCCS will communicate the overall school academic achievement to the RCCS Board at each monthly board meeting, with specific reports regarding all formal achievement testing. The school calendar was developed with ample opportunities for student/parent/teacher conferences, and will be used accordingly. Teachers will maintain a log documenting parental contacts. Monthly data team meetings set the stage for measuring and

monitoring student progress, with a specific focus on any students who need supplemental assistance. Any teacher will have the ability to designate a student for additional help at any time. RCCS will communicate with the community through written and electronic means. The PowerSchool portal will be used on a regular basis for two-way communication. RCCS will develop a website, and each teacher will establish and maintain a current webpage. Local media outlets, including newspapers and radios, will be utilized so that parents and community members are kept abreast of important school events, dates, and times. RCCS's guidance and administrative staff will help with parents who may need assistance getting to and from the campus.

RCCS's goals are clear and direct. Each year's SC READY testing will provide immediate material for analyzing and interpreting academic achievement for all RCCS students. Should RCCS fail to make reasonable progress toward its goals each year, supplemental materials and instruction will be considered by the Board based on a proposal developed by the principal and faculty.

ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

Governing Body

While some volunteered and some were recruited, RCCS formed a Planning Committee which comprises a diverse mix of parents, educators, and professionals. Together, the Committee represents decades of experience in business and education. Each member has shown a sincere interest in seeing the children of South Carolina as competitive contenders in the global marketplace. The group coalesced around the idea that an educational focus on academic rigor and virtue was absent from the Richland County community, and the addition of such an environment would be beneficial to both the community and the state. The following provides a profile snapshot of each committee member:

NAME	LEADERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS
Caroline Donaldson	Executive Assistant, Office Manager, Associate VP, Administrative Services & Board Secretary for the SC Chamber of Commerce
Gregory D. Dowey	Senior and Founding Pastor of Fresh Church
Cindy D. Burks	Business Education teacher at Pine Ridge Middle School
Samuel L. Johnson, Esq.	Staff Counsel for the Honorable Ralph King Anderson, III, Chief Judge, and the Honorable S. Phillip Lenski
Jay Couto	Owner/Manager of Simplify, a small cleaning business
Janis Dorn Morgan	World Language teacher at Chapin High School, Lead teacher of the World Language Data Team and D5 Homebound Services, and Sponsor for the junior and senior National Beta Club.
Rebecca G. Ewing	Faith and Family Director for The Alliance

Table 4: Charter Committee (See Appendix K)

The following provides a brief biography of each existing committee member, highlighting their experience and credentials as the founding group of RCCS:

Caroline Donaldson

Caroline Donaldson graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from Presbyterian College in Clinton, SC. She has an extensive background in administrative services, where she was responsible for customer support and handling business operations. Donaldson is currently the Executive Assistant, Office Manager, Associate VP, Administrative Services & Board Secretary for the SC Chamber of Commerce, where she provides a full range of support services to the President and CEO. She is also a member of Southside Baptist Church where she has been the Nursery Director for 3 years. She was also a Sunday school teacher and Bible school teacher for grade-school children.

Gregory D. Dowey

Gregory D. Dowey attended the University of South Carolina-Columbia where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in theatre and speech with a concentration in psychology. In 1989, he

earned a Master of Divinity degree in Theology with a concentration in Christian Education and Evangelism and a minor concentration in Church Planting from the Southwestern Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, TX. Dowey later received his Doctor of Ministry degree from North Greenville University in Tigerville, SC. He received further studies at Columbia International University and Liberty University. Dowey is currently the Senior and Founding Pastor of Fresh Church in Irmo, SC. He has held other pastoral positions at other churches in the South Carolina area as well. As a project through Fresh Church, he has led multiple short-term, International and North American mission trips, including Hong Kong, Oklahoma, Taiwan, China, Detroit, and Canada.

Cindy D. Burks

Cindy D. Burks received her Bachelor of Science degree in Fashion Merchandising from Winthrop University in Rock Hill, SC. She earned her MAT in Business and Marketing Education from the University of South Carolina-Columbia and is currently expected to complete her Master of Education degree in Administration in May 2018. As a certified South Carolina teacher with 21 years of experience, Burks has held teaching positions in multiple schools and a technology center across the South Carolina area. She is currently a business education teacher at Pine Ridge Middle School in West Columbia, SC.

Samuel L. Johnson, Esq.

Samuel L. Johnson, Esq. graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of South Carolina-Columbia with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history. In 2011, he received his Juris Doctor degree from the University South Carolina School of Law-Columbia where he was the student works editor for the South Carolina Journal of International Law and Business. Johnson began his career as a law clerk and intern in various law divisions and is currently Staff Counsel for the

Honorable Ralph King Anderson, III, Chief Judge, and the Honorable S. Phillip Lenski at the South Carolina Administrative Law Court in Columbia, SC. His responsibilities include conducting legal research, drafting necessary documents, and providing overall support to the served judges on each case.

Jay Couto

Jay Couto attended Midlands Technical College and is currently the Owner/Manager of Simplify, a small cleaning business in Columbia, SC. The local business specializes in inhabited homes, offering services to realtors, new construction, and office spaces. Couto is currently a member of Rosewood Baptist Church where he serves as Senior Deacon on the Deacon Committee and Head of the church's Production Team.

Janis Dorn Morgan

Janis Dorn Morgan graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish Language Education from Columbia College. She also attended the University of Salamanca in Salamanca, Spain for advanced Spanish Language and Pedagogy. Morgan received her Master's degree in Christian Ministries from North Greenville University in Tigerville, SC and is currently attending Coastal Carolina University in Conway, SC to obtain a Computer Science and Digital Citizenship Process Standards Certification. With a proven background as a world language teacher in several high schools across the South Carolina area, she is currently a world language teacher at Chapin High School in Chapin, SC where she serves as the lead teacher of the World Language Data Team and D5 Homebound Services, as well as a sponsor for the junior and senior National Beta Club.

Rebecca G. Ewing

Rebecca G. Ewing Pensacola graduated from Christian College in December 2007, majoring in Music Education with a double minor in Speech Education and English Education. In August 2010, she received a Master's degree in English Education from Bob Jones University. Ewing is currently a Faith and Family Director for The Alliance. She is responsible for developing partnerships among non-profits and ministries in the areas of poverty, pro-life, foster care, adoption, family development, and human trafficking.

As of the date of the submission of this application, all of the Planning Committee members intend to remain involved with RCCS, playing a substantial and ongoing role in the school's development and operation. Together, the members of the Planning Committee possess ample educational and leadership experience for the operation of RCCS.

RCCS holds Articles of Incorporation as a South Carolina non-profit corporation and has established Bylaws for governance and operation. The Planning Committee recommends implementing the Policy Governance model, developed by Dr. John Carver and published in his book, *Boards that Make a Difference*. Should RCCS be granted a charter, RCCS will secure the services of Dr. Wayne Brazell, former Superintendent of the South Carolina Public Charter School District and current consultant for a number of South Carolina public charter school Governing Boards, to assist in training and implementation, as well as obtain board training from the South Carolina Charter School Alliance.

The Board of Directors is the governing body for the non-profit corporation and is legally responsible for all matters regarding RCCS. The Board's focus is strategic, and as such, the Board will set policies, oversee long-range planning, ensure fiscal solvency, and supervise operational matters, including: budgeting, curriculum, operating procedures, and community relations. The

Board will select, by majority vote, a qualified, experienced principal to lead RCCS. The Board will delegate to the principal, upon employment, the authority for the management and execution of day-to-day school activities, including management of personnel and instructional leadership. RCCS's Principal will serve as the liaison between the Board and the school.

Pending charter approval and prior to the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year, RCCS's Planning Committee will request from its members nominations for those who would like to serve as a member of the Governing Board. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50 *et seq.*, the Governing Board shall consist of seven members, as specified in RCCS's Bylaws. Members may initially serve a term of two years, and may serve additional terms upon re-election. A choice of the membership of the board must take place every two years. A majority of the members of the board must be individuals who have a background in K-12 education, business, and/or law. Parents and business and community members will have ample opportunity to submit names for nominations to the Planning Committee in written form. The employees and parents/guardians of enrolled students must elect four members of the Board. A person who has been convicted of a felony shall not be elected. Nominations shall be taken through the close of business on September 30, 2019. Ballots listing the candidates shall be sent out no later than October 30, 2019. Initial elections will be held during the month of November 2019.

Parents shall receive one ballot for each student enrolled in the school. Employees will also receive one ballot each. Ballots received or postmarked on or before November 15, 2019 will be opened and counted in a public process. Individuals receiving the four highest vote totals shall be elected to the Board. The four members will then elect the remaining three members, in accordance with the Bylaws, at the organizational meeting, with specific emphasis on professional experience in education, business, and/or law. The newly elected members will be publicized through the

school's newsletter, webpage, and local media outlets. The Board will hold an organizational meeting no later than November 30, 2019, and will elect the remaining three members and officers in accordance with the Bylaws.

Elections, thereafter, shall commence every two years, and shall coincide with regularly scheduled elections to be held on the first Tuesday of November with ballots to be counted, confirmed, and publicly reported. Further, the Bylaws allow the Board the flexibility to arrange for staggered terms of four years after the initial establishment of RCCS. RCCS's principal will preside at the initial November Board meeting until such time as the Board elects its officers. Newly elected Board members will be sworn-in at the November board meeting, and will attend the initial board training session during December 2019. Board member training will be conducted twice annually. The Board's responsibilities shall include, but are not be limited to:

- Employing and contracting with teachers and non-teaching employees;
- Ensuring that all certified personnel, teachers, and non-certified teachers undergo background checks and other investigations before they are employed with the school;
- Contracting for other services including, but not limited to: transportation, instructional equipment, food services, accounting, and legal services;
- Developing pay scales, performance criteria, and discharging policies for its employees, including the school's administrator;
- Deciding all other matters related to the school's operation, including: budgeting, curriculum, and operating procedures; and
- Dismissal of employees, including administrative personnel;
- Actively participating in School Board training sessions;
- Developing and adopting the budget;
- Establishing a method for engaging the parents, business persons and other community members in planning, implementing, evaluating and improving the school;
- Developing a policy that addresses accountability for student records, Board meetings, and RCCS records; and
- Ensuring that the school adheres to the same health, safety, and civil rights and disability rights requirements, as are applied to all public schools operating in the district.

RCCS will comply fully with Title 30, Chapter 4 of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Meetings of the Board of Directors will be held a minimum of six (6) times per year and conducted by the Board of Directors in accordance with all provisions of the current law and any enacted amendments. The RCCS Board shall meet on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Meeting notices and agendas shall be posted and sent home to the parents/guardians at least one week prior to the meeting. In exception of executive session, all meetings are open to the public. RCCS will adhere to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act as it pertains to student records and administrative records by respecting the purpose of privacy regulations that include:

- Assuring consumer control over student information;
- Setting boundaries on the use and disclosure of student records; and
- Establishing appropriate safeguards to protect privacy of student information.

All student records and administrative records will be secured on the premises of the school or at a site approved for their storage by the Board. All meetings will be conducted in public according to the stipulations of the FOIA except for matters prescribed in Section 3-40-70 which include the following:

- Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body; however, if an adversary hearing involving the employee or client is held, the employee or client has the right to demand that the hearing be conducted publicly. Nothing contained in this item shall prevent the public body, in its discretion, from deleting the names of the other employees or clients whose records are submitted for use at the hearing.
- Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim.
- Discussion regarding the development of security personnel or devices.

- Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct.
- Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body.

Before entering executive session, the Board shall vote in public on the question and when the vote is favorable, the presiding officer shall announce the specific purpose of the executive session. As used in this sub-section, *specific purpose* means a description of the matter to be discussed as identified in items (1) through (5) of sub-section (a) of this section. However, when the executive session is held pursuant to Sections 30-4-70(a)(1) or 30-4-70(a)(5), the identity of the individual or entity being discussed is not required to be disclosed to satisfy the requirement that the specific purpose of the executive session be stated. No action may be taken in executive session except to (a) adjourn or (b) return to public session. The members of a public body may not commit the public body to a course of action by a polling of members in executive session. The Board assumes liability for the activities of RCCS and agrees to hold harmless the Charter Institute at Erskine, its servants, agents, and employees from any and all liability, damage, expense, cause of action, suits, claims, or judgments arising from injury to persons or property or otherwise that arises out of act, failure to act, or negligence of RCCS, its agents and employees, in connection with or arising out of the RCCS activity. RCCS does not anticipate the need for any advisory bodies or councils at this time. *(See Appendix L for Bylaws, Appendix M for Articles of Incorporation, and Appendix N for the Organizational Chart)*

Education/Charter Management Contracts (EMO/CMO)

This section is *not applicable* to the RCCS application.

Administrative Structure and Building Leadership

The principal of the administrative staff will hold a current South Carolina administrator's certification and have a minimum of three years' experience in administration.

Mr. Dowey will lead the selection process as chair of the ad hoc Selection Review Committee (SRC), with one teacher and one other member from the Planning Committee aiding him in reviewing all applications for the position. The SRC will present all applications which met the required experience and education requirements and make a recommendation to the Planning Committee. The Board will select, by majority vote, a qualified, experienced Principal to lead RCCS.

The RCCS Governing Board will design and implement a professional evaluation of the principal annually during the month of January. The evaluation will be focused on the ability of the principal to: demonstrate strategic leadership for advancing RCCS's core programmatic features and academic excellence; provide instructional leadership; foster a positive and productive school culture for students; adequately facilitate their administration to the best of their ability; and demonstrate efficient budget and resource management.

Detailed job descriptions and qualifications can be found in the appendices (*See Appendix P*). In accordance with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Every Student Succeeds Act, and any amending laws, all employees of RCCS will meet the State Charter Schools Act guidelines. The principal will make final recommendations of teacher employment to the Board of Directors. The Board will assume authority for employment.

During the first year of operation, RCCS has projected staffing to accommodate two kindergarten classes, two first grade classes, and one second grade class. The model will grow during subsequent years of implementation, expanding annually by one grade level each year through the eighth grade. Teachers of core academic areas (English, mathematics, science, social studies, music, and art) will hold area certification or a baccalaureate or graduate degree in the subject(s) taught and meet Highly Qualified ESEA requirements. RCCS will employ a full-time

special education teacher, as well as contracted services as deemed necessary in order to provide a free and appropriate education (FAPE) to all eligible special education students in accordance with state and federal regulations as outlined in the IDEA. RCCS will comply with Section 504, the ADA, and the ESEA. Any non-certified staff member performing instructional duties at RCCS will have completed a minimum of one year at an accredited college or university and will meet the qualifications outlined in SC Code Ann. § 59-25-115.

Staff development will be funded by the Board and based on the results of student data to determine their needs and most effective ways to meet those needs according to the Core Knowledge curriculum. Faculty and staff needs will also be assessed through employee surveys to ensure that they are equipped with all of the necessary knowledge, training, tools, and techniques to establish a learning environment that fosters the values of classical education in support of the growth and development of leadership-caliber students. All teachers and assistants working with students will be required to undergo training in South Carolina State Standards Implementation and Core Knowledge. All leadership and faculty will also be expected to participate in the professional development programs offered by The Charter Institute at Erskine.

Qualifications and experience of all faculty and staff of the school will be open to public review and considered as an important part of the information shared with prospective and enrolled students and their parents/guardians. Updates on changes with regard to staffing and qualifications will be communicated in writing, and in a timely manner. Teachers will maintain daily and weekly lesson plans that will be monitored by the administration and reviewed during conferences. The principal will be responsible for directing performance improvement and/or taking disciplinary action for RCCS employees. The principal will formally evaluate all teachers using the SAFE-T

model to determine whether the quality of performance is sufficient to continue as a RCCS employee. *(See Appendix Q for the School Start-up Plan)*

Employees

RCCS will employ administrators and teachers at-will, in compliance with the South Carolina Charter Schools Act, the ESEA, and any other applicable state or federal laws. The provisions of Article 5, Chapter 25, Title 59 of the South Carolina Code will not apply to the employment and dismissal of teachers at the charter school. RCCS will advertise all vacancies through media outlets, including newspapers and electronic venues for a minimum of seven (7) days or until vacancies are filled. Candidates will be required to complete an employment application. The principal will hold a current South Carolina administrator's certification and have a minimum of three years' experience in administration. As such, the application screening committee will be organized by the principal to review applications and determine a viable candidate pool. The screening committee will comprise Board members and school parents. Candidates will undergo an oral interview and a writing assessment, as deemed appropriate for the applied position. The interview and writing assessment will be scored individually by members of the committee. In the event of multiple candidates for a single position, a second interview will be conducted. Pending a criminal background check, the principal will make final recommendations of employment to the Board of Directors. The Board will assume authority for employment.

Board policies will be posted electronically and in written form in order to provide access. Policies will be reviewed with employees annually and on an as-needed basis. Employees will be provided a handbook outlining procedures, policies, expectations, and requirements. Extensive background reviews, including criminal background checks, will be done to verify past experiences to ensure the safety of RCCS students. All employees and others serving in an official

capacity must be fingerprinted. RCCS reserves the right to mandate random testing of employees if deemed necessary to protect the students. All RCCS teachers must provide copies of their teaching certificates or subject matter degrees. In addition, as part of the background check performed on all new employees, RCCS will confirm that the certification is valid within the state of South Carolina. The school will not employ an individual to provide instructional services if the individual's certificate or licensure as an educator is or has been suspended or revoked by South Carolina or any other state.

All employee files will be maintained by RCCS in the central office. RCCS will fully comply with ADEPT and SAFE-T under South Carolina's system for assisting, developing, and evaluating professional teaching. Based on state expectations (i.e. the ADEPT Performance Standards) that are aligned with nationally recognized professional standards, the ADEPT system forms a seamless continuum for educators throughout the entirety of their careers. The principal will formally evaluate all teachers using these measures to determine whether the quality of performance is sufficient to continue as a RCCS employee.

The principal and educational support staff will conduct frequent informal teacher observations to identify strengths and professional growth targets. Additionally, the director will formally observe teachers annually three times in the classroom, depending on the teacher's level of experience. Informal collegial dialogue about systemic improvement of student work will be ongoing throughout the year. The principal will be responsible for directing performance improvement or taking disciplinary action for RCCS employees. The timeline, process, and necessary forms will be shared with faculty and staff at the beginning of the school year. Teachers will maintain daily and weekly lesson plans that will be monitored by the administration and

reviewed during conferences. All faculty and staff will develop annual performance plans that will become part of the evaluation process.

Employees are at-will and shall have the right to appeal termination to the Board of Directors. RCCS will maintain a high standard of excellence and a formidable code of ethics to ensure the safety and well-being of the students. The Board expressly reserves the right to discharge employees after exhausting an internal due process hearing. Violation of any of the following will result in immediate disciplinary action ranging from verbal warning to termination: absenteeism and tardiness; poor performance; insubordination; violation and/or lack of enforcement of school rules; breach of confidentiality; theft; harassment; misuse of property; weaponry on school grounds (other than those personnel acting as security in as-necessary circumstances); acts of moral turpitude, including, but not limited to, fraud, dishonesty and/or false statements in any circumstance; threats and weapons in the workplace; and/or substance abuse. Other circumstances and/or actions that are inappropriate or unlawful can lead to disciplinary action, including immediate termination. RCCS's Board of Directors retains discretion at all times to immediately terminate an employee for unlawful conduct. The principal is responsible for informing the Board of disciplinary action taken against an employee. In dealing with infractions that persist, the principal or his/her designee will issue a verbal warning; a written warning; a final warning and/or probation; and notify the employee of recommended termination.

In the interest of effective personnel management, the administration and Board recognize the need for a personnel grievance procedure to provide prompt and effective means for resolving any differences that may arise among our personnel, be it between employees or between employees and administrators. Grievance procedures will be available to all employees, including teachers, paraprofessional staff, and non-teaching staff to ensure that differences are resolved as

efficiently and fairly as possible. The procedure is designed to settle personnel grievances and complaints as quickly as possible, and at a level as close as is reasonable to the point of origin; therefore, there will be no extension of the prescribed time for moving through the grievance procedure except upon a compelling show of good cause as determined by the RCCS Board in its sole discretion. Proceedings will be informal and confidential, whenever possible.

The appeals process to be used to resolve RCCS employee and stakeholder complaints or grievances will be based on the chain of command established at the school. The individual will meet with the principal to address the concern, if necessary. The principal will inform the RCCS Governing Board. The policies and procedures for resolving complaints will be presented at orientation, PTA/PTO, and open house meetings. All complaints and grievances will be addressed in a timely fashion. RCCS will comply with the provisions of Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1903.2 (a)(1) and will place all requisite Occupational Safety and Health Administration posters and related information in conspicuous areas.

Enrollment

RCCS will be a public charter school, authorized by the Charter Institute at Erskine, that is supported through state and local funding and will not charge tuition. Admission to the school is open to all students who reside in South Carolina. Due to the geographic location of the school, it is probable that students residing in Richland County will make up the majority of, and possibly all, of RCCS student enrollment. Prior to admission, students and parents may contact RCCS to request a tour of the facility and meet with school administrators and teachers. All applicants must complete the basic application and have it signed by a parent or legal guardian.

A sub-committee appointed by the Planning Committee is responsible for receiving and processing the applications, inclusive of notifying individuals by mail or email of receipt of their

application. Upon approval of the Charter application, RCCS will begin accepting applications in February 2019, and will continue to accept applications until April 2019, or until such time as grade levels meet projected enrollment numbers. Approximately one month before applications are due, date reminders will be issued through local newspapers and radio stations, school newsletters, and notices posted throughout the proposed district and surrounding areas. RCCS will also canvas families within its geographic area by phone, email, or other electronic communication methods. Applications may be mailed, faxed, or personally delivered. All applications must be received by the publicized closing date and are subject to any necessary lottery process.

If the number of student applicants exceeds the number of available slots, an attempt will be made to develop additional capacity. During the initial planning stages, efforts will be made to attract teachers and resources in preparation for this contingency. RCCS also has sufficient financial commitments from local supporters to meet such a need, up to and including purchasing additional classroom space.

However, in the event that this effort is unsuccessful, a lottery will be used to determine which students are accepted for enrollment. All applicants who would like to attend and have a placement preference shall submit their names for acceptance prior to the lottery process. The application process is open to all students residing in South Carolina. In selecting probable students, the application process will consider the following:

- Applicant sibling of a currently attending student;
- Applicant sibling of an accepted applicant applying for the same academic year;
- Children of RCCS employees;
- A child of the RCCS Planning Committee member as long as this applicant does not exceed 20% of the total enrollment; and

- First-time sibling applicants. Siblings who are applying for the first time will receive preference only after one of the siblings has been accepted.

The lottery will be held in an open meeting, rely on technology for selection, and be easily understood and followed by all observers. Only applications received prior to the established deadline will be eligible for lottery participation. All offers of acceptance and registration will be made in the order of the lottery results and established waiting list. No offer will be made to any student not properly entitled to the next available seat. All applicants offered acceptance would be required to respond affirmatively in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days. Those not responding (excluding declinations) will be placed on the waitlist. All parents or guardians of student applicants will be given written notice of their status as accepted for enrollment or placement on the waiting list.

Students denied admission to RCCS for reasons other than lottery results may appeal to the RCCS Board of Directors. The decision of the governing Board is binding on the student and RCCS. The parent/guardian of any student denied admission for a reason(s) other than lottery results must adhere to the following appeal guidelines:

RCCS Appeal Guidelines
<p>Within five (5) days of the event, provide to the RCCS Governing Board, in writing, a notice of appeal citing the reason(s) for the appeal. The Governing Board will read and respond to the appeal, in writing, within five (5) days. The Governing Board reserves the right to conduct a hearing with the parent or guardian of the denied student. The Governing Board retains final authority to uphold or revoke admission based on the appeal, and any subsequent hearing. All decisions of the Governing Board must be finalized, in writing, within fifteen (15) days from the date of the appeal.</p>

Table 5: RCCS Appeal Guidelines

No student shall be denied equal opportunity for admission on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, handicap, marital status or national origin. Should the final enrollment of RCCS not reflect the required demographic makeup, RCCS will take all legal steps to inform and attract sufficient numbers of students to do so. RCCS will be open to all kindergarten through second

grade students beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. RCCS will add the next consecutive grade level each subsequent year. A completed basic application form, signed by the student's parent/legal guardian is required for all potential students. (*See Appendix S for Letter from Sponsor Regarding Desegregation Plan or Order*).

Student Conduct, Rights, and Responsibilities

Self-discipline is an integral part of a student's education and lifelong success. Parents are encouraged to teach their children the positive character traits of honesty, respect for others, self-reliance, independence, integrity, kindness, and charity. While participating in any RCCS settings, all students must conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates these qualities. RCCS faculty and staff will reinforce these expectations of all students at all school-sponsored activities in support of the best educational opportunities possible. In order to have an environment that facilitates a safe and sound education for all students, a high standard of behavior is expected from all moving parts. As a result, RCCS will have the following Code of Conduct:

We cheerfully and promptly obey the authority under which we are placed.

We can appeal respectfully and courteously, but we do not argue or negotiate.

We love and honor one another.

We give encouragement to each other.

We do not point out the shortcomings of others in order to build up ourselves.

We tell the truth.

We do not disrespect the classroom or teacher by passing notes or otherwise interrupting.

We do not spread rumors or gossip.

We will not make excuses for our wrong actions but will admit them.

We avoid cliques, clubs, or games that exclude others.

When others are sorry, we forgive them.

When others are sad, we comfort them.

When we have work to do, we do it without complaining.

If we make a mess, we clean it up.

We treat one another with respect and patience.

Each student and their parents/guardians will sign the Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its provisions. When this standard of behavior is not met, the nature, seriousness, and frequency of the inappropriate behavior will determine the action taken. Students will also be expected to sign a student contract, outlining the consequences for failing to follow RCCS behavioral guidelines and the Code of Conduct. Students will be held accountable for their behavior in accordance with Board policy, as outlined in the student discipline code. Enforcement will be firm, but with an understanding of the age of the RCCS student(s). The goal is to instill understanding of the benefits of the Code of Conduct and voluntary compliance based on that understanding. The discipline procedures for RCCS applies while students are on school grounds, going to or coming from a school-sponsored activity, and when attending any activity sponsored by RCCS.

While it is unlikely that the below will be problems in the early years of RCCS operation, unfortunately, as the later grades are added, it is likely that one or more of the issues listed below may arise, and are therefore addressed in the student discipline code. The following infractions, while not an exhaustive list, are unacceptable behaviors that may lead to suspension or expulsion:

- Dress that does not meet school uniform standards
- Disruptive behavior
- Insubordination (i.e. not obeying directions, refusal to work)
- Fighting, threatening, physical aggression, bullying, and/or hazing

- Gambling
- Unauthorized use of computer technology
- Defacing/destroying school or private property
- Theft or attempted theft
- Possession of actual weapons, look-alike weapons, explosives, fireworks.
- False alarms, bomb threats, 911 calls, threats against persons, hoaxes
- Use or possession of tobacco, tobacco products, drugs, or alcohol
- Profanity/obscenities
- Sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, color, sex, disability, national origin, ethnicity, or religion

In compliance with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-63-235, any student who brings a firearm to campus will be expelled. Student conduct, rights, and responsibilities will be explained to parents at the beginning of the school year. RCCS will issue a student handbook explaining a RCCS student's rights and responsibilities upon student registration. RCCS's Planning Committee will develop a proposed RCCS Student Handbook prior to the initial opening day for adoption by the elected Board. RCCS will comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232). Parents may appeal disciplinary actions to the Board of Directors. All decisions of the Governing Board must be finalized, in writing within fifteen (15) days from the date of the appeal. In compliance with IDEA, RCCS will ensure the continued provision of a FAPE for any student with a documented disability who is expelled from RCCS. (*See Appendix T for Draft Discipline Policy*)

Transportation

RCCS does not intend to provide transportation. In order to ensure that students are transported to and from school on a daily basis, however, any student that has difficulty obtaining transportation for school, RCCS will assist parents/guardians or other organizations in with transportation needs. In addition, RCCS will offer an early morning drop-off at 7:00 a.m. and a

low-cost, afterschool program until 6:00 p.m. to assist parents with issues related to work and transportation. RCCS will work with parents/legal guardians on a case-by-case basis to ensure transport of any student who is unable to attend school due to lack of transportation. RCCS hopes that any child who wishes to attend RCCS has the chance to do so, regardless of transportation issues, and will budget funds to assist in this effort. As RCCS matures, the Board will annually revisit this decision. RCCS assumes no liability for transport. (*Appendix U is not applicable*)

BUSINESS PLAN AND CAPACITY

Budget and Finance

RCCS's proposed five-year budget reflects the mission of the school to fund an educational environment that produces model citizens that embrace ongoing achievement in education and service (*See Appendices X and Y for the Five and Ten-Year Budget*). As a model for such efforts, RCCS's budgetary philosophy will be used to fund teaching and student learning in the classroom. All budget items are measured to determine worth in providing for and improving educational experiences. The five-year budget demonstrates RCCS's best effort to invest funds from the fiscal year 2018-2019 budget directly into the classroom.

Members of the RCCS Planning Committee possess the qualifications needed to implement a successful finance and budget plan. A few of the Planning Committee members have experience in law, business, and education, including Samuel L. Johnson, Esq., Jay Couto, and Cindy D. Burks. Burks, a current business education teacher, received her MAT in business and marketing from the University of South Carolina-Columbia. The Planning Committee has also secured the services of Dr. Wayne Brazell, former Superintendent of the South Carolina Public Charter School District and current consultant for a number of South Carolina public charter school

Governing Boards, to assist in implementation. His many years of experience in the charter school arena will provide useful direction and assistance, where applicable.

The budget of RCCS prepared for the purposes of this application was developed using actual expenditure data from local school districts. The basis for the revenue projection is the minimum funds anticipated per student. (*See Appendix W for the Per Pupil Estimate Review*) The staffing levels included in the budget reflect the minimum staffing required to meet the initial grade level classroom faculty needs. No grant funds were included in the budget. The funds anticipated also reflect an assumption of 100 students in the initial year of school operations. (*See Appendix V for the Student Enrollment Projection Form*) This assumption is a valid assumption given that over 400 indications of interest have now been received by RCCS. RCCS does anticipate acceptance as a charter school grant recipient beginning with fiscal year 2018-2019. Funds received from the state will be based on the award percentage rate provided by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE).

In accordance with statutory requirements, RCCS will undergo an annual audit and will comply with all aspects of this mandate. The Single Audit Guide has been reviewed in detail including current highlights, technical notes, audit requirements, and appropriate information in the Compliance Supplement. RCCS is knowledgeable of the compliance requirements and suggested audit procedures. The Board of Directors will engage an auditor no later than 120 days prior to the close of the fiscal year by soliciting three bids from independent Certified Public Accountant (CPA) firms and selecting the firm that best meets the needs of RCCS. The annual audit will encompass RCCS's financial and administrative operations and will be conducted in compliance with law. The audit report will meet the state requirements and the Board will receive, review, and approve the annual audit prior to required submission to the Charter Institute at Erskine

and required state agencies. Additionally, RCCS will adhere to accounting, reporting, and auditing procedures and requirements of the Charter Institute at Erskine and all public schools operating in South Carolina. However, RCCS will not offer SC Retirement System benefits. RCCS will remain fiscally solvent; adhere to generally accepted accounting practices; have no material breaches; address financial concerns; and follow the South Carolina pupil accounting system by designing, developing, and implementing a comprehensive Internal Fiscal Control System, including:

- Establishing financial policies and corresponding financial procedures to properly account for all revenue and expenses as directed in the Financial Accounting Handbook and the Funding Manual;
- Establishing policies to adhere to the reporting policies, procedures, and regulations of the South Carolina Pupil Accounting Manual and the South Carolina Student Accountability Manual;
- Ensuring that all accounting, reporting, and auditing procedures and requirements comply with the published specifications of the Office of District Auditing and Field Services contained in the (a) Single Audit Guide, (b) Financial Accounting Handbook, and (c) Funding Manual.;
- Defining and adhering to Generally Accepted Standards of Fiscal Management;
- Developing and approving an annual operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year no later than June 30th of the preceding fiscal year;
- Maintaining appropriate records on a by-transaction basis thereby establishing our financial management system as *audit ready* at the conclusion of any given transaction;
- Making required reports (on-call, monthly, quarterly, annually) to the Board and external appropriate agents and agencies. Reports will be maintained and filed according to district, state, and federal requirements; and
- Identifying, reporting, and dealing with material breaches and financial concerns through corrective and preventative action protocols.

At this time, RCCS does not have any liens, litigation history, or any sanctions from any local, state, or federal regulatory agencies. RCCS possesses financial resources and active commitments for additional support. To date, \$10,000 has been received and an additional \$10,000

pledge is currently in-process. The Committee is continuing the solicitation process in order to provide for any needed reserve funds. However, if a funding shortfall should occur, the RCCS Committee is committed to raising additional capital through solicitation of additional community donations or utilization of the credit markets. RCCS has identified five areas in which professional operational assistance will be provided: (1) marketing services, (2) school model support, (3) fiscal services, (4) administrative staff support, and (5) professional development. (*See Appendix AA for Documentation of Any Soft Funds*)

Facilities

RCCS needs a facility that can accommodate four classrooms, administrative offices, ample storage, land for future growth, a service kitchen, and adequate restroom facilities. In the case of building a new facility or purchasing an existing building, RCCS will comply with requirements for building codes, safety requirements, request a certificate of occupancy. RCCS will also apply for an implementation grant, conduct fundraisers, and request donations from community members and businesses to cover any accrued costs. Equipment, including instructional, will be directly purchased, leased, or donated. Items will be properly coded and accounted for according to state and federal law.

Insurance Coverage

Workers' Compensation

South Carolina Workers' Compensation Law is designed to provide medical and monetary benefits for an employee who sustains an accidental injury arising out of and in the course of his/her employment. The law provides medical care to bring about the earliest possible recovery from the injury, a percentage of wages and salary lost during the injured employee's disability, and, in the case of death, compensation for the deceased employee's dependents. RCCS will

purchase workers' compensation insurance in the appropriate amounts. A statement setting out our ability to secure this insurance and an estimate of the cost of this insurance is included. RCCS will also utilize commercially available software applications to ensure any treatment that the injured employee requires is timely and comprehensively provided.

Liability Insurance

An estimated cost for liability insurance has been provided by Palmetto Insurance, LLC, a licensed insurance broker in the State of South Carolina. These policies are designed to match or exceed the minimum limits required by the South Carolina Tort Claims Act S.C. Code Ann. § 15-78-120 (Supp. 2011).

Property Insurance

An estimated annual premium for property insurance has been provided by Palmetto Insurance, LLC, a South Carolina licensed insurance company. The estimate ensures \$50,000 worth of building contents with a \$1,000 deductible.

Indemnity Insurance

An indemnity insurance estimate against civil and criminal liability for RCCS, members of the Board, and employees acting in their official capacity with respect to all activities related to the charter school is included in *Appendix FF*, along with a statement that RCCS has the ability to secure the insurance.

Automobile Insurance

The Planning Committee has obtained an estimated annual premium for automobile insurance from Palmetto Insurance, LLC, a South Carolina licensed insurance company. The estimate ensures up to \$1,000,000 for hired and non-owned automobiles.

Other Insurance

The Planning Committee has obtained an estimated annual premium for umbrella insurance that ensures up to \$1,000,000 from Palmetto Insurance, LLC, a South Carolina licensed insurance company. The policy terms, conditions, and exclusions will prevail. (*See Appendix FF for all Applicable Insurance Documents*)

APPENDIX

Application Section	Appendix Item
Section I	
<i>Educational Plan and Capacity</i>	
Executive Summary	<i>No appendix items in this section</i>
1. Evidence of Need and Community Support	A. Signature Certification Page B. **Evidence of Notification C. Evidence of Support D. **Conversion School Support E. **Private School Support
2. Curriculum and Instructional Model	F. School Calendar and Daily Schedule G. Supporting Documents for Educational Plan H. List of Teaching Positions I. **Virtual School List of Courses
3. Serving Students with Special Needs	J. **Agreement with Sponsoring District
4. Goals, Objectives, and Assessment Plan	<i>No appendix items in this section</i>
Section II	
<i>Organizational Plan and Capacity</i>	
1. Governing Board	K. Charter Committee L. Bylaws M. Articles of Incorporation N. Organizational Chart
2. Education/Charter Management Contracts	O. **EMO/CMO Documentation
3. Administrative Structure/Building Leadership	P. Sample Job Descriptions Q. School Start-Up Plan
4. Employees	R. **Letter of Agreement from Sponsor Regarding Compliance with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-410 <i>et seq.</i> (2004)
5. Enrollment	S. **Letter(s) from Sponsor regarding Desegregation Plan or Order
6. Student Conduct, Rights, and Responsibilities	T. Draft Discipline Policy
7. Transportation	U. **Transportation Services Contract
Section III	
<i>Business Plan and Capacity</i>	
1. Budget and Finance	V. Student Enrollment Projection Form W. SCDE Per Pupil Estimate Review X. Five-Year Budget Y. Ten-Year Budget Z. **Memorandum of Agreement for Negotiated Services AA. Documentation of any "Soft Funds"
2. Facilities	BB. **Floor Plan of Identified Facility CC. **Proposed Lease or Rental Agreement DD. **Documentation from SCDE's Office of School Facilities EE. **Documentation from SCDOT School Traffic Engineering
3. Insurance Coverage	FF. Applicable Insurance Documents