

# Application: Gates School

Stephanie Sams - stephsams@comcast.net  
2020 Charter School Application



## Select Sponsor(s)

**Completed** - Jan 13 2020

Select the sponsor(s) to which the application will be submitted.

## Select Sponsor(s)

### Select Sponsor

Select the desired sponsor(s) from the list below. This should be the same sponsor(s) to whom the Letter of Intent was submitted.

### Responses Selected:

Charter Institute at Erskine



## Cover Page

**Completed** - Jan 21 2020

## Cover Page Form

### South Carolina Public Charter School Application

Cover Page

### Applicant Information

#### Name of Proposed Charter School

Gates School

#### Mailing Address (if known)

(No response)

**City**

TBD

**State**

South Carolina

**Zip Code**

00000

**Name of Applicant Group**

Gates School

**FEIN \*(optional - if this number has not yet been assigned, leave blank)**

Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) or the Federal Tax Identification Number, is a unique nine-digit number assigned by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to business entities operating in the United States for the purposes of identification.

(No response)

**Contact Information**

Enter the name and contact information for the person to be contacted regarding this application.

**Title**

Mrs

**First Name**

Stephanie

**Last Name**

Sams

**Title/Position**

Chairperson

**Mailing Address**

3003 Dunes West Blvd. Ste 2

**City**

Mount Pleasant

**State**

South Carolina

**Zip Code**

29466

**Phone Number**

843-813-6735

**Cell Number**

843-813-6735

**Email**

stephsams@comcast.net

**Fax Number**

888-888-8888

**Additional Information About Proposed Charter School****Grade levels during opening year**

1-5

**Grade levels at full student matriculation**

K-8

**Executive Summary**

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

*For this task, you will upload an attachment in either PDF or Word format.*

The executive summary is not to exceed **two pages, single-spaced**. This section should provide a concise overview of what the applicant wishes to achieve, who the applicant wishes to serve, and why the applicant believes it has the capacity to open and operate a high-quality school.

Describe the following:

- Begin the executive summary with a mission statement that is clear and supports the principles of the South Carolina Charter Schools Act (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-10 *et seq.*)
- The proposed mission (fundamental purpose) of the proposed school and how it aligns with the purpose of state charter school law outlined in § 59-40-20;
- The targeted student population and the community the school will be designed to serve, including anticipated academic and non-academic needs of the students and any non-academic challenges the school is likely to encounter;
- The key features of the educational program and why the school model will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population; and
- The founding group/planning committee - how it was formed, how it arrived at the collective decision to create a charter school in South Carolina, and why it believes it has the capacity necessary to open and oversee a high-quality charter school.
- If the applicant proposes to contract with an education management organization (EMO) or a charter management organization (CMO), identify the organization and describe why it has been selected as a partner.

## Executive Summary - Hynd Final 011520

**Filename:** Executive\_Summary\_-\_Hynd\_Final\_011520.docx **Size:** 14.0 kB



### I. Educational Plan and Capacity

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

## I. Educational Plan and Capacity Form

### ***1. Evidence of Need and Community Support***

The application must include evidence that an adequate number of parents or legal guardians with students eligible to attend the proposed school pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50 support the formation of the charter school and justify the projected per pupil allocation in the application budget. The evidence must indicate substantial support that the school will reach its first year's projected enrollment, which is critical to producing a fiscally sound budget. Evidence may include, but is not limited to, documentation of attendance and support at community meetings and survey results. If the social situation of the proposed school's targeted population precludes establishing parental support, evidence should demonstrate support from community groups and agencies, including letters from these entities that specify the level of their commitment to the school. **However, a list of prospective or tentatively enrolled students or prospective employees is not required per S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-60.**

Outreach activities should be diverse and designed to reach all students in the community, thereby ensuring equal access. Specify the types of outreach activities that have been made to at-risk populations, especially if the applicant's mission is to serve at-risk student populations. Letters of support from community leaders, business people, or elected officials should be included in the appropriate support document. These letters should state why the individual believes the proposed new charter school would best serve the community. If the social situation of the school's targeted population precludes establishing parental support, evidence should demonstrate support from community groups and agencies, including letters from these entities that specify the level of their commitment to the school.

If the school is a proposed conversion charter, the application must also include evidence that two-thirds of the faculty and instructional staff voted to support the filing of the application and evidence that two-thirds of the voting parents or legal guardians voted to support the filing of the application (see Appendix Item C below). Parents or guardians shall have one vote for each of their children enrolled in the school (i.e., each student may be represented by only one vote). All parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the school must be given the opportunity to vote. A conversion school must offer the same grades or non-graded education appropriate for the same ages and education levels of pupils as offered by the school immediately before conversion and may also provide additional grades and further educational offerings. The application for the school must be submitted by the principal or by his or her designee, who thus will be considered the applicant.

### Narrative Requirements

1. Provide evidence that an adequate number of parents or legal guardians with students eligible to attend the proposed school pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50 support the formation of the charter school and justify the projected per pupil allocation in the application budget. **Do not include names of individual students.** Include a table indicating interest documented by grade level or non-graded education groupings appropriate for the targeted population (outline the groupings and how they are categorized, i.e. age levels and/or education levels) for the first year of operation.
2. Explain the plan for student recruitment and marketing that will provide equal access to interested students and families. Where possible, include specifics such as the types of marketing that will be used, partners who will be engaged, and the number of families who will be reached. Describe how the plan will reach a diverse group of families.
3. Discuss the type(s) of outreach the charter committee has conducted thus far to make the student population and their families aware of the proposed charter school and the outcomes

of this outreach.

4. Provide information on community members, parents, and leaders who publicly support the proposed school and their role in the development of the school and application.
5. Discuss specifically what has been done to assess and build parent and community demand for the school. Explain the plan to continue to engage parents and community members from the present time, to approval, and through opening. If applicable, provide evidence of engagement such as letters of support or partnership agreements.
6. Explain the plan to engage parents in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles described previously). Describe the plan for building family/school partnerships to strengthen support for learning and encourage parental, student, and community involvement. Describe any opportunities and/or expectations for ongoing parent, student, and community involvement.
7. Describe any partnerships the school will have with community organizations, business, or other educational institutions. Specify the nature, purpose, terms and scope of services of any such partnerships, including any fee-based or in-kind commitments from community organizations or individuals that will enrich student learning.
8. If you are a private school, describe the need/evidence in the community to support converting to a charter school.

According to the Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity, 20 percent of the population is affected by dyslexia. It is the most common of all neuro-cognitive disorders. Put another way, one in every five students in any given classroom is a dyslexic learner. Our current public schools are struggling to identify these children and are not equipped to educate them in an effective manner.

In addition to having difficulty with reading, writing and spelling, students with dyslexia often experience challenges with social skills, time management skills, comprehension and memory. They suffer from poor self-esteem, feelings of failure and inadequacy.

Gates School is an opportunity to open the gates to academic success for those underserved dyslexic learners in South Carolina although the facility will most likely be located in Berkeley, Charleston or Dorchester County (Lowcountry). Gates School is capable of providing the unique type of instructional approach that students with dyslexia need.

Parents, guardians and community members are enthusiastic about having a dyslexia specific school in the Lowcountry. Gates School's first public community meeting had over 40 people in attendance and within 48 hours, more than 40 people had filled out parent interest forms through our Facebook page.

Although we have 136 completed forms, several parents asked to wait until the school actually came to fruition before completing a form. The table below indicates parent interest by grade level:

Parent Interest Forms Completed (desired grade at time of opening)

K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9+
0	3	3	8	20	32	23	19	8	21

Gates School's Facebook presence began in February 2019 and currently has 323 people following the page as well as 312 total likes for the page. The very first post regarding our first community meeting reached 2.3k people. A post made on November 7, 2018 announcing that Gates School had submitted Letters of Intent reached 3.9k people. Our Facebook audience continues to grow daily.

It should be noted that our target area of Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties has a large pool of students in grades 1 - 5 as evidenced by the SC Department of Education's most recent headcount data taken in July 2019:

#### ACTIVE ENROLLMENT IN SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY GRADE

2018-19 180 Day Headcount

Source: 180th Day Extraction, July, 2019 (QDC4)

District Grade Level

1 2 3 4 5

Berkeley 01 2,720 2,637 2,786 2,882 2,954

Charleston 01 3,930 3,877 3,801 3,996 3,890

Dorchester 02 1,839 1,885 1,939 2,043 2,132

TOTAL 8,489 8,399 8,526 8,921 8,976

The SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office estimates that as of July 1, 2018 the population in Charleston County is 405,905, Berkeley County is 221,091 and Dorchester County is 160,647. All three Counties have seen population growth since the 2010 census and all three are projected to continue to see growth rise through at least July of 2030.

Statistics show that among Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester (2) Counties, there are almost 12,000 students with disabilities who have IEP's:

Total Students with IEP's by District

Source: NCES District Directory Information 2018-2019

Berkeley 01 4,179

Charleston 01 4,752

Dorchester 02 3,007

TOTAL 11,938

Results from the SC SDE, Office of Special Education Services Child Count Data collected in October of 2018 show that there were 1,421 students in Berkeley County identified as having a primary diagnosis of SLD, 1,800 in Charleston County and 969 in Dorchester County.

These data points allow us to reasonably infer that student achievement and school success in our target area of the Lowcountry is waning, and the number of students with disordered learning and specialized educational needs is quite great. The Post and Courier reported on August 20, 2018 that 4,059 third grade students failed the reading test administered by the state. It also needs to be considered that this area of South Carolina is continuing to grow in population, so the number of children experiencing difficulties related to dyslexia will only continue to rise.

It is imperative that marketing for Gates School is extensive and covers as many socioeconomic populations as possible throughout the Lowcountry. Gates School has been in contact with multiple local psychoeducational specialists who have all offered their support of a public charter school for students whose primary diagnosis is dyslexia or related reading challenges. These are the professionals who conduct the educational testing used to determine if a diagnosis of dyslexia is warranted. These psychoeducational specialists will be able to refer students to Gates School (see Appendix C for a letter of support from Dr. Andrew Mantini and Chantal Milcarek, M.Ed.).

The Medical University of South Carolina's Department of Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics (specifically Mary Kral, PhD) is highly supportive of Gates School's endeavor and will be another valuable student referral source and will be able to have access to a diverse group of families (see Appendix C for Dr. Kral's letter of support).

Several members of the local and state delegation as well as town council members have offered their support of Gates School including Mayor John Tecklenburg (Charleston), Mayor Will Haynie (Mount Pleasant), Mayor Keith Summey (North Charleston), Representative Nancy Mace, Representative Gary Clary, Senator Rex Rice, Mount Pleasant Town Council Member Jake Rambo, Charleston County Council member Elliott Summey and former Representative Phil Owens.



Gates School has an outreach committee who will continue to distribute rack cards and information to pediatrician's offices, preschools, churches and various places where families can be reached throughout the Lowcountry.

Our website ([www.dyslexiacharter.org](http://www.dyslexiacharter.org)) and Facebook page (Gates School) will remain active and assist in marketing and spreading the word about Gates School.

Local dyslexia specific organizations, such as the SC Chapter of the International Dyslexia Association, the Orton-Gillingham Center of Charleston, the SC Chapter of Decoding Dyslexia and the Greater Charleston Area Dyslexia Support Group are also supportive of our endeavor (see appendix C for letters of support from SC IDA and Orton-Gillingham Center of Charleston) and will act as sources of referral.

Local school districts who have students with dyslexia that are struggling in the traditional classroom will also be able to make referrals to Gates School.

Outreach and publicity is critical when opening a new school. The Gates School Planning Committee has held several community informational meetings about the possibility of opening a public charter school whose primary focus is dyslexia and related reading challenges. Meetings were also used to discuss:

- Symptoms of and challenges related to dyslexia,
- The necessity of a language-based, multisensory, structured, sequential, cumulative, cognitive and flexible instructional system,
- Increased autonomy of charter schools and their ability to offer specialized instruction,
- Misconceptions about charter schools.

The table below lists these meetings that were held in racially diverse communities and the number of community members in attendance.

Date Location Attendance

02/20/2019 The Exchange, Mt Pleasant 40

03/13/2019 Arthur W. Christopher Community Center, (downtown Charleston) 9

04/23/2019 Seacoast Church, Mt Pleasant 4

08/24/2019 Greater Charleston Dyslexia Parent Support Group (Palmetto Islands Co. Park) 6

09/12/2019 Rollins Edwards Community Center, Summerville 7

09/13/2019 IDA Tennis Social (Mt Pleasant) 55

09/19/2019 Rollins Edwards Community Center, Summerville 7

10/23/2019 James Island Town Hall 12  
11/02/2019 IDA SC Conference (Mt Pleasant) 150  
11/22/2019 The home of Stephanie Sams 13  
12/21/2019 The home of Stephanie Sams 30  
01/23/2020 Orton-Gillingham Center of Charleston 4

The Gates School Planning Committee reached out to the Greater Charleston chapter of the Decoding Dyslexia organization, the SC chapter of Decoding Dyslexia and the SC chapter of the International Dyslexia Association. We have received immense support and these organizations have allowed us to promote the school and let families and dyslexia tutors know of our goal to open in August 2021. We had an information table at the SC International Dyslexia Association Tennis Social in September 2019. We also had a Gates School information booth at the SC International Dyslexia Association Conference in November 2019. The IDA-SC website keeps a tab under their news section for Gates School so people can click to learn more information directly from the IDA-SC website. We have shared our mission with the Orton-Gillingham Center of Charleston and they are highly supportive of our endeavor. The goal of this outreach was to make Gates School known to a larger audience of those touched by dyslexia and related language-based learning challenges.

Since it is estimated that one in five individuals are dyslexic learners, it is not uncommon to strike up a conversation with someone about language-based learning challenges and to hear that they or someone they know has struggled with reading, writing, and spelling. Such conversations have garnered awareness of and support for Gates School, and members of the Planning Committee have been wholly intentional about using such conversations as a form of outreach. Word of mouth is a powerful form of publicity, and therefore we have met with members of numerous churches and social organizations and provided information for them to pass on to their networks, as it is highly probable that they know families with a child with dyslexia or related language-based learning challenges and for whom Gates School would be an ideal school. We have also been in touch with directors of the major nonprofits in the area to let them know about our mission to empower students to discover and to use their unique abilities to acquire the skills and self-confidence necessary to achieve academic, career and personal goals. Upon approval, we will schedule presentations at the meetings of area service organizations (Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, etc.) to make as many people as possible aware of the specialized instruction that Gates School will provide so that dyslexic learners can find scholastic and personal success.

Gates School Planning Committee members met with administrators at Trident Academy (a local private school for children with learning challenges) to inform them of our mission to bring a public charter

school specific to dyslexic learners to the area. Trident Academy has offered their support to Gates School.

Lakes and Bridges Charter School was the inspiration for the concept of Gates School. Gates School Planning Committee members contacted the LABCS founding board to obtain guidance on how to bring their concept to the Charleston area. Committee members were invited to spend a day at LABCS to see the concept in action and talk with Heidi Bishop, the Founding Principal. LABCS has been extremely supportive of our endeavor and has offered much assistance and support with our charter application. We are grateful for the immense knowledge about opening and running a dyslexia charter school that the Founding Board and Principal at LABCS have shared with us (see appendix C for LABCS letter of support).

As previously discussed, Gates School spent a great deal of time assessing the need for a dyslexia focused charter school in the Lowcountry by hosting several community interest meetings, participating in community events and talking with the public. The overwhelming response from parents, the community and delegation drove us to conclude that this is a very sought-after concept. We will continue to engage parents and the community as we move further along the timeline towards and beyond opening. We will continue to have approximately one community information meeting per month throughout the planning year to keep spreading the word about the school. We are also planning a dyslexia awareness event in late Spring 2020. We will continue to engage in discussions with community members and our local delegation to keep them informed of Gates School's progress. We continue to look for parents and community members that are interested in serving on our Planning Committee and later on the Gates School Board.

Gates School realizes that parent involvement is crucial to the success of the school. Parents will be given multiple opportunities to be highly involved members of the school community. From helping in classrooms, being a board member, acting as a recess monitor, to leading groups during Gates University time, Gates School welcomes and encourages parent and community participation.

Gates School desires to have strong parent, student and community connections. Due to the nature of the school, parents will find great support amongst each other as they navigate their child's learning challenges. Parents will be expected to take an active role in their child's education at Gates School. They will be highly involved in discussions related to the academic and behavioral goals and progress for their child. Parents and students will have daily access to student's grades, progress notes, assessment data, and teacher's notes through online communication programs (such as, but not limited to, PowerSchool Parent Portal, etc.).

Several school-wide events and fundraisers will be held throughout the year to bring students, parents and community members together. For example, Gates School will have an art night where students will welcome family and community members to tour the “Gates Art Gallery” where their work is proudly displayed.

Gates School intends to be well connected to the community. Planning committee members have talked to several local businesses that are interested in discussing further partnerships once the school comes to fruition. With the use of The Leader In Me curriculum (to be discussed further in the next section), community and local business leaders will play an essential role in encouraging the social growth of Gates School students.

Corresponding Appendices

Appendix A - Signature Certification Page

Appendix B - Evidence of Notification

Appendix C - Evidence of Support

Appendix D - Conversion School Support — Not Applicable

Appendix E - Private Schools — Not Applicable

## **2. Curriculum and Instructional Model**

The charter school’s educational program must include how it will meet or exceed the academic performance standards and expectations, including academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education and how the instructional design, learning environment, class size and structure, curriculum, and teaching methods enable each pupil to achieve these standards per S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-60 (F)(5).

There should be a research basis for selecting a particular curriculum. In addition to obtaining information from the publisher, research is available online at ERIC (<http://www.eric.ed.gov>) and the What Works Clearinghouse (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>). The research should support using the curriculum with the student body that at the proposed school will likely attract, and benchmark assessments should be chosen to align with the curriculum.

All core content areas plus supplemental or elective areas should be described. If certain characteristics of the school culture are critical to the overall educational program (i.e., small school size, character

education, and high expectations), the research basis should thoroughly support the unique educational program design.

Charter schools must provide evidence of increased student academic achievement for all groups of students described in Section 1005(2)(B)(xi) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Sponsors must use increases in student academic achievement for all students described in ESSA as the most important factor when determining to renew or revoke a school's charter. Sponsors and charters must enter a contractual agreement that student performance of all students described in ESEA is the most important factor when determining to renew or revoke a school's charter.

If the proposed charter school will serve high school grades, the charter school must offer a high school diploma program, which includes offering a course of study that will lead to the issuance of the state high school diploma. The proposed charter school's program must meet the state's requirements for the high school diploma, including, but not limited to, course unit requirements, seat time for Carnegie units, as applicable, and administration of the required examinations. Charter schools may provide a plan for providing proficiency credit in lieu of meeting the seat-time requirements for Carnegie units. *See Reg. 43-234.* Schools that wish to offer a proficiency-based system must submit a plan that provides procedures for establishing and developing a proficiency-based system, including the method for determining proficiency. Schools are accountable for making sure that the academic standards and the individual learning needs of the students are addressed. **Charter schools may not offer GED preparation programs as they do not meet the state requirements for a high school diploma program.**

If the proposed charter will be virtual or will be a blended model, the application must describe how the charter school will comply with the legislative requirement that 25 percent of instruction will be delivered in "real time" (or regular instructional opportunities) and how much teacher interaction students will receive within the online instruction. The application must describe the process for curriculum alignment with the state standards, including a timeline. At least one course per grade level should be "live," meaning it can be previewed by the SCDE for curriculum alignment; so, a description of the portal and how it works must be included in the narrative. Lastly, the school must describe how it will comply with teacher requirements in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50.

If the charter school is contracting with an external company for online curriculum delivery, the

application must describe the company's history in the field of virtual education and its success.

After approval of the charter school application, virtual schools must submit their courses for review in accordance with 2 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-601. Note: the 2013 amendments to S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-601 transferred the responsibility for course approval to the sponsor.

### **a) Instructional Model**

1. Provide an introduction and summary of the educational program to include an overview of the curriculum and instructional design, the guiding educational philosophy, and how the educational program aligns to the mission of the school; included should also be an explanation of how the education program will improve student learning. Be sure to address any non-negotiable elements of the school model, including any distinctive learning or teaching techniques to be used. Briefly describe the evidence that promises success for this program with the anticipated student population.
2. A description of how the educational program is research-based and data-driven including why the selected curriculum was chosen for the anticipated population of students.
3. An explanation of how the charter school will meet or exceed the academic performance standards and expectations, including how the school will ensure alignment with the academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education.
4. Describe the methods, systems, and development teachers will have available for adapting the curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of all students. Describe the school's Response to Intervention (RtI) plan and what specific social-emotional and academic supports teachers will use to support students, including students i) above or below grade level, ii) with disabilities, iii) identified as gifted and talented, and iv) requiring English learners (ELLs) services.
5. Discuss the systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out or not meeting grade level or graduation requirements.
6. High school grades, if applicable: describe how the school will meet the state's graduation (exit) requirements. Explain how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements will exceed state and district standards, explain the additional requirements.
7. **Additional Requirements for Replication Schools:**
  - Describe any changes in instructional methodology and strategies in your new school. Why are these changes being implemented? How will you know if they create the

intended impacts and create rigorous instruction?

- Explain the organization's approach to replicating and implementing the curriculum and instructional design among multiple schools.
- How will you ensure the fidelity and consistency of your instructional methodology and strategies across sites?

Gates School will be an Alternative Education Campus (AEC) public charter school for grades K-8 with an explicit mission and purpose of providing an exceptional, evidence-based, multisensory education for students with dyslexia to open the gates to their individual and academic potential in an environment that empowers students to develop a positive and socially conscious self-image. We believe that all students at Gates School will possess unique and remarkable talents and it is our job to empower students to discover and use these talents.

Dyslexia is the most common specific learning disability affecting reading and is characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension, fluency and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. (Lyon, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2003) We know from Dr. Sally Shaywitz's extensive research on dyslexia that reading is not a natural or instinctive process. It is acquired and must be directly and explicitly taught. How reading is taught can drastically affect the ease with which a child learns to transform what are essentially abstract squiggles on a page into meaningful letters, then sounds, then words and finally into entire sentences and paragraphs. Reading represents a code, which about 70-80 percent of children can break after a year of instruction. For others, breaking the code remains a mystery even after several years of reading instruction.

Research has shown that the most effective, evidence-based intervention for dyslexia and language based learning differences is instruction from highly skilled and well-trained teachers who have expertise in the structure of English language and who use researched based curriculum taught well and with fidelity (Gough and Tunmer). A structured language approach such as Orton-Gillingham is designed primarily for use with students who have difficulty with reading, spelling, and writing. The essential curricular content and instructional practices that characterize a structured language approach are derived from scientific evidence about how people learn to read and write; why a significant number have difficulty in doing so; how having dyslexia makes achieving literacy skills more difficult; and which instructional practices are best suited for teaching such persons to read and write. A structured language

approach is always focused upon the unique learning needs of individual students. All teachers at Gates School will be specially trained to use best practices in structured language and multisensory teaching approaches, utilizing auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic modalities in every class throughout the school. According to the Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity, visual aids, technology and creativity help bring life into learning. When teachers use these strategies, they not only help dyslexic students learn, but engage and improve learning for all students in the class.

The following framework will be implemented at Gates School with fidelity and in a rigorous manner with a primary focus on reading, writing, reading fluency and reading comprehension:

\*High-quality, scientifically based classroom instruction. All students receive high-quality, research-based instruction in general education classrooms.

\*Ongoing student assessment. Universal screening and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement, both individually and in comparison with the peer group. These data are then used when determining which students need closer monitoring or intervention. Throughout the process, student progress is monitored frequently to examine student achievement and gauge the effectiveness of the curriculum. Decisions made regarding students' instructional needs are based on multiple data points taken in context over time.

\*Leveled instruction. A leveled approach is used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students. Gates School incorporates increasing intensities of instruction offering specific, research-based interventions matched to student needs. Every student has a 55 minute Fundamentals of Reading through Orton-Gillingham (FROG) class. FROG-2 level students receive small group instruction with others who are achieving at similar levels and progressing at similar rates. FROG-3 level students require more intensive instruction and interventions, have Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and are taught by a Special Education teacher.

\*Leadership Development. Through the social-emotional curriculum The Leader in Me, students are empowered to become self-confident leaders and learn life skills they need to become successful in life.

Online instruction allows for a high level of engagement, remediation as needed, self-paced progression and real-time assessment. Gates School students will use online programs for supplementary reading and math instruction as well as skills practice. Online resources will enrich science and social studies classes and will be used in research for projects and reports. Students will be able to access e-books and magazines online. Teachers and students will create digital learning lessons and presentations for classroom instruction.



Most children, including those with dyslexia, benefit greatly from opportunities to move freely and frequently throughout the day. Classroom schedules, routines, furniture and learning spaces will be designed to give students choices to fit their work styles. Students will get daily exercise in physical education classes, multiple daily recess and movement breaks.

Dyslexic learners often have common strengths of creative visual thinking, problem solving, and out-of-the-box thinking. Studies conducted at Drexel University highlighted the importance of focusing on the strengths of the dyslexic student. They learned that when teachers became aware of their student's creative strengths, positive changes occurred in their teaching and student interactions, as well as positively affecting student self-efficacy. (Reussman & Bach 2002) Gates School will offer a place where students can bring their ideas to life. The Imagination Station is a dedicated space where students can express themselves through a variety of modalities. Students may choose to explore art on canvas using various types of paints or brushes, try out video production using a green screen, or bring fashion designs to life at the sewing station. Teachers will weave time at the Imagination Station into their regular lesson plans as they see fit.

Gates School's commitment to innovative scheduling and learning practices will be exemplified by the Friday afternoon schedule. The final two hours of the day will be for Gates University activities. Gates University will represent opportunities for students to participate in activities such as field trips, clubs, research, art, drama, and service learning projects that augment classroom instruction. Adding novelty to the schedule is an innovation that is meant to heighten students' curiosity and enthusiasm for learning as well as to build on the strengths typical too many dyslexic individuals. The goal of Gates University projects, activities, and experiences is to develop and strengthen the natural gifts of students. Such experiential learning opportunities will allow students to follow areas of interest that might lead to future career and work with a mentor in that area.

Curriculum based on the Orton-Gillingham approach will be used with fidelity at Gates School. Such curricula include, but are not limited to, the Wilson Reading System, Project Read and Math-U-See. According to the Wilson Reading System literature, by employing Wilson's evidence-based instructional models, school districts can put together a powerful literacy action plan that meets states' rigorous college- and career-readiness standards, closed the reading gap for struggling students and builds a solid foundation for beginning learners. This directly aligns with Gates School's mission and focus.

The Wilson Reading System received a "Strong" rating by Evidence for ESSA and studies on its effectiveness are included in the Institute for Educational Science What Works Clearinghouse. (WWC;

Studies of students with dyslexia have shown measurable improvements in the language areas of their brains' left hemispheres after effective reading interventions. For these students, multisensory teaching strategies can be the difference between academic success and academic failure and frustration.

Findings from research studies converge to show that explicit and systematic instruction helps most students understand how speech sounds map to letters and patterns, which can greatly reduce the prevalence of reading problems.

The Math-U-See curriculum employs all of the components that are essential for children struggling in math; explicit instruction that is structured, multisensory, systematic and cumulative. All of these components have been externally peer reviewed and recommended through the US Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences.

Aligning with the South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Standards, the curriculum at Gates School closely resembles content taught in other public schools with a few critical differences. Small class sizes and low student-teacher ratio will provide unique opportunities for teachers to understand the distinct strengths and weaknesses that affect each individual child's learning. When a student enters Gates School, we will meet them where they are at academically. Students receive customized instruction in language arts, math, science, social studies, and technology. Multidisciplinary studies are used to integrate concepts and to demonstrate the interconnectedness of major issues. Instruction is not only rigorous; it is relevant. Students learn and apply concepts as they relate to real world issues. Our students are encouraged to be curious about the world and to solve real world problems.

South Carolina Act 284-Read to Succeed supports the notion that students who do not read or comprehend at grade level struggle academically in all their content area courses and that reading proficiency is a fundamental life skill vital for the educational and economic success of our citizens and state. To that end, Gates School will provide evidence-based, integrated instruction that is flexible, differentiated, and provided to students by highly skilled, well-trained classroom teachers. Additional individualized support will be provided to each child based on his or her needs through FROG groups. Instructional programs such as, but not limited to, the Wilson Reading System and Project Read and the multi-sensory style of instruction that will be used at Gates School has proven to be imperative for students with dyslexia in order to become competent readers. Students with dyslexia and related language based learning challenges need to master the same basic knowledge about language and its relationship to our writing system as students who have more typical learning profiles. However, as

previously stated, because of their unique learning needs, dyslexic learners require more direct, explicit instruction in sorting, recognizing, and organizing the raw materials of language for thinking and use. Language elements that non-dyslexic learners acquire and apply easily must be taught directly, systematically and sequentially. In order to be successful, students with dyslexia must spend more time on tasks learning to read, spell, and write than is usually possible to provide in traditional school settings. In Gates School FROG groups you might observe students reading letter sounds aloud while performing motions for each sound; writing letters on sand trays or tactile boards; walking and tracing the shapes of large letters on the floor; learning rules of syllabication; or reading passages aloud while instructors tally errors and chart the results on a fluency graph.

Gates School students will spend a minimum of two class periods daily (90 minutes) in Core language arts classes receiving structured, explicit, multisensory and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and spelling. Structured language curricular approaches such as the Wilson Reading System (and/or Project Read or other pertinent, relevant system) will be used in foundational reading classes with students working in small groups with teachers, instructional assistants, and computer assisted instruction. Core language arts instruction must be continuously and meticulously evaluated so that every student is successful. Effectual classroom instruction requires that skilled teachers differentiate instruction based on data in order to meet the needs of all students. Instruction must be intense enough that all students make consistent progress toward the goal of becoming proficient readers, ideally catching up with their typical reading grade level peers in terms of reading skills. In order to achieve catch-up growth, students who are several grade levels behind require at least double the amount of reading instruction daily to have a chance of achieving this. All students, including those identified as at-risk for academic failure on the basis of their performance on screening assessments such as MAP, will be provided 55 minutes of supplemental support during Fundamentals of Reading through Orton-Gillingham (FROG).

FROG groups will receive direct, targeted literacy instruction by a highly effective teacher or interventionist. Students will be placed in leveled FROG-2 or FROG-3 groups depending on the individual needs of the student. FROG group instruction includes immediate response to student performance through frequent progress monitoring and collaboration among classroom teachers, families, interventionists and school administrators. When FROG-2 instruction does not meet an individual student's needs and the student has an active IEP, additional support will be provided in FROG-3. The inability of FROG-2 to meet the instructional needs of students who have not qualified for additional or specialized services in the past is usually a flag or trigger to begin the evaluation or qualification process for Special Education or 504 Plan services (see Serving Students with Special Needs section).

Compared to FROG-2, FROG-3 will be even more explicit, focuses on remediation of skills, is provided for a longer duration of time and occurs in groups of two or three, or in some cases, individually. FROG-3 will be made up of students needing more intense intervention, possibly meeting criteria for entry into special education programs for students with disabilities as described in the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Students may spend up to 60 additional instructional minutes in FROG-3. A highly trained special education teacher, who individualizes and monitors lessons based on the student's individual needs, will provide instruction and service.

Math groups at Gates School will be made up of mixed aged students working on or near the same developmental or foundational levels. Groups will be flexible and based on a variety of measures such as frequent informal assessments, teacher observations and formal curriculum based measures such as AIMS web and DIBELS Next. The Math-U-See curriculum will be utilized and lessons will follow teacher developed units written to follow the SC Math Standards and will be presented in small, easy-to-follow, sequential steps. The multisensory approach, which is a hallmark of Gates School, can be found in math classes where students frequently use manipulatives, recite mnemonics to help them remember concepts and play math games to reinforce concepts they have learned.

Gates School students will be organized into age group homeroom classes, working together to master SC standards for science, social studies, technology, and to participate in related arts activities. Students will have alternating four-week blocks of Social Studies and Science to encourage focus on new information. Teachers will develop Concept Units following the SC Grade Level Standards for Science, Social Studies, Technology and Literacy. Science units will integrate inquiry, reading technical texts, scientific method, field trips and hands on activities. The structured, sequential, multisensory approach will continue to be employed throughout these classes. Specific strategies based on best practices for students with dyslexia will be used in all academic areas. These strategies represent evidence-based approaches that benefit all learners but are essential for students with dyslexia.

Social Studies units will integrate study skills, reading nonfiction texts and learning effective note taking. The multisensory approach will be applied throughout the lessons.

Effective use of technology is a critical component of Gates School's educational plan. In recent years, K-12 schools have been moving toward increased use of digital learning materials to deliver instruction, provide opportunities for structured practice, and to extend learning through digital resources such as textbooks, articles, videos, notes, slides, and graphs. These materials hold great promise for students who have difficulty reading traditional, print-based instructional materials but explicit instruction in effectively using technology is crucial. Systematic instruction in the use of each component of technology

will be ongoing for all students and integrated into classroom and small group instruction.

Gates School students will be taught how to use technology with accommodation features such as text to speech, speech to text, and spelling prediction that lessen the burden of fluent reading and writing age appropriate concepts for academic subjects such as social studies and science. Students will become competent using digital features that enable them to demonstrate the knowledge acquired through research, prepare presentations, and communicate and create programming. While not diminishing the urgency of developing the skills needed to read and comprehend text in all formats and effectively use written communication, students will develop digital skills needed to be successful.

According to the International Dyslexia Association (IDA), multisensory teaching is one important aspect of instruction for dyslexic learners. Effective instruction is direct, explicit, structured, sequential and cumulative. It involves the use of visual, auditory and kinesthetic-tactile pathways simultaneously to enhance memory and the learning of written language. Links are consistently being made between the visual (language we see), auditory (language we hear) and kinesthetic-tactile (language symbols we feel) pathways in learning to read and spell.

Progress monitoring assessments will be given regularly throughout the year to ensure that adequate progress in reading growth is achieved. Examples of progress monitoring tests that are linked to national norms are DIBELS Next for reading fluency, AIMS web for oral reading fluency and silent reading comprehension. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) for Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies can also be used for beginning, middle and end of year testing of student growth.

Outcomes assessment is designed to measure overall achievement and occurs at the end of each school year. Students in South Carolina public schools take South Carolina College-and Career Ready Assessments (SC READY) to measure reading and math achievement and South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SC PASS) grades 3-8 for science and social studies (testing was suspended for the 2019-2020 school year for 8th grade science, 5th grade and 7th grade social studies). Gates School students will participate in all state testing, using accommodations as needed and as allowed by individual test protocols and/or as mandated by the student's IEP.

Traditionally, dyslexic students score lower on standardized tests than typical reading peers. After four or more full years of work at Gates School, we believe that our students will score at or above grade level on state mandated tests.

The experience of being dyslexic can provoke a range of uncomfortable emotions. It is natural for

dyslexic students to attribute academic problems to being unable to learn because they don't understand what may be wrong. Students may be puzzled by the inconsistency of their learning. They may have been told that they aren't trying hard enough, aren't motivated enough or are just lazy. Given even the best possible situation, students with dyslexia must work harder and longer than typical students in order to be successful. Additionally, children with dyslexia often have co-occurring problems with attention, behavior, emotional functioning, and/or organization in time and space.

Early detection of dyslexia and early intervention often alleviate and prevent emotional problems that make reading and schoolwork even more difficult. Gates School students will become less frustrated because they understand dyslexia, are receiving support, and are building confidence by accomplishing tasks and making progress.

An explicit Social and Emotional curriculum, The Leader in Me, chosen from effective, evidence based programs will be implemented as a stand-alone curriculum and included in academic classes and activities so that the culture of Gates School is one of nurture, support, and validation among students, staff, and parents. Gates School students will learn and practice the social skills needed to be self-advocates and to represent themselves as accomplished learners and good citizens.

The impact of dyslexia affects much more than the inability to develop competent reading, spelling, and writing skills. Understanding directions, organizing information, building a foundation of general knowledge, developing effective problem solving strategies, understanding information as it becomes more syntactically complex, and expressing oneself succinctly in classroom situations are all adversely affected. Making friends, assuming responsibility, assessing social situations correctly and acting appropriately also depend on having an internal language system with which one can make sense of the world. Gates School programs are designed to nurture the whole student and enable each student to overcome the challenge of dyslexia and to step out into the world as a competent, accomplished person prepared to enter the college and career of their choice.

For a Gates School student to be successful, ongoing student assessment is paramount. As previously stated, students, teachers and parents will be routinely updated on progress and setbacks. Students will not fall through the cracks like they previously did in traditional schools. A hallmark of the Orton-Gillingham approach is that it consistently spirals back and teaches concepts to mastery. This is essential to the dyslexic learner.

## **b) Educational Structure**

8. A description of any unique features, such as a non-traditional school year, longer school day, key partner organizations, multiple campuses, school culture, etc.
9. The proposed charter school's grade levels or non-graded education groupings appropriate for the targeted population (outline the groupings and how they are categorized, i.e. age levels and/or education levels) to be served at build-out, the grade levels non-graded education groupings upon opening, and the growth plan (if the school does not plan to initially open with all grade levels non-graded education groupings).
10. The size of the school at full capacity, including the number of classes per grade level and the number of students per class.
11. Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure.
12. Describe the structure of the school day and school week for each division. Include the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Note the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times. Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and per week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade. **As appendix item F, include the school calendar and daily schedule for the Academic year for each division of the proposed school.**
13. Explain how the instructional design, learning environment, class size and structure, curriculum, teaching methods, and schedule will be optimal for student learning and how it will support the mission of the school.
14. A brief description of the average school day for a prospective student. How would their experience set itself apart from the average school day at nearby schools?
15. A description of the teacher lesson planning process. What planning tools will teachers use to prepare lessons?
16. Describe a typical day for a teacher of a grade that will be served in the first year of operation. If, particularly for a virtual or alternative school, a "typical" day will vary widely, also explain the boundaries of that variation.

The Gates School's unique features are identified right in the school's mission: to provide an exceptional, evidence-based, multisensory education for students with dyslexia to open the gates to their individual and academic potential in an environment that empowers students to develop a positive and socially conscious self-image. Research shows that the dyslexic learner's educational environment should include a curriculum that is direct, explicit, multisensory, sequential and systematic. Typical Gates School students, despite having average to superior intelligence, score two or more grade levels behind typical readers on reading assessments because they have not received the specialized instruction necessary for closing the achievement gaps between their intellectual potential and reading ability. Academic, social

and technical programs at Gates School will enable students to experience success, understand the nature of their learning differences, and master the skills needed to overcome their academic difficulties.

Another unique feature to Gates School is the Imagination Station. One of the many positive attributes of a dyslexic learner is that they are often creative and able to think outside the box. Gates School will provide students with a place where they can let their creativity shine. The Imagination Station will have space for things such as an art station, a sewing station and a room with a green screen. Upon entering the Imagination Station, visitors may find students working on a STEM project or making a masterpiece using recycled items.

At capacity, Gates School will have 300 students in grades K-8. The school will open with 15 students in 1st grade, 25 students in 2nd grade, 30 students in 3rd grade, 30 students in 4th grade and 25 students in 5th grade. A grade each year through 8th grade will be added and culminate with the addition of kindergarten in the School's fifth year of operation. The table below depicts what the school's enrollment will look like at capacity.

Gates School Student Enrollment Projections:

GRADE	2021-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31
K	20	20	25	25	25	33				
1st	15	15	15	20	20	25	25	25	25	33
2nd	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	30	34	
3rd	30	30	30	30	30	30	33	34	34	
4th	30	30	30	30	30	30	33	34	34	
5th	25	30	30	30	30	30	33	33	33	
6th	0	25	30	30	30	30	30	30	33	
7th	0	0	25	30	30	30	30	30	33	
8th	0	0	0	25	30	30	30	30	33	
TOTALS	125	155	185	220	245	250	260	269	271	300

One of the hallmarks of Gates School is small class sizes and low student to teacher ratio. In traditional schools, classrooms are overcrowded and teachers are stretched thin. At 15 students per teacher, Gates School learners will receive the attention they need to be successful. Students will work in mixed age groups in ELA, math and Fundamentals of Reading through Orton-Gillingham (FROG) groups based on achievement levels and rates of academic progress.



The school's daily schedule supports the mission, enhances teachers' effectiveness, and encourages leadership in students and staff. In order to promote a supportive and motivational environment, it is important to get to know one another and to share a culture of respect, encouragement, and achievement. At Gates School, every school day will begin with a Gates School community meeting which is used to celebrate learning, affirm our commitment to make each day the best day yet, share news of the community and experience unity. Each teacher will have the opportunity to discuss specific classroom goals with their students once they are settled in homeroom.

Gates School students will be organized into age group homeroom classes where they will stay as a group to work together to master SC standards for science, social studies, technology and to participate in related arts activities. Students will have alternating four-week blocks of social studies and science to encourage focus on new information. Teachers will develop concept units following the SC Grade Level Standards for science, social studies, technology and literacy. Science units integrate inquiry, reading technical texts, scientific method, field trips and hands on activities. Specific strategies based on best practices for students with dyslexia will be used in all academic areas. These strategies represent evidence-based approaches that, while appropriate for all learners, are essential for students with dyslexia.

All students will be immersed in multisensory instruction in small groups in every subject area throughout the day. Instruction that is multisensory engages students in activities that involved multiple pathways of learning in the brain. Simultaneous use of visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile (VAKT) responses enhances memory and learning. Each skill is taught explicitly and clearly. Systematic and frequent review of information will be critical and ongoing.

Gates School students will work in mixed age groups for math and will use the Math-U-See curriculum. Groups are made up of students working on or near the same developmental or foundational levels to advanced math concepts for those working above grade level. Groups are flexible and based on frequent standardized and curriculum-based measures such as AIMS web, DIBELS Next, informal assessments, teacher observations and student progress. Lessons follow teacher developed units written to follow SC Math Standards and are presented in small, easy-to-follow steps. The multisensory approach continues to be employed in math.

Fundamentals of Reading through Orton-Gillingham (FROG) groups will meet for a minimum of 55 minutes daily. This instruction is imperative for the dyslexic learner and is essential remediation that they will not receive at traditional schools. Students will be assigned to FROG groups based on need for specific instruction and interventions. The groups are multi-age within a three-grade range.

For example; fourth, fifth and six graders may be FROG grouped for a series of lessons on syllabication. A first, second, and third grade mix may need additional FROG group instruction in consonant sounds. The most intense FROG-3 group is for students requiring intensive interventions described by an individualized education plan (IEP). A special education teacher teaches this group. A special education teacher also oversees these groups' total academic program, implementing necessary accommodations and modifications needed for their success in other classes.

Friday afternoons will be devoted to opportunities for students to participate in Gates University in flexible and ever-changing groups depending on the goal of the learning experience and interest of students. On any given Friday, students may be learning about music in different cultures, building and launching rockets or making travel brochures using information learned by researching U.S. states. Gates University time provides a novel change in the normal routine that is motivating and exciting to students. Teachers, movement coaches, part-time instructors and volunteer members of the community will plan Gates University activities.

Learning to read is extremely taxing for dyslexic students. They typically have to think about each word, the rules that govern its configuration of letters, and try to remember the words so that a sentence or paragraph makes sense. All of this work consumes a great deal of attention; thus, movement breaks become critical to maintaining attention for learning. A study by Reynolds and colleagues (2003) found that a movement program was a great benefit to dyslexic learners. Those in the intervention group showed significantly greater improvement in dexterity, reading, verbal fluency and semantic fluency than did the control group. The exercising group also made substantial gains on national standardized tests of reading, writing, and comprehension. Gates School students will have two scheduled movement breaks daily. During these periods, students will be moving in a variety of ways including playing games, responding to music, and performing aerobic exercise routines.

Students at Gates School will have many opportunities to explore their creative side in the Imagination Station. Teachers will coordinate time in the Imagination Station to fit within their lesson plans. For example, students may be studying the colonial era in social studies and use time in the Imagination Station to design and sew clothing typical of that time period. In science, students may be discussing weather and can use the green screen in the Imagination Station to become weather broadcasters.

The final 30 minutes of each day, except Friday, is practice work time. Students will rarely have assignments of traditional homework so that their evenings are free for activities of choice and relaxing with family and friends.

Gates School will follow the academic calendar of the public school district it will be located in and students will attend school for 180 days in a calendar year. Although not finalized, the school day will run from approximately 8 am until 3 pm. This will be finalized once Gates School determines the school's location.

Each day students will participate in 90 minutes of core ELA classes, 55 minutes of FROG instruction, 90 minutes of math and 45 minutes of social studies/science. Students will participate in PE every day and will have another scheduled movement break throughout the day.

Gates School will provide an optimal learning environment for students with a primary diagnosis of dyslexia and related reading challenges. Students will be taught using direct, explicit, multisensory, evidence-based curricula tailored to fit their unique learning style. Class sizes will be small with a low student-to-teacher ratio. FROG time will provide students with small group instruction. Multiple movement breaks throughout the day as well as a designated space for letting creativity shine are both unique features offered by the school. Using the social emotional curriculum, The Leader In Me, will help build the self-esteem of Gates School students and will assist in preparing them to be the next leaders of our community. All of this fits within the Gates School mission of providing an exceptional, evidence-based, multisensory education for students with dyslexia to open the gates to their individual and academic potential in an environment that empowers students to develop a positive and socially conscious self-image.

An average day for a Gates School student will provide a huge sense of relief compared to the average day at a typical public school. Students will walk into a supportive environment that caters to the unique way they learn. Upon arrival, students will feel a sense of community as they gather for the morning meeting. Celebrating success and setting intentions for the day during the meeting will send the student to homeroom with a feeling of pride and ownership for their education. Although they will vary, a student's daily schedule will include ELA, math, science/social studies, FROG time, lunch, two scheduled movement breaks, 30 minutes at the end of each day to complete unfinished work (except for Friday) and Gates University time on Friday.

The teacher lesson planning process will be a collaborative effort with each grade level team, FROG teacher and special education teacher. Teachers will have planning time during PE, potentially during Gates University (if GU is being led by someone other than the teacher) and after school. Teachers will use data from assessments and anecdotal notes from small group observations as tools to prepare their lessons. They will also use teaching points from the curriculum that highlight intervention and

enrichment activities.

A typical day for a teacher at Gates School will start with the morning community meeting. Students and teachers will gather together to celebrate successes and set school-wide intentions for the day. Teachers and students will then head to their classrooms where additional classroom goals for the day are discussed. Teachers will teach core subjects (math and ELA) for 90 minutes each. Students will participate in PE each day at which time the teacher can work on lesson planning. Students will go to assigned FROG groups for 55 minutes each day. Teachers and students have lunch and then time for another movement break during the second half of the day. Science or social studies will be taught for 45 minutes. During the final 30 minutes of each day, the teacher will supervise the students as they finish up any remaining work. On Friday, the final two hours of the school day will be devoted to Gates University. If a community leader or parent volunteer is available to cover Gates University, the teacher will be free to use this time for lesson planning or parent meetings.

### **c) Professional Development**

17. Identify the person(s) or position(s) responsible for overseeing professional development (PD).
18. Discuss the core components of the school's PD plan for all staff (all teachers, leaders, other staff) and how they will support effective implementation of the educational program.
19. Provide a schedule and explanation of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what will be covered during this induction period and how teachers will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods.
20. Describe the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year, and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure accommodate this plan. Include time scheduled for common planning or collaboration.
21. How does professional development align with the vision and core academic priorities of the school? How will the effectiveness of PD be evaluated? When teachers have time for common planning or collaboration? How will this time be used?
22. An explanation of how the school calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure will help facilitate sufficient time to conduct, reviews, and provide guidance on professional development and growth.
23. **Additional Requirements for Replications Schools:**
  - Describe any shared PD across campuses. Who will be responsible for developing, leading, and evaluating any shared PD?

The Principal of Gates School is ultimately responsible for overseeing professional development (PD) for

teachers, support staff, and contract professionals such as school psychologists and therapists. However, it will be important for other members of the faculty to assist in overseeing the implementation and fidelity of professional development. Faculty/staff members that may assist with this process include Special Education Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator and Guidance Counselor.

It is crucial that teachers at Gates School understand the structure of language. An Orton-Gillingham classroom educator training conducted by an OG certified trainer will be a requirement for all teachers.

Gates School, as discussed and described throughout the sections of this document, will choose a research-based, multisensory, structured curriculum such as, but not limited to, The Wilson Reading System for reading and Math-U-See for math. All teachers will learn to teach such programs as with fidelity through the guidance of on-site and on-line trainers. The principal and one or more teachers will attend a training seminar for The Leader In Me. These staff members will then train the entire Gates School faculty and oversee the implementation of this program – a program that will be an integral part of the school’s culture as previously discussed in that respective application section.

Implementation and support of Gates School’s educational program will be successful by providing the following professional development to faculty and staff. These are the core components and Gates School will provide training and development on other topics based on the needs of the school, teachers, and success of students.

- Wilson Reading/Language System
- The Leader In Me
- Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS)
- Fundamentals of Reading through Orton-Gillingham (FROG)
- Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PIBS)
- Special Education

Professional development is a crucial component to teacher success, even for experienced teachers, which ultimately leads to student success and overall school success. In support of the mission, teachers will be trained on the nature of dyslexia and concurrent struggles a student may face (ADHD, dyscalculia). Gates School will initially train staff in the aforementioned programs and modules and provide professional development seminars and trainings in the necessary instructional strategies of a dyslexia-specialized elementary-middle school. These trainings will be held before the school opens and will continue throughout the school year. When possible, Gates School will collaborate with Lakes and Bridges Charter School for professional development and trainings. Gates School will also utilize any professional development opportunities offered by The Charter Institute at Erskine. The Gates School

budget provides for ongoing professional development and training and the Principal will plan monthly professional development sessions, bringing in experts in the field to work with faculty and staff. When student performance is not at an acceptable level, data will be reviewed to determine root causes and further research will be done, if necessary, to find evidence-based interventions for improvement. Results of data will guide professional development topics and relevant staff will participate in professional development as part of the school's continuous improvement cycle and professional learning community. Continuous data monitoring will assist with the basis for assessing the effectiveness of the intervention. From this, decisions regarding whether to increase the intensity of the current intervention, move the student to an even more intense level of intervention, or create new interventions can be made.

Professional development, just as the school year's beginning, ending, and holidays, will follow the school district calendar in the district that Gates School resides (this is TBD but refer to Appendix F for an example of a school calendar). There are ten professional development days built into the calendar for professional endeavors such as curriculum workshops, The Leader In Me training, monthly Wilson Language/Reading system workshops, and training for using assessment data to guide instruction. Students do not attend school on these designated PD days. Professional development can also occur during after school faculty meetings and during teacher planning periods.

From Gates School's mission statement and the educational program description, it is easy to see that the anticipated professional development plan is tightly aligned with the academic priorities of the School. Effectiveness of this professional development will be evaluated by the results of all of the student and School data. Teachers will complete a short rubric after each PD giving their opinion of how applicable the training was. These will be submitted randomly so that teachers feel they can be honest. Teachers will also be given the opportunity to add suggestions as they see fit. When teachers have time for common planning and collaboration, they will use this time to analyze student data to guide instruction.

The principal or Director of Curriculum will schedule teacher observations and provide coaching and feedback sessions while students are engaged in Gates University or movement breaks. To assist with staffing during PD time scheduled during the school day, Gates School will rely on academic assistants and parent volunteers to help provide classroom coverage.

Appendix F: School Calendar

Appendix G: Support Documents for Educational Program

Appendix H: List of Teaching Positions

Appendix I: Not Applicable

## **Virtual Charter Schools**

A virtual charter school is a charter school whereby students are taught primarily through online methods; however, at least 25 percent of the instruction in core areas as defined in Section IV(E)(1) of SC SBE Regulation 43-601. If the proposed charter school is a virtual charter school, the following additional information must be submitted as part of the application:

### **Not Applicable?**

### **Responses Selected:**

Select if the question does not apply to your school

### **3. Serving Students with Disabilities and Special Populations**

As public schools, charter schools must open their enrollment to *any* student and must provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) by offering special education and related services as needed for students with disabilities. To ensure a FAPE and a continuum of services, including transition and technical assistance, will be provided in the initial year of operation, the application must include either a budget that reflects the employment of at least one appropriately certified special education teacher starting with the initial year or the agreement reached for the provision of special education and related services between the school and the sponsor. The applicant's plan should follow the policy established by their proposed sponsor.

In addition, a charter school application must demonstrate that the educational program is designed to enable each student to achieve the charter school's stated student achievement goals and academic performance standards. The application requires a clear indication that the prospective charter school understands requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and plans to comply with these requirements, which includes appropriately certified personnel, documentation, assessments, adaptations, and modifications.

In this section of the application, the applicant will not only address how they will serve students with disabilities. The applicant will also address how the proposed charter school will meet the diverse needs of special student populations that require additional supports to include: ELLs, high achieving/gifted students, homeless, military, etc.

## Narrative Requirements

1. Identify the types and size of the various special populations that the school expects to serve and the basis for these assumptions;
2. Discuss how the curriculum, daily schedule, staffing plans, and support strategies and resources of the proposed educational plan will meet diverse needs of any special populations or any modifications to the educational plan that will be made in order to do so;
3. Describe the school's plan to provide a continuum of services in the least restrictive environment;
4. Clearly define the roles and responsibilities, as well as provide an explanation of the partnership between the proposed charter school and the potential sponsor;
  - *Include an explanation of any contracted services between the proposed school and a local district*

Gates School will be an Alternative Education Campus (AEC) charter school, grades K-8, with an explicit mission and purpose of providing an exceptional, evidence-based, multisensory education for students with dyslexia to open the gates to their individual and academic potential in an environment that empowers students to develop a positive and socially conscious self-image. Because of its mission, specialized focus, and especially due to its designation as an AEC, Gates School anticipates having the majority of its students qualify for either Special Education services through the IDEA or through a 504 Plan of the Rehabilitation Act. Having an AEC designation allows Gates School (as allowed by ESSA and SC Charter School Law) to accept mission-aligned preference students, those with a primary diagnosis of dyslexia and related language-based learning challenges, by weighted lottery (discussed further in Section II Enrollment).

Through the School's specially designed educational program with its interventions, tier system, and closely monitored student performance data, as discussed in this application, many students will no longer slip through the cracks, but instead, will trigger a system designed to initiate the evaluation process for specialized services.

Gates School will provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to all students with disabilities in accordance with all state, district and federal special education guidelines and regulations as provided by the South Carolina Public Charter School District, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Gates School will be a public school and will not discriminate or limit enrollment based on race, religion or disability.



Many Gates School students will enter with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) in place and they will be provided special education services immediately. Other students will not be identified as needing special education services until later in the school year. Gates School will hire the appropriate number of special education teachers to ensure that all IEP services are implemented. Special Education staff will include (in the first year of operation), but is not limited to, a lead special education teacher who serves as Coordinator and oversees special education compliance.

As described in the Instruction and Curriculum section, Gates School will implement a leveled system of interventions as a framework of design to guide quality instruction for students in grades K-8. The organization of levels is a framework intended to support students across the continuum from lowest performing students to highest performing students. This approach is particularly useful in designing instructional systems that build a continuum of services and supports for all students to achieve academic excellence.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is an integral part of the level system and is an instructional framework focused solely on student response to instruction and intervention. RTI is a framework encouraged by the IDEA. An RTI approach to instruction requires that Gates School will provide a research and evidence-based instructional model to all students in academic and behavior areas, find the students who are not meeting standards, plan and provide research and evidence-based interventions for those not achieving, closely monitor the progress of targeted students, and intervene at a higher level if students do not progress toward age-appropriate levels. Response to Intervention in South Carolina (RTI SC) believes effective instruction in the core curriculum, Level 1, is the foundation of a school-wide delivery system.

RTI uses the expertise of school professionals and parents in a proactive format, which puts the student's needs first and bases decisions on data. Students failing to make adequate progress within an intervention tier are referred to problem-solving teams for review. When the team determines that a student requires further evaluation, the procedure is followed to determine if that student qualifies for special education services.

The purpose of special education and related services is to give students with disabilities access to the general education curriculum of the school, program, or extracurricular activities that all students without disabilities enjoy. Gates School will comply with all processes stipulated by the Charter Institute at Erskine in its Child Find procedures to ensure that all children with disabilities enrolled are identified, located, and evaluated according to federal, state, and district requirements. Identifying children through RTI, referrals from teachers, parents, and administrators will all be part of faculty and staff training for identifying children to be evaluated for a disability. The school will publicly post information regarding

Child Find procedures within the facility and on its website. All parents will receive procedural safeguards at the onset of the evaluation process, as well as other required points, to ensure that they are aware of the special education process and their rights, at any point during this process.

Gates School, as a public charter school, is aware that its enrollment must be open to any student and that it must provide a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) by offering services, as needed, for students with disabilities, including students who are English Language Learners (ELL). These services shall include all documentation, assessments, adaptations, modifications, and accommodations. Gates School understands and will comply with the Charter Institute at Erskine's specific policies and procedures, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and any revisions thereof in their entirety. Furthermore, Gates School will demonstrate adherence to the following legal principles, outlined in the above-mentioned legislation:

- free appropriate public education (FAPE)
- confidentiality
- child find
- procedural safeguards
- nondiscriminatory evaluations
- individualized Education Program (IEP)
- least restrictive environment (LRE); and;
- certified teachers (as many as enrollment dictates)

#### Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Gates School, in collaboration with the Charter Institute at Erskine, will ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is made available to all of its students with disabilities. This will include making assistive technology available, if required, as part of the child's special education, related services, or supplementary aids and services. Additionally, Gates School will work closely with the Charter Institute at Erskine to ensure that extended school year services (ESY) are provided if a child's IEP team determines that the services are necessary for the provision of FAPE to the child.

In regards to nonacademic services, Gates School will take steps, including the provision of supplementary aids and services determined appropriate and necessary by the child's IEP team, to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities as provided to students without disabilities. Such services and activities may include, but are not limited to: counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest

groups or clubs sponsored by the school or school district, and referrals to agencies that provide assistance to individuals with disabilities. Gates School will take steps to ensure that students with disabilities receive appropriate physical education services as mandated by state law and regulation. Each student with a disability will have the opportunity to participate in a regular physical education program available to non-disabled children, unless the child is in need of specially designed physical education, as prescribed in the child's IEP.

#### Confidentiality

Gates School will safeguard the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at use, collection, storage, retention, disclosure and destruction stages. The Principal, along with Gates School's special education coordinator and teachers, will be responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of personally identifiable information. Gates School will ensure that all persons collecting or using personally identifiable information receive training and instruction regarding the school and the Charter Institute at Erskine's policies regarding that information. Gates School will give notice to all parents of students receiving special education and related services that is adequate to fully inform parents about confidentiality requirements, in accordance with SC Board of Education Regulations.

Gates School will permit parents (or their representatives) to inspect and review any education records relating to their children that are collected, maintained, or used by the School or the Charter Institute at Erskine. Gates School will comply with requests to access records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding any IEP, hearing, or resolution session and will do so within 45 days after the request has been made. Gates School will keep a record of parties obtaining access to education records collected, maintained, or used under Part B of the IDEA, including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records. Gates School will maintain a list of authorized employees who have access to educational records. Unless the information is contained in education records and the disclosure is authorized without parental consent under FERPA, Gates School will obtain parental consent before personally identifiable information is disclosed to parties other than officials of participating agencies in accordance with and as defined by the SC Board of Education Regulation. The parent's consent, or the consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority (which is unlikely at Gates School as we serve Elementary and Middle school students), must be in writing, signed, dated, and must:

1. Specify the records to be disclosed;
2. State the purpose of the disclosure; and
3. Identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made.

Gates School will obtain such consent before personally identifiable information is released:

1. Prior to inviting officials of participating agencies providing or paying for transition services to an IEP meeting in accordance with South Carolina Board of Education;
2. To officials in another district or school in connection with the child's enrollment in a nonpublic school; and/or
3. For purposes of billing insurance and/or Medicaid.

Gates School will afford rights of privacy to children similar to those afforded to parents, taking into consideration the age of the child and the type or severity of disability. Unless the student has been determined incompetent, the rights of parents regarding education records under FERPA will transfer to the child at age 18. This includes the rights regarding education records, which also transfer to the child. The IEP, once a child reaches the age of 17, must include a statement that the child has been informed regarding this transfer of rights. Again, having a student reach the age of majority or age of transfer is unlikely, but not necessarily impossible at Gates School.

Additionally, Gates School will include in the records of a child with a disability, a statement of any current or previous disciplinary action that has been taken against the child and transmit the statement to the same extent that the disciplinary information is included in, and transmitted with, the records of non-disabled children. If Gates School reports a crime to the appropriate law enforcement officials, it will transmit copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the child to those officials only to the extent that FERPA and any other applicable laws permit the transmission.

As necessitated by federal auditing requirements, Gates School will make available education records for identified students for five (5) years after they exit from special education services. After that, Gates School may destroy records. Before destroying special education records, however, Gates School must notify the parent or the adult student that the information is no longer needed and that the school is proposing to destroy them. A certified letter will be sent to the last known address of the student. A returned letter will become the supporting documentation of Gates School's attempt to inform the student/parent of the proposed destruction of records. However, most student records will transfer to the receiving high school, private school, or other specialty school.

#### Child Find

Each state is required by the IDEA to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities who need special education and related services. It is the responsibility of all public schools, including Gates School, to assist in this process. This includes children who are suspected of having a disability even though they are advancing from grade to grade. Determining eligibility will be the responsibility of the multidisciplinary team. If the student is not proficient in English, Gates School will not identify the student

as having a disability if the limited English proficiency (LEP) is the cause of the suspected disability. Gates School and its staff will use a variety of community resources and systematic activities in order to identify children requiring special services. The following is an example of the Child Find notice and description of methods for publicly providing the notice that Gates School will use unless it is necessary to use a Charter Institute at Erskine notice:

Annual Notice of Child Find School Year 2021-2022: Under a mandate of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), Gates School is to conduct activities to locate, identify, and evaluate any child with known or suspected disabilities who attends the school. Categories of disabilities may include: developmental delay, mental disability, emotional disability, speech or language impairment, deafness and hard of hearing, visual impairment, deaf-blindness, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, traumatic brain injury, autism, and multiple disabilities. A referral (report for possible evaluation) may be made by parent/guardians, school staff member, or other concerned persons. Referrals are made when a person reasonably believes a child may be a child with a disability even if the child is advancing from grade to grade. Before referring the student, the person making the referral must inform the child's parent that the referral will be made. Gates School employs interventions for struggling students. Before an evaluation is conducted, the student should be enrolled in one of the intervention programs. However, the school may not deny a request or delay a request for an evaluation. Referrals must be in writing and include the reason why the person believes the child is a child with a disability. Referral forms may be requested by contacting the Special Education Coordinator at: TBD@dyslexiacharter.org The obligation of child finds is fulfilled by the posting of this letter in a public location within the school, having it sent out in mass email to all school parents/guardians, and posted on the website.

#### Procedural Safeguards

As required by IDEA and the South Carolina Board of Education, Gates School will provide prior written notice (PWN). To ensure that parents are fully informed of the action being proposed or refused, PWN will include the following mandated information:

1. A description of the action proposed or refused by Gates School;
2. An explanation of why Gates School proposes or refuses to take this action;
3. A description of other options that the IEP team considered and the reasons why those options were rejected;
4. A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record or report that Gates School uses as a basis for the proposed or refused action;
5. A description of other factors that are relevant to Gates School's proposal or refusal;
6. A statement that the parents of a child with a disability have procedural

safeguards and, if the notice is not an initial referral for evaluation, the means by which a copy of the description of procedural safeguards can be obtained;

7. Sources for parents to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of South Carolina's rule regarding procedural safeguards.

Unless it is clearly not feasible to do so, Gates School will provide this notice in the native language of the parents or other mode of communication used by the parents.

Parents of a child with a disability, as stated above, are entitled to specific procedural safeguards under IDEA and SC Board of Education Regulations. Gates School will provide parents with a copy of the procedural safeguards at least once a year during the annual review. In addition, Gates School will provide parents with a printed copy of this procedural safeguards notice in each of the following circumstances:

1. Upon the initial referral or parental request for evaluation;
2. Upon receipt of the first State complaint or due process hearing request in a school year;
3. Upon a change in placement for disciplinary action; and
4. When requested by the parents or the child who has reached the age of majority.

Prior to performing certain actions within the special education process, it will be necessary to obtain parental consent. Consent means that the parents: have been fully informed in their native language or other mode of communication of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought; understand and agree in writing to the completion of the activity for which the consent was obtained (the consent will describe the activity and lists the records, if any, that will be released and to whom they will be released); and, understand that the granting of consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. Gates School will obtain written consent from the parents before:

- a.) Conducting an initial evaluation to determine if a child is eligible for special education;
- b.) Initially providing special education and related services;
- c.) Conducting a reevaluation when additional data are needed; and
- d.) Releasing personally identifiable information about the child to any person other than a person authorized to obtain those records without parental consent pursuant to FERPA.

Gates School will make reasonable efforts to contact parents to obtain written consent and will document those attempts. If parents fail to respond or refuse to provide consent for an initial evaluation,

reevaluation, and/or initial provision of special education and related services, Gates School will respond accordingly with the options that are available and which have the best interest of the student in mind, including:

- \*Requesting a due process hearing and engaging in conflict resolution or mediation to convince parents to provide their consent; or,
- \*Deciding not to pursue initial evaluation and providing the parents with PWN of this decision;
- \*Proceeding with a reevaluation;
- \*Continuing to provide FAPE if both Gates School and parents agree the three (3) year evaluation is unnecessary; and,
- \*Providing PWN and notifying parents of decision to discontinue special education and related services which will include the right of the parent to use mediation or due process procedures if the parent disagrees with this decision to discontinue the provision of FAPE to the child.

#### Evaluation

Before the initial provision of special education and related services, a comprehensive, non-discriminatory evaluation must be conducted. However, prior to the evaluation, the student may be provided with interventions, such as in the RTI process, to address below grade-level performance. Students not responding to intervention will be referred for an evaluation. A parent may initiate a request. Additionally, a Gates School employee who has reason to suspect the child may have a disability, is obligated to initiate a request for an initial evaluation. Within a reasonable amount of time from receipt of a request for an evaluation, Gates School will either obtain parental consent for an initial evaluation through an evaluation planning meeting or will provide to the parents prior written notice stating that Gates School does not suspect a disability and will not be conducting an evaluation.

When an assessment is necessary, the evaluation team must decide upon which assessment(s) to use. It is simply not just the school psychologist who decides eligibility based on the assessment results.

Relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent, will be gathered. All areas of the suspected disability are assessed, not just any single measure or assessment will be used as the sole criterion for determination. Parents will receive PWN that describes any evaluation procedures the school proposes to conduct. The initial evaluation:

a.) Is conducted within 60 days of receiving signed parental consent for the evaluation;

and

b.) Consists of procedures:

\*To determine if the child is a child with a disability as defined in South Carolina

Board of Education Regulation 43-243.1; and

\*To determine the educational needs of the child.

Gates School will obtain parental consent before conducting an evaluation. The evaluation team consists of the members similar to those of IEP team and other qualified professionals.

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

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

\*Evaluations and information provided by the parents of the child;

\*Current classroom-based, local or state assessments and classroom-based observations;

\*Observations by teachers and related services providers;

\*Data about the child's progress in the general curriculum; and

\*Data from previous interventions.

2. On the basis of that review and input from the child's parents, identify what additional data, if any, are needed to determine:

\*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;

\*In the case of a reevaluation of a child, whether the child continues to have such a disability and the educational needs of the child;

\*The present levels of academic achievement and related developmental needs of the child;

\*Whether the child, as a result of the disability, needs special education and related services; or

\*In the case of a reevaluation of a child, whether the child continues to need special education and related services; and

\*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.

In conducting the evaluation, Gates School will:

1. Use a variety of 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:



\*Whether the child is a child with a disability as defined in South Carolina Board of Education Regulation 43-243.1; and

\*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;

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. Uses technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors.

Gates School will ensure that:

1. Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child:

\*Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;

\*Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form 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 provide or administer;

\*Are used for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;

\*Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and

\*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. (Not applicable here at this time) 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 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 that includes all information used by the team in making the eligibility determination.

After drawing upon information from a variety of sources (including aptitude and achievement tests, state-wide and district-wide assessments, parent input and teacher recommendations, as well as information about the child's physical condition, social/cultural background, and adaptive behavior), and it is determined that a child has a disability and is in need of special education and related services, Gates School will develop an IEP for the child within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of eligibility.

#### Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Once the team has determined that a child is eligible under IDEA and once the parent has provided signed written consent for the child to receive special education services, Gates School will form an IEP team. The meeting to develop an IEP is then conducted by this team within thirty (30) calendar days of this decision. Following its development, the IEP is implemented as soon as possible and Gates School will ensure that the parents receive a copy of the child's IEP at no cost. Prior written notice is provided to the parents the same day as the IEP meeting. Members of the IEP team will include:

1. The child's parents;
2. General education teacher who is working with the child and implementing portions of the IEP;
3. Special Education teacher;
4. LEA representative who:

\*Is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities;

\*Knows the general education curriculum; and

\*Knows about the availability of resources of the school and/or district.

5. Someone who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results, who may be one of the team noted previously;

6. At the discretion of the parents or the school, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate; and

7. The child, whenever appropriate. The child must be invited if a purpose of the meeting is the consideration of postsecondary goals for the child and the transition services needed to assist the child in reaching those goals, which begin at age thirteen (13).

To schedule IEP meetings, Gates School will adhere to the following procedures:

1. The school special education teacher will contact the parent and determine a mutually agreed upon date and time for the IEP meeting. This may be done via email, by phone or in person.

2. If the teacher is unable to preset the date and time with the parent via email, phone or in person, a written invitation will be sent home to the parent. Without parental contact, the meeting should be scheduled within a reasonable amount of time for the parent to plan to attend.

3. If, after three (3) days, the teacher does not receive the signed meeting notification response, a second notification should be sent home again using a different method such as email, in person, or US mail.

4. If after two (2) reasonable attempts and there is no response, or the parent responds that they will not attend, the teacher may hold the IEP meeting. If the parents indicate in writing, that they will attend but do not show up for the meeting, the teacher may hold the IEP meeting.

In developing each child's IEP, the IEP team will consider:

1. Strengths of the child;

2. Concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child;

3. Results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the child;

4. Results of the child's performance on any state or district-wide assessment programs, as appropriate; and

5. The academic, developmental and functional needs of the child.

The IEP will include the following:

1. A statement of the child's present levels of academic and functional performance, including:
  - \*How the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum; or
  - \*As appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities;
2. A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to meet the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and meet the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability;
3. A description of the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals described in the IEP and how they will be measured; and when reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals will be provided;
4. A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided to enable the child:
  - \*To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;
  - \*To be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and
  - \*To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and non disabled children in the activities;
5. An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with non disabled children in the regular classroom and in activities;
6. 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; and
  - \*If the IEP team determines that the child must take an alternate assessment instead of a particular state or district assessment of student achievement, a statement of why the child cannot participate in the regular assessment and the particular assessment selected is appropriate for the child; and
7. 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;
8. For children age thirteen (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.

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

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. Gates School will create a system to ensure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children who are non disabled and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. A continuum of services, including inclusive services in the general education classrooms, will be available to meet the needs of students with disabilities for special education and related services and LRE issues are considered in placement decisions. Gates School will ensure that students with disabilities will receive a FAPE and will utilize a variety of strategies to address student needs.

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, Gates School will develop an IEP for the child within 30 calendar days of the date eligibility is determined as required by South Carolina Board of Education Regulations 43-243.

#### Transfer IEPs

Gates School will provide comparable services to all children who enter Gates School with an IEP in place. Within 30 days, Gates School will gather data and have an IEP team meeting to determine if the IEP is

appropriate for Gates School's environment and can be accepted as is or if adjustments to the IEP are required in order to provide access to Gates School's general education.

#### Re-evaluations

Re-evaluations will be conducted if the team determines that the educational or related service needs of the child, including improved academic achievement and functional performance, warrant a re-evaluation or if the child's parent or teacher requests a re-evaluation. The re-evaluation must occur at least once every three (3) years, unless the parent and LEA representative agree that the re-evaluation is unnecessary. A re-evaluation may not occur more than once a year, unless the parent and LEA representative agree otherwise. If the team determines, during the re-evaluation, that the child is no longer a child with a disability under IDEA (the child no longer meets eligibility criteria, and no longer needs specially designed instruction), the team will determine if the student meets the wider definition of disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students under Section 504 typically receive their 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. While similar to IDEA, these are not the same. If, at the re-evaluation, a student is determined to no longer qualify or no longer require services, the student will be exited from special education. If the team decides a transition plan is needed, then one will be created.

#### Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

To the maximum extent possible and appropriate, Gates School will ensure that a continuum of services is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The least restrictive environment:

- Is based on meaningful evaluation data;
- Considers appropriate placement options;
- Is determined at least annually;
- Is determined by the child's IEP team; and
- Considers 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.

Gates School will not remove a child with a disability from instruction in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of need

If the IEP team determines that a FAPE cannot be provided to the student within the Gates School setting, even with appropriate accommodations and modifications, Gates School will work closely with the

Charter Institute at Erskine to determine a program within the school district that can meet the child's needs. If so, based on the IEP team's decision, placement will be made.

#### Certified Teachers

As a best practice, despite falling under the twenty-five percent (25%) of personnel who can be non-certified, Gates School will employ certified special education teachers to address the educational needs of its students. During its inaugural year, Gates School will employ a Special Education Coordinator and at least one (1) other special educator (or more if needed as determined by enrollment) and each will address the needs of either the elementary school or middle school students. However, the number of special educators hired will be driven by the number of students that qualify for services and will be reflected in the budget. These special educators will provide services for students already identified and assist in the identification of students in need of and who qualify for services under IDEA and Section 504, but who have yet to be identified as meeting state and/or federal criteria of a student with a disability. The Special Education Coordinator/Teacher will attend all district meetings for special education coordinators/teachers and will serve as the contact person between Gates School and the Charter Institute at Erskine on special education matters, including state and federal reporting. S/He will attend all trainings offered or provided by the district to better provide services to the school, students, and parents. Student needs and the staffing required to serve those needs will be reviewed on a continuous basis, and staffing will at all times be in compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations.

#### Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

Gates School will follow the SCDE and the Charter Institute at Erskine's plan and guidelines to meet the needs of its students demonstrating limited English proficiency, thereby, essentially fulfilling the requirements of Title III of the ESEA for speakers of a language other than English. The law requires effective instruction that: (1) leads to the timely acquisition of proficiency in English and (2) provides teaching and learning opportunities so that each student can become proficient in the state's academic content and student academic achievement standards. Children that may have limited English proficiency are attempting to learn core content taught in English -- a language that is not their first or "home language." Thus, their ability to learn content knowledge may be compromised by the lack of classroom accommodations to assist in this process or the lack of other opportunities through English language learning. These students are tasked with the dual responsibility of learning the English language while simultaneously trying to digest all of the core content knowledge. With no plan in place to assist such students, they are often at a higher risk of quitting school and subsequently having limited opportunities for career and employment opportunities.

Therefore, Gates School in tandem with the SCDE and the Charter Institute at Erskine, is committed to

providing equal opportunities to all students, including providing English Language Learner (ELL) students the needed accommodations and programs to become proficient in English so that they may excel at learning the content and achievement standards. An overview of the process that Gates School will implement and utilize is as follows:

\*At the time of enrollment into Gates School, a “home language survey” form will be completed. This form is used to determine if there is an influence of a language other than English and is included as part of every enrollment packet.

\*A staff member, as determined by the Principal, will administer the survey. A bilingual translator will be provided, if necessary, and when available. The survey identifies any languages other than English that are: first learned or acquired by the student; used by the student in the home; or used by parents in the home. If the student indicates that any of these examples are pertinent to his situation, then he is a language minority student. If any response on the Home Language Survey indicates the use of a language other than English by the student or an individual in the home, then further information must be obtained to determine the student’s English-language proficiency. Based on identification of a potential ELL through the Home Language Survey, new ELLs will be tested within thirty days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year, and within two weeks thereafter within the school year. This does not necessarily mean that the student is not English proficient. The student could be bilingual. Or, the student could have a parent that only speaks another language while he speaks only English.

\*Based on the Home Language Survey, if a language other than English is indicated on the survey, and after the parent has clarified further survey questions, the student is referred to Assessment Step.

\*Through ACCESS for ELLs® through the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium and the W-APT screener, Gates School will test the identified student’s English Language Proficiency to determine initial ESOL (English for Speaker of Other Language).

\*Students scoring less than a Level 5 (Fully English Proficient) must continue to take ACCESS until they have scored at Level 5 and will qualify for ESOL services until a Level 5 is attained. Parents are notified in preferred language.

\*Gates School will offer an ESOL Support Program for as long as the student continues to qualify for services.

\*The following will be used or followed to determine if student should exit the program: Scoring a Level 5, Fully English Proficient on ACCESS; Student academic performance; teacher recommendation; Student/Parent input to determine when direct ELL services should be terminated.



\*Students who do not meet Exit qualifications will continue with ELL services. Students who meet Exit qualifications will move to the next step.

\*Monitoring: the ESOL coordinator will monitor Students who have exited the ESOL program for a period of two full school years.

\*If Gates School is aware or is knowledgeable that the student has taken ACCESS in the previous year, then Gates School will request ACCESS scores from the previous school.

\*Once a student has taken ACCESS; they can only be exited by attaining a Level 5 on ACCESS.

\*The Principal will be responsible for ensuring that, within ten (10) school days of enrollment, a copy of the Home Language Survey is filed in the permanent record of the student at the local school and one copy is distributed to the ESOL Teacher/Coordinator.

\*ELL students should be placed in the grade that is age appropriate. Retaining or placing an LEP student in a lower grade is not in compliance with state guidelines.

\*Prior to placing a student in an English language instruction educational program, the LEA must ensure that the school notifies parents of their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for participation in the program in the parents' preferred language.

\*Upon receipt of written instructions from the parent declining participation (waiver), an LEA must withdraw the student from a formal English language instruction educational program. The LEA is still obligated to provide appropriate, informal strategies to ensure that the student's English language and academic needs are met. Additionally, waived students are required to be assessed annually for English proficiency using ACCESS.

\*Each student who qualifies for services will have an ELL plan written that will address the needs of the student. An ESOL school committee consisting of the ESOL Teacher, classroom teacher and another member at large will complete the ELL plan and determine the proper services for the student. Once a student has been placed in the ESOL program, an Academic Plan for Student that specifies ELL services and modifications must be developed and should be discussed with the parent/guardian during a school conference. (Adapted from the South Carolina Department of Education English Language Learning Handbook)

Such services are driven by the needs of the enrolled students. If ELL/ESOL/LEP staff are needed to meet the needs of Gates School students, a plan will be developed to obtain the proper credentialed personnel. If few students require such programming, this will be a service that Gates School will look to contract

with a provider, service, or with the district, if available. The program will be evaluated at the end of the school year to determine future staffing needs and to plan for “best practices” in future student needs.

Corresponding Appendices

Appendix J – Not Applicable –Agreement with Sponsoring District for SPED Services

#### **4. Goals, Objectives, and Assessment Plan**

The charter school’s goals, objectives, and academic performance standards must be clearly described in the application and must meet or exceed the academic performance standards and expectations, including academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education.

The charter school’s goals and objectives, along with the strategies to meet such goals, must be clearly described in the application. While it is understood that before the school is established, there are no actual baseline test scores, attendance rates, or other data, an applicant can use the residential district average as a baseline and/or state that a baseline will be established in the first year of operation.

**NOTE:** Some, but not all goals and objectives should utilize standardized test data that aligns with the state accountability system. Goals and related objectives may include indicators for students served over multiple years to document growth and educational program outcomes.

The proposed charter school should develop measures or indicators aligned with their mission for which they will be held accountable. These goals and objectives will be used to measure the progress of the school in advancing its mission. Such indicators may include school climate or culture. Be sure to include only realistic and achievable measures, as these additional indicators will become a part of the school’s accountability plan.

A charter school application should include a clear plan for evaluating pupil performance across the curriculum. This plan should align with state performance standards, as well as with the school’s pupil performance goals, and should be presented along with a clear timeline for achieving these standards/goals. A clear explanation of the types of assessments and frequency of administration should be included, reflecting the thoughtfulness given to tracking student progress while still preserving as much class learning time as possible. A plan for the use of data gathered through assessments should

include procedures for taking corrective action (both individually and collectively) if pupil performance falls below expected standards.

A quality assessment plan will include summative (end-of-year) assessments and formative (more frequent, end-of-unit) assessments to track student skill and knowledge development. The plan should include how this data will be used to guide professional development of teachers as well as how this data will be used to guide refinement of the curriculum. When developing the assessment plan, consideration should be given to the appropriateness of assessments to the curriculum, what will serve as the baseline for student progress comparisons, and the inclusion of state and federal assessments to demonstrate appropriate student growth. See the SCDE website for the most recent student assessment information at <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/ac/Assessment/>.

### Narrative Requirements

1. Outline goals that are appropriate and manageable and will provide evidence that the school is advancing its mission and meeting the purpose of S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-20 including closing achievement gaps, as applicable. Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic of the school's mission, and time-based (SMART).
2. A summary of test scores, attendance rates, or other data of the residential district which will be used as a baseline or an explanation of how the applicant intends to establish a baseline in the first year of operation (assessment plan to include which assessment(s) will be used and at what point in the school year they will be administered).
3. Strategies to meet the goals and objectives that reference the educational program section.
4. A description of the diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments including state-mandated assessments with baseline data gathering and details on the types of assessments. Discuss why the assessments were chosen, the plan to administer the selected assessments, and how the results will be used to inform instruction. The description should also address how the data will be used to measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole – throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter.
5. A plan to monitor progress toward meeting the goals and objectives of the school and how the school will make modifications based on data, including revising and redirecting professional development and instruction.
6. Identify the resources (technology, personnel, staff development) that will be needed to successfully implement the proposed assessment plan. Who will be responsible for analyzing and interpreting academic data and communicating student achievement data to the board? Who will

communicate student achievement data to parents?

**7. Additional Requirement for Replication Schools:**

- Please provide a brief description of the school's recent academic performance. In particular, were the goals that were set met? If not, describe the corrective action plan used to address those goals which were not met.
- Discuss any achievement gaps that were present at the school and how they were addressed.

Gates School's goals, objectives and assessments reflect and support the School's mission of providing an exceptional, evidence-based, multisensory education for students with dyslexia.

Gates School will strive to assist South Carolina in reaching academic excellence by improving student learning, increasing learning opportunities for students, creating new professional opportunities for teachers, and creating new, innovative, and more flexible ways of educating children within the public school system, with the goal of closing the achievement gaps between low performing student groups and high performing student groups.

Teachers, administrators, board members, staff, and volunteers are committed to executing new, innovative, and proven approaches to meet the needs of an ever-increasing and challenging population of students that struggle to learn to read. All instruction implements an approach intended for use with people who have difficulty with reading, spelling, and writing of the sort associated with a primary diagnosis of dyslexia. Curriculum and instructional methods are developed and applied using scientific evidence about how children learn to read and write; why a significant number have difficulty in doing so; how having dyslexia makes achieving literacy skills more difficult; and which instructional practices are best suited for teaching each student to read and write.

The goals of Gates School indicate rigorous instruction and notable rates of achievement; however, it is essential to be mindful of the characteristics of the students who make up the measured group. Students with severe reading disabilities and students with milder forms of reading problems have been the subjects of long-term research on the causes and treatments of reading failure. The first important finding is that most students with reading disabilities can be taught to read, at least adequately, and many can become proficient readers. It has been estimated that after three to four years of intensive, evidence based instruction a student's reading fluency and comprehension will approach that of a typical learner's reading. While it is true that students who are poor readers can make significant gains, it is also true that most tend to remain slow readers. That is why some common and fair accommodations for students with reading disabilities include extra time on tests, shortened reading assignments, and

supplemental use of audiotaped materials. The following goals take into account Gates School's specialized mission and student population:

Goal 1: Gates School Charter School students will demonstrate increased academic performance and mastery of SC College and Career Ready Curriculum Content Standards in core subject areas during each year of the school's operation.

Measurable Objective 1: Upon completion of four years of instruction at Gates School students will demonstrate proficiency on statewide assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) at levels comparable to those of the top 50% of schools in South Carolina. Students will maintain or exceed this level as long as the school remains operational.

Measurable Objective 2: Upon completion of four years of instruction at Gates School students will demonstrate proficiency on statewide assessments in Mathematics at levels comparable to those of the top 50% of schools in South Carolina. Students will maintain or exceed this level as long as the school remains operational.

Measurable Objective 3: Upon completion of four years of instruction at Gates School students will demonstrate proficiency on statewide assessments in Science at levels comparable to those of the top 50% of schools in South Carolina. Students will maintain or exceed this level as long as the school remains operational.

Measurable Objective 4: Upon completion of four years of instruction at Gates School students will demonstrate proficiency on statewide assessments in Social Studies at levels comparable to those of the top 50% of schools in South Carolina. Students will maintain or exceed this level as long as the school remains operational.

Measurable Objective 5: Upon completion of one year of instruction at Gates School, 75% of the students will demonstrate at least 1 year gain in Reading/ELA from fall to spring administration, as indicated by an assessment similar or equal to the Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) and/or Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). The goal of attainment will increase incrementally each year over the first 5 years of the school's operation with the percentage of students increasing as follows:

Year 1 2021-2022 75%

Year 2 2022-2023 80%

Year 3 2023-2024 85%

Year 4 2024-2025 90%

Year 5 2025-2026 95%.

The percentage of students will continue to increase incrementally through the final five years of the charter until 96% of students meet or exceed this goal. Students will continue to maintain this level as long as the school remains operational.

Measurable Objective 6: Upon completion of one year of instruction at Gates School, 80% of the students will demonstrate at least 1 year gain in Mathematics from fall to spring administration, as indicated by an assessment similar or equal to the Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) and/or Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). The goal of attainment will increase incrementally each year over the first 5 years of the school's operation with the percentage of students increasing as follows:

Year 1 2021-2022 80%

Year 2 2022-2023 82%

Year 3 2023-2024 85%

Year 4 2024-2025 90%

Year 5 2025-2026 95%

The percentage of students will continue to increase incrementally through the final 5 years of the charter until 96% of students meet or exceed this goal. Students will continue to maintain this level as long as the school remains operational.

Measurable Objective 7: In the first year of operation, 75% of students will meet or exceed the goals as outlined in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). The goal of attainment will increase incrementally each year over the first 5 years of the school's operation with the percentage of students increasing as follows:

Year 1 2021-2022 75%

Year 2 2022-2023 80%

Year 3 2023-2024 85%

Year 4 2024-2025 90%

Year 5 2025-2026 95%

The percentage of students will continue to increase incrementally through the final 5 years of the charter until 96% of students will meet or exceed their IEP goals. Students will continue to maintain this level as long as the school remains operational.

Goal 2: Through consistent and accurate implementation of evidence-based practices of instruction and support, Gates School will assist each child to increase leadership, pro-social behaviors, and to reduce or eliminate behaviors that interfere with learning.

Measurable Objective 1: Every student will write daily journal entries to demonstrate understanding of

concepts in weekly social skills classes. A social skills curriculum such as The Leader in Me will be selected from Guidelines For Selecting Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) from Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

Measurable Objective 2: At the completion of each school year, after completing weekly instruction and daily practice, every student will more skillfully demonstrate leadership, increased motivation, self-confidence, planning skills, goal setting skills, organization/time management, communication skills, conflict management skills, empathy, honesty, respect, problem solving and decision making by demonstrating observable attribute specific goals described by the social skills curriculum and documented by checklists and narratives.

Measurable Objective 3: At the completion of each school year, a review of student data will reveal increased positive social behaviors and peer relationships by fewer conduct problems administrative interventions, fewer parent contacts for disruptive behaviors, improved students grades and increased test scores.

Goal 3: Gates School Charter School students will demonstrate increased competence in their use of technology and increased mastery of student standards adopted from International Standards for Technology Education (ISTE) by SC STEM aligned standards.

Measurable Objective 1: By the end of each school year, 85% of Gates School students will demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology by achieving at least one of the following:

- o Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
- o Create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
- o Use models and simulations to explore complex systems and issues.
- o Identify trends and forecast possibilities.

Measurable Objective 2: By the end of each school year, 85% of Gates School students will use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others by achieving at least one of the following:

- o Interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others employing a variety of digital environments and media.
- o Communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.
- o Develop cultural understanding and global awareness by engaging with learners of other cultures.

o Contribute to project teams to produce original works to solve problems.

Measurable Objective 3: By the end of each school year, 90% of Gates School students will apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information by achieving at least one of the following:

- o Plan strategies to guide inquiry.
- o Locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.
- o Evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks.
- o Process, date and report results.

Measurable Objective 4: By the end of each school year, 90% of Gates School students will use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources by achieving at least one of the following:

- o Identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigations.
- o Plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.
- o Collect and analyze data to identify situations and/or make informed decisions.
- o Use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions.

Instructional strategies to achieve the goals and objectives are outlined and detailed throughout the education plan section of the application, as well as the Serving Students with Special Needs section. Instructional strategies also include:

\*Testing results (i.e. MAP and similar tests) will be used to lead to the design of individualized interventions for students. Consistently below benchmark scores will lead to students being referred to the SIT/RTI for remediation. Scores achieved above benchmark can be used to refer to SIT/G&T or for advancement.

\*Using emerging technologies to engage students and inform teachers and administrators of areas of instruction that need further focus.

\*Providing professional development for teachers to ensure that they are properly prepared to facilitate learning through multisensory instruction, Orton-Gillingham approach, Social and Emotional curriculum, grade specific and relevant technology standards.

\*Communicating with family members to ensure collaboration with home and school, skill practice at home and continued satisfactory progress at school.





## II. Organizational Plan and Capacity

Completed - Jan 29 2020

# II. Organizational Plan and Capacity Form

## 1. Governing Board

### Narrative Requirements:

1. Identify the key members of the founding group/planning committee. Key members are individuals who will play a substantial and ongoing role in the school's development, governance and/or operation, and thus will share responsibility for the school's outcomes. Provide a brief biography of each member, highlighting what experience they will bring to the proposed school and any leadership experience and credentials.
2. Describe how and why the founding group/planning committee decided to form a school in South Carolina.
3. Describe the model or philosophy of governance that will guide the board (*the identified model/philosophy should serve as a guide to the board but this question is not requiring the board to formally adopt a specific model/philosophy*).
4. Describe the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles, powers, and duties of the governing board and how it will interact with and evaluate the school leader. Include the nature and extent of involvement by key stakeholder groups. Explain how this structure and composition will ensure that the school will be an educational and operational success and that there will be an active and effective representation of key stakeholders. Describe the desired size and composition of the future governing board. *Note: The composition of the board must be aligned with the requirements stated in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50 (B)(9).*
5. Describe how governance will transition from the charter committee to the governing board in the first year of operation.
6. Describe the process to appoint or elect new members of the board, including when and in what manner elections will be held that ensure proper participation of parents and/or employees of the school in voting in a manner that is consistent with the school's by-laws. How will the board expand and develop over time? How and on what timeline will new members be recruited and added, and how will vacancies be filled? What are the priorities for recruitment of additional board members?
7. Describe plans for building the capacity of the governing board and professional development

plans. What kinds of orientation or training will new board members receive, and what kinds of ongoing development will the existing board members receive? The plan for training and development should include a timetable, specific topics to be addressed, and any requirement to participate

8. Describe the relationship of the governing board to the school's administrators, staff, parents, and students.
9. Describe any advisory bodies or councils that are in place or will be formed, including the roles and duties of each. For each identified group describe:
  1. Its current and/or planned composition and the strategy for achieving that composition; and
  2. The role of parents, students, and teachers, as applicable, and community members.
10. **Additional requirements for Replication Schools:**
  1. How will the governance structure of the new school relate to the school which is being replicated?

## II. Organizational Plan and Capacity

### 1. Governing Board

The Gates School will provide South Carolina parents and students an additional educational choice for elementary and middle school-aged children struggling to learn to read and master content knowledge because of such a difficulty. In November 2018, an interested group of educators, tutors, and parents met to discuss the academic needs of children with dyslexia and the possibility of establishing a public charter school inspired by Lakes and Bridges Charter School in Easley SC. After several informational and organizational meetings in early 2019, what resulted was a cross-section of community members that formed a regular group. This became the Gates School Charter Planning Committee. These members can be seen in the table below.

Name: Ashley Brooks

Relevant Experience: Non-profit Management, Program, Development, Implementation & Evaluation, Staff Management, Budget Oversight, Grant Writing, Business Management, Parent

Credentials: BA Psychology, Master's of Social Work

Name: Hope Gresham

Relevant Experience: Orton-Gillingham, Early Childhood Education, Elementary School Teacher, Inclusion Classroom Teacher, Committee Chair, Non-profit Director, Non-profit

Development, Implementation & Evaluation, PTA Chair, Parent, Advocate, Lobbyist

Credentials: BS Early Childhood Education, Associate/Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners & Educators

Name: Rob Harrahill

Credentials: Non-profit management, Non-public school administration, enrollment management, fundraising, governance, facilities

Credentials: BS Economics & Political Science

Name: Alison Hynd

Relevant Experience: Orton-Gillingham, Pediatric Neuropsychology, School Psychology, Licensed Psychologist, Supervision of psychologists, Fundraising, Volunteer, Parent

Credentials: BA Psychology, MS Clinical and School Psychology, PhD Educational (School Psychology), Fulbright Fellowship in Psychology, Member in National Academy of Neuropsychology, International Neuropsychology Society, National Association of School Psychologists

Name: George Hynd

Credentials: Elementary teacher, NIH-funded researcher and author focusing on dyslexia and childhood psychopathology, Distinguished Professor and Director of the Center for Clinical & Developmental Neuropsychology at the University of Georgia, Dean, College of Education, University Provost & President

Credentials: BA & MA Psychology, MEd Educational Administration & Supervision EdD Psychology, Post Doctoral Fellowship Minneapolis VAMC, Fulbright Fellowship in Child Neuropsychology, Fellow in the American Psychological Association, National Academy of Neuropsychology & American Education Research Association

Name: Honorable Harry "Chip" Limehouse III

Relevant Experience: SC State Legislator - Budget Chairman of Higher Education, Business Owner, Commercial Real Estate Broker, Parent of a dyslexic learner

Credentials: BS Political Science

Name: Stephanie Sams

Relevant Experience: Orton-Gillingham, Psychology/Clinical Counseling, Parent, Program Development, Committee Chair, Board Member

Credentials: MA Psychology: Clinical Counseling, Associate/Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners & Educators, International Dyslexia Association-SC member

Name: June Thomas

Relevant Experience: Paralegal Instructor, Medical/ Legal background, Teacher, Elementary School Tutor, Non-Profit Management & Program Development

Credentials: Master's of Public Administration, New Jersey Teacher's Certification, Pi Alpha Alpha (PAA), the National Honor Society for Public Administration, Notary Public of South Carolina

The Gates School Planning Committee has worked diligently to generate interest and support for the Gates School. Over 300 members of the community have attended planning committee community meetings and the information sessions/parent forums that have been held throughout the Charleston County area.

Charter school governance is extremely important to the success of a charter school. In most cases including Gates School, the charter school's planning committee transitions to become the school's initial governing board. The core of the Gates School Planning Committee consists of the members presented in the above table. Members provided a brief biography, and these can be seen below. Committee members' resumes can be found in Appendix K.

Ashley Brooks

Ashley Brooks earned a Bachelor's in Psychology from Mount Holyoke College and a Master of Social Work degree, with a focus on nonprofit management and program development, from Boston University. Prior to earning her master's degree, Ashley served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Cape Verde, West Africa, where her primary concentration was on Community Development and Health Education. While at Boston University, Ashley interned at Big Sisters and facilitated healthy life choices groups for at-risk adolescent girls in Boston public schools and housing projects. Ashley also worked at a Boston community health center conducting outreach to gang involved youth in order to assist them find alternative educational placements.

Since relocating to South Carolina in 2011, Ashley has served as the Director of Programs & Services at Palmetto Community Care, a nonprofit organization that provides assistance to individuals living with HIV in Charleston, Berkeley and Dorchester Counties.

Ashley has almost 20 years of experience working at nonprofit organizations in various roles. She has significant experience in developing, implementing and evaluating programs; as well as managing staff, budget oversight and grant writing. Ashley is the proud parent of a dyslexic learner. It was through her academic advocacy efforts on behalf of her son that Ashley recognized the overwhelming unmet need for

effective educational services for dyslexic learners in South Carolina. Ashley is passionate about and committed to helping to ensure that all children who struggle to read, regardless of their socio-economic status, have access to evidence based effective reading intervention.

#### Hope Gresham

Hope Gresham earned her Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from Valdosta State University and is certified to teach grades Pre-k through 5th in both Georgia and South Carolina. She taught Pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1st grade in Georgia for 11 years. Hope is trained at the Associate Level in Orton Gillingham (OG) and privately tutors children using OG. She has been extensively involved in community service in both South Carolina and Georgia. Hope and her husband are parents of two children, a son currently in the Charleston County School District and a daughter who is a graduate of Charleston County Schools. Their son, who is now homeschooled, is in 4th grade but attended public and private schools for the early grades. Hope pursued OG training after her son was diagnosed with dyslexia in the summer of 2017.

#### Robert Harrahill

Rob Harrahill helps organizations turn passion into performance. With nearly 20 years working in the educational sector, he has expertise in governance, strategic planning, enrollment management and helping organizations exceed their fundraising goals. For over 15 years, Rob has helped schools-independent and charter- deliver on their mission. Having worked with over 40 schools, he has extensive experience with language based niche schools such as schools for students with dyslexia as well as bilingual schools. He graduated with a liberal studies degree in Economics & Political Science from Oregon State University. Currently he is the COO & Chief Strategist for the Lowcountry Group based in Charleston, SC.

#### Alison Hynd

Alison R. Hynd is a pediatric neuropsychologist who earned her B.A. in Psychology from the University of Georgia and then a M.S and M.A. in Clinical and School Psychology, respectively, from Eastern Washington University. After finishing her Masters', she worked in Washington State as a school psychologist for Battle Ground School District, outside of Vancouver, Washington. She returned to the University of Georgia to earn her doctorate in Educational (School) Psychology with area of emphasis in Child Neuropsychology and Preschool Assessment and Development. After completing her coursework, she was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship in Finland and afterward completed an APA approved year-long doctoral internship at the Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City.

Dr. Hynd then moved to New York where, for a number of years, she worked as a licensed psychologist primarily in a hospital-affiliated preschool for special needs students on Long Island. The student

population was mission focused on language and communication disorders including expressive and receptive language disorders, phonological disorders, and the social emotional difficulties associated with such disorders. Her duties included conducting neuropsychological evaluations as a member of a multidisciplinary team, working with parents and teachers on child behavior needs, supervision of rotating psychology interns and in-house psychologists, and attending school district meetings on behalf of students and their placements.

Last year, Dr. Hynd undertook Orton-Gillingham (OG) training with the knowledge that the children she served in New York were most likely diagnosed with dyslexia or another primary reading disorder as they matured. She is currently completing her Associate Level OG practicum as well as working to complete her psychology license application in South Carolina. She and her husband have two college graduate daughters who were typical readers.

### George Hynd

George W. Hynd earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology from Pepperdine University, a master's degree in educational administration and supervision from the University of Guam and a doctorate in psychology from the University of Northern Colorado. He completed a post-doctoral clinical fellowship in neuropsychology from the Minneapolis VA Medical Center and a Fulbright Fellowship in child neuropsychology at the University of Jyväskylä in Finland. Hynd was a distinguished research professor at the University of Georgia where he directed the Center for Clinical and Developmental Neuropsychology. Over the course of his career, Hynd's research was funded by grants from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) where he focused on developing a better understanding of the neurobiological basis of childhood learning and behavioral disorders. His research revealed subtle developmental differences in the brains of children diagnosed with dyslexia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. While at the University of Georgia, Hynd supervised and graduated 69 PhD students, mentored six post-doctoral fellows, authored or coauthored eleven books and over 200 refereed journal articles or chapters. Among his books, Hynd co-authored *Dyslexia: Neuropsychological Theory, Research and Clinical Differentiation* and *Pediatric Neuropsychology*. His articles on dyslexia and ADHD have appeared in such journals as *Psychological Bulletin*, *Archives of Neurology*, *Journal of Child Neurology*, *Brain and Language*, and *Journal of Learning Disabilities* among other journals.

Hynd has also served in senior administrative roles in Higher Education. Hynd was the dean of the College of Education at Purdue University, dean of the Mary Lou Fulton Graduate School of Education at Arizona State University, provost and executive vice president at the College of Charleston and president at Oakland University in Michigan. Hynd has received numerous national and international awards and honors for his research contributions. In addition to receiving the Albert J. Harris Award for Outstanding Clinical Research Article in Reading from the International Reading Association (IRA), Hynd was invited to

give the Normal Geschwind Memorial Lecture at the Orton Dyslexia Society and received an honorary doctorate from the University of Jyväskylä in Finland. Hynd is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA), National Academy of Neuropsychology (NAN) and the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

Hynd has four grown children, is married and lives in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

#### Honorable Harry "Chip" Limehouse

Harry B. "Chip" Limehouse III is a former long-serving member of the South Carolina House of Representatives, representing District 110. He took office in 1995 and served in the House of Representatives for over twenty years. Chip attended the University of South Carolina where he earned a degree in Political Science, was a member of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, and played on the polo team. He has received honorary doctorates from the College of Charleston, the Medical University of South Carolina, and The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina. Chip owns Limehouse Properties and is a commercial real estate broker. During his time in the legislature, he served as 1st Vice Chair of the Ways and Means Committee and served as Budget Chairman of Higher Education. Chip has been actively engaged in the South Carolina and Lowcountry communities and is highly respected for the wide-ranging impact he has fostered. Chip is passionate about helping children with dyslexia and promoting educational and career opportunities for all South Carolinians.

#### Stephanie Sams

Stephanie Sams, a Charleston native, earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the College of Charleston and Master's in Psychology: Clinical Counseling from The Citadel. Stephanie has worked with a wide variety of populations including adults with chronic mental illness, crime victims and college students. Stephanie and her husband have two amazing daughters, one of which is a dyslexic learner. After realizing that the school system provided very little support for children who learn differently, Stephanie pursued Orton-Gillingham training and became certified at the Associate level through the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators. Stephanie currently provides private OG tutoring to dyslexic learners.

#### June Thomas

June Thomas worked for over 40 years as a paralegal at various law firms in the New Jersey- New York metropolitan area. As a grandmother, she enrolled in Fairleigh Dickinson University. At first, she thought she was only going to obtain an Associate's Degree, but she continued her education and in 2003 received a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Business Administration and a minor in psychology. In 2006, June furthered her education and received an advanced Master's Degree in Public Administration. She was inducted into Pi Alpha Alpha, a global honor society for public administration. Pi Alpha Alpha

recognizes outstanding students in public administration.

June also possesses a Grade K-5 New Jersey Teachers Certificate. She worked as a substitute with at-risk high school and elementary special needs students. June is caregiver for her sister, Sharon, who lives with her and who is mentally challenged. She has two adult sons. One son has dyslexia and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. In addition, she has 3 grandchildren, one girl and two boys. One grandson also has dyslexia and Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder. Currently, June lives in North Charleston. She is an adjunct instructor teaching paralegal studies at Miller-Motte Technical College. In her spare time, she enjoys sewing, shopping for antiques and going to the beach. June is a Committee Member of College of Charleston Academy for Lifelong Learning and Charleston Jazz Society.

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Upon approval of the Charter, members of the Gates School Charter Committee will become the initial Board of Directors of Gates School. The first election of board members will occur after school opens in August 2021 and before the end of February 2022 at which time eligible voters (parents and employees) will have been identified. The Gates School Board of Directors will follow a modified policy governance model, which enables the Board to focus on big-picture matters and strategic planning and to govern through policy. In turn, the Principal will manage through procedures and is responsible for the daily operations of the school. While the Board assumes responsibility for developing and establishing the mission, vision, and values of Gates School, as well as the policies and procedures for school operation and management, the Principal is empowered with the responsibility for implementation and compliance of these principles and policies. A strong relationship, motivated by mutual trust, exists between the Board and the Principal.

The Board has a complete understanding of laws pertaining to South Carolina public charter schools and, either knowledge of best practices in the education of and academic services for dyslexic learners, or the desire to learn about such practices and services through the Board's ongoing training. The Board shall be responsible for the organization and control of the school and is empowered, within the boundaries of federal and state law, to determine the policies necessary for the effective operation and general improvement of the School. The primary responsibility of the Board is to hold the Principal accountable for implementing the charter with fidelity.

Though the Principal will be concerned with the daily operations of Gates School, the Board of Directors is ultimately responsible and has the governing authority for the execution of all Board responsibilities in accordance with the Charter School Act of 1996. The Board's focus is student achievement, ensuring compliance, and operation with sound fiscal management.



Gates School, Inc. is organized as a SC non-profit corporation through the SC Secretary of State's office. The Board of Directors will be organized as the governing body of Gates School in accordance with the requirements of the South Carolina Charter Schools Act. The charter school and all school board operations will conform to state and federal laws and regulations, school policies, and professional ethics, including the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The Gates School Board of Directors, Principal, or the Principal's designee will consult with legal counsel in any instance in which a FOIA information request appears to conflict with a Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99 regulation. The governing board and the staff of Gates School will comply with FERPA and must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA.

Gates School Board of Directors is responsible for establishing policies for all aspects of the school's operations regarding financial, academic, staff management, legal, and other matters. Additionally, the Board is responsible for ensuring proper management and policy compliance in these areas as well. The Board will also direct the strategic planning of the school, including review of the organization's mission, vision, values, and goals. The Board will hire the Principal and will be responsible for the supervision, compensation, evaluation, and retention or termination of the Principal. The Principal will report directly to the Board and will implement, through operational oversight, the broad objectives of the Board. The Board will assess the Principal's performance annually utilizing an evaluation tool such as the Marzano Learning Sciences Center Focused Leader Evaluation Model.

In furtherance of these broad objectives, Gates School Board of Directors assumes the following responsibilities, which will be implemented through the operational oversight of the Principal (as seen in the table below) consistent with South Carolina law and regulations and with the assistance and support of the school where appropriate:

Developing "at-will" work agreements with teachers and non-teaching employees;

Ensuring that all certified personnel, teachers, and non-certified teachers and personnel undergo background checks and other investigations before they are employed in the school;

Contracting for other services including, but not limited to, transportation, accounting, and legal;

Developing pay scales, performance criteria, and discharging policies for its employees, including the school's administrator;

Deciding all other matters related to the operation of the charter school, including budgeting, curriculum, and operating procedures; and

Ensuring that the charter school will adhere to the same health, safety, civil

rights, and disability rights requirements applicable to all public schools operating in the same school district.

In addition to the aforementioned regulatory mandates, key responsibilities of the Board of Directors include the following:

- Establishing policies and procedures to uphold national, state, and local laws;
- Supporting the mission and goals of the charter school;
- Evaluating the achievements of Gates School compared to the annual goals established by the Board;
- Reviewing financials to ensure stability, financial responsibility, and proper stewardship of the charter school;
- Conducting meetings in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local open meeting laws;
- Attending and participating in annual Board training.

An organizational chart for the school, which depicts the board of directors, school administration, employees, and the relationship to the sponsoring district is included in Appendix N.

The Principal will be the interface between the Board of Directors and the school. The Board will empower the Principal to manage and carry out the mission, vision, and values of Gates School through day-to-day operation of school activities. The Principal will:

- Establish and direct academic programs, curriculum, instruction, and assessment, under the general supervision of the Board;
- Protect interests of students, faculty, and staff;
- Recruit, interview, and hire, evaluate, discipline, and terminate all staff for the school, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local legal requirements; and
- Represent the school to parents, the community, and other agencies.

Parents, teachers, community members, and business leaders comprise Gates School Planning Committee and these members with their various backgrounds and experiences have governed through the application process. This Committee shall act as governing board until such time as a duly elected board shall be chosen. As indicated above, the first election of the permanent Board will be held after school opens in August 2021 and before the end of February 2022.

In compliance with South Carolina's current charter school law, the number of Directors shall be nine (9). With the exception of the first year, where no more than 50% of the board will have terms for one (1) year as determined by the initial Board, the term of membership shall be for continuous two (2) year renewable terms, unless removed. The Board of Directors shall be made up of no more than fifty percent (50%) of members who are appointed and no less than fifty percent (50%) who are elected by the employees and the parents/guardians of Gates School students. If there is an odd number of Board Members, the majority must be elected. Gates School will follow the current charter school law, and in the event the law changes concerning the election or makeup of the Board, the law will supersede Gates School election process and bylaws without amendment. Fifty percent (50%) of members must have a background in either business or K-12 education. When there is an odd number of members, the extra member must have a background in business or K-12 education. Currently enrolled Gates School parents will actively be encouraged to serve on the Board and shall at minimum represent 30% of the Board the remaining members will be members of the local community.

A Nominating Committee will be formed by the Board for the purpose of identifying and recruiting those persons who demonstrate a strong commitment to the school's mission. Nominees for board membership will also be reviewed by the Nominating Committee to ensure compliance with State Law and the Bylaws of Gates School. Once compliance has been ensured, all nominees will be voted on by the Board. Board approved candidates will be placed on the ballot.

Candidates must meet the following criteria:

1. Cannot be a sitting governmental official.
2. Must be 18 years of age.
3. Must not have a felony conviction.
4. Must have completed (and passed) a SLED or FBI check.
5. Must have a high school diploma (or equivalent life experience as deemed appropriate by the Board)
6. Must be a resident of the state of South Carolina.
7. Cannot be an employee of the school or an immediate family member of an employee
8. May not be a Gates School independent contractor

In addition to the aforementioned criteria, the Board of Directors will have the discretion to establish additional qualification requirements for members as it deems appropriate.

All employees of the school and all parents/guardians of students currently enrolled in the school are eligible to participate in the election of the Board of Directors. Employees will be given one (1) vote. Parents/guardians shall have one (1) vote for each student enrolled in Gates School. If an employee has a child or children at the School, he/she will get a separate vote for being an employee and his/her total number of votes will be based on the number of children enrolled. The deadline for voting will clearly be stated on the ballot form, in addition to announcements posted at the school, flyer, email, and/or the Gates School website several weeks in advance. Ballots may be issued as paper or electronic ballots. Absentee ballots will be available upon request, if needed. Those elected to the Board will be notified within two (2) business days. If voting will be conducted online, the school will provide a computer with internet access for parents and legal guardians so that they may vote on-site at the school. At the Board meeting after the first Board election, members of both the Charter Planning Committee/Initial Board and the newly elected Board will be present and authority will be transferred to the newly elected Board. At the first board meeting of newly elected directors, the Board of Directors will elect officers by a majority vote.

Rotating two (2) year terms will be developed with less than fifty (50%) of this Board serving one (1) year terms and the remaining serving two (2) year terms. Officer elections will be held annually. Board recruitment will be an ongoing process and those who demonstrate commitment to the mission, values, and goals of Gates School will be sought as potential Director candidates. Members of the Board of Directors should have a genuine interest in and devotion to public education, compassion for dyslexic learners, a willingness to give time and effort to the work, a capacity for understanding people, and the ability to work cooperatively with others. Members of the Board of Directors shall not receive any compensation from Gates School.

The Board may also include non-voting ex officio members such as the Principal of the School and, as the Board determines from time to time, the President of a parent booster club or similar organization for the School, and/or a teacher representative. The Board may also create an advisory council, honorary board, ad hoc committee, standing committee or other auxiliary groups as it deems appropriate to advise and support the School. The Gates Planning Committee has already formed an Outreach Committee comprised of interested volunteers for the purpose of building awareness about the school. Gates School flyers and brochures have been distributed throughout the local community and on social media and have been strategically disseminated to pediatricians, child psychologists and other developmental specialists who may serve children with dyslexia.

The Board will form other committees and/or groups such as a Facilitates Committee, a Nominating Committee, and a Parent Teacher Organization in the future. These committees will be comprised of

Board members, parents, community “experts”, and school staff members. Each of these groups will be responsible for its own internal functioning and will report regularly on the status of its activities to the entire Board. In order to cultivate a sense of “ownership” and guarantee the success of the school, the Board is committed to involving staff, parents, and community members in decision making. The school has already begun the process of involving parents, educators, and members of the community in the design of the proposed charter school and will continue to involve stakeholders throughout the implementation process.

The Gates School Planning Committee intends for a code of ethics to be adopted by the Board of Directors as a guide to its members as they strive to render effective and efficient service to their community. Directors should honor the acute responsibility which their membership demands by:

- Always thinking of children first;
- Understanding that the basic function of a school Board is policymaking, not administration and differentiating intelligently between these two;
- Ensuring that the maximum facilities and resources are provided for the proper functioning of the school;
- Representing the entire school at all times;
- Staying well-informed regarding the duties of being a Director and the proper functions of public schools; and
- Supporting improvements in education throughout the state and not only in the Gates School local area.

Furthermore, Directors should respect their relationships with other members of the Board by:

- Recognizing that authority rests only with the Board in official meetings (and that an individual member has no legal status to bind the Governing Board outside of such meetings);
- Recognizing the integrity of their predecessors and associates and the merit of their work;
- Refusing to make statements or promises as to how they will vote on any matter which should properly come before the Board as a whole;
- Making decisions only after all facts bearing on a question have been presented and discussed;
- Respecting the opinion of others and graciously agreeing to the principle of majority rule;

Refusing to participate in irregular or unofficial meetings which all members do not have the opportunity to attend; and

Maintaining the confidentiality of matters discussed in executive session.

A Board Director should maintain an amenable and amicable relations with the Principal and school employees by:

Striving to seek and advocate for the best professional Principal available (and fervently procure, when a vacancy exists);

Giving the Principal full administrative authority for properly discharging his/her professional duties and holding him/her responsible for acceptable results;

Having the Principal present at all meetings of the Board except when his/her contract and salary are under consideration;

Referring all complaints to the Principal and discussing them only at a regular meeting after failure of an administrative solution;

Striving to provide adequate safeguards around the Principal as well as other employees so they can live comfortably in the community and discharge their educational functions on a thoroughly professional basis; and

Presenting personal criticisms of any employee directly to the Principal.

Charter school governance and having a strong, knowledgeable Board is critical to the success of the Gates School. Therefore, it is essential to plan and prepare for on-going Board training and to allocate funding for capacity building within the school's budget. All new members will receive Board training through the Public Charter School Alliance of South Carolina and a robust on-boarding process will be developed to ensure that all members are fully able to serve the Board and the school effectively. Members will participate in training topics such as; effective meeting management, understanding financial audits and student achievement data, compliance with state and federal laws, and other facets of excellence in charter school governance which will allow Gates School to actively build capacity, while meeting the mandatory Board orientation requirement. Members will also have the opportunity to attend conferences and workshops provided by the Alliance. This professional organization brings in national experts each year to focus on best practices in governance and education.

In addition, the Board will schedule regular learning opportunities highlighting best practices in multi-sensory instruction and other issues that are critical to the success of children with dyslexia and related reading disorders and central to the mission of the school. The Board recognizes the importance on ongoing professional development for faculty and school staff as well and will designate funding in the

annual budget for continuing staff professional development (please see Section I for more detailed information).

To ensure an effective and informed Board of Directors, and help guarantee the overall success of the school, all Board members will commit to the following:

Within one (1) year of taking office, all persons elected or appointed as members of Gates School Board of Directors shall complete a mandatory orientation program in the powers, duties, and responsibilities of a Board member including, but not limited to, topics on policy development, instructional programs, school finance, school law, ethics, and community relations;

Use “real-time” data at each of the monthly board meetings to evaluate or adapt the budget; such data includes enrollment numbers, new expenditures, length and cost of any contracted services, and projected fundraisers, and;

Annually participate in training, seminars, and conferences offered through the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), The Charter Institute at Erskine, the South Carolina Alliance of Public Charter School, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, and any resources the Board identifies as a means for the continued improvement and success of the Gates School.

The Gates School Planning Committee believes the Board’s most important function is formulation and adoption of policies and procedures, and the Principal’s function is the execution of those policies and procedures. The Board delegates certain of its executive powers to the Principal to manage the school within the established policies and procedures. The Board's delegation of its executive powers to the Principal provides freedom for him/her to manage the school. It also frees the Board to devote its time to policymaking and appraisal functions. The Principal’s chief management responsibilities regulated by the Board of Directors are:

Administration of set policies and procedures;

Execution of Board decisions;

Operation of the internal structure designed to serve the school program; and,

Informing the Board about the school’s operations and problems.

The relationship that exists between the Board of Directors and the Principal is paramount to the management of the school and the students’ academic progress. Below is a list of specific reasonable expectations for both the Board and the Principal that will enhance and promote a sound and stable

working relationship:

The Board of Directors will:

Select a competent, established educational leader as Principal and support that person in the discharge of assigned duties.

Serve as a policymaking body.

Allow the Principal to administer the school.

Adopt an annual budget.

Exercise sound judgment in business affairs of the school corporation.

Deal always in an ethical, honest, straight-forward, transparent manner with the Principal and the public.

Approve an organizational structure for the administration.

Formulate and administer means of evaluating the Principal.

Require and discuss reports from the Principal concerning the progress of the school in terms of achievements of students, faculty, and staff.

Function as a Board of Directors rather than as individuals.

Communicate with staff members through the head of the school.

Remember that the school exists for the benefit of the students.

Present the needs of the school before the citizens of the state.

Adopt school curriculum, textbooks and annual school calendar.

The Principal will:

Administer effectively and provide the professional educational leadership necessary. The Principal is responsible for managing all staff employed by the school.



Recommend sound policy and enforce the policies by establishing rules and regulations.

Make Board policy effective through efficient administration.

Prepare and submit an annual budget to the Board for consideration.

Keep the Board informed on financial matters, keep current expenditures within the Board approved budget.

Deal always in an ethical, honest, straight-forward transparent manner with the Board, staff, parents, students, and the public.

Make assignments for each position with the Board's authorization.

Formulate and administer means of evaluating staff members.

Report findings to the Board. Duties and responsibilities may be delegated, but the Principal has final responsibility for actions of subordinates.

Deal with the Board as a whole rather than as individual members.

Communicate with the Board on behalf of the staff.

Remember that the school exists for the benefit of the students.

Plan means of keeping the public informed about school matters. Serve as a representative of the school before the public.

Recommend for Board action the school curriculum, textbooks, and annual school calendar.

The Board of Directors intends to maintain open channels of communication between itself, the school's staff and parents of enrolled students. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Principal. Faculty, teachers, or other staff members will submit all communications or reports to the Board and/or any Board committee through the Principal. This necessary procedure will not be construed as denying the right of any employee to appeal to the Board from administrative decisions, provided

such appeal is in accordance with the Board's policy on complaints and grievance procedures. The Principal will also convey broad parent concerns to the Board. Additionally, staff members and parents will be welcome to attend non-executive session Board meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe first-hand the Board's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

The Board of Directors will make all official communications, policies, and directives of staff and parental interest and concern through the Principal. The Principal will utilize such media as are appropriate to keep the staff and parents informed of the Board's concerns and actions. Should a Director make an official visit to the school it must be authorized by the Board and with the full knowledge of the Principal, who will in turn, communicate this to the faculty and staff. A Director may make informal visits to the school and/or classrooms but only with prior arrangements through the Principal. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as an "inspection" or for administrative purposes. If/When a staff member or parent and a Director should interact at a school event or other social affairs, they may informally discuss such matters as educational trends, issues, innovations and general school problems. However, school staff and parents should be reminded that individual Directors have no special authority, unless they are convened at a legal meeting of the Board or vested with special authority by Board action.

Rather than speak as or make decisions as individual Board Members, the Gates School Board of Directors will follow the "one voice" principle and will speak and govern as a full Board. The Board can take action only during a meeting in official public session, when a quorum is present. A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board, but if less than a majority of the Directors are present at any meeting, a majority of the Directors present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice. Unless the Board specifically authorizes a member to act, the Board shall not be bound in any way by any action on the part of an individual board member or an employee, except when such statement or action is in compliance with the public action of the Board.

Meetings of the Gates School Board of Directors will be held a minimum of six (6) times annually and will be conducted in accordance with all provisions of the current law and any amendments as they may be enacted. All meetings shall be open to the public according to the requirements of the South Carolina FOIA as it applies to public charter schools unless closed pursuant to Section 30-4-70 for executive session. No votes shall be taken in executive session. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by or at the request of the Board Chair or any three (3) Directors and shall be held at the principal office of Gates School - or at such other place as the Directors may determine. The act of a majority of the Directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of

Directors, unless the act of a greater number is required by law or Gates School bylaws.

The Gates School Board of Directors will provide the annual schedule of regular meetings to The Charter Institute at Erskine, the public, and will post it to the Gates School website. The Board of Directors may provide, by resolution, the time and place for holding additional regular meetings without other notice than such resolution.

Corresponding Appendices

Appendix K – Resumes of the Charter Planning Committee

Appendix L – Bylaws

Appendix M – Articles of Incorporation

Appendix N – Organizational Chart

## **2. Education/Charter Management Contracts**

**Complete this section only if the proposed charter school intends to contract with an EMO/CMO.**

**Not applicable?**

**Responses Selected:**

Select if this question is not applicable to your school

## **3. Administrative Structure/Building Leadership**

The application should include a description of the administrative structure/building leadership of the charter school.

Narrative Requirements:

1. Describe the administrative structure of the school.
2. Describe the capacity and experience that will be sought for school leadership and management team members along with job descriptions of the administrative positions, including the school leader and any other administrative staff with a clear delineation of employee classification and who is responsible for employment decisions and oversight at each level. Explain how the capacity of the school's administrative team is tied to the mission, organizational sustainability, and student achievement.

3. Describe how a lead administrator will be hired and how the transition of leadership and charter committee responsibilities will happen.
4. Describe the nature and extent of parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the operation of the charter school.
5. Describe the capacity building plan for leadership and staff development with funding reflected in the budget.
6. Describe the process of evaluating the school leader and management company (if applicable).
7. **Additional Requirement for Replication Schools:**
  - Describe any involvement with the replication of existing successful public charter schools.

## Organizational Plan

### 3. Administrative Structure/Building Leadership

The administration of Gates School is responsible, within the guidelines established by Board of Directors policy, for the direction and coordination of students and staff in their efforts to reach educational goals adopted by the Board. The Board is legally charged with the responsibility for providing an instructional program for the students it serves. The school is organized to accomplish this purpose through an elected Board of Directors and professional staff members who are employed by the school.

The Board of Directors will rely on its Principal to provide professional administrative leadership. The Principal's administrative function is to plan for, control, coordinate, supervise and direct the school in accordance with the purposes, policies, plans, procedures and programs authorized by the Board. The Board will delegate to the Principal the authority for the management and execution of day-to-day school activities, including management of personnel and instructional leadership. The Principal will serve as the liaison between the Board and the School.

The Principal will inspire, lead, guide, and direct every member of the instructional and support services in setting and achieving the highest standards of excellence, so that each individual student enrolled in the school may have a complete, valuable, meaningful and personally rewarding education. The Principal is responsible for providing a supportive environment for all Gates School employees and must promote academic freedom, trust, and respect among all employees. As Principal her/his specific responsibilities include:

Administer the development and maintenance of a positive educational program designed to meet the needs of the school and to ensure that the

school's mission is implemented with fidelity;

Recommend policies, guidelines and procedures for adoption by the Board of Directors;

Carry out the policies, guidelines and procedures adopted by the Board;

Lead in the recruitment and retention of the quality staff required to provide proper instructional and support resources for the operation of the school program;

Participate in the preparation of the school annual budget for Board approval;

Conduct a continuous study of the development of the needs of the school and keep the public informed;

Represent the school before the public and maintain through cooperative leadership, a program of publicity and public relations as may keep the public informed of the activities, needs, and successes of the school;

Serve as the school's instructional leader, modeling and implementing curricula based on "best practices" that are aligned with standards of the South Carolina Department of Education and also consistent with inquiry-based approaches to instruction;

Oversee assessment processes that monitor student learning and drive on-going curricular and instructional design;

Plan and lead the school's professional development activities in collaboration with the faculty;

Plan and implement the master schedule in collaboration with the faculty;

Evaluate all school faculty and staff, conducting observations of the instructional process;

Ensure that accurate and current student and personnel records are maintained according to the established record-keeping format;

Stay abreast of current research in education in general, and in multi-sensory curriculum and instruction in particular; and,

Carry out all duties that may be assigned by the Governing Board.

Gates School views the Principal's position in three roles: (1) executive officer of the school; (2) instructional leader and accountable officer for all instructional personnel, and (3) liaison between those personnel and the Board of Directors. The Principal is the only person in the school with whom the Board normally needs to be directly involved with in decisions regarding appointment of personnel. Because the Gates School Charter Committee believes the responsibility for the administration of the school should rest with the Principal, the Board has the responsibility for developing a systematic means of evaluating

the head of the school's effectiveness in implementing the objectives expressed in policies. The Principal has the responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of all other school personnel. The Principal may delegate to other school personnel the exercise of any powers and the discharge of any duties imposed upon the Principal by these policies or by vote of the Board. The delegation of powers or duties, however, will not relieve the Principal of responsibility for action taken under such delegation. The Principal (within the limits of the law and Board policy) is the administrative authority of the school. The Principal is responsible for a thorough knowledge of all laws, regulations and instructions governing the position.

The employment of the Principal will be the responsibility of the Gates School Board of Directors. The Board may seek the advice and counsel of interested individuals or of an advisory committee, and it may hire consultants to assist in selection. However, final selection rests with the Board. The Principal will be employed by and will work at the discretion of the Board subject to the rules and regulations by the state of South Carolina. Prior to the first year of implementation, eligible members of the Gates School Charter Committee will select the Principal. Eligible members will include those who have attended at least fifty percent (50%) of charter committee planning meetings prior to the submission of the charter application, ensuring a thorough knowledge of the school's mission and vision.

The recruitment and hiring process for the Principal will generally follow the steps below, but may be modified as needed for particular positions and circumstances:

1. A state-wide and nationwide search will be conducted, including referrals from board members, online job sites, CERRA, and other pertinent resources.
2. Gates School Planning Committee (or a sub-committee of these members specifically designated to review and vet employment candidates) will review all resumes.
3. Screening interviews will be conducted by phone as a first step in determining if the person interviewed is the right fit for the job with the school.
4. First round, face-to-face interviews of candidates will be held with the hiring committee/panel.
5. Background and extensive reference checks will be conducted.
6. Upon return of successful background checks, the sub-committee will recommend 3 final candidates to the full Gates School Planning Committee and they will interview the finalists and make the selection of the Principal from these candidates.
7. The Gates School Planning Committee will extend an offer of employment to the top candidate.

As leader of the school, the Principal will ensure that the operations of the school are in accordance with the mission and vision of Gates School. He/She will have a full understanding of the school's mission to provide an exceptional, evidence based, multi-sensory education for students with dyslexia to open the gates to their individual academic potential, in an environment that empowers students to develop a positive and socially conscious self-image.

The Board will delegate to the Principal the authority for the management and execution of day-to-day school activities, including management of personnel and instructional leadership. All staff will be employed by the Board and will report to the Principal. All service providers, consultants, and vendors will be contracted by the Board. The Principal will make all school-based decisions as authorized, establishing and implementing procedures for the day-to-day operations of the Gates School, including coordinating the contracts of the aforementioned personnel that directly affect daily school operations, at the discretion of the governing board. The Principal will report to the Board on all contract matters. The faculty and staff will be responsible for carrying out these procedures in their daily activities and interactions with students, parents, and the community.

While the responsibility for the administration of the school should rest with the school Principal, the Board has the responsibility for developing a systematic means of evaluating the Principal's effectiveness in implementing the objectives expressed in Board policies. The Principal has the responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of all other school personnel. Gates School intends to utilize the Marzano Learning Sciences Center Focused Leader Evaluation Model but reserves the right to explore and implement other evaluation methods and models as it sees fit. The Marzano Model evaluates the Principal's performance across six key areas:

1. A Data-driven focus on School Improvement
2. Instruction of a Viable and Guaranteed Curriculum
3. Continuous Development of teachers and staff
4. Development of a Community of Care and Collaboration
5. A Focus on Core Values
6. Resource Allocation

These Marzano Model assess the Principal according to the following professional standards:

Standard 1. Mission, Vision, and Core Values - Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being

of each student.

Standard 2. Ethics and Professional Norms - Effective educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 3. Equity and Cultural Responsiveness - Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 4. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment - Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 5. Community of Care and Support for Students - Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.

Standard 6. Professional Capacity of School Personnel - Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 7. Professional Community for Teachers and Staff - Effective educational leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 8. Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community - Effective educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 9. Operations and Management - Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 10. School Improvement - Effective educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

During the first year of the Gates School's operation, in addition to the Principal, other administrative



and/or key staff will include an Office Manager, Special Education Coordinator/Curriculum Coordinator, and budget permitting, a Guidance Counselor. If not in the first year, a Guidance Counselor will be added once the budget permits. Sample Job Descriptions for these positions are included in Appendix P. The Principal will have at least one year of (preferably charter school) experience in the field of school-based administration. Although it is preferred that the ideal candidate hold a current South Carolina certification in administration, it isn't necessary. Holding a certification in administration is not mandatory for charter school administrators per SC charter school law. One year or more of administrative experience is mandatory by law. Job descriptions for these positions are included in Appendix P.

If the Principal hired is not certified, within ninety (90) days of employment he or she will complete an orientation program in the powers, duties, and responsibilities of a school administrator including, but not limited to, topics on personnel, instructional programs, school finance, school law, ethics, and community relations. The orientation will be provided at no charge by the SCDE or an association approved by the department.

After approval of the charter application, Gates School Planning Committee will begin the process of opening the school and transitioning administrative responsibilities to the principal by completing the following steps:

- Complete the RFP for charter school funding, commonly called the Planning and Implementation Grant (P&I), due by SCDE timeline;

- Create a bank account(s) for the school for any "soft funds" and/or grant monies;

- Begin recruitment of students by posting the lottery application on the website and planning recruitment fairs;

- Secure land and/or the building for the school or work with a chosen facility developer to accomplish this;

- Consult with the Office of School Facilities and the SC Department of Transportation for a land and traffic appraisal of the perspective school location;

- Send out enrollment packets for all students accepted in the lottery, begin taking students on a first come first serve bases if no lottery was required;

- Finalize curriculum/assessment tools;

- Begin the search for the school's Principal;

- Have facility (leased or purchased) and site review submitted to OSF;

- Sign contract with authorizer, the Charter Institute at Erskine, and;

Ensure the initial Board has been trained as required by SC Charter School Law.

Once the school principal has been hired, s/he will work in close conjunction with the Board and assume primary responsibility for the following:

- Principal begins hiring staff and preparing facility;
- Continue with recruitment if needed;
- Begin enrollment reviews to ensure all packets are complete;
- Request student records from sending districts;
- Purchase furniture, equipment and supplies;
- Ensure all insurance policies are in place;
- Set up PowerSchool;
- Have safety plans ready for opening day;
- Finalize curriculum and special education procedures
- Present budget to board for final approval;
- Consult with school attorney on all policies and procedures to ensure compliance with state and federal laws prior to opening;
- Start facility and staff training in July or sooner if available and possible;
- Have OSF inspection to obtain Certificate of Occupancy and;
- Ensure all health and safety certificates have been collected from all staff and students.

A detailed school start-up plan can be found in Appendix Q.

Gates School is committed to involving staff, parents, and community members in decision making. The school has already begun the process of involving parents, educators, and members of the community in the design of the proposed charter school and will continue to involve stakeholders throughout the implementation process. Gates School will make use of subcommittees as needed so that as many stakeholders as possible can be involved. Parents, educators, and community members can be involved in the governance and operation of Gates School through service on the Charter Committee, advisory and sub committees, and the Board of Directors. Parents, educators, and community members also will be represented in the governance of the school by their vote for Board of Directors and in their freedom to have input into Board decisions. Board meetings will be held regularly and will be open to the public. Directors and school personnel will solicit and address suggestions from all stakeholders before and during each Board meeting.

The Gates School believes that parent involvement significantly enhances the educational experience for all students. After undergoing the appropriate background checks, proper and appropriate training, and with approval of the Principal, there will be limited opportunities for parents to volunteer in classrooms. However, there will be more opportunities for parents to volunteer in such activities as lunch time monitoring and clean-up, field trip chaperones, recess duty, coordinating extracurricular activities, and car line. Parents who undergo the proper training and background checks could also participate in volunteer opportunities for tutoring, mentoring students, and participating in community outreach. Parents are expected to attend parent-teacher conferences, participate in student events, and stay well-informed regarding their child's classroom and individualized instruction. Parents will be surveyed about their goals for their children, their opinion on various school programs, and operations as the school grows and matures.

Corresponding Appendices

Appendix P – Sample Job Descriptions (for administrators and key employees)

Appendix Q – Detailed School Start-Up Plan

#### **4. Employees**

The application must provide an explanation of the relationship that will exist between the charter school and its employees. This must include evidence that the terms and conditions of employment are addressed with affected employees and their recognized representative, if any. In addition, proposed employment policies should be included. If the charter will contract with an EMO, the relationships between the school and the employees must be clearly stated in the application.

As charter schools are, by statute, public schools, employees of charter schools are public employees. Charter schools and their employees can, but are not required to, participate in the state retirement fund. **If a charter contracts with an EMO, then those employees are not considered public employees and therefore do not qualify for state retirement or state benefits.**

Charter school law provides flexibility in hiring teachers, allowing a newly created charter school to hire noncertified teachers, not to exceed 25 percent of its faculty. A converted charter school may hire noncertified teachers, not to exceed 10 percent of its faculty. A noncertified teacher must be appropriately qualified for the subject matter taught, must have completed at least one year of study at

an accredited college or university, and must meet the qualifications outlined in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-115. Elementary certified teachers may teach in any academic area and in any grades allowable by the status of their certification.

Charter schools must adopt an evaluation program for teachers; charter schools may elect to use the ADEPT Evaluation System, South Carolina TAP or adopt an evaluation program submitted for approval by the Office of Teacher Effectiveness.

The application must include a description of a reasonable grievance and termination procedure, including notice and a hearing before the governing body of the charter school. The application must state whether or not the provisions of Article 5, Chapter 25, Title 59 apply to the employment and dismissal of teachers at the charter school.

#### *Teacher Employment and Dismissal Procedures*

1. If the school will adopt the procedures for the employment and dismissal of teachers outlined in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-410 *et seq.* (2004), include a letter of agreement from the sponsor as Appendix Item R.
2. If the school does not adopt the procedures outlined in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-410 *et seq.* (2004), explain the school's employment and termination procedures that will provide for notice and a right to a hearing before the governing board.

#### Narrative Requirements:

1. Describe the criteria that will be used in hiring teachers, administrators, and other school staff.
2. Describe the recruitment strategies that will be employed to achieve the desired quality of staff.
3. Include a statement that the school will ensure that at least one member of the administrativestaff holds a current SC certification of administration or has at least one year of experience in the field of school-based administration.
4. Describe the proposed evaluation process for teachers. Charter schools may use the ADEPT Evaluation System, SC TAP, or another evaluation system that has been approved by the Office of Teacher Evaluation.
5. Describe the process the school will use to communicate its employment policies and

any policy changes.

6. Describe the grievance and termination procedures for the charter school's employees.

## Employees

Gates School is committed to recruiting and hiring the best-qualified employees without regard to race, religion, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, or ancestry. As an equal opportunity employer, Gates School will follow all state and federal rules, regulations, and laws regarding employment practices. Gates School will be an at-will employer such that all employees with the exception of the Principal will be at-will employees. The Principal reports directly to the Board and the Board will be the authority for the Principal. The process to hire administrators, faculty, and staff (e.g. custodians) will follow the guidelines as described below. Gates School will not adopt the procedures for the employment and dismissal of teachers outlined in S.C. Code Ann. Section 59-25-410 et seq. (2004), as the school will engage in "at-will" employment agreements with all of its employees except the Principal who will directly report to the Board.

To fill its Special Education, Elementary Education, and Middle Grade Education teaching positions, Gates School will hire teachers who hold the appropriate South Carolina (SC) teaching certificates in the area and grade allowable by the status of the certification. They must also meet Highly Qualified status, or the most current Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Qualification designation. For related arts, physical education, school counselor, and any other instructional positions necessary to fulfill the school's mission-aligned focus and educational goals, Gates School may exercise its right to hire non-certified teachers not exceeding 25% of the faculty, understanding they still must be Highly Qualified, or meet the ESSA designation that replaces this classification. A non-certified teacher must be appropriately qualified for the subject matter taught, must have completed at least one year of study at an accredited college or university, and must meet the qualifications outlined in S.C. Code Ann. Section 59-25-115.

To achieve the desired quality of faculty and staff for Gates School, the recruitment and selection process will include, but not be limited to:

\*An analysis of the job vacancy will be conducted by the Principal prior to initiating the recruitment process and development of a job description.

\*Announcements/advertisements for the job vacancy will be published in accordance with all related legal and reporting requirements and may include internal and external searches, and advertisements through outlets such as:

\*Gates School website

\*Social media

- \*Local, state, and regional newspapers
- \*State and national public charter school websites
- \*Publications of area teacher education programs
- \*Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA)
- \*South Carolina Public Charter School Alliance
- \*Applications for a position must be made in writing or via email and shall include at a minimum:
- \*Application form
- \*Resume or other summary of related experience
- \*South Carolina teaching credential or other certification or credentials when required for the position
- \*Copy of diploma, degree, or certificates when required for the position
- \*Transcripts from any and all higher education institutions attended by the applicant when required for the position
- \*Three professional references

The school will not consider the individual's application file complete until it has received these documents.

\*Gates School will advise all employment applicants of the school's employment policy and application process, including a check of all criminal records and, if applicable, a credit check. School personnel will advise applicants that any falsification of information, either by omission or commission, will be grounds for disqualification from consideration or ground for discharge, should they be employed.

\*The Principal and/or designee will screen application files to determine which applicant(s) meet(s) the minimum training, education, and experience requirements for the position. At the finalist level, all application information, including education and job-related training, work experience, prior employment record and criminal records, will be verified by the school administration.

\*Using the information gained during the screening process, the Principal and/or designee will determine which applicant(s) will be invited to be interviewed.

\*Employees of the school who apply for a position vacancy will be given first consideration.

\*The interview team will be composed of the Principal and any others s/he determines should provide input into the selection process for the position.

\*The selection process may include interview(s), observation of performance of work,

review of other appropriate documents, and contact with appropriate professionals having knowledge of applicant's/applicants' performance.

\*At the completion of the selection process, the Principal and/or designee will evaluate all information gathered and select the best qualified candidate.

\*The Principal and/or designee will offer the position to the selected candidate and will notify the Board after the employment agreement is signed by the candidate.

The Principal of Gates School or at least one member of the administrative staff of Gates School will hold a current SC certification in administration OR have at least one year of experience in the field of school-based administration. Job descriptions for these positions are included in Appendix P. Once hired, if the Principal is not certified, within ninety days of employment s/he will complete an orientation program in the powers, duties, and responsibilities of a school administrator. In addition to South Carolina Department of Education and the Charter Institute at Erskine leaders, the Principal will work closely with curriculum experts, as well as training experts in the selected methodologies (i.e. Orton- Gillingham) to provide educational leadership for the school.

Gates School will use the Expanded ADEPT Support and Evaluation System for evaluating its teachers consistent with South Carolina Department of Education guidelines. Additionally, as part of its annual teacher performance evaluation and to fulfill the requirements of ESSA, all teachers will receive a minimum of four observations yearly.

The Gates School Board of Directors will approve the terms and condition of employment for all employees, such as:

- \*Length of work year and work day
- \*Salary and payment schedule
- \*Vacation days, holidays, and paid leave
- \*Notification of absence
- \*Insurance benefits
- \*Reimbursement
- \*Disciplinary and termination procedures
- \*Confidentiality

Any policy changes will be made known via internal communication (e.g. email, announcements at staff meetings, etc.). Electronic versions of the employee handbook will be corrected immediately; if hard copies are used, then those containing the amended language will be printed for distribution for the following academic year. An employee handbook outlining policies and procedures, including but not

necessarily limited to the topics above, will be developed and approved by the Gates School Initial Board of Directors and will comply with all state and federal rules, regulations, and laws regarding employment practices. The handbook will be given to all employees upon hiring and will be reviewed annually and revised when necessary. Employees will sign a statement indicating their receipt of the handbook and willful acceptance of the policies and procedures contained within the handbook.

Gates School faculty and staff who are employed at-will as well as the Principal who reports directly to the Board are expected to conduct themselves as professionals. They are expected to meet high standards of conduct and performance. Employees who do not meet these standards may be given the opportunity to correct their conduct or performance through performance evaluations and corrective disciplinary action; however, employment is at-will with the exception of the Principal. Corrective action may include or lead up to termination. Though at-will employees may resign or be terminated at any time and for any or no reason, SC law requires a description of a reasonable grievance and termination procedure including notice and a hearing before the governing body of the charter school. Because charter school faculty and staff are at-will with the exception of the Principal and day-to-day operations are the responsibility of the Principal, a hearing before the school's board related to employee grievances and terminations will typically address only (1) whether the employee is in fact an at-will employee; (2) whether the school administration's conduct is consistent with the school's policies and procedures; and/or (3) whether the administration's conduct complies with federal and state laws. Any employee with a dispute or concerns should follow the procedure below:

1. The employee will meet with the supervisor to try to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved after meeting with the supervisor, the employee should move to the next step. In regard to the Principal, s/he will meet with the Board.
2. The employee should put their issue in writing describing in detail, desired result, and the proposed solution. The written issue should be turned into the Principal or Board within ten (10) business days of the occurrence.
3. After the Principal or Board receives the written issue, he/she/they will meet with the employee and any supervisor to discuss the policies and procedures and relating to the issue. Usually, the review of faculty policies and procedures will dictate a resolution. The employee has the right to address the Gates School Board if the issue is not resolved.

As an at-will employee, one may be discharged for any reason, so long as it is not a protected reason (e.g. race, religion, creed, national origin, gender, age, disability, pregnancy, sexual orientation, etc.). If an employee has an issue listed in (1)-(3) above, and after the employee has met with the supervisor and/or the Principal, and the issue still has not been resolved, the employee may bring the issue to the



Board and send a written request for a right to a hearing within thirty (30) business days of the action under dispute. The Board will review the issue and schedule a hearing with the employee, supervisor (if any), and Principal. After the hearing, the Board will make a final decision and report the resolution to the employee within five (5) business days.

Gates School is an equal opportunity employer. It is the Gates School policy to make all personnel decisions without discriminating on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, marital or family status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical and/or mental disability, height, weight, age, marital status, citizenship, national or ethnic origin, military status, ancestry, or genetic information. The Gates School non-discrimination policy extends to all terms, condition, and privileges of employment as well as the use of all school facilities, participation in all school-sponsored activities and employment actions such as promotions, compensation, benefits, and termination of employment. Gates School employment decisions will be based upon merit, qualifications, and abilities. Investigation and complaint procedures for reports of unlawful discrimination and retaliation will be developed and included in a policies section of the employee handbook.

Additionally, Gates School will comply with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable state and local laws providing for non-discrimination in employment against qualified individuals with disabilities. Gates School shall also provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals in accordance with these laws. The Gates School Board of Directors shall ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities are treated in a non-discriminatory manner in the pre-employment process and during active employment with Gates School. Qualified applicants among Gates School employees (once the school is in operation) with disabilities should make formal requests in writing for accommodations.

Appendix Item:

R: Letter of Agreement from Sponsor Regarding Compliance with S.C. Code Ann. Section 59-25-410 et seq (2004), NOT APPLICABLE.

## **5. Enrollment**

The admission policies and procedures must reflect compliance with all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services.

The admission policies and procedures must provide that, subject to space limitations, the charter school

admits all students who are eligible to attend public school in the school district where the charter school is operating. For schools sponsored by the SCPCSD and the board of trustees or area commission of a public or independent institution of higher learning, the enrollment is open to all students who are eligible to attend public school in the state. If the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, non-graded education groupings, or building, students must be accepted by lottery, as specified in federal or state guidance. There is no appeal to the local school board of trustees.

The policies and procedures must not limit or deny admission or show preference to any individual group, except if the application is to create a single-gender charter school.

Enrollment priorities may include:

- A sibling of a pupil currently enrolled and attending or who, within the last six years, attended the school for at least one complete academic year.
- Children of charter school employees and children of the charter committee (these students may not exceed 20 percent of the enrollment of the charter school).
- For a public conversion school, admission priority must be given to all students enrolled in the school prior to the conversion and those that live in the attendance zone in future years.
- In the case of a charter school designated as an Alternative Education Campus, pursuant to (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-111), mission-aligned preference may be given to educationally disadvantaged students as specifically defined in their charter and charter contract approved by their sponsor and as allowed by the ESSA.

Policies and procedures must include provisions to grant or deny permission for students to attend the charter school if they reside in a school district other than the one where the charter school is located. This is not applicable to schools sponsored by the SCPCSD or the board of trustees or area commission of a public or independent institution of higher learning.

- If a charter school denies admission to a student for reasons other than the results of a lottery, the student may appeal the denial to the sponsoring district. The decision will be binding on the student and the charter school.
- In-district students will be given priority.
- Out-of-district student enrollment must not exceed 20 percent of the total

enrollment of the charter school without the approval of the sponsor's board of trustees. The sending district must be notified immediately of the transferring students. Out-of-district students must be considered on the basis of the order in which their applications are received.

- If the 20 percent of out-of-district students are from one school district, then the sending district must concur with any additional students transferring from that district to attend the charter school.

The application must describe how the charter school intends to ensure that the enrollment of the school reflects that of the local school district in which the charter school is located or that of the targeted student population of the local school district that the charter school proposes to serve, to be defined for the purposes of this chapter (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50) as differing by no more than twenty percent from that population. The application must demonstrate timely, fair, and realistic procedures for recruiting, registering, and admitting students that reflect the racial composition of the school district or the targeted school population.

If the sponsoring district is under a desegregation order or plan by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the applicant must provide assurance that the school will comply with the plan or order. To ensure compliance with a desegregation plan or order, the charter school applicant should request and receive a letter from the sponsor indicating whether the school will be subject to any desegregation plan or order.

For a prospective charter school that is subject to a desegregation plan or order, the application should demonstrate that the charter school's policies and procedures are in compliance with the desegregation plan or order. The school must request and receive an additional letter from the sponsor that indicates whether the charter school's proposed policies and procedures are in compliance with the desegregation plan or order in effect in the district or whether clarification must be received from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.[AK1]

Narrative Requirements:[AK2]

1. Describe the policies and procedures that will guide the enrollment and withdrawal of students,

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

2. Describe the recruitment strategies that will be utilized. Provide a rationale for each one.
3. Explain how the community will receive information about the formation of a new charter school and any upcoming lottery and enrollment deadlines;
4. Explain the notification of placement process and the timeline for parents to accept the placement or not;
5. Describe any enrollment priorities that will be granted by the school consistent with state charter school law.
6. Explain how the school intends to enroll out-of-district students, including estimated percentage of enrollment, notification to sending district, and approval procedures for receiving and sending districts (not applicable if applying with the SCPCSD as sponsor); and
7. Describe how the proposed charter school intends to ensure that enrollment reflects that of the local school district in which the charter school is located or that of the targeted student population of the local school district that the charter school proposes to serve, to be defined for the purposes of this chapter as differing by no more than 20 percent from that population.

## Enrollment

With this application, Gates School is seeking the designation of an Alternative Education Campus (AEC) charter school with an explicit mission and purpose of providing an exceptional, evidence-based, multi-sensory education for students with dyslexia and other primary reading disabilities to open the gates to their individual academic potential in an environment that empowers students to develop a positive and socially conscious self-image. With this in mind and in accordance with Section 59-40-50, the focus of the school will be on students K-8th grades who have been given a medical/psychological diagnosis of dyslexia or a primary reading disability, have characteristics that are primarily and foremost consistent with dyslexia or have demonstrated need for such specific services through, but not limited to, documentation in an IEP, 504 plan, or documentation from previous schools that the student is not meeting grade specific standards in literacy as a primary area of deficit. A student's testing results from an accepted school district approved dyslexia screener such as FastBridge Learning or AIMSweb that indicate a primary reading deficit will also be considered as evidence.

Often with dyslexia, there are often co-occurring disabilities and disorders such as dyscalculia and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. The co-occurrence or existence of these or other disabilities and disorders will not impact admission if the student meets the mission-aligned focus of dyslexia or characteristics of dyslexia as the primary disorder. Admission to Gates School will be available to all

children eligible to attend public school in SC who meet the mission-aligned focus of dyslexia or primary reading disability as specifically defined in the School's charter and charter contract approved by the Charter Institute at Erskine and as allowed by ESSA. With the exception of serving students who meet the mission-aligned qualifications, Gates School will not limit or deny admission or show preference in admission decisions to any individual or group of individuals.

Accordingly, if the number of applicants exceeds Gates School first year capacity of 125 students, students will be accepted by weighted-lot as allowed by ESSA and the SC Charter School Law. Remaining space, if any, will be filled via a lottery (described below). Gates School is in consultation with the Public Charter School Alliance of South Carolina to design, develop, and implement an appropriate and equitable weighted lot and/or admission process so that it may optimally fulfill its mission-aligned focus and provide the needed evidence-based specialized instruction for educationally disadvantaged dyslexic or primary reading disability students that have a demonstrated need for its services. Gates School also anticipates input on this process from the SCDE and possibly the Charter Institute at Erskine. Until this process has been finalized, Gates School will proceed as described in this section. A tentative application process is also offered here but, as previously stated, is currently under development (at the time of this writing).

Gates School student applications will be received and processed by the Gates School Admissions Team. All printed and electronic communication materials will clearly state where applications are available, how to apply, and the deadlines for submittal. Additionally, the Gates School Planning Committee believes the school's facilities should be available by the time of application, thus allowing applications to also be available at the campus. The application form may be submitted in person, via United States Postal Service (USPS), via fax, or online and must contain the following information: parent/guardian names; student name and grade; address; phone number; email address (when registering online). Below is Gates School's draft of a fair and equitable weighted-lot Application Process that is currently under development, as described in the paragraph above. Gates School anticipates having this process fully developed, vetted by legal and top authorities on SC public charter school education, and approved prior to the first enrollment application deadline of January 6, 2021.

#### Weighted-Lot Application and Enrollment Determination Process Draft

Qualified students are those children who:

1. Complete the Application Process for admission to Gates School; and
2. Are found to have a diagnosis of dyslexia from a medical or psychological professional or characteristics consistent primarily and foremost with dyslexia or primary reading disability by the Admissions Team as a result of the Determination

Process.

The Application Process is as follows:

1. A parent or guardian completes the Application (including, but not limited to, a medical questionnaire) and signs a records release of information for the submission of all the child's records from all school attended by the child. The applicant's family must also confirm on the form that the student meets the basic eligibility requirements of state residence and legal school age and provide the required documents as proof of SC residency.
2. A parent or guardian submits all available academic and identifying records, including but not limited to IEP, 504, medical/psychological diagnosis/diagnoses, and any prior evaluations completed (checklist under development and TBD). Results of a student's testing results from an accepted school district approved dyslexia screener such as FastBridge Learning or AIMSweb that indicate a primary reading deficit will also be considered.
3. A qualification screening session is scheduled with the expectation that both the parent or guardian and child shall attend. These screening sessions may be scheduled as early as October/November 2020 and will continue as long as necessary to meet the enrollment projection. The Gates School Board of Directors will seek the help of graduate students at a local university to assist in conducting these screenings in addition to Gates School personnel.
4. The child and a parent or guardian participate in the qualification screening session, lasting approximately two hours, which may include but is not limited to:
  - a. Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP)
  - b. Kaufmann Brief Intelligence Test Second Edition (KBIT-2)
  - c. Academic and Curriculum Based Performance Tasks
  - d. Parent or guardian consultation meeting with Gates School Admissions Team (consisting of Special Education Coordinator and/or School Psychologist, Principal)
5. If a child already has a diagnosis of dyslexia from a medical/educational professional, or documentation through an existing IEP, 504, results of a student's testing results from an accepted school district approved dyslexia screener such as FastBridge Learning or AIMSweb that indicate a primary reading deficit indicating or characteristics consistent primarily and foremost with dyslexia or primary reading disability that child and parent will not necessarily need to participate in a screening session.

The tentative application deadline for the first year of operation is January 6, 2021. This date and the

lottery time period identified below should be in place for the first year of operation, but may be amended by the Board in subsequent years. If Gates School does not reach its enrollment goal by the deadline date, applications will be time stamped and accepted on a first-come first served basis until the enrollment target is met.

The Determination Process for Qualified Students to be used by the Admissions Team is as follows:

1. A review of the documentation submitted as part of the Application Process
2. A review of all results of the screening assessments and parent consultation
3. A determination by the Admissions Team as to whether the child demonstrates a diagnosis of dyslexia, or characteristics of dyslexia or a primary reading disability so as to meet the mission-aligned focus of Gates School if not previously diagnosed or qualified through IDEA, ADA, or the Rehabilitation Act. The Admissions Team may seek the guidance of the SCDE as SEA and Charter Institute at Erskine as LEA. Additionally, the Admissions Team may seek the consultation of a psychiatrist, psychologist, or physician regarding documentation and/or evaluation results, interpretation, and/or ambiguity. As noted above, with dyslexia there are often co-occurring disabilities and disorders such as dyscalculia and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. The co-occurrence or existence of these or other disabilities and disorders will not impact admission if the student meets the mission-aligned focus of dyslexia or characteristics of dyslexia as the primary disorder.
4. If there is no appeal to the Sponsor permitted, all decisions made by the Admissions Team as to whether a child is a "Qualified Student" are final. If an appeal is permitted, the decision of the Sponsor is final and binding upon both parties.
5. Gates School will not discriminate against pupils on the basis of race, religion, national origin, gender, ancestry, creed, mental and/or physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity in its educational programs or activities, including the admissions process, as long as the student meets the mission-aligned focus of dyslexia or primary reading disability. Students denied admission for reasons other than lottery results may appeal that decision to the Charter Institute at Erskine. The appeal must be in writing and state the grounds on which the appeal is based. The decision of the Charter Institute at Erskine shall be binding and final on both parties, without right of appeal.

During the first year of operation, Gates School will enroll 125 students in 1st Grade (or have completed one year of 5K) through 5th Grade. The projected enrollment is presented in the table below. During the inaugural year (2021-2022), Gates School will offer education services for Qualified Students in Grades 1-

5 and will add a grade level each academic year through Grade 8, culminating with the addition of Kindergarten in the fifth year of operation. All Qualified Students will be eligible to attend as space permits. If there are more Qualified Students than space available, a lottery (which will follow the general lottery format and description found in this section) will be held for all Qualified Students. The final lottery policy will be approved by the Planning Committee. The policy will comply with the South Carolina Charter School Law and follow specific guidelines set by the United States Department of Education. The policy will be subject to review by the SCDE and the Charter Institute at Erskine.

#### GATES SCHOOL Growth Plan

School Year	2021-	2022-	2023-	2024-	2025	2026-	2027-	2028-	2029-	2030-
Grade	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031

Kinder 20 20 25 25 25 33

Grade 1 15 15 15 20 20 25 25 25 25 33

Grade 2 25 25 25 25 25 25 30 30 30 34

Grade 3 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 33 34 34

Grade 4 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 33 34 34

Grade 5 25 30 30 30 30 30 30 33 33 33

Grade 6 25 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 33

Grade 7 25 30 30 30 30 30 30 33

Grade 8 25 30 30 30 30 30 33

Total Student

Body 125 155 185 220 245 250 260 269 271 300

The ideal enrollment would see each designated grade at capacity as depicted in the above chart. However, due to the mission-aligned focus of the school, filling each specific grade in this manner might



be difficult. Because of this, Gates School will request that specific grade level capacities be waived and total student enrollment remain at 125 for overall school enrollment. The needs of the 125 students will drive or determine the number of classrooms. Because of its specialized focus, Gates School may not be an optimal educational fit for all students. In order for parents to make an informed decision about attendance at Gates School, the enrollment process will include a discussion with parents in the screening process whereby information regarding the specialized curriculum and mission-aligned focus of the school is reviewed.

If the number of applicants exceeds the capacity of the school on the application deadline date, a lottery will be held to determine enrollment. The lottery will be duly publicized through various means of communication which may include print, radio, television, internet, and at any community meeting held by the Gates School in the Fall of 2020. The lottery will be held at an evening meeting open to the public in late January of 2021 and will be supervised by the Initial Board of Directors but someone other than Gates School Board members will actually run the lottery. As described above, parents or guardian will be notified by email or USPS of their student's acceptance. Failure to complete and return the Gates School Admission Packet within 15 business days of the acceptance notification may result in forfeiture or loss of the space, which will then be offered to the next student on the waiting list. Before offering the space to the next student, every effort will be made to assist the family in completing the requested information and the school will document these efforts.

The process for conducting the lottery will be done electronically to account for the weighting and will be implemented as follows with appropriate software specifically for school lotteries:

\*A member of the League of Women Voters or a local South Carolina Notary Public (not a member of the founding Planning Committee) will be recruited by the Initial Gates School Board of Directors witness and verify the lottery process.

\*The name of each student who has submitted a complete application will be entered into the database.

\*The software procedures will be followed allowing for the preferences and weighting allowed by law.

\*The outcome of the lottery will be reviewed by a member of the League of Women Voters or a SC Notary Public. This person will have no relationship to Gates School or its Board.

\*Students not offered enrollment will be placed on a waiting list in lottery number order. The waiting list will not be allowed to carry over to the following school year. The lottery process will start anew for each succeeding school year.

A variety of community outreach efforts have been made to bring awareness of the creation of Gates School to the Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester Counties (Lowcountry) and these efforts will continue after the school has been established. It is expected that the Gates School facility will be located in one of these three counties. The Planning Committee has held 11 public information meetings in the Lowcountry area with a total of 337 attendees and has plans to continue community meetings in the Lowcountry through 2020 monthly until the enrollment deadline of January 6, 2021. The meetings have been held in diverse communities as well as slightly less diverse communities. At the time of this writing, there have been approximately 140 Parent Interest Forms available on the Gates School Facebook page filled out by parents of prospective students.

The most recent census data reveals that the racial composition of the Lowcountry is comprised of approximately 64% white, 28% Black, 5% Hispanic and 3% other. In order to ensure that the enrollment reflects a diverse student body and remains, at least, within 20% of the racial composition of the resident Lowcountry district in which Gates School will be located as well as provide the community with information about the formation of Gates School and important lottery and enrollment deadlines, the Gates School Planning Committee has proposed the following broad community outreach plan:

- \*Continue to develop and maintain partnerships with area dyslexia support groups and professional organizations such as SC Decoding Dyslexia and SC IDA who can disseminate information about Gates School among their members through their Facebook pages as well as group newsletters/emails
- \*Continue relationships with Lowcountry professionals who evaluate children with learning disabilities including dyslexia and who can refer possible students to Gates School
- \*Meet with local religious leaders and their congregations in diverse community churches such as AMEs to spread education and awareness in diverse communities about dyslexia and primary reading disorders
- \*Continue to develop relationships with African-American and other diverse leaders in the Lowcountry
- \*Sponsor fundraising initiatives with aforementioned dyslexia professional organizations and support groups during “dyslexia awareness” periods of the year
- \*Continue to develop and maintain relationships with pediatricians and other medical professionals who treat children and diagnose dyslexia
- \*Join/attend area Chamber of Commerce meetings across the Lowcountry and present about Gates School
- \*Post announcements in newspapers distributed or available to Lowcountry residents

- \*Purchase air time for advertisements on local radio and/or television stations targeting different audiences (e.g. country music, pop, R&B, hip-hop, Latino stations)
- \*Write or sit for interviews for articles about the uncommon educational opportunity and innovative school model that Gates School exemplifies for publication in local newspapers, magazines, and family-oriented websites
- \*Hold Open House gatherings at the Gates School facility or a public facility if the school building is not expected to be ready by the end of the enrollment period
- \*Present information sessions about Gates School to major employer(s) located in the Lowcountry such as Boeing, Blackbaud, The Medical University of South Carolina
- \*Send student-oriented and family-oriented newsletters to those families who apply and encourage families to share it with other families
- \*Make Gates School brochures/applications available throughout the Lowcountry at libraries, churches, civic groups, neighborhood associations, and other similar organizations and make presentations to these organizations
- \*Continually update the Gates School website to include an overview of the school, a printable application, enrollment procedures, deadlines, and contact information in case a student/parent requires specific assistance in applying to the school.

#### Notification of Qualification

Once the Admission Team has completed the process and determined if the child is a “Qualified Student”, the parent or guardian shall be notified of the acceptance or denial of admission within three (3) working days. The notice shall be sent through certified letter via the USPS to the address given by the parent or guardian on the application forms. The parent will additionally be notified as soon as possible via phone and/or email. The parent or guardian shall have 72 hours (3 days) after the receipt of the notice (tracked via USPS certified letter) to accept admission. If Gates School has had no response to the notice of admission at the end of 48 hours (2 days), a follow up telephone call will be made to remind the potential parent of the pending deadline. If no response is provided, it shall be deemed that the offer of admission has been declined and a certified letter to that effect will be sent to the parent or guardian and student.

As an AEC, Gates School will not deny admission to any child who meets the eligibility for the mission-aligned exceptionality of dyslexia or primary reading disability, nor will any child be denied admission based on that child’s race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or national or ethnic origin as long as the child is a Qualified Student. Gates School is open to all Qualified Students who are residents of South Carolina since Gates School is applying to the Charter Institute at Erskine to act as the Authorizing Agent. The final lottery policy will provide preference for students who have

enrolled in the school in a prior year, siblings of enrolled students, children of the staff of Gates School, and children of the Planning Committee. Priority enrollment for children of employees and children of the Planning Committee is not to exceed 20% of total enrollment. Since Gates School is applying to the Charter Institute at Erskine as Authorizing Agent, there will be no out-of-district students as long as a Qualified Student is a resident of South Carolina.

As noted above, the most recent census data reveals that the racial composition of the Lowcountry is comprised of approximately 64% white, 28% Black, 5% Hispanic and 3% other. The racial composition of student enrollment at Gates School will reflect, within 20%, that of the Lowcountry. Gates School intends to ensure that enrollment reflects that of the targeted population of the local school district that Gates School proposes to serve as an AEC through the recruitment strategies listed above.

#### Appendix Items

S- Letter from Sponsoring District Regarding Desegregation Plan or Order (NOT APPLICABLE)

### **6. Student Conduct, Rights and Responsibilities**

The charter school application must include a description of student rights and responsibilities, including behavior and discipline standards, and a reasonable hearing procedure. The application must set forth an appeal process for students recommended for expulsion that includes a right to appeal a decision to the charter school board.

The charter school application must include a policy governing student conduct, student rights and responsibilities, and student discipline standards and procedures. The policy must set forth disciplinary actions to be taken by the administration for breaches of the student conduct policy.

The application must set forth an assurance that the charter school will comply with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-63-235 (Supp. 2001), which provides for the expulsion of any student who brings a firearm to school.

The application must include an assurance that the charter school will comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232).

The application must contain the explanation of the policies with regard to student conduct, rights, and responsibilities that will be given to parents and students at the beginning of the school year.

Note that under The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 2004, the continued provision of FAPE for a student with a disability who is expelled from a public school remains with the LEA. The sponsor may have a policy or agreement with the charter schools within the LEA that puts the obligation on the school to ensure the continued provisions of a FAPE for expelled students. The SCDE, however, is required to hold the LEA responsible for the education of that student.

#### Narrative Requirements:

1. Describe the process and timeline for developing a student handbook and related policies; ensure that the discipline policy **complies** with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232) (FERPA).
2. Describe the student rights and responsibilities, including behavior and discipline standards and disciplinary actions to be taken by the administration for breaches of student conduct policy.
3. Provide a reasonable appeal process for students recommended for expulsion that includes a right to appeal a decision to the charter school board, including notice and hearing procedures for the board of directors of the charter school.
4. Provide the process for addressing IDEA compliance regarding student discipline, suspension, and expulsion for students with IEPs and the continued provision of FAPE and a description of how the school will identify and address significant behavioral concerns, specifically as it relates to students with disabilities.
5. Discuss how the proposed plan protects students' rights including due process. How will the school ensure that the discipline policy does not disproportionately affect students with disabilities? Include the school's plans for conducting discipline hearings.

#### 6. Student Conduct, Rights, and Responsibilities

Gates School recognizes that a positive environment is conducive to learning and cannot exist without maintaining order and discipline through conduct, rights and responsibilities. The Gates School Student and Family Handbook will have standardized procedures for students and families which will help ensure that the rights of every student are upheld as well as other policies that will relate to the school's functioning as a whole. The completion of the Gates School Student and Family Handbook, which will

outline a Code of Conduct as well as policies related to the school is currently underway. The Gates School Student and Family Handbook will comply with the requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which provides families and students:

- a. The right to inspect and review the student's education records at the school
- b. The right to challenge and require the school to amend a student's record if the information is inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's privacy rights, and
- c. The right to require the school to obtain written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information, subject to specific exceptions.

The tentative timeline for the Handbook's completion is as follows:

- Complete draft and submit to Board for 1st Reading/Review – June 2020
- Finalize any changes and submit to Board for 2nd Reading/Review – July 2020
- Submit Handbook Final Draft Version to Board for Approval – August 2020
- Print and Distribute Handbook at Orientation sessions – Summer 2021

Upon enrollment or during orientation sessions, each student and parent will be presented with a copy of the handbook, which will outline student conduct, rights, and responsibilities. Parents and students will be required to sign a form indicating that they have received the Handbook, have read or will read its contents, and that they are committed to these policies and procedures. The policies to be addressed include, but are not limited to, students' rights and responsibilities, an anti-discrimination policy, harassment policy, expectations of student conduct and behavior, a description of inappropriate behavior, discipline standards, violations of student conduct policy, and the appeal process for students that are recommended for expulsion.

Learning how to self-discipline is an important part of a student's education but can be difficult to master for students with dyslexia or primary reading disability or characteristics of either. As an AEC, Gates School is committed to serving children who meet its dyslexia or primary reading disability mission-aligned focus. Within the Gates School Student and Family Handbook, as outlined in Appendix T in the Draft Code of Conduct Matrix, three levels of offenses will include:

- Level I offenses that result in school-based action and can be subject to higher discipline if behavior continues or is repeated.
- Level II offenses that result in temporary suspension, either in school or out of class, or out of school suspension, for up to 10 days. Upon return to school, the student and his/her parents will meet with the Principal for a re-entry interview. During this interview,

the student must demonstrate a willingness to commit to a renewed focus on academic, motivational, and behavioral aspects of his/her Gates School life. The student will be required to sign a contract affirming this commitment and acknowledging that continued disciplinary infractions and breaches of the contract will result in the student moving to a Class III offense.

- Level III offenses that result in expulsion. All due process rights for children with special needs will be followed in the area of student discipline, including, but not limited to, services on the 11th day and a Manifestation Determination Review.

Students who do not comply with the Code of Conduct will be led through a progressive disciplinary process beginning with counseling and parent notification. If the behavior continues, in-school detention or suspension may be warranted. In the event of gross misbehavior, immorality, consistent disobedience, commission of a crime, or jeopardizing the safety of students, faculty, or staff, the student may be expelled. If a student is caught with weapons (other than a firearm), drugs, or assaults a student or school employee, they will be automatically referred to the Board of Directors for an expulsion hearing and local law enforcement authorities will be notified. In compliance with S.C. Code Ann Section 59-63-235, any student who brings a firearm to school will be immediately expelled.

Before a student is suspended for a period of one day or less, an informal hearing or conference will be held with the student, legal guardian, Principal, and staff members as deemed appropriate. The Principal will present the charges to the student and parent. The student will be given an opportunity to present his/her case to the Principal and admit to the charges. If the student does not admit guilt to the charges, the Principal will present the evidence. The student will then be given an opportunity to respond. If the Principal decides that the student should receive suspension, a written notice will be sent to the legal guardian and student.

Before a student receives a suspension of more than ten days or is expelled, the Principal will convene the Gates School Discipline Committee, which is composed of the Principal and teachers or other faculty members appointed by the Principal. The Discipline Committee will review the student's situation that led to this discipline level. The Discipline Committee may request the presence of the parent/guardian and/or student. If the Discipline Committee decides to move forward with the suspension or expulsion, the Principal shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written notification of the charges or misconduct, the disciplinary action to be taken, and their right to appeal in writing to the Gates School Board of Directors. If an appeal is submitted, the Gates School Board of Directors will schedule a hearing in a timely manner and provide the student and parent/guardian the opportunity to respond. The Gates School Board of directors will then review the entire disciplinary record and notify the student and

parent/guardian in writing of the final disciplinary action to be taken.

As an AEC and with a mission-aligned focus of serving students with dyslexia or primary reading disorders, the students who have, or need, a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of their IEP will be managed based on their plan. Gates School will ensure the continued provision of FAPE for a student with a disability who is expelled from Gates School and will comply with the requirement of the Charter Institute at Erskine for a continued education of a special education student. Gates School policy on suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities will be congruent with the IDEA 2004 Amendments of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under IDEA 2004, the continued provision of FAPE for a student with a disability who is expelled from a public school remains with the LEA. The obligation to ensure the continued provision of FAPE for expelled students will remain with Gates School, under the guidelines of the Charter Institute at Erskine. Since Gates School will be an AEC serving students with a diagnosis of dyslexia, characteristics of dyslexia or primary reading disorder, the discipline policy will not disproportionately affect students with disabilities since the discipline plan will be the same for all students. The Gates School plan for conducting discipline hearing is detailed above.

Appendix Item

T: Draft Discipline Policy

## **7. Transportation**

The SC Charter Schools Act of 1996 does not require charter schools to provide transportation for students but does allow for a charter school to enter into a contract with a school district or private provider to provide transportation to the charter school students. ***The law does, however, require an applicant to describe how the charter school plans to meet the transportation needs of its students.***

If the charter school will provide transportation by school bus, the application must include a plan that complies with the state requirements for drivers and training and the state safety requirements for school buses. If the charter school intends to contract with the district or a third party for transportation services, a description of those services and a proposed contract must be provided in the application. A charter school is not required to provide or facilitate transportation for students. If the lack of transportation is preventing students from attending, the charter school should provide a plan to address



their transportation needs.

#### Narrative Requirements:

1. Discuss the plan which will be put in place if the school is planning to provide transportation by school bus (must comply with state regulations for driver and training and the state safety requirements for school buses).
2. Discuss the proposed transportation service if the school intends to contract with the local school district or a third party.
3. Regardless of the applicant's intention to contract with a third party for transportation services, describe how the proposed charter school plans to address the transportation needs of its students and, in particular, if the lack of transportation is preventing a child from attending school.

#### 7. Transportation

Although there is currently no plan to provide buses and drivers, if that occurs, Gates School will comply with the state requirements for transportation as outlined in the following documents, which would be kept on file in the school office.

- South Carolina School Bus Driver's Handbook (issued by the SC Department of Education)
- Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976 (Title 23, Title 56, and Title 59)
- Board of Education Regulation for School Transportation: Regulations 43-80 (1976 Code 59-67-10 through 59-67-710).

In the future, Gates School could investigate the safety and feasibility of providing transportation via its own school buses and hired drivers. If that occurs, policies will be developed and all regulations regarding transportation of students will be closely and properly followed. Drivers would need to meet the state training requirements and be properly credentialed. Proper and adequate vehicle insurance would be obtained and maintained at the proper limits. School buses might be purchased or leased and would meet state safety requirements. Regular transportation solutions could include contracting with the local school district, car services, or utilizing public transportation. As with any system involving students, a safety protocol and feasibility study will be completed prior to putting any idea into service. Future transportation options might include bus pick-up and drop-off points in centralized areas such that parents could drive to the pick-up/drop-off point rather than the school for the student to be transported.

Additionally, district or third-party transportation services would require a contract, which would be reviewed and approved by the Gates School Board of Directors prior to commencement. All scenarios would include conducting background checks on all adults who would be involved in such a transportation plan.

At this time, Gates School does not intend to contract for transportation services. However, Gates School will appropriate funds in the budget for contingency transportation solutions, should there be a transportation issue mandated by a student's IEP. Any transportation arrangement for Special Education students to attend school or activities will be in accordance with all state and federal laws and regulation. However, because the Gates School focus is students with dyslexia or a primary reading disability and students with this designated diagnosis or classification generally do not require bus services due to their disability, Gates School does not anticipate having to provide such services to a large number of students as mandated by their IEPs.

Although Gates School will not provide regular transportation, Gates School will not deny access to school because of inadequate transportation and will work to find appropriate options for any student in need of transportation. Gates School can facilitate communications between/among parents who may be interested in a car pool or "taking turns" transporting students to and from school. In such circumstances, Gates School will not be responsible for negotiating or maintaining such agreements.

Importantly, the use of an employee or volunteer's private vehicle to transport students will be prohibited by the Gates School Board of Directors except as stated in this document or future policies. Under emergency circumstances, the principal of the school may authorize the use of an employee or volunteer's private vehicle for the transportation of students to and from school or to and from school-sponsored activities.

Appendix Item

U: Transportation Services Contract (NOT APPLICABLE)



### III. Business Plan

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

### III. Business Plan Form

#### 1. Budget and Finance

The application should provide evidence that the plan for the charter school is economically sound, a proposed budget for the term of the charter, and a description of the manner in which an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the charter school, including any services provided by the sponsor, is to be conducted.

The proposed budget should be based on reasonable estimates that reflect choices made throughout the rest of the charter application. In nearly all cases, the combination of facility costs, insurance, instructional materials, and staff salaries/benefits represents the bulk of spending in charter schools. As such, close attention should be paid to these areas. In addition to these areas, other items that need to be planned for financially include special education, various professional services, classroom supplies and materials, general supplies and materials, liability insurance, and more. The budget must be based on documented State Department of Education estimated revenues in accordance with the allocations in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-140(A)-(C). Please contact Dana Jones, at [DNJones@ed.sc.gov](mailto:DNJones@ed.sc.gov) to submit a request for a SCDE Per Pupil Estimate Review.

The budget and financial plan for the proposed charter school must include a five-year detailed budget and ten-year budget plan for revenues and expenditures. The plan should demonstrate diligent financial practices, clear alignment to the other components in the application, and strong oversight.

Provide documentation regarding the pupil accounting system, including evidence that the school will adhere to the procedures and regulations that are applied to public schools operating in South Carolina. The pupil accounting system must comply with the principles included in the *South Carolina Pupil Accounting Manual* and the *South Carolina Student Accountability Manual*, published by the SCDE at <https://ed.sc.gov/finance/financial-services/manual-handbooks-and-guidelines/>.

Include a summary of any negotiated services to be provided by the proposed sponsor (local school district, the SCPCSD, or the institution of higher education/technical college), including but not limited to financial accounting, payroll services, food services, custodial services, maintenance, curriculum,

library and media services, and warehousing.

In accordance with the South Carolina Charter Schools Act (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50(B) (3)), a charter school must adhere to the same financial audits, audit procedures, and audit requirements as are applied to public schools. Also, in accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-230(E) (10), a charter school must procure an outside annual certified financial audit on funds and submit it to the SCDE as required. As a charter school is a component unit of the sponsor, the audit report is required to be submitted to the sponsor to incorporate the school's audit report in the sponsor's audit report. Additionally, if a charter school receives more than \$750,000 in federal funding, the school is required to have a single audit.

#### Narrative Requirements:

Include the following in this section:

1. Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Financial Plan successfully, including capacity in the following areas: financial management; fundraising and development; and accounting and internal controls.
2. Discuss how the proposed budget will support the mission, vision, and educational program of the school. Describe how the proposed 5-year and 10-year budget support the successful implementation of the school's educational program and increasing student achievement. Highlight any unique instructional strategies or curricular components and how they will be funded. Explain the school's data-driven decision-making process in regards to resource allocations.
3. A detailed description of budget assumptions, calculations, and revenue estimates. The narrative should include, at minimum, the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs. Provide specific evidence supporting assumptions and/or describe the source of estimated amounts wherever possible.
4. Describe any applicable state and federal money funding sources. Clearly address the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising). Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property, or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include evidence of commitment for any funds on which the school's core operation depends.
5. Provide a summary of any negotiated services to be provided by the proposed sponsor (local school district, the SCPCSD, or the institution of higher education/technical college), including but not limited to financial accounting, payroll services, food services, custodial services,

maintenance, curriculum, library and media services, and warehousing.

6. Explain how the school will remain fiscally solvent, adhere to generally acceptable accounting practices, have no material breaches, address any financial concerns, and follow the South Carolina pupil accounting system, auditing, and reporting procedures.
7. Describe how the school will maintain its books and records according to generally accepted accounting principles and will create an appropriate system of internal control.
8. Discuss planned client subcontracts to outside providers (if applicable).
9. Discuss the process the school will follow to contract with a certified public accountant to conduct an annual, independent financial audit and to disseminate the results from the audit to the school district and required state agencies.
10. Indicate if the school plan to offer South Carolina Retirement System benefits to its employees? If so, describe the planning committee's understanding of the costs and restrictions associated with such benefits and how the school's budget will absorb applicable costs from year to year.
11. Discuss the school's contingency plans for cash flow challenges, a budget shortfall, lower than expected student enrollment or other financial challenges in the early years of operation.
12. Describe the process of how the annual operating budget will be developed and refined each year based on student achievement data and mission driven priorities. Explain who will be involved in the process and how the budget may be amended during the year.
13. Explain in detail the year one [planning year] cash flow contingency plan, in the event that revenue projections are not met (or not met on time).

The following budget and financial plan (narrative and appendices) provide clear evidence that the design for the Gates School is economically sound. The proposed Five-Year Detailed Budget, with accompanying Three-Year Cash Flow and Ten-Year Budget Plan, is based on "reasonable estimates that reflect choices throughout the rest of the application", but those estimates (assumptions) also stand on relevancy, reliability, and are therefore, realistic.

The Mission of the Gates School is to serve students with dyslexia. Given national research for the past several decades, we are confident that we'll meet, if not exceed, our enrollment projections.

Close attention has been paid to those areas that represent the bulk of our expenditures, salaries (and payroll liabilities), facility costs, instruction materials and insurance. We paid particular attention to the needs of special education and various professional services. In the end, we are confident that our diligent fiscal management protocols and our firm commitment as exceptional stewards of public funds clearly demonstrate superior sustainability and financial success.

The team is comprised of individuals with over 100 years combined experience in school management, dyslexia education/ tutoring, fundraising and finance. As per our Bylaws, the transition Board will be comprised of a cross section of expertise to ensure sound fiscal management.

We have researched the SC Boards Association, several school districts and the advice of auditors to compile necessary information for the development of “best practices” financial policies and internal controls that will serve as the cornerstone of our fiscal management.

The Board, via its finance committee, will establish those internal cost control standards as well as financial policies and procedures to ensure financial compliance and to facilitate annual financial audits, the audit procedures, and the audit requirements for public charter schools. Pursuant to instructions received from our meetings with auditors, the Finance Audit Committee will be responsible for the overall financial accounting and audit functions at the school.

Duties will include:

- \*Working with school leadership to draft and submit to the Board for approval an annual budget,
- \*Meeting with the principal and business manager on a monthly basis to review the budget report, cash flow and financial performance,
- \*Establishing fiscal policy and procedure in accordance with GAAP,
- \*Issuing the RFP and overseeing the selection process for an annual independent auditor,
- \*Establish an audit timeline and schedule for fieldwork,
- \*Reviewing and presenting the results of the annual audit for Board approval,
- \*Draft the Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) that accompanies the audit report,
- \*Contribute to the preparation and review of the annual Form 990
- \*Review potential financing / leasing options,
- \*Draft and oversee implementation of organizational and functional level internal controls.

The proposed budget reflects the School’s commitment to effectively invest funding directly into the classroom. We have directed our finances toward providing for the needs of the students with dyslexia. This can be seen in the number of teachers hired, including specialists such as special education staff, counselors and teaching assistants, all of whom will lower the teacher to student ratio. We have also invested in the school’s specialized curriculum and professional development and to provide appropriate

services that will be mandated within each student's IEP. The School's budgetary philosophy is to fund the teacher and the student in the classroom and all budget items will be judged by what improvement and excellence will be added to the student's educational experience. It is without question that our mission and goals drive this budget and that all available monies are invested to ensure that our students' achievement levels are commensurate with those of the top 50% of SC schools.

We find that it is of paramount importance that an experienced leader with an understanding of dyslexia, teaching methodologies as well as finance and budgeting is hired to lead the school. This person will help develop the Gates School to be one of distinction, and a national model for serving this population. Attracting, recruiting, setting the tone for, and providing appropriate training for exceptional teachers will be one of the initial tasks of this talented leader and we feel we have allocated the funds to meet this goal.

Other budgetary priorities include teacher and staff training in the best possible methodologies for educating dyslexic students. We have allocated funds to ensure this so that our students are competing with the top schools in SC. Technology is another investment for the Gates School and one that is tantamount to the success of dyslexic students. The assistive technology that is available today has been documented to be highly effective for dyslexic learners. It is important for students to have access to electronic tablets and other mediums as well as the unique software that augments learning. We have a satisfactory budget for this and we have researched Microsoft, Apple, Google and other tech companies offering programs for possible budgetary offsets.

With our budgetary allocations for training, professional development, and programs such as The Leader In Me, FROG, and Gates University, the Gates School will become the model for other schools. Decisions about budget will be data-driven and this can be seen in the investment that we will make to ensure that each teacher becomes trained reading specialists for small groups and one-on-one instruction. Decisions regarding curriculum options and trainings will be made based on supporting evidence of effectiveness with this population. Additionally, decisions will be made based on the improvement and success of the students.

The data-driven decision-making process used for resource allocation is based on the following that we consider operation best practices:

\*Engaging the principle of zero-based budgeting, whereby we justify each and every line-item (revenue and expense) from a zero-base;

\*Gathering historic revenue and expense data from multiple charter schools of similar grade

span and enrollment profile, as well as, a similar student classification profile and use this information as a metric;

\*Gathering regulatory data such as minimum salary schedule, district salary schedules, per pupil revenue & experience and use this figure as a metric;

\*Basing all of our budget assumptions on reasonableness, relevancy, reliability.

From both budget iterations it is clear that we are aware of the Education Finance Act (EFA) Funding (per pupil amount based on SDE estimates), how we assign our projected student body to a Grade Span & Enrollment matrix (weighting the students in their proper classification), and ultimately calculating our EFA revenue.

We are aware of the different categorical funding available to us (Federal, Education Improvement Act, the Education Accountability Act, Education Lottery Act, State Restricted, etc) through the funding manual. While the EFA is the backbone to our funding, these alternative funding sources would be apportioned across our line item expenses in accordance with the Financial Accounting Handbook (fund, function, object dimensions) to properly fund our program.

At this time, the Planning Committee has completed its due diligence and does not have commitments for any school resources.

The Gates School is committed to utilizing pre-existing services that have proven expertise and are cost efficient. We anticipate using the services of our sponsoring agency and the services of a well-established firm such as McKay Kiddy. We will continue to review and assess all options that will establish the Gates School as an exceptional steward of public funds.

It is generally assumed that we will contract for services such as financial accounting, payroll services and custodial services. Other services such as library, arts and other required programs will be made on a case by case basis. We will retain the option to assign a particular service to an appropriately certified employee or to someone on an appropriate professional contract.

The Gates School will remain fiscally solvent, will adhere to generally accepted accounting practices, have no material breaches, address any financial concerns, and follow the SC pupil accounting system, auditing and reporting procedures by developing and implementing a comprehensive internal fiscal control system.

\*Establishing financial policies and corresponding financial procedures to properly account for



all revenue and expense as directed in the Financial Accounting Handbook and the Funding Manual,

\*Establishing policies and procedures to adhere to the reporting policies, procedures and regulations of SC Pupil Accounting Manual and the SC Accounting Manual,

\*Ensuring that all accounting, reporting, and auditing procedures and requirements will 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,

\*Strict adherence to general accepted accounting practices (GAAP),

\*Establishing and implementing a comprehensive set of organizational and function level internal controls,

\*Developing and approving a balanced, annual operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year no later than June 30th of the preceding fiscal year,

\*Maintaining records on a transaction-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) readily available to the Board of Directors and appropriate external agents and agencies. Reports will be maintained and filed according to district, state, and federal requirements,

\*Identifying, reporting and immediately addressing material breaches and financial concerns through corrective and preventative action protocols.

From the outset of our charter initiative, we have put considerable effort into the economic soundness, viability and the long-term sustainability of our school; accordingly, we have developed a strong, clear and detailed financial road map. This is recognized in the Five-Year Detailed Budget and the Ten-Year Budget Plan, as well as our continued interface with various South Carolina governmental and education agencies, ongoing coordination with our sponsor the Charter Institute at Erskine, and the assistance of an outside fiscal management company. These relationships will continue during our Pre-Planning Year and into the Operational Years of our charter initiative.

A strong, sound internal control environment provides for a high level of assurance to those that have an interest in the Gates School assets and those that use information produced by the school for decision making. The factors required to achieve this environment are varied and include organizational values, systems controls, physical controls and a system of review and monitoring that is maintained. Sound policy development is to establish the environment required to promote activities that are carried out in an efficient and orderly manner. The Board shall ensure that appropriate financial policies are developed, implemented and maintained in order to enact the adopted policies so that the School can achieve its

objectives, ensure adherence to policies, safeguard assets, and secure the accuracy and reliability of records.

The Administration shall ensure that the effective organizational level internal control environment includes the following:

- \*Policies and procedures that are communicated to staff, including whistleblower protections and confidential reporting of potentially fraudulent behavior,
- \*A comprehensive set of functional level controls,
- \*Processes of risk identification and assessment,
- \*Provisions and process to ensure that the faculty and staff are adequately trained,
- \*Appropriate delegations of authority,
- \*Automated and manual systems which regularly monitor and review processes,
- \*Process for maintaining an open and effective channel of communication with auditors.

The following is a listing of policies to be developed by May 1, 2020:

#### INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEM:

- \*Accounting System
- \*Book of Accounts
- \*Chart of Accounts
- \*Security of Financial Data
- \*Insurance

#### BANK ACCOUNT:

- \*Opening and closing of Accounts
- \*FDIC- Collateralization vs. Multiple Accounts

#### ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

- \*Budget Calendar
- \*Budget Revisions and Adjustments
- \*Budget Monitoring

#### ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

- \*Incoming Checks
- \*Grants

\*Contributions, Donations, & Bequests

\*Borrowing Funds

#### ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

\*Contracts

\*Purchasing

\*Credit & Debit Cards

\*Petty Cash

\*Travel Expenses

\*Reimbursements

\*Executive Limitations

\*Issuing & Signing Checks

Adopting GAAP & SC specifications of District Auditing & Field Services:

#### CAPITAL ASSETS & DEPRECIATIONS

#### PAYROLL

#### FUND BALANCE

#### INVESTMENTS

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

#### ANNUAL AUDIT

With regard to the implementation of fiscal policies and procedures, our practices will be guided by GAAP:

\*A fiscal year balanced budget that clearly defines achievable goals as defined in the school's charter and approved by the Board in the form of a Budget Resolution,

\*Accounting records shall be properly and accurately record and account for all transactions including cash. Accounting information shall be relevant, reliable, comparable and consistent and shall be available for the preparation of reliable financial statements,

- \*Strict compliance with Federal and State laws and regulations, State Board of Education policies and other compliance requirements,
- \*Maintenance of documentation that outlines internal controls on business practices and operation,
- \*All Accounts Payable shall be current,
- \*Transactions shall be executed in compliance with laws, regulations, and the provisions of contracts or grant agreements that could have a direct and material effect on Federal and State funds,
- \*Funds, property, and other assets shall be safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition,
- \*Ensure that required independent audits are performed and submitted in a timely manner as prescribed by the sponsor,
- \*Documentation shall be maintained that supports its financial statements and that reflect its financial position / condition, results of operations or changes in net assets and where appropriate, cash flows for any fiscal period / year.

As noted in our Five-Year Budget, we have identified several areas of outside providers that would be cost effective for the school. As noted in the 2015-2016 Financial Accounting Handbook, these may include:

- \*Exceptional Children Instructional Services
- \*Professional Development Services
- \*Psychological Services
- \*Fiscal Services
- \*Audit Services
- \*Legal Services
- \*Custodial Services
- \*Technology Services
- \*Marketing and Advertising Services.

An annual audit is both a statutory and regulatory requirement; accordingly, we will comply with this mandate. We have reviewed the Single Audit Guide in detail, to include current Highlights, Technical notes, Audit requirements and appropriate information in the Compliance Supplement; consequently, we are knowledgeable of the compliance requirements and suggested audit procedures.

The Board 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 Accountants (CPA) firms and selecting the firm that (a) has prior charter school auditing experience and (b) best meets our needs. The annual audit will encompass

our 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 the required submission deadline.

The Gates School will not offer South Carolina Retirement System benefits to its employees at this time.

While the goal is to offer an independent plan to its employees, the nature of these plans could change on an annual basis and will therefore be more thoroughly reviewed in late 2020. The School reserves the option to not offer retirement to employees from the beginning.

With purposeful planning and a commitment to be strong stewards of public funds, we have been planning for nearly 2 years in order to ensure we have all proper plans in place. During operational years, we will integrate contingency planning into our annual budgeting process. Our budget establishes a baseline for expected performance, which means it also sets parameters for both subpar and superior performance. The primary goal of our contingency planning is to identify key road markers (financial metrics for action, such as failure to reach revenue targets or net operating expenses) that management will use to recognize very early when financial performance is beginning to veer off course thereby enabling us to launch quick, effective responses to changing financial situations.

The Board assumes a vital trust with the responsibility of managing a large amount of public resources. As a trustee of local, state and federal funds allocated for the use in public education, the Board shall be vigilant in fulfilling its responsibility to see that these funds are used wisely for the achievement of the purposes to which they are allocated. The quantity and quality of learning programs are directly dependent on the funding provided and the effective, efficient management of those funds. Achievement of the school's mission is best achieved through excellent fiscal management. To this end, a system of financial policies and procedures shall be implemented for the Board to account for the receipt and disbursement of funds in an accurate and efficient manner. All financial management activities shall be in accordance with GAAP.

Because of resource limitations, there could be a temptation to operate so that fiscal concerns overshadow the educational program. Recognizing this, the Board shall take specific action to ensure education remains central in which we view decisions through a lens of what most directly benefits the students? Fiscal matters, while critical, are ancillary and contribute to the educational program and this concept shall be incorporated into Board operations and into all aspects of the school's management and operation.

As such, the administration of the Gates School will:

- \*Use the best available techniques and processes for budget development and management,
- \*Engage in thorough advance planning to develop budgets and guide expenditures so as to effectively educate every child,
- \*Establish levels of funding which shall provide high quality education to the students,
- \*Effectively utilize funds in order to achieve the greatest returns and contributions to the educational program,
- \*Continually review expenditures to identify those which are not necessary or not delivering adequate value,
- \*Provide timely and appropriate information to the Board and all staff with fiscal management responsibilities,
- \*Establish and implement efficient procedures for accounting, purchasing, payroll, payment of vendors and contractors, reporting and all other areas of fiscal management.

We have studied and are cognizant of the history of reduction in statewide funding (2008) as well as other unexpected “changes” to assumptions and plans. In this regard we have also studied the financial plans of multiple operating charter schools and how they have addressed and mitigated cash flow problems, budget shortfalls, lower than expected student enrollments, reduction in state funding and other financial challenges. We have identified best practices and we continue to run contingency budget scenarios. The end result is that we will stay in close communication with our sponsor during the pre-planning, as well as, beginning operational year so that we can evaluate changes in the funding landscape, and implement a financial plan that incorporates contingencies to deal with financial challenges.

These contingencies involve (in order):

- \*Increasing revenue through outside funding sources (grants, fundraising and contributions)
- \*Increasing cash flow through a line of credit
- \*Decreasing variable expenses
- \*Renegotiating fixed expenses
- \*Reducing non-essential support services
- \*Eliminating non-essential support services
- \*Reducing salaries of support service personnel
- \*Increasing student-to-teacher ratio
- \*Reducing grade span
- \*Reducing salaries of instruction service personnel

Once in operation, in the event that unforeseen circumstances occur that negatively affect revenues, two strategies will be employed depending upon the cause.

\*Assuming a shortage arising from under-enrollment, the school will increase marketing efforts and use every available resource to improve enrollment including expanded outreach to the community, referral partners, increased exposure and visibility through advertising.

\*Assuming changes in student funding, the school will charge its finance committee with presenting a plan to reduce costs in the following order:

-1st - Reduction or elimination of any non-essential fixed costs and renegotiation of leases and non-instructional contracts,

-2nd - Reduction or elimination of any non-essential, non-instructional variable costs (including non-instructional and administrative salaries and benefits)

-3rd - Analysis and strategic reduction, consolidation or combination of expendable, non-essential instructional costs.

We will continue to research and analyze the financial climate and we will continue to develop a reliable financial plan that is based on economically sound principles.

Appendix Item(s):

Student Enrollment Projection Form (template provided by the SCDE).

SCDE Per Pupil Estimate Review

Five-Year Detailed Budget (an Excel spreadsheet showing realistic assumptions and their basis, a cash-flow projection of operation, minimum enrollment needed for solvency, and adequate staffing that fits with the application narrative in educational plan and other related sections). Do not save as a pdf.

Ten-Year Budget Plan (an Excel spreadsheet). Do not save as a pdf.

Memorandums of Agreement for Negotiated Services (for any negotiated service to be provided by the sponsor or a third party, if applicable).

Documentation of any "soft funds," such as grant money or donations that have been received or are likely to be received.

## **2. Facilities**

Charter schools may rent, lease, own, or otherwise finance facility space. In some cases, a school district may have an unused facility; in other cases, a charter school may share space with another tenant. With any facility, building permits, inspections, and a certificate of occupancy are required from the SCDE's Office of School Facilities (OSF) as the building official for all public schools. All facilities must meet

applicable building codes, and the OSF is available to review and discuss proposed facilities to evaluate code and other life safety requirements. In addition, contact your community's planning and zoning department for necessary land-use permits and requirements.

Charter schools are required to comply with all traffic management regulations. SC Department of Transportation (SCDOT) School Traffic Engineering will visit and evaluate your site and provide you with traffic requirements for your school traffic. The evaluation may require a traffic study and the charter school is responsible for all costs associated with necessary improvements such as road widening and addition of traffic lanes.

#### Narrative Requirements:

1. Describe the basic facilities requirements for accommodating your school plan, including number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, common areas, overall square footage, and amenities.
  - Identify any other significant facilities needs not already specified, including: playground, large common space for assemblies and other large group meetings, athletic facilities, and other special considerations (identify and explain).
2. Explain how the facility will meet the needs of students and provide an assurance that it will be accessible to students with physical disabilities.
3. For virtual schools, provide a plan for maintaining student records and school records, including financial records, at a designated central office of operations.
4. If a facility has been identified, include the address of the facility, a description of the facility, and the name and address of the owner of the facility.
  - If entering into a lease agreement, describe the material terms of the agreement. What specific buildout is required? What are those estimated costs?
  - A description of the planning committee's contingency plan should the lease or planned purchase fall through.
5. If a facility has not been identified, specify a plan for obtaining such a facility and include a description of the facility needs, a statement as to whether an existing facility will be remodeled or a new facility will be built, and a schedule for completing or obtaining a suitable facility and, if applicable, a description of and timeline for any plan to raise funds for completing or obtaining the facility.
  - A discussion of the planning committee's process for obtaining facilities.
6. A description how the school's facilities plan is aligned with the projected enrollment growth outlined in the charter application.



As the Gates School continues to search for a facility, we will consult with the SCDE Office of School Facilities' Best Practices for Site Selection and Planning and Best Practices for Instructional Space. We are cognizant of the importance of parking and traffic requirements.

We anticipate leasing a temporary space until we can either purchase an existing, larger building or have land donated where we can build from the ground up. The ideal scenario would include finding a space and renovate as a permanent site with enough surrounding property to expand during our proposed growth phase to capacity.

To fully implement our mission of serving students with dyslexia, space needs to accommodate general classroom activities, small group reading space, individual instructional support space, counseling space, cafeteria and general flex space and playground.

If a temporary site is necessary, the Gates School will ensure that both the temporary and permanent buildings are in compliance with the requirements set forth in the SC School Facility and Planning and Construction Guide for charter school occupancy and will accommodate at least 35 square feet per student.

A facility has not yet been identified. Presently there is a short list of options.

The Gates School has formed a facilities sub-committee, comprised of Planning Committee members, elected officials, well known community supporters, education specialists and those with prior experience building and developing schools.

At this time, our priority is that we will remodel a facility to fully suit the needs of dyslexic learners. We also anticipate raising private funds for the renovation. In order to develop a quality fundraising plan and timeline, a site needs to be confirmed, and renovation budget established. We have recruited Planning Committee members with experience in raising construction and renovation funds for charter schools.

Based on our proposed student enrollment, the building that we would initially require approximately 10,000 square feet. This amount of square footage would also provide enough space to extend the lease, if necessary into the following three years should we experience difficulty finding land and having a build-up facility completed in time or in finding a bigger permanent space to renovate. Based on the proposed maximum student population of 300 hundred students, our permanent building needs to be approximately 25,000 square feet. This square footage will accommodate 35 square feet per student, 17 total multi-use classrooms with enough square footage for 16 students per classroom, assembly space,

cafeteria space, flex/multipurpose and office space.

Appendix Item(s):

BB. Floor Plan of Identified Facility, including size in square footage (if applicable)

CC. Proposed Lease or Rental Agreement (if applicable)

DD. Documentation from the SCDE's Office of School Facilities (if applicable)

EE. Documentation from SCDOT School Traffic Engineering (if applicable)

### 3. Insurance Coverage

The application must include a description of the types and amounts of insurance coverage to be obtained by the charter school. The application must address, but is not limited to, the following types of insurance: workers' compensation, liability, property, indemnity, and automotive. **All requirements should be placed in the support documents.**

#### Narrative Requirements:

All requirements for this section will be in the support documents.



#### Appendix Items Information

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

## Appendix Items Information

The table below presents the appendix items that correspond to specific sections of the application. Applicants are encouraged to use this table to ensure that their application includes all required appendix items. Items in the table noted with \*\*, indicate they are required only if applicable.

The first support document is the Signature Certification Page. Print the Signature Certification Page (page 46) and obtain the appropriate signatures from the chair of the charter committee. Note: this form includes certification of the SCDE Statement of Assurances for Charter Schools. Retain the copy of the statement of assurances included in this document (pages 44-45) for your records and ensure that each signatory has a copy of the document. By signing the Signature Certification Page, the signatories assure

that they will comply with all the assurances for public charter schools in South Carolina. **The sponsor representative and the charter school committee chair will sign the bottom of this form after the school is approved.**

Once completed, include a copy per the instructions on page 5. **Applications that do not include the signed Signature Certification Page will not be reviewed or considered for approval.**

<b>Application Section</b>	<b>Appendix Item</b>
<b><i>Section I</i></b>	<b><i>Educational Plan and Capacity</i></b>
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 Disabilities	J. **Agreement with Sponsoring District
4. Goals, Objectives, and Assessment Plan	<i>No appendix items in this section</i>
<b><i>Section II</i></b>	<b><i>Organizational Plan and Capacity</i></b>
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
<b>Section III</b>	<b>Business Plan and Capacity</b>
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



## A. Signature Certification Page

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

# Statement of Assurances for Charter Schools

***For informational purposes only. The applicant certifies to abide by these assurances by signing and submitting the Signature Certification Page. Keep a file copy of both documents.***

**As the authorized representative of the applicant group, I hereby certify under the penalties of perjury that the information submitted in this application for [ (name of school) ] is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I understand that, if awarded a charter, the school and its governing board**

- A. Will comply with all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-40(2)(b)**
- B. Will not charge tuition or other charges of any kind except as may be allowed by the sponsor and is comparable to the charges of the local school district in which the charter school is located. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-40(2)(d)**
- C. Will adhere to the same health, safety, civil rights, and disability rights requirements as are applied to other public schools operating in the same school district or, in the case of the South Carolina Public Charter School District (SCPCSD) or a public or independent institution of higher learning, the local school district in which the charter school is located. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50(B)(1)**
- D. Will meet, but may exceed, the same minimum student attendance requirements as are applied to public schools. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50(B)(2)**
- E. Will adhere to the same financial audits, audit procedures, and audit requirements as are applied to public schools. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50(B)(3)**
- F. Will report to its sponsor and the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) documentation of the appropriate use of federal funds the charter school may receive.**

- G. Will use the same pupil accounting system as required of public schools and districts.**
- H. Will employ noncertified teachers in a ratio of up to 25 percent of its entire teaching staff (10 percent for conversion schools). All teachers in core academic areas will be highly qualified as defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50(5)**
- I. Will employ one administrative staff member who is certified or experienced in the field of school administration. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50(6)**
- J. Will be secular in its curriculum, programs, governance, and all other operations. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-40(1)**
- K. Will comply with the Freedom of Information Act. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50(10)**
- L. Will comply with the ESEA legislation and applicable provisions of the SCDE's ESEA waiver.**
- M. Will adhere to all provisions of reporting student truancy, discipline incidents, and persistently dangerous situations as required by ESEA.**
- N. Will assume liability for the activities of the charter school and will indemnify and hold harmless the school district, its servants, agents, and employees from any and all liability, damage, expense, causes of action, suits, claims, or judgments arising from injury to persons or property or otherwise which arises out of the act, failure to act, or negligence of the charter school, its agents and employees, in connection with or arising out of the activity of the charter school. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-60(F)(15)**
- O. Will report to its sponsor and the SCDE any changes to information provided under its application in a timely manner. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-140(H)**
- P. Will report at least annually to its sponsor and the SCDE all information required by the sponsor and by the SCDE, including, at a minimum, the number of students enrolled in the charter school, the success of students in achieving the specific educational goals for which the charter school was established, and the identity and certification status of the teaching staff. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-140(H)**
- Q. Will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 that are applicable. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50(B)(1)**
- R. Will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient (LEP), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal**

**Educational Opportunities Act of 1974. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-50(B)(1)**

- S. Will comply with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-63-235 (2004), which provides for the expulsion of any student who brings a firearm to school.**
- T. Will comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232).**
- U. Will comply with any school district desegregation plan or order in effect. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-60(F)(9)**
- V. Will adhere to all requirements of the Office of School Facilities as detailed in the Charter School Facilities Approval Form.**
- W. Understand that, as a charter, we gain autonomy to make decisions in exchange for accountability to our authorizer.**

**Signature Certification Page**

**Name of Proposed School**

Gates School

**Mailing Address (if known)**

TBD

**City**

TBD

**State**

South Carolina

**Zip Code**

TBD

**Name of Applicant Group**

Gates School Planning Committee

---

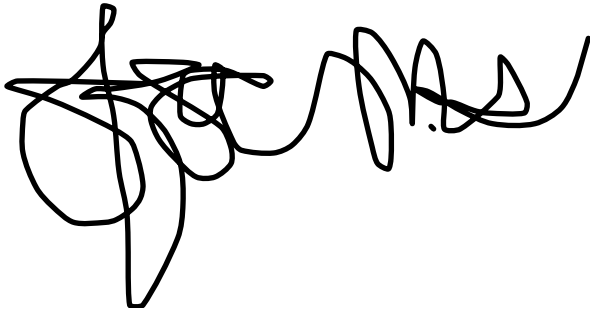
**Sponsor Name (local school district board, SCPCSD, or institution of higher education/technical college)**

Charter Institute at Erskine

**Certification:**

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information and data contained in this application are true and correct. The applicant's governing body has duly authorized this application and documentation, and the applicant will comply with the South Carolina Public Charter School Statement of Assurances if the charter school is approved.

**Signature of Charter School Committee Chair**

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Date**

Jan 28 2020



**Authorization:**

We hereby certify that this charter application has been duly authorized by the sponsor listed above. This authorization indicates that the terms of this application constitute a contractual agreement between the two organizations represented below pursuant to Section 59-40-60 of the South Carolina Charter School Act (1996). According to state and federal guidelines, charter schools must provide evidence of improved student academic achievement for all groups of students described in Section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Sponsors must use increases in student academic achievement for all groups of students described in Section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) of the ESEA as the most important factor when determining to renew or revoke a school’s charter. Each sponsor and charter school must enter a contractual agreement stating that student performance of all students described in Section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) of the ESEA is the most important factor when determining to renew or revoke a school’s charter. ***The sponsor representative and the charter school committee chair will sign below after the school is approved.***

**Charter School Committee Chair Name:**

Stephanie Sams

**Signature**

**Date**

Jan 28 2020


**Sponsor Representative Name:**

Charter Institute at Erskine

**Signature**

**Date**

Jan 28 2020

 **B. Evidence of Notification**  
**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

(if applicable) — In the case of the applicant applying to the SCPCSD or a public or independent institution of higher learning sponsor, the applicant, upon submission of a charter school application, shall provide notice of the application to the local school board of trustees in which the charter school

will be located for informational purposes only. The applicant shall also notify the local delegation of a county in which a proposed charter school is to be located and shall also provide a copy of the charter school application upon request by a member of the local delegation.

## Scan Receipts

**Filename:** Scan\_Receipts.pdf **Size:** 806.9 kB



## C. Evidence of Support

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

Letters or other documents indicating support from parents and the community (do not include a list of potential students). One method that may be used to protect the identity of potential students is to submit the information to an independent third party of the applicant's choosing and have them provide a notarized affidavit certifying that there is documented family interest in enrolling their child in the school.

## OGCC Letter of Support

**Filename:** Letter\_of\_Support\_for\_the\_GATES\_School.pdf **Size:** 65.7 kB

## MUSC Letter of Support

**Filename:** Gates\_School\_letter\_Kral.pdf **Size:** 106.7 kB

## Rep. Clary Letter of Support

**Filename:** Rep\_Letter\_Gates\_School\_-\_Stephanie\_Sams.pdf **Size:** 209.8 kB

## Summey Letter of Support

**Filename:** 1-6-20\_Summey\_to\_Charter\_Institute\_re\_EqRx1mQ.pdf **Size:** 1.5 MB

## Bailey Letter of Support

**Filename:** 2020-01-29\_08-22.pdf **Size:** 489.4 kB

## PCSASC Support Letter 012720

**Filename:** PCSASC\_Support\_Letter\_012720.pdf **Size:** 335.0 kB

## Sprouting Minds Letter of Support

**Filename:** CCE\_000006.pdf **Size:** 371.4 kB

## Jake Rambo Letter of Support

**Filename:** Jake\_Rambo\_Letter\_of\_Support\_.pdf **Size:** 94.3 kB

## LABCS Letter of Support

**Filename:** LABCS\_LOS.pdf **Size:** 897.8 kB

## Belk Letter of Support

**Filename:** Scan\_Marty\_Belk\_QNy4nP9.pdf **Size:** 255.4 kB

## Mayor Tecklenburg Letter of Support

**Filename:** 1.29.2020\_Support\_Letter\_for\_Gates\_School.pdf **Size:** 510.2 kB

## IDA Letter of Support

**Filename:** Scan\_IDA\_letter.pdf **Size:** 313.9 kB

## Hollinshead Letter of Support

**Filename:** Joe\_letter.pdf **Size:** 144.5 kB

## Parent Interest Forms Notarized

**Filename:** Parent\_Interest\_Forms\_Notarized.pdf **Size:** 101.5 kB



### D. Conversion School Support

**Incomplete**

(if applicable)—evidence that two-thirds of the faculty, instructional staff, and parents voted to support filing the application to convert the school from a traditional school to a charter school



### E. Private Schools

**Incomplete**

(if applicable) —evidence that the enrollment of the converted private school for the most recently completed school term before the date of the proposed conversion to a charter school reflects the racial composition of the local school district in which the converted private school is located



### F. School Calendar and daily schedule

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

School Calendar and daily schedule for the Academic year for each division of the proposed school (elementary, middle, and high as applicable); must reflect a minimum of 180 instructional days per year and six hours of instructional time per day, or its equivalent weekly (S.C. Code Ann § 59-1-425).

## Appendix F School Calendar

**Filename:** Appendix\_F\_School\_Calendar.docx\_-\_Google\_Docs.pdf **Size:** 60.7 kB

## Appendix F Gates Daily School Schedule

**Filename:** Appendix\_F\_Gates\_Daily\_School\_Schedule\_zxwViB8.pdf **Size:** 36.5 kB



### G. Supporting Documents

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

G. Supporting Documents for the described educational program – if needed, the applicant may include supporting documents to supplement their outlined educational program as “Appendix Item G”

## Appendix G - Wilson

**Filename:** Appendix\_G\_-\_Wilson.pdf **Size:** 1.8 MB

## Appendix G Leader In Me

**Filename:** Appendix\_G\_Leader\_In\_Me.pdf **Size:** 44.1 kB

## Appendix G Project Read

**Filename:** Appendix\_G\_Project\_Read.pdf **Size:** 1.3 MB

## Appendix G Math-U-See Curriculum

<https://www.youtube.com/user/mathusee/featured>



### H. List of Teaching Positions

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

List of Teaching Positions, grade(s), ad content areas the teachers will instruct and the required qualifications/certifications

## Appendix H Teaching Positions

**Filename:** Appendix\_H\_Teaching\_Positions\_kjXmeW1.pdf **Size:** 34.3 kB



### I. Virtual School List of courses

**Incomplete** - Hidden from applicant



### J. Agreement with Sponsoring District for Special Education Services

**Incomplete**

J. Agreement with Sponsoring District for Special Education Services (if applicable)



### K. Charter Committee

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

Charter Committee —resumes of charter committee members

## Appendix K Planning Committee Resumes

**Filename:** Appendix\_K\_Planning\_Committee\_Resumes\_.pdf **Size:** 23.5 MB



### L. Bylaws

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

Bylaws must reflect the SC Nonprofit Corporation Act and should clearly include:

- The election process of the governing board, including when elections will occur and the voting procedures. Procedures should include that parents/legal guardians will have one vote for each student enrolled in the school. In addition, each employee will have one vote.

- Detailed plan for dissolving the charter committee and instituting the first governing board. Procedures should specifically describe how nominations will be taken, when the vote will occur, how eligible voters will cast their ballots, and when training will be provided for these governing board members.
- Explanation of powers and duties, size, terms, composition, qualifications, term limits, officer positions and duties, election procedure, vacancy replacement, minimum number on the board, quorum and decision-making process, how board members are elected or appointed, and when this takes place.
- An explanation of the proposed board meeting frequency and focus, and the role of any standing subcommittees.
- A description of the relationship between the governing board and the school administrator, which includes the amount of authority the governing board will convey to the school administrator.
  - A statement that the proposed charter school and its governing body will comply with the FOIA.

## Appendix L Gates School Bylaws 1-11-20

**Filename:** Appendix\_L\_Gates\_School\_Bylaws\_1-11-20\_.pdf **Size:** 5.2 MB



### M. Articles of Incorporation and signed Certificate of Incorporation.

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

## Appendix M AOI Documents

**Filename:** Appendix\_M\_AOI\_Documents..pdf **Size:** 1.2 MB



### N. Organizational Chart

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

Organizational Chart (include school administration, employees, and the relationship to the sponsoring district).

## Appendix N Organizational Chart - Google Docs

**Filename:** Appendix\_N\_Organizational\_Chart\_-\_Google\_Docs.pdf **Size:** 56.8 kB



### O. EMO/CMO Documentation

**Incomplete** - Hidden from applicant

EMO/CMO Documentation:

1. Term sheet – for the proposed management of the charter school to include clear performance measures and contract severance provision(s)
2. Conflict of Interest Form(s) –for any individual of an EMO/CMO with which the planning committee plans to partner
3. Proposed EMO/CMO Management Agreement/Contract to include:

- i. the scope of services and costs of all resources to be provided by the EMO/CMO;
  - ii. the compensation structure and payment schedule, including clear identification of all fees, bonuses, and any other compensation to be paid to the EMO/CMO;
  - iii. the term (duration) of the management agreement? Explain the conditions and procedures (including time frames, notice, and decision-making procedures) for renewal and termination of the contract. How often will the management agreement be renewed; and
  - iv. the conditions that both the EMO/CMO and the school must satisfy for the management agreement to be renewed. On what grounds may the EMO/CMO or the school terminate the management agreement for cause, and without cause? List any indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.
4. Copy of EMO's/CMO's SC business license
  5. Draft copy of employee contract
  6. Copy of the EMO/CMO employee policy manual
  7. Evidence of the financial health of the EMO/CMO – include the most recent independent financial audit report of the organization and its most recent annual report.



## P. Sample job descriptions

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

Sample job descriptions (for administrators and key employees)

### Appendix P Gates School Job Descriptions

**Filename:** Appendix\_P\_Gates\_School\_Job\_Descriptions\_.pdf **Size:** 2.7 MB



## Q. School start-up plan

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

### Appendix Q Gates School Startup Plan Sheet1

**Filename:** Appendix\_Q\_Gates\_School\_Startup\_Plan\_Sheet1.pdf **Size:** 95.0 kB



## R. Letter of Agreement

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

Letter of Agreement from Sponsor Regarding Compliance with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-410 et seq. (2004), if applicable

### Appendix R - Letter of Agreement from Sponsor Regarding Compliance for Gates School

**Filename:** Appendix\_R\_-\_Letter\_of\_Agreement\_from\_\_4kJuk9.pdf **Size:** 60.2 kB



## S. Letter(s) from Sponsoring District Regarding Desegregation Plan or Order

**Incomplete**



### T. Draft Discipline Policy

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

A draft policy governing student conduct, student rights and responsibilities, and student discipline standards and procedures that meet state law. Include the hearing procedures for the charter board appeals process for students recommended for expulsion. Must also comply with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-63-235, which provides for the expulsion of any student who brings a firearm to school.

### Draft Discipline Policy

**Filename:** Draft\_\_Discipline\_Policy.pdf **Size:** 99.0 kB



### U. Transportation Services Contract

**Incomplete**

U. Transportation Services Contract (if applicable)



### V. Student Enrollment Projections Form

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

## Student Enrollment Projections Form

### Student Enrollment Projections Form

If the proposed charter school will not enroll students from one or more grade-level, please select the "N/A" option for that grade level.

### Name of Charter School

Gates School

## Student Enrollment Projections for 10-Year Charter

None None None None None None None None None None None None None None None

	N/A	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24	2024- 25	2025- 26	2026- 27	2027- 28	2028- 29	2029- 30	2030- 31
Pre-Kinder garten	✓										
Kinder garten	✗	0	0	0	0	20	20	25	25	25	33
First	✗	15	15	15	20	20	25	25	25	25	33
Second	✗	25	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	30	34
Third	✗	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	33	34	34
Fourth	✗	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	33	34	34
Fifth	✗	25	30	30	30	30	30	30	33	33	33
Sixth	✗	0	25	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	33
Seventh	✗	0	0	25	30	30	30	30	30	30	33
Eighth	✗	0	0	0	25	30	30	30	30	30	33
Ninth	✓										
Tenth	✓										
Eleventh	✓										
Twelfth	✓										



W. SCDE Per Pupil Estimate Review

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

Charter PPE

Filename: Charter\_PPE.pdf Size: 40.0 kB





## X. Five-Year Detailed Budget

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

(an [Excel](#) spreadsheet showing realistic assumptions and their basis, a cash-flow projection of operation, minimum enrollment needed for solvency, and adequate staffing that fits with the application narrative in educational plan and other related sections). **Do not save as a pdf.**

### Gates Appendix X - 5 Year Budget

**Filename:** Gates\_Appendix\_X\_-\_5\_Year\_Budget.xls **Size:** 276.0 kB



## Y. Ten-Year Budget Plan

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

Ten-Year Budget Plan (an Excel spreadsheet). Do not save as a pdf.

### Gates Appendix Y - 10 Year Budget

**Filename:** Gates\_Appendix\_Y\_-\_10\_Year\_Budget.xlsx **Size:** 20.9 kB



## Z. Memorandums of Agreement

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

Memorandums of Agreement for Negotiated Services (for any negotiated services to be provided by the sponsor or a third party, if applicable).

### Appendix Z MCK Info

**Filename:** Appendix\_Z\_MCK\_Info\_.pdf **Size:** 1.5 MB



## AA. Documentation of Any "Soft Funds"

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

Documentation of any "soft funds," such as grant money or donations that have been received or are likely to be received.

### Appendix AA - Documentation of Any Soft Funds for Gates School

**Filename:** Appendix\_AA\_-\_Documentation\_of\_Any\_Sof\_HKFWMa7.pdf **Size:** 20.8 kB



## BB. Floor Plan of Identified Facility

**Incomplete**



## CC. Proposed Lease or Rental Agreement (if applicable)

Incomplete



DD. Documentation from the SCDE's Office of School Facilities

Incomplete



EE. Documentation from SCDOT School Traffic Engineering

Incomplete



FF. Insurance Documentation

Completed - Jan 29 2020

The application must include a description of the types and amounts of insurance coverage to be obtained by the charter school. The application must address, but is not limited to, the following types of insurance: workers' compensation, liability, property, indemnity, and automotive. **All requirements should be placed in the support documents.**

Upload the following:

- Include a description of workers' compensation insurance and the amounts.
- Include a description of liability insurance and the amounts to be obtained by the charter school. The minimum policy must cover the limits of the South Carolina Tort Claims Act (S.C. Code Ann. § 15-78-120 (Supp. 2013)).
- Include a description of the insurance to cover loss to the school building and contents for fire and theft.
- Include a description of indemnity insurance against civil and criminal liability for the charter school to protect the sponsor, the members of the board of the sponsor, and the employees of a sponsor acting in their official capacity with respect to all activities related to the charter school.
- Include a description of automobile insurance and both property and liability insurance.
- Indicate whether the charter school will obtain any other type, or types, of insurance. For each type, include a description and estimated cost of coverage.
- Insurance Documents—for each type of insurance listed, a statement from a South Carolina-licensed insurance company or the state insurance reserve fund stating the charter school applicant's ability to secure the insurance and an estimate of the cost of the insurance, if available.

2020 GS Premium Estimate

Filename: 2020\_GS\_Premium\_Estimate.docx Size: 59.0 kB

Charter Institute at Erskine Sponsor Addenda Information



**Incomplete**

A charter school sponsor has the ability to request information in addition to the standard application requirements. This section contains the additional requests of the Charter Institute at Erskine. Please complete all Charter Institute Sponsor Addenda in the designated sections.

## Appendix Items Information

The Charter Institute at Erskine has requested the following addenda in addition to the standard application template. You will complete each addenda as an individual task in the subsequent sections.



**Charter Institute at Erskine Sponsor Addenda Responses**

**Completed** - Jan 28 2020

## Form for "Charter Institute at Erskine Sponsor Addenda Respo

# Application History Questionnaire

**To provide the board of directors for the charter institute at Erskine with all facts associated with your charter application, please provide the following:**

1) Has your planning team applied for a charter in the past? If yes, indicate what year, and how many times did you applied.

2) If your application was denied, please provide us a copy of the letter sent from the sponsor as an attachment in "Charter Institute at Erskine Addenda Attachments."

3) Have you ever been granted a charter by another sponsor? If yes, indicate what year.

4) Is the school still in operation? If yes, please provide the student academic performance and school financial statement based on the recent annual report as an attachment in "Charter Institute at Erskine Addenda Attachments."

5) If the previous charter was revoked, please provide a copy of the declaration letter(s) listing the reasons for revocation as an attachment in "Charter Institute at Erskine Addenda Attachments."

## New School Application Addendum

### Application History

1. Has your planning team applied for a charter in the past? If yes, indicate what year, and how many times did you applied.

No, the Gates School Charter Planning Committee has never applied before.

2. If your application was denied, please provide us a copy of the letter sent from the sponsor.

N/A

3. Have you ever been granted a charter by another sponsor? If yes, indicate what year.

No, the Gates School Charter Planning Committee has never been granted a charter before.

4. Is the school still in operation? if yes, please provide the student academic performance and school financial statement based on the recent annual report.

N/A

5. If the previous charter was revoked, please provide a copy of the declaration letter(s) listing the reasons for revocation.

N/A

## Church and State Compliance

If the school plans to enter into a contract or lease agreement with a church or other religious organization, please respond to the following questions with as much detail as possible. If a question is not applicable, please indicate in your response the reason that the question does not apply.

1. Is there a church or other religious organization connected to the school building?

2. What proportion of the School's planning committee/governing board are also officers, board

members, or employees of the church or other religious organization? Also, what proportion of the School's planning committee/ governing board are members of the church or other religious organization?

3. Will there be any shared time programs with the church or other religious organization?

4. If the church or other religious organization is connected to the school building, does the school building have a separate entrance? Is the separate entrance clearly marked and identified?

5. Will there be any religious symbols, pictures, or statues in the school building? Will there be any religious symbols, pictures, or statues in the classrooms and common areas used by school students?

6. Does the church or other religious organization conduct any programs in the building during school hours? If so, will those programs and the school share common areas in the building or at the building site (e.g., bathrooms, teacher's lounge, playground, or lunchroom)?

7. Does the school have its own signage separate from the church or other religious organization to indicate that it is not organized by or affiliated with the church or other religious organization?

8. Does the school and church or other religious organization plan to share employees, textbooks, or services such as food services and transportation?

9. Is the school parking lot separate from the church or other religious organization parking lot?

10. Is the school being operated or organized by the church or other religious organization? Will the school have any organization, ties, or affiliations with the church or other religious organization that would be prohibited by state and federal constitutional laws?

11. Will there be any other tenants occupying the school building? If so, please list those additional tenants by name (including church or other religious organization personnel).

12. Are there any provisions in the proposed lease agreement requiring the school to teach or promote religion?

13. Describe how the school's planning committee/governing board will notify the general public that the school is a public school and that it is not operated by or affiliated with a church or other religious

organization.

14. Is the agreed rental rate comparable to that being charged for structures of similar size in the same geographical location?

15. Did the school search for other potential sites? If so, please describe the search efforts.

16. Is the church/religious organization building used for any other public functions?

17. Does the lease agreement include any restrictions on the school's curriculum or activities?

18. Are any restrictions or conditions imposed by the church/landlord or lease relating to what kind of clubs or other religious groups can be at the school?

#### Charter Institute at Erskine New School Application Addendum

#### Church and State Questions

1. If the school plans to enter into a contract or lease agreement with a church or other religious organization, please respond to the following questions with as much detail as possible. If a question is not applicable, please indicate in your response the reason that the question does not apply.

2. Is there a church or other religious organization connected to the school building?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

3. What proportion of the School's planning committee/governing board are also officers, board members, or employees of the church or other religious organization? Also, what proportion of the School's planning committee/governing board are members of the church or other religious organization?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

4. Will there be any shared time programs with the church or other religious organization?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

5. If the church or other religious organization is connected to the school building, does the school building have a separate entrance? Is the separate entrance clearly marked and identified?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

6. Will there be any religious symbols, pictures, or statues in the school building? Will there be any religious symbols, pictures, or statues in the classrooms and common areas used by school students?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

7. Does the church or other religious organization conduct any programs in the building during school hours? If so, will those programs and the school share common areas in the building or at the building site (e.g. bathrooms, teacher's lounge, playground, or lunchroom)?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

8. Does the school have its own signage separate from the church or other religious organization to indicate that it is not affiliated with the church or other religious organization?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.



9. Does the school and church or other religious organization plan to share employees, textbooks, or services such as food services and transportation?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

10. Is the school parking lot separate from the church or other religious organization parking lot?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

11. Is the school being operated or organized by the church or other religious organization? Will the school have any organization, ties, or affiliations with the church or other religious organization that would be prohibited by state and federal laws?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building. Therefore, Gates School is not being operated by a church or other religious organization.

12. Will there be any other tenants occupying the school building? If so, please list those additional tenants by name (including church or other religious organization personnel).

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building. There is consideration of a closed public school building that may house another tenant in addition to Gates School but Gates School does not have a site at this time.

13. Are there any provisions in the proposed lease agreement requiring the school to teach or promote religion?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

14. Described how the school's planning committee/governing board will notify the general public that the school is a public school and that it is not operated by or affiliated with a church or other religious organization.

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

15. Is the agreed rental rate comparable to that being charged for structures of similar size in the same geographical location?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School.

16. Did the school search for other potential sites? If so, please describe the search efforts.

Gates School Planning Committee is actively searching for a possible site with the help of a local realtor; we have looked at one site that is currently owned by Charleston County School District but we have not considered a contract at this time.

17. Is the church/religious organization building used for any other public functions?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building. The site at which we have looked is a closed public school building.

18. Does the lease agreement include any restrictions on the school's curriculum or activities?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school building.

19. Are any restrictions or conditions imposed by the church/landlord or lease relating to what kind of clubs or other religious groups can be at the school?

Not Applicable: At this time, Gates School Planning Committee has not found a site for Gates School and is not considering facilities that have a religious organization connected or affiliated with the school

building.

## Racial Composition

Ensuring comparability in student composition to the resident district of the pro-posed school location is critical. Beyond the narrative and requirements of other sections of the standard application, the Institute is seeking specific information around the school's plans to comply with this law.

1. Please provide enrollment plan details that pertain to satisfying this particular requirement. This should include information on marketing and recruitment that may be distinct for diverse populations, as well as ongoing efforts that will be implemented beyond school opening to ensure these levels of compliance are maintained. Consideration should be given to school plans for monitoring composition and adjusting efforts if noncompliance occurs.

2. Above and beyond application requirements related to transportation: ensure this section of your submission specifies solutions to potential transportation barriers that may exist for all student groups and families to access your school.

3. Include information about your plans for offering food services to students enrolled in your school. This should include your decisions to utilize a vendor or provide unsubsidized meals, participate in services with an area School Food Authority (SFA), or plans to become a SFA. Your proposal should also include information for food services to students who forget or may be unable to provide a meal.

### Racial Composition

1. Please provide enrollment plan details that pertain to satisfying this particular requirement. This should include information on marketing and recruitment that may be distinct for diverse populations, as well as ongoing efforts that will be implemented beyond school opening to ensure that these levels of compliance will be maintained. Consideration should be given to school plans for monitoring composition and adjusting efforts if noncompliance occurs.

The Gates School is committed to serving the diverse population that comprises the South Carolina Lowcountry. The most recent census data reveals that the racial composition of the Berkley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties is comprised of approximately 64% white, 28% Black, 5% Hispanic and 3% other. Considering the large pool of students that comprise these Counties, it is notable that there are almost 12,000 students with disabilities that have IEPs. Considering that specific reading disability (dyslexia) is one of the most commonly identified learning disabilities, and that dyslexia is considered to have a genetic etiology, the incidence of dyslexia should be the same across all racial and ethnic groups. Consequently, it is imperative that the enrollment of the Gates School reflect the proportional representation of the diverse population it strives to serve.

Consistent with what we have outlined in Section II, 5., on Enrollment, we have proposed an ambitious community outreach plan to attract all students who would profit from attending the Gates School. In addition to the fourteen different outreach strategies itemized in Section II, 5. we will specifically reach out individually to each of the AME and Catholic churches in the three County Lowcountry as these churches are most likely serving the Black and Hispanic communities. In our outreach contact we will ask permission to hold an information sharing session where we discuss the purpose of the Gates School, the characteristics of the students who have dyslexia and offer information on possible enrollment. This effort will take considerable human resources but with each member of the Planning Committee reaching out to ten schools each this should be accomplished prior to the beginning of school in the fall of 2021. As part of this effort we will try and recruit a well-respected community member, not necessarily a member of a particular church, to personally accompany us or provide an appropriate introduction. Additionally, we will reach out by way of local newsletters or newspapers that target these communities as a way to announce informational meetings.

The success of these and other efforts noted in Section II, 5., should facilitate our success in having enrollments that mirror the diversity of the population that will be served by the Gates School.

2. Above and beyond application requirements related to transportation, ensure this section of your submission specifies solutions to potential transportation barriers that may exist for all student groups and families to access your school.

The Gates School currently has no plan to provide buses and drivers or contract for transportation services. However, should a student's IEP mandate that transportation be provided, we will comply in accordance with appropriate state requirements as outlined in the South Carolina School Bus Driver's Handbook, the Code of Laws of South Carolina (specifically Title 23, 56 and Title 59) and the Board of

Education Regulation for School Transportation: Regulations 43-80 (Code 56-67-10 through 59-67-710). Because the Gates School's primary focus is on students with dyslexia or primary reading disability, and because co-occurring mobility problems are rare in students with a primary reading diagnosis, it is anticipated the need for transportation services will not be a frequent occurrence.

While the Gates School will not provide transportation, the Gates School will work to facilitate communication between and among parents who may be interested in a "car pool" or "taking turns" transporting students to and from school. However, the Gates School will not be responsible for initiating or maintaining such informal agreements between parents. It is important to note that the use of employee or a volunteer's private vehicle will be prohibited by the Gates School Board of Directors. However, emergency circumstances will be dealt with on an individual basis with the principal having sole responsibility for making decisions for the use of an employee or volunteer's use of a private vehicle for transportation in such cases.

3. Include information about your plans for offering food services to students enrolled in your school. This should include your decisions to utilize a vendor or provide unsubsidized meals, participate in services with an area School Food Authority or plans to become an SFA. Your proposal should also include information for food services to students who forget or may be unable to provide a meal.

The Gates School will not initially provide breakfast or lunches prepared at the school as it is anticipated that the students will bring their lunches with them from home or purchase lunches delivered from contracted sites. Since the location of the Gates School is yet to be finalized, potential contracted sites for the provision of lunch have not yet been contacted. Children who qualify for a free lunch will have their lunch provided at no cost while those that qualify for a reduced lunch will have their lunch provided at a reduced cost.

# Alternative Education Campus (AEC) Programming

South Carolina's law allows each school, with its authorizer's approval, to request designation as an Alternative Education Campus (AEC). AECs are defined as schools that have a specialized mission and serve either a special need and/or an at-risk population, where more than 50% of students have either an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 85% of students meet the definition of a high-risk student.

1. Identify the particular high-risk student population or populations your school will be focused on serving. Be sure your application specifically addresses how your recruitment and marketing will reach the high-risk student populations required for designation.
2. Describe how the proposed model is scalable, measurable, and sustainable at its proposed size, and with consideration of any independent or wraparound supports and services.
3. Include goals and objectives to supplement your application goals that specifically address evaluation of student engagement.
4. Detail how the proposed model will address student transition and/or student readiness for post-completion activity and success.
5. Provide evidence of compliance with requirements related to the establishment of an AEC in accordance with Section 59-40-111. Additional state information can be found here: <https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/student-intervention-services/alternative-schools/>.

## AEC Programming

1. Identify the particular high-risk student population or populations your school will be focused on serving. Be sure your application specifically addresses how your application specifically addresses how your recruitment and marketing will reach the high-risk student populations required for designation.

Consistent with our Mission and Vision, the Gates School strives to open the gates to academic success

for underserved dyslexic learners. As a public charter school for students in grades 1-5, the Gates School will serve students with a primary diagnosis of dyslexia and reading challenges in the Lowcountry area.

The Gates School will broadly serve the South Carolina Lowcountry as Charleston, Berkeley and Dorchester Counties have a large pool of students in grades 1 – 5 as evidenced by the most recent headcount data taken in July 2019 as among Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester (2) Counties, there are almost 12,000 students with disabilities who have IEP's.

The Post and Courier reported on August 20, 2018 that 4,059 third grade students failed the reading test administered by the state. This is a serious concern as National studies have shown that students who struggle with reading by the end of third grade have significantly lower graduation rates. In fact, 35% of these students do not graduate and for students of color the rate is a staggering 65%.

The Gates School will use a multi-pronged marketing plan for recruitment. Considering the large number of at-risk students reflected in these demographics, it seems evident that the schools are better equipped for early detection, testing and referral. Concurrent to reaching out to the schools in the Lowcountry, the Gates School will also provide training to teachers and school staff on early detection and information about how best to serve students at risk for a formal diagnosis of dyslexia.

#### LEVEL 1: OUTREACH TO PROVIDERS & NETWORK

Community outreach and publicity are critical when opening a new school. The Gates School Planning Committee reached out to the local Greater Charleston chapter of the Decoding Dyslexia organization, the SC chapter of Decoding Dyslexia and the SC chapter of the International Dyslexia Association. We have received immense support and these organizations have allowed us to promote the school and let families and tutors know of our goal to open in the fall of August 2021. We have also reached out directly at various venues. For example, we had an information table at the SC International Dyslexia Association Tennis Social in September 2019 and in November the Gates School Planning Committee staffed an information booth at the SC International Dyslexia Association Conference held in Mt. Pleasant. Furthermore, the IDA-SC website keeps a tab under their news section so interested parents or teachers can learn about Gates School. We have shared our mission with the Orton-Gillingham Center of Charleston and they are highly supportive of our endeavor. Finally, we have reached out and continue to develop strong relationships with professionals who conduct the educational testing, specifically those who's testing is used to determine if a diagnosis of dyslexia is warranted. These professionals will be able to refer students to Gates School.

All of these outreach and public information efforts were aimed at making the larger community aware of

the intention to launch the Gates School and to make ourselves known to a larger audience of those touched by dyslexia and related language-based learning challenges.

## LEVEL 2: GENERAL COMMUNITY AWARENESS

The Gates School has conducted a number of community informational meetings about the formation of a dyslexia-specific public charter school in the Lowcountry. Members of the Gates School Planning Committee attended these meetings and spoke about the challenges students at risk for dyslexia experience and the need for a public charter school to address their unique educational and social needs. At these community meetings and online, parents completed a parent interest form for the formation of Gates School. We will continue this successful endeavor.

Social media response to Gates School has been and remains strong. Gates School has a website ([www.dyselxiacharter.org](http://www.dyselxiacharter.org)) and an active Facebook page (Gates School). Email updates on the progress of the Gates School are sent regularly to parents who have completed interest forms. The Committee intends to continue with community meetings throughout the planning year and remains confident that the first year's capacity will be met. The committee is planning a "walk in the shoes" event for late spring 2020 in which we will raise awareness for dyslexia in general and more specifically for the Gates School.

Since it is estimated that one in five individuals are dyslexic, it is not uncommon to strike up a conversation with someone about language-based learning challenges and to hear that they or someone they know has struggled with reading, writing, and spelling. Such conversations have garnered awareness of and support for the Gates School, and members of the Planning Committee have been wholly intentional about using such conversations as a form of outreach. Word of mouth is a powerful form of publicity. Therefore, we have met with members of a number of educational institutions, churches and social organizations and provided them with information for them to pass on to their networks. It is highly probable that they know families with a child with dyslexia or related language-based learning challenges and for whom the Gates School would provide an ideal educational experience. We have also been in touch with directors of the major nonprofits in the area to let them know about our mission to empower students to discover and to use their unique abilities to acquire the skills and self-confidence necessary to achieve academic, career and personal goals. We will soon schedule presentations at the meetings of area service organizations (Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, etc.) to make as many people as possible aware of the specialized instruction that the Gates School will provide so that dyslexic learners can find scholastic and personal success.

## LEVEL 3: EDUCATION & AWARENESS

Dyslexia does not discriminate on economic background nor race. However, the resources and



knowledge of resources in these areas have been less than sufficient. As such we have reached out to elected officials, churches and organizations in various lower economic neighborhoods with the goals of creating a better understanding of dyslexia, understanding early detection as well as providing information on resources and of the intended launch of the Gates School.

Finally we have researched the marketing efforts of other charter schools as well as schools for students with dyslexia. We are incorporating the best practices into our marketing plan.

2. Describe how the proposed model is scalable, measurable and sustainable at its proposed size, and with consideration of any independent or wraparound supports and services.

The Mission of the Gates School is to serve students with dyslexia. The population of students with dyslexia is significant and is not likely to decline. For example, the International Dyslexia Association estimates that “about 13-14% of the school population has a handicapping condition that qualifies them for special education. Current studies indicate that one half of the students who qualify for special education are classified as having a learning disability (LD) (6-7%). About 85% of those students have a primary learning disability in reading and language processing. Nevertheless, many more people – perhaps as many as 15-20% of the population as a whole – have some of the symptoms of dyslexia, including slow or inaccurate reading, poor spelling or mixing up similar words.”

Given these widely recognized data regarding the incidence of dyslexia in the school-aged population as well as data related to the number of students with tri-county IEPs, we are confident that we will meet, if not exceed, our enrollment projections. The population of unidentified and likely under-served students with dyslexia supports the conclusion that the need for such a school as the Gates School will continue and not diminish over time.

During our extensive budget preparations (Five-Year Detailed Budget, Three-Year Cash Flow and Ten-Year Budget Plan), we have based projections, not only on “reasonable estimates that reflect choices throughout the rest of the application”, but those estimates (assumptions) also stand on relevancy, reliability, and are therefore, realistic and lend support of our conservative growth plan.

At the Gates School our first priority is to deliver a solid evidence-based and individualized multi-sensory educational program that produces measurable academic results. Additional programs and services will be added with the increase in students and revenue.

3. Include goals and objectives to supplement your application goals that specifically address evaluation of student engagement.

The Gates School strives to assist South Carolina in reaching academic excellence by improving student learning, increasing learning opportunities for students, creating new professional opportunities for teachers, and creating new, innovative, and more flexible ways of educating children within the public school system, with the goal of closing the achievement gaps between low performing student groups and high performing student groups.

Gates School's goals, objectives and assessments reflect and support the school's mission of providing an exceptional, evidence-based, multisensory education for students with dyslexia. The goals of Gates School indicate rigorous instruction and notable rates of achievement; however, it is essential to be mindful of the characteristics of the students who make up the measured group. Students with severe reading disabilities and students with milder forms of reading problems have been the subjects of long-term research on the causes and treatments of reading failure. The first important finding is that most students with reading disabilities can be taught to read, at least adequately, and many can become proficient readers. Longitudinal studies cited earlier in this application support this conclusion. In this regard, it has been estimated that after three to four years of intensive, evidence-based instruction a student's reading fluency and comprehension will approach that of a typical learner's reading. While it is true that students who are poor readers can make significant gains, it is also true that most tend to remain slow readers. That is why some common and fair accommodations for students with reading disabilities include extra time on tests, shortened reading assignments, and supplemental use of audiotaped materials.

Goal 1: Gates School Charter School students will demonstrate increased academic performance and mastery of SC College and Career Ready Curriculum Content Standards in core subject areas during each year of the school's operation.

Goal 2: Through consistent and accurate implementation of evidence-based practices of instruction and support, Gates School will assist each child to increase leadership, pro-social behaviors, and to reduce or eliminate behaviors that interfere with learning.

Goal 3: Gates School Charter School students will demonstrate increased competence in their use of technology and increased mastery of student standards adopted from International Standards for Technology Education (ISTE) by SC STEM aligned standards.

Our goals are not arbitrary nor are they unrealistic. With thorough planning and with consultation with other charter schools as well as with schools for students with dyslexia across the United States, the

Gates School will use evidence-based instruction, set high but achievable goals and aspires to be the model for other schools in the region and state.

4. Detail how the proposed model will address student transition and/or student readiness for post-completion activity and success.

For schools serving students with dyslexia, great care and attention is given to transition- from transitioning into the school and its unique program, to setting and reaching academic achievement goals to ensuring readiness for post-completion success.

At the Gates School, transition is not a one-time event, an assembly that students and their families attend. Transition is inherent day-to-day. The following framework is implemented at Gates School with fidelity and in a rigorous manner with a primary focus on reading, writing, reading fluency and reading comprehension to ensure that all students will find success.

- High-quality, scientifically based classroom instruction. All students receive high-quality, research-based instruction in the general education classrooms.
- Ongoing student assessment. Universal screening and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement, both individually and in contrast to the peer group. These data are then used when determining which students need closer monitoring or intervention. Throughout the process, student progress is monitored frequently to examine student achievement and gauge the effectiveness of the curriculum. Decisions made regarding students' instructional needs are based on multiple data points taken in context over time.
- Leveled instruction. A leveled approach is used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students. Gates School incorporates increasing intensities of instruction offering specific, research-based interventions matched to student needs. Every student has a 55-minute Fundamentals of Reading through Orton- Gillingham (FROG) class. FROG-2 level students receive small group instruction with others who are achieving at similar levels and progressing at similar rates. FROG-3 level students require more intensive instruction and interventions, have Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and are taught by a Special Education teacher.

Through the School's specially designed educational program with its interventions, tier system, and closely monitored student performance data, as discussed in this application, many students will no longer slip through the proverbial cracks, but instead, will trip or trigger a system designed to initiate the evaluation process for specialized services. And reflecting this commitment to on-going monitoring,

evaluation and individualized educational programming, the school will provide the services of an academic counselor who will ensure that each student's progress is monitored such that when they are ready to transfer to another school to begin the ninth-grade studies they are not only academically well prepared but that a complete individualized educational plan accompanies them into their new educational environment.

5. Provide evidence of compliance with requirement related to the establishment of an AEC in accordance with Section 59-40-111. Additional state information can be found here: <https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/student-intervention-services/alternative-schools/>.

Consistent with the provisions of the South Carolina Charter School Act of 1996, and specifically Section 59-40-111, the Gates School will serve students 1-8th grade who have an identified specific learning disability in reading (dyslexia). More specifically and reflective of the provisions noted under Section 59-40-50 (B.7.), the students attending the Gates School will have a demonstrated need for specialized, evidence-based educational services as documented by their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or by way of "documentation that the student is not meeting grade-specific standards in literacy as documented by the student's school" (Section 59-40-50 [B.7.]). Consequently, it is certain that more than 50% of the students enrolled in the Gates school will have an IEP consistent with the provisions noted for an AEC.



## Charter Institute at Erskine Sponsor Addenda Attachments

**Completed** - Jan 29 2020

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