

Application to the Missouri Charter Public School Commission

Respectfully submitted by:

Kansas City Girls Preparatory Academy's Founding Board of Directors

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Missouri Charter Public School Commission
20 South Sarah Street
St. Louis, MO 63108

Missouri Charter Public School Application Cover Sheet Form

NAME OF PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL

Kansas City Girls Preparatory Academy

NAME OF NOT-FOR-PROFIT 501(C) (3) ORGANIZATION THAT WILL HOLD THE CHARTER

Kansas City Girls Preparatory Academy

PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON

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TITLE/RELATIONSHIP TO NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Founder

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EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDER (IF APPLICABLE)

Not applicable

PHYSICAL ADDRESS OF SCHOOL (IF KNOWN)

To be determined

DISTRICT IN WHICH THE SCHOOL WILL BE LOCATED

Kansas City Public Schools

INTENDED OPENING SCHOOL YEAR FALL 2019

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

	GRADE LEVEL	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT		GRADE LEVEL	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT
SCHOOL YEAR 1	5	100	SCHOOL YEAR 6 *	5 - 10	590
SCHOOL YEAR 2	5 - 6	200	SCHOOL YEAR 7 *	5 - 11	671
SCHOOL YEAR 3	5 - 7	300	SCHOOL YEAR 8 *	5 - 12	744
SCHOOL YEAR 4	5 - 8	400	SCHOOL YEAR 9 *	5 - 12	744
SCHOOL YEAR 5	5 - 9	500	SCHOOL YEAR 10 *	5 - 12	744

AT FULL ENROLLMENT THIS SCHOOL INTENDS TO SERVE GRADE LEVELS 5 TO 12 WITH A PROJECTED TOTAL ENROLLMENT OF 744.

APPLICATION CERTIFICATION

I certify that I have the authority to submit this application and that all information contained herein is complete and accurate.

I recognize that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocations after award. The person named as the contact person for the application is so authorized to serve as the primary contact for this application on behalf of the organization.

SIGNATURE



TITLE/ROLE

Founding Board Chair

DATE

March 27, 2018

PRINTED NAME

Christine Kemper

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Executive Summary

KCGPA will be the first single-gender, open-enrollment charter public school in Kansas City. It will enroll 100 fifth grade girls beginning in Fall 2019 and grow one grade per year to form a 5th - 8th grade middle school and a 9th - 12th grade high school.

KCGPA will create a small-school atmosphere, where families, students, and staff will build the close and supportive relationships essential to developing young women who are self-directed, high-achieving, and committed to supporting one another.

KCGPA will be an affiliate of the Young Women's Leadership Network (YWLN), a network of all-girls schools founded over two decades ago that has ensured college access for thousands of young women from low-income neighborhoods. In service of its core values of equity, community, and growth, KCGPA will build on YWLN's model to create a space where young women develop their voice and build the academic skills and knowledge to go wherever they want in life.

KCGPA addresses a community need for more opportunities for young women in neighborhoods that have been negatively impacted by historical de jure segregation and contemporary de facto segregation. KCGPA will serve young women living in the Kansas City Public Schools district boundaries, with a geographic preference for students from zip codes with the largest gap between demand for and supply of quality schools.

To ensure every student can achieve at high levels, KCGPA will partner with families and its community to build a strong network of support for every student. In particular, KCGPA seeks to serve students with special educational needs exceptionally well, including students with learning disabilities and students who speak a language other than English at home. KCGPA's program will foster a strong community, confidence-building identity development, and a rigorous, college-bound academic culture, including:

- *More time.* An extended school year and longer day will provide 32% more time for learning.
- *No tuition, fees, or admissions exams.* KCGPA will recruit and enroll girls of all academic abilities.
- *Rapid literacy growth.* Students will be immersed in rich texts in all classes and will receive daily personalized support to ensure they grow as readers faster than they could imagine.
- *Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM).* STEAM classes will build conceptual understanding and interdisciplinary connections in content areas that open doors to a vast array of future opportunities for young women.
- *Social and Emotional Learning.* A daily advisory will ensure a tight-knit, trusting community where young women can challenge and support one another to be their best selves.
- *High quality teachers who are always learning.* Teachers and leaders will engage in 30 full days of professional development per year, not including weekly professional development sessions on an early-release day, weekly coaching, and weekly collaboration with colleagues to design rich learning experiences for students.

KCGPA's founding team is inspired by the incredible growth and achievement that students attain when embraced by a school that ensures high expectations through high support. The team is excited to share this opportunity with the young women who will serve as Kansas City's next generation of leaders.

**Technical Review Check List
Information Required by Missouri State Law**

Statute	Description	Page Numbers
160.400.2 160.400.4 160.400.5	Located in an eligible district	34-39
160.400.3 160.403	Sponsored by an eligible sponsor	Pending
160.400.7, .8, Charter 355	Missouri non-profit	52-53, Appendices B.1.1, B.1.2, B.1.3
160.400.11	Sponsorship fees are in budget	65, Appendices C.1.1, C.1.4
160.400.14	Criminal background checks and family care safety registry conducted for all members of governing board	53, Appendix B.1.5
160.400.15	No board members hold office or is an employees of the school; or provides services	Appendices B.2.2, C.2.2
160.405.1	Submitted and approved by sponsor	Pending
160.405.1	Submitted copy of application to local school district within five business days	Appendix B.1.6
160.405.1	Performance contract (covering 160.400-160.425, 160.349)	Pending
160.405.1.(1)	Mission and vision statement for charter	9-12
160.405.1.(2)	Description of the organizational structure	56-58, Appendices B.3.1, B.3.2, B.3.3
160.405.1.(2)	Bylaws of governing body	Appendix B.1.2
160.405.1.(2)	Description of parent, professional educator, community involvement in governance and operations	62-64
160.405.1.(3)	Financial plan for first three years of operation	65-68, Appendices C.1.1, C.1.2, C.1.3, C.1.4
160.405.1.(4)	Description of policy for securing personnel services	67-78, Appendix B.3.4
160.420.3.	Personnel employed by charter school shall participate in the retirement system of the school district	59, Appendix B.3.4
160.405.1.(4) 160.420.1 160.420.2	Personnel policies, including right to remain an employee of the district and non employ instructional personnel with revoked or suspended license	59, Appendix B.3.4
160.420.2	Noncertificated instruction personnel limited to 20%	59
160.405.1.(4) 160.415.2	Personnel qualifications	59-60, Appendix B.3.3
160.405.1.(4)	Professional development plan	23-27
160.405.1.(5)	Description of grades and ages of students served	34-39

Statute	Description	Page Numbers
160.405.1.(6)	School calendar of operation, at least equal to 160.011	33-34, Appendix A.4.1
160.405.1.(7)	Description of pupil performance standards	27-33
160.405.1.(7) 160.405.4 (6)	Description of academic program performance standards including indicators, measures, metrics and targets;	27-33, Appendix A.7.1
160.405.1.(7)	Indicators, measures, metrics and targets for academic program performance	27-33, Appendix A.7.1
160.405.1.(7) 160.405.1.(8)	Goals on graduation, standardized tests and academic growth	Appendix A.7.1
160.405.1.(9)	Description of charter school's educational growth program and curriculum	14-27
160.405.1.(10)	Five year term for the charter	53
160.405.4. (4) 160.405.1.(11)	Procedures for monitoring financial accountability of charter consistent with MO financial accounting manual	65-66, Appendix C.2.3
160.405.1.(12)	Health, safety and other legal requirements	58-60, Appendices B.3.4, C.2.4
160.405.1.(12)	Description of student discipline policy	46-52, Appendix A.8.2
160.405.1.(13) 160.410.1. 160.410.2. 160.410.3. 160.415.11	Description of student admission policy, including no tuition, no fees beyond what school district is prohibited	Appendix B.5.3, B.5.4
160.405.1.(13)	Description of student admission policy for students with disabilities	Appendix B.5.3, B.5.4
160.405.1.(14)	Description of the school's grievance procedures for parents and guardians	Appendix B.6.2
160.405.1.(14) 160.405.8 160.405.9	Charter School Agreement detailing sponsor intervention, revocation of charter	Pending
160.405.1.(15) 160.405.16.(6)	Closure procedures	Appendix D.2.1
160.405.1.(15) 160.405.16.(6)	Closure procedures include transition of student records	Appendix D.2.1
160.405.1.(15) 160.405.16.(6)	Closure procedures include archival of business operations	Appendix D.2.1
160.405.1.(15) 160.405.16.(6)	Closure procedures include transfer or repository of personnel records	Appendix D.2.1
160.405.1.(15) 160.405.16.(6)	Closure procedures include submission of final financial records	Appendix D.2.1
160.405.1.(15) 160.405.16.(6)	Closure procedures include resolution of any remaining financial obligations	Appendix D.2.1
160.405.1.(15) 160.405.16.(6) 160.405.1.(17)	Closure procedures include disposition of charter school assets	Appendix D.2.1

Statute	Description	Page Numbers
160.405.1.(15) 160.405.16.(6)	Closure procedures include notification plan to parents, district, retirement, state board of education	Appendix D.2.1
160.405.1.(16)	Description of special education and related services available	39-46
160.405.4.(1)	Nonsectarian in programs	59, Appendix B.3.4
160.405.4.(1)	Nonsectarian admissions policies	Appendix B.5.3, B.5.4
160.405.4.(1)	Nonsectarian employment practices	59, Appendix B.3.4
160.405.4.(1)	Nonsectarian operations	59, Appendix C.4.1
160.405.4.(2)	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on health	58-60, Appendices B.3.4, C.2.4
160.405.4.(2) 167.115-167.117	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on safety	58-60, Appendices B.3.4, C.2.4
160.405.4.(2) 160.261 167.161 167.164 167.171	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on minimum educational standards	27-33, Appendix A.3.1
167.518	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on academic assessment	27-33, Appendix A.3.1
167.020.	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on transmittal of student records	62, 68, Appendix C.2.4
160.041	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on minimum school days and hours	33-34, Appendix A.4.1
168.133 160.420.2	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on employee criminal history background checks and family care safety registry; all employees	53, Appendix B.1.5
160.405.4.(4)	LEA complies with all requirements of ESSA as it relates to federal audit requirements	65-66, Appendix C.2.3, C.2.4
160.405.4.(4)	Debt included in repayment plan in financial plan	Appendix C.1.1
160.405.4.(5)	Provide a comprehensive instructional program for at least one grade or age group, K-12	Appendix A.2.3
160.405.4.(5)	Provide a comprehensive instructional program for at least one grade or age group, early childhood - OPTIONAL	n/a
160.405.4.(6)(a) 160.514	Design a method to measure pupil progress toward pupil academic standards	27-33
160.405.4.(6)(a) 160.514	Establish baseline student performance in performance contract during the first year	27-33
160.405.4.(6)(a)	Collect student performance data	27-33
160.405.4.(6)(a) 160.518	Participate in the statewide assessment	27-33

Statute	Description	Page Numbers
160.405.4.(6)(a) 160.522	Complete and distribute annual report card as prescribed	32
160.405.4.(6)(a) 160.410	Provide data required for the student of charter schools	32, Appendix C.2.4
160.405.4.(7) 162.670-162.710 IDEA Section 504	Comply with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding student with disabilities	39-46
160.405.4.(8)	Documentation a copy of the application was submitted to local district	Appendix B.1.6
160.405.4.(8)	Statement outlining reasons for approval by sponsor related to 160.400-160.425 and 167.349	Pending
160.405.14.(1)	Chief financial officer maintains a surety bond	67, Appendix C.4.2
160.405.14.(2)	Chief financial officer maintains an insurance policy	67, Appendix C.4.2
160.415.1	Collect and report average daily attendance, free and reduce lunch, special education and limited English proficiency pupil count	Appendix C.2.4
For high risk or alternative schools		
160.405.4.(6)(b)	Performance measures based on mission, curriculum, teaching methods and services	Appendix A.7.1
160.405.4.(6)(b)	Comprehensive academic and behavioral measures to determine student meeting performance standards on a different and specified time frame	27-33, 39-46
160.405.4.(6)(b)	Annual report shall include comprehensive measures of student progress	32
160.405.5.(1)	May include alternatives for students to obtain credit	n/a

A: Educational Plan

A.1: Mission, Vision, Philosophy and Goals

Kansas City Girls Preparatory Academy (KCGPA) respectfully proposes the launch of a new Local Education Agency serving young women in a 5th-8th grade middle school and a 9th-12th grade high school. If approved, KCGPA will enroll 100 5th grade students in Fall 2019 and will add one new 5th grade cohort per year thereafter.

Mission

Through a small-school atmosphere, families, students, and staff will build the close and supportive relationships essential to developing young women who are self-directed, high-achieving, and committed to supporting one another.

Vision

In 2015-2016, only seven open-enrollment schools within the Kansas City Public Schools boundaries had more than half of students proficient in math and reading.¹ For students who take college-entrance exams, scores fall far below requirements for competitive admissions.² These burdens are borne disproportionately by low-income communities of color in Kansas City.³

KCGPA seeks to ensure that young women growing up in neighborhoods negatively impacted by de jure and de facto racial segregation⁴ achieve equitable educational outcomes. Too often, young women living in segregated neighborhoods – and especially young women of color – do not have access to equitable educational opportunities.⁵ KCGPA aims to change this reality.

KCGPA will establish a school community that prepares students not just for academic and career success, but also ensures that young women from underserved communities develop the knowledge, skills, and agency to define for themselves what a meaningful, impactful life will be, and to act in service of the values and equity-focused critical lens that they've developed within their school community.

Five years into the future, KCGPA will have grown to grades 5-9 and begun offering college preparatory high school programming. It will have developed a reputation for strong community engagement, a trusting and caring culture, and supportive, rigorous academics. The school community of families, students, staff, and partners will celebrate one another's successes, support learning from failures, and feel an ever-growing sense of possibility as strong academic results confirm the potential of every young woman. The school will have a reputation as a premier option for students with disabilities and/or with limited English proficiency, who the school will serve with excellence.

Ten years into the future, KCGPA's first two classes of students will have graduated high school and matriculated to competitive colleges and universities. They will be experiencing success and navigating

¹ Missouri Comprehensive Data System. <https://mcds.dese.mo.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

² "The Conditions for Success: Ensuring Great Public Schools in Every Neighborhood." Education Cities Presentation to the Missouri State Board of Education. 2014.

³ "Putting Performance on the Map Locating Quality Schools in the Kansas City, Missouri School District." IFF. 2010. <http://www.iff.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/IFFKCRReportFINAL.pdf>

⁴ Briana O'Higgins. How School and District Boundaries Shaped Education In Kansas City." *KCUR*. June 27, 2014. <http://kcur.org/post/how-school-and-district-boundaries-shaped-education-kansas-city#stream/0>

⁵ Center for Public Education. "Educational Equity What does it mean? How do we know when we reach it?" <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/educationalequity>

hurdles with the supportive relationships they grew with one another and KCGPA's staff. These alumnae will return to KCGPA to inspire young women following in their footsteps. They will share their excitement as they prepare to serve as Kansas City's next generation of leaders in medicine, law, business, public service, engineering, education, and countless other fields.

Educational Philosophy and Core Values

KCGPA's philosophy is informed not just by a desire to redress injustices, but also by a deep belief in the potential of every young woman to achieve at incredibly high levels when nurtured by a program founded in shared values of Equity, Community, and Growth. These three core values serve as both the foundation of all programming and the lens through which the KCGPA team measures success.

KCGPA's founding team believes that achievement of the mission depends on engaging families and community stakeholders to collaboratively develop and sustain the high expectations and supports that will ensure young women achieve their potential. KCGPA therefore seeks to achieve equitable academic outcomes through a tight-knit, diverse community and a growth-oriented culture where every family, staff, and student feels embraced by supportive relationships that help them to move with purpose towards becoming their best self.

Equity

KCGPA believes that equitable outcomes can be achieved through the development of a diverse community of students and families with an intentionally inclusive culture. The culture of this community will be driven not only by a shared desire for equitable outcomes, but by an abiding belief in the value of equity itself – that we must open our eyes to past and current inequities and work together to address them.

KCGPA believes that a community driven by a shared belief in equity and a commitment to equitable outcomes can be served well through the structure of an open-enrollment, single-gender model. It is important to note, however, that KCGPA does not pursue a single-gender model because it subscribes to biological theories of different learning styles by sex any more than it subscribes to biological theories of different learning styles by race.⁶ Gender and race matter in schooling not because girls and girls of color learn differently; gender and race matter because of normative social and cultural beliefs that often obstruct the progress of young women, and especially young women of color.⁷ A large and growing body of research documents how teachers' stereotypes of race and gender shape damaging expectations for academics, behavior, and future potential for female students and students of color.⁸

These beliefs play a prominent role not just in the classroom, but across entire school systems. These beliefs are often implicit⁹ because they are embedded in assumptions about who deserves resources

⁶ Lise Eliot. "The Myth of Pink and Blue Brains." *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 68, No. 3. Nov. 2010.

⁷ Beverly Tatum. *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria: And Other Conversations About Race*. BasicBooks. 1997.

⁸ Jamilia J. Blake, Bettie Ray Butler, and Danielle Smith. "Challenging Middle Class Notions of Femininity: The Cause for Black Females' Disproportionate Suspension Rates." *Closing the School Discipline Gap: Research to Practice*. Daniel Losen ed., forthcoming; Seth Gershenson, Stephen B. Holt, and Nicholas Papageorge, "Who Believes in Me? The Effect of Student-Teacher Demographic Match on Teacher Expectations." W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. 2015. http://research.upjohn.org/up_workingpapers/231/; Ulrich Boser, Megan Wilhelm, and Robert Hanna. "The Power of the Pygmalion Effect: Teachers Expectations Strongly Predict College Completion." Center for American Progress. October 6, 2014.

⁹ Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, The Ohio State University. "2016 State of the Science:

and support, whether they be via course offerings or behavior management practices.¹⁰ The fact that beliefs are often implicit does not reduce their impact across a wide range of factors, including disproportionate rates of suspension in Missouri,¹¹ inequitable access to qualified and effective teachers,¹² and wage gaps for African American, Hispanic, and white women earning just 64 cents, 55 cents, and 78 cents to the dollar that a white, non-Hispanic male earns, respectively.¹³ Tragically, the confluence of these pernicious beliefs can even be seen in life expectancies that are 8-14 years shorter in Kansas City's low-income neighborhoods than its high-income neighborhoods.¹⁴

These stigmatizing beliefs clearly have life-altering impacts. KCGPA will embrace its core value of equity to directly challenge them. KCGPA will ground staff and student understanding of issues of equity in a theory of difference proposed by Stuart Hall, where "race is more like a language than it is like a way in which we are biologically constituted." Hall describes how "floating signifiers" like religion, skin color, language, gender, and a host of other classifications shape people's expectations of themselves and of others, very often without their conscious awareness that this is happening.¹⁵ To succeed in its mission, KCGPA's families, students, staff will engage in an ongoing, mutually supportive dialogue to embrace the value of equity and the struggle to understand, challenge, and fundamentally reshape limiting beliefs and expectations.

Community

KCGPA will reinforce its foundational belief in equity by cultivating a trusting, supportive, and tight-knit community where young women construct their sense of self and of purpose. In the words of Cesar Chavez: "We need to help students and parents cherish and preserve the ethnic and cultural diversity that nourishes and strengthens this community – and this nation." KCGPA believes that the best way to develop confident, independent young women who see their diversity as an incredible asset and can lead in and outside of their communities is to engage their community in their education.

KCGPA will serve young women in 5th - 12th grade to help them navigate a critical stage in their identity development.¹⁶ Social and Emotional Learning, which has been shown to have significant, positive, and long-term impacts on "mental health, social skills, and academic achievement,"¹⁷ will be supported through a daily advisory and integration into core curricula.

KCGPA will also constantly measure its progress through the lens of its belief in the power of

Implicit Bias Review." 2016. kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/my-product/2016-state-of-the-science-implicit-bias-review

¹⁰ Lisa Delpit. *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*. New York. The New Press. 1995.

¹¹ Sarah Martin-Anderson. "School Suspension as a Determinant of Health." Presentation for Kansas City School Suspension Summit. September 6, 2017.

¹² United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights. "Dear Colleague Letter: Resource Comparability." October 1, 2014. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-resourcecomp-201410.pdf>

¹³ "A Look at the Wage Gap for African American Women in 20 States." National Partnership for Women and Families. January 9, 2013. www.nationalpartnership.org

¹⁴ United States Census Bureau. *2011-2015 American Community Survey*. 2016. census.gov/programs-surveys/acs

¹⁵ Stuart Hall. *Race, the Floating Signifier*. DVD. Sut Jhally. 1997.

¹⁶ Melissa Johnson. "Girls In-Between: Social, Emotional, Physical, and Sexual Development in Context." *Women's Reproductive Mental Health Across the Lifespan*. Springer International Publishing. Switzerland. 2014.

¹⁷ Rebecca D. Taylor, Eva Oberle, Joseph A. Durlak, Roger Weissberg. "Promoting Positive Youth Development Through School-Based Social and Emotional Learning Interventions: A Meta-Analysis of Follow-Up Effects." *Child Development*, Volume 88, Issue 4, July/August 2017.

community. Organizations often operate with implicit or assumed values.¹⁸ KCGPA will engage students, families, and staff in an ongoing discourse around where the values are being lived out – and where the school is falling short. KCGPA’s belief in community drives a commitment to working with the school’s community to achieve the mission. Please see Section A.2: Curriculum and Instruction and Section B.6: Parent/Guardian, Community, Higher Education, and Employee Involvement for more information.

Growth

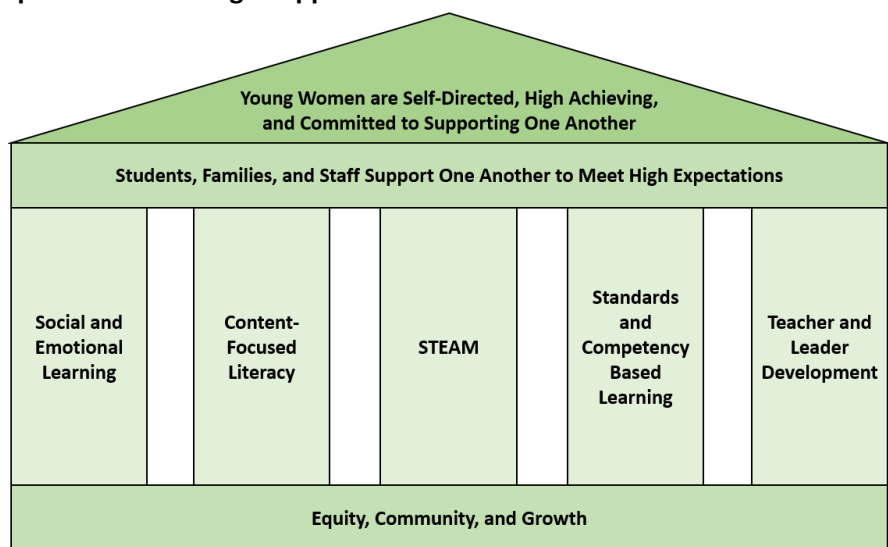
KCGPA’s team also believes fundamentally in the power of a growth mindset and an excitement in the constant journey to learn and grow. This belief is grounded in research. Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck has shown that a strong growth mindset can be more predictive of success in life outcomes than a high IQ.¹⁹ She defines a fixed mindset as a belief that “basic qualities, like... intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits.” People with this mindset “spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them.” This contrasts with a growth mindset, wherein “people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work... [which] creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.”

KCGPA’s founding team recognizes that most people have a blend of fixed and growth mindsets. They may perceive their ability to develop friends through a growth mindset lens, whereas they may perceive their math abilities through a fixed mindset. For all members of KCGPA’s community, development of this growth mindset will support their near-term academic and personal growth while building the habits of mind for long-term success. All KCGPA students and staff will believe that every experience is a learning opportunity and that every single student can learn at high levels with effective, strategic effort.

Programming Overview: High Expectations and High Support

The “house” graphic at right summarizes KCGPA’s model.

Core values are the foundation, with equity as the fundamental reason for KCGPA’s existence and the lens through which KCGPA engages its community and develops growth mindsets. Five pillars of the model grow from these values, supporting shared, high expectations and achievement of the mission.



1) *Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)*. In the

context of a single-gender environment, students will connect with one another through daily advisories, curricular integration, and Personalized Learning Plans to develop vulnerability-based trust, self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and a strong sense of purpose. Staff will also engage in SEL to internalize the learning they will lead for students and to model the core value of Growth. KCGPA will incorporate families in

¹⁸ Glenn Singleton. *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*. Corwin. 2005.

¹⁹ Carol Dweck. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Ballantine Books. 2007.

design to ensure that learning goals are supported by all adults in our young women's lives.

- 2) *Content-focused literacy.* All students will experience rich, constant instruction in literacy that prioritizes the development of content knowledge alongside skill development. These practices will be especially critical for KCGPA's English Language Learners and students with special with disabilities. Rapid literacy growth requires both mastery of foundational skills and increasingly rich content knowledge over time. For that reason, students will engage in daily Balanced Literacy to build foundational skills through guided reading and personalized learning. At the same time, students will engage in a Humanities class that connects English Language Arts and Social Studies/History content through grade level, complex texts. Texts will support the development of a critical lens for examining the intersectional power dynamics of gender, race, and other signifiers. STEAM classes will also use rich nonfiction texts to build knowledge. All teachers will engage in significant, ongoing development in literacy instruction.
- 3) *Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM).* KCGPA's STEAM curriculum will focus on helping students master the four domains articulated in the Next Generation Science Standards and the National Core Art Standards. STEAM learning will be inquiry-based, rely on content-focused literacy development, and emphasize principles of scientific thinking and interdisciplinary connections with students' math learning. Students will engage in an integrated Science, Technology, and Engineering class alongside mathematics and Fine Arts classes. They will see that derivatives and integrals in calculus grow from the same conceptual tree as slope and will be able to connect their mathematical thinking to analysis of population density changes in biology.
- 4) *Standards and competency-based learning.* Staff, students, and families will use standards and competency-based curricula and assessment to focus on the progression of a student's mastery of key knowledge and skills rather than the hours they've spent in their seat. An extensive network of data driven supports will address both advanced and struggling students' learning needs, including targeted whole group and small group instruction, Personalized Learning Plans, and tutoring.
- 5) *Teacher and leader development.* KCGPA's leaders and teachers will benefit from 30 full days of professional development each year. In addition, they will engage in weekly professional development, instructional coaching, and peer collaboration. All professional development will be grounded in collaborative, cyclical work with standards, competencies, assessments, curriculum, and student work. To sharpen staff's knowledge and skills through this collaborative learning structure, KCGPA will rely on a network of external experts and active collaboration with other high-performing urban schools.

Performance Goals

KCGPA will be governed by a Board of Directors who will steward the vision and mission of the school. The Board will have the responsibility of defining, communicating, monitoring, and ultimately ensuring the success of the school's performance goals. While KCGPA will use a host of different goals and measures to monitor its progress, its mission is driven by three priority goals:

- 1) *Equitable Community:* At least 75% of members of numerically significant subgroups enrolled at KCGPA for three consecutive years will achieve academic growth and proficiency scores equivalent to other subgroups within the school.
- 2) *Growth in Academics:* At least 75% percent of students enrolled at KCGPA for three consecutive years will achieve Proficient or Advanced status in all assessed subjects on the Missouri Assessment Program.
- 3) *Equitable Outcomes of College Access and Success:* KCGPA alumnae's four-year college completion rate will be above the national average for all students and at least four times the national average for students from similar economic backgrounds.

Capacity of the Founding Team

KCGPA has the capacity that is required to achieve its mission. The school’s founding team brings insights from having managed, governed, and led for results in some of the highest performing urban public schools in the U.S. Members of the Board have direct experience with public school finance, nonprofit and education law, and governance, as well as a distinguished record of service in the Kansas City community. The team has demonstrated long-term commitment to the mission of equity and student success. For more information, please see Appendix B.2.1: Bios of Founding Team.

To ensure success, KCGPA will also leverage its affiliation with the Young Women’s Leadership Network (YWLN), a nonprofit that supports two life-changing programs: The Young Women’s Leadership Schools and the College Bound Initiative. In 1996, Kansas City native Ann Tisch founded the U.S.’s first public all-girls school in thirty years, The Young Women’s Leadership School of East Harlem. The success of the flagship school has inspired the opening of dozens of single-gender schools nationwide. KCGPA will benefit from affiliation with YWLN, including:

- Onsite support from network experts, including mentoring for school leadership
- Professional development and professional learning communities
- Academic and advisory curricula
- Support and guidance in the recruitment and hiring of leadership and staff

Through its affiliation with YWLN, the School will build upon a proven model that results in high levels of student achievement, including the following college-bound outcomes over more than 20 years:

- More than 95% high school graduation rate
- Near 100% college acceptance rate with the majority accepted into four-year colleges
- A nearly \$20,000 average student aid package annually

KCGPA’s founding team has adopted a research-based approach to school design, which is outlined in Appendix A.1.1: Research-Based Design Approach. For an overview of the individuals and schools who have influenced KCGPA’s design, please see Appendix A.1.2: Key Influencers on KCGPA’s Design and Appendix A.1.3: High-Performing Schools that Influenced KCGPA’s Design.

A.2: Curriculum and Instruction

Overview

KCGPA recognizes that the choice and implementation of curricula is fundamental to teacher and student success. Chingos and Whitehurst state that “the choice of instructional materials has large effects on student learning—effects that rival in size those that are associated with differences in teacher effectiveness.”²⁰ This section overviews instructional models, pedagogical approaches, and curriculum choices, then discusses the role those elements play in staff development.

In keeping with its core value of equity, KCGPA’s curriculum will weave together Social and Emotional Learning and academic knowledge and skills to ensure that young women take leadership, collaborate effectively, appropriately assert and support their opinion, and develop a critical lens for analyzing power dynamics that exist in the intersections of gender, race, and other signifiers. These practices will be supported throughout the curriculum in service of the school’s mission of ensuring that young women are self-directed, high-achieving, and committed to supporting one another.

²⁰ Chingos, Matthew M. and Grover J. “Russ” Whitehurst. “Choosing Blindly: Instructional Materials, Teacher Effectiveness, and the Common Core.” Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings. 2012.

Two Phases: Middle School for Foundations and High School for Acceleration

KCGPA’s curriculum will be designed to meet the educational needs of young women with unlimited potential who will likely come to KCGPA one or more years behind grade level. In 2016-2017, for example, primary schools located in KCGPA’s priority zip codes had average proficiency rates on the Missouri Assessment Program of 37% in ELA, 26% in math, and 19% in science. For more detail, please see Section A.5: Target Population and Appendix A.5.1: Academic Results and Demographics for Schools in KCGPA’s Priority Zip Codes, School Year 2016-2017.

KCGPA therefore anticipates that students will encompass a broad spectrum of needs for academic development, ranging from students who struggle with and dislike school, to students who have immigrated as refugees with little or no formal schooling, to students who are above grade level and hungry for more challenge. To ensure that students will graduate on a successful path to college, KCGPA divides its approach to curriculum into two phases:

- In grades 5-8, curricula will emphasize the mastery of core academic standards with a strong focus in literacy, numeracy, and Social and Emotional Learning. Curricula will simultaneously build foundations while also preparing students for the intellectual demands of a college preparatory high school program.
- In grades 9-12, curricula will become increasingly specialized and content-driven in preparation for success in Advanced Placement classes and advanced learning opportunities such as internships or early college classes.

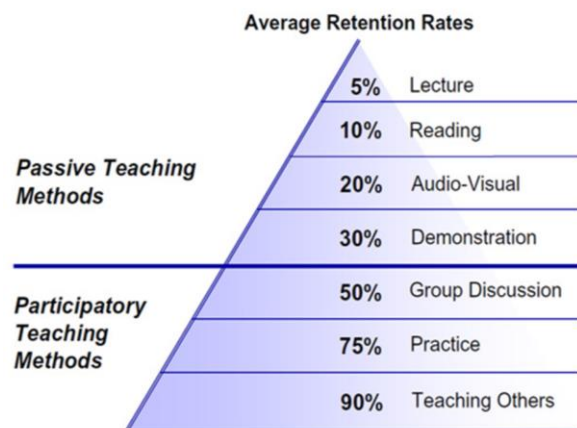
Instructional Methods to Deliver the Curriculum

KCGPA’s overall instructional philosophy will be consistent across all classrooms. KCGPA believes that all students can learn at high levels, and that it is therefore critical that staff collaborate to internalize and apply research-based practices that benefit all students, especially students with disabilities (SWD) and students who are English Language Learners (ELL).

KCGPA will support consistency and vertical alignment by grounding all instruction in common curricula and a data-driven, “assessment for learning” approach. To ensure clear intended learning outcomes, KCGPA will use benchmark “Destination Assessments.” These assessments will focus teachers and students on essential knowledge and skills while providing data for instructional improvement. They will fall into two categories: external assessments (e.g. NWEA MAP) and internal assessments (e.g. ACT-aligned interims or an essay). Section A.3: Assessing Student Performance provides additional detail.

To prepare students for the rigor of these Destination Assessments, KCGPA will seek to engage students in participatory teaching methods, outlined in the graphic at right.²¹ To support these participatory methods, KCGPA will use instructional models that ensure all students develop a thorough grounding in content and skills with the ultimate goal of application and synthesis via discussion, practice, and collaborative learning. Teachers will choose from the following instructional models based on student need, standards, and the rigor of the Destination Assessment.

- *Whole Group Direct Instruction.* Students will



²¹ Adapted from National Training Laboratories, a leader in the application of applied behavioral science.

learn foundational skills and knowledge in heterogeneous groups, guided by the facilitation of a teacher and/or co-teachers.

- *Small Group Direct Instruction.* Students will learn in homogenous groups to address skills or knowledge that are particular to the needs of that group. This structure will be especially important for the rapid development of literacy and numeracy foundations as well as for targeted support of SWD and ELL students.²²
- *Personalized Learning.* Students will drive their own learning through goal-setting and independent practice.²³ This structure will:
 - Maximize students' autonomy and ownership of learning, which is especially helpful for students with special needs to develop their wayfinding and executive functions
 - Maximize students' ability to monitor their own progress
 - Create flexible opportunities for students to get lots of "at bats" with knowledge and skills they have not yet mastered
 - Leverage teachers for higher order conceptual and shared learning rather than relatively mundane tasks like generating and tracking student progress on a math problem set
- *Collaborative Learning.* Students will collaborate with others to drive their collective learning, build habits of discussion, and practice for application-level assessments and Expeditions
- *Tutoring.* KCGPA will develop partnerships with nonprofits, businesses, and/or universities to offer a high volume of individual tutoring services to students.

Pedagogical Approaches to Ensure Mastery

KCGPA will develop teachers in universal pedagogical principles that ensure high engagement, support, and rigor whether in whole group or personalized instructional models. The following strategies are prioritized to ensure that students with disabilities, students with limited English language proficiency, and students "at-risk" of academic failure meet the high standards that are set at KCGPA.

Help Students Until They Master It. Students learn at varying rates. KCGPA believes in Growth and the potential of all students to meet high standards. KCGPA will therefore be prepared to support students regardless of the pace at or style in which they learn until they reach mastery, via:

- Clear, engaging, high-quality lessons fostered by a low student to teacher ratio
- Station rotations through small group, collaborative, and personalized learning models
- Pull-out and push-in support from Learning Support Specialists for SWD and ELL students
- Extended block schedule that allow for sustained practice before shifting to a new cognitive task
- Increased learning time relative to traditional schools
- Additional services such as counseling, speech, and occupational and physical therapy
- Tutoring

Caring Relationships. Feeling known, cared for, and respected is a prerequisite to the sense of personal value and wellbeing necessary for learning. To maintain a "small feel" and develop an intentional community, KCGPA will operate as distinct middle and high school academies, each employing a strong daily advisory structure to foster a feeling of belonging in a tight-knit community. Staff will have ample time and support for building relationships with students. Together, students and staff will meet

²² Walqui, Aida and Leo van Lier. *Scaffolding the Academic Success of Adolescent English Language Learners: A Pedagogy of Promise.* WestEd. 2010.

²³ Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, K-12 Education Team. *Continued Progress: Promising Evidence on Personalized Learning.* 2015. <http://k12education.gatesfoundation.org/resource/continued-progress-promising-evidence-on-personalized-learning/>

challenges and come to see that with shared, hard work they can surpass any obstacle.

Help students envision a bright, inspiring future. Research indicates that children who have a clear and positive image of their futures are better able to overcome the hurdles that being born into low-income communities can place before them.²⁴ KCGPA will continuously engage students in college and career learning opportunities to ensure they internalize an equitable vision of their own future and the growth mindset to connect their work at KCGPA to the development of knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in these institutions. This message will be reinforced through:

- Frequent learning about and reference to inspiring leaders, universities, and career paths
- Connections with speakers, mentors, and tutors from universities and area businesses
- Field trips to museums, local and national parks, and universities
- Expeditions, internships, and study abroad programs

Foundational Texts to Ensure Equitable Pedagogical Practices. All KCGPA's teachers will be developed using Zaretta Hammond's *Culturally Responsive Teaching and The Brain* and Aida Walqui and Leo van Lier's *Scaffolding the Academic Success of Adolescent English Language Learners*, both during summer professional development and throughout the year. These texts provide a strong grounding in principles of teaching and learning that drive equitable communities and outcomes. Teachers will also leverage tools described in the *Teach Like a Champion* taxonomy to support high levels of cognitive engagement.

Provide Structure and Order. KCGPA believes that all students have a right to a safe and orderly school. Creating an environment in which teachers can focus on students' priority needs and students can focus on learning and mutual support is essential to our mission. We will therefore hold students to high, clear expectations for academics and behavior. Please see Section A.8: Culture and Climate for more detail.

Curriculum by Content Area

Final decisions about curricular materials will be the responsibility of the founding School Leader during the pre-opening year, which will include residencies in high-performing schools to observe best practice. For an outline of proposed course content, please see Appendix A.2.1: Curriculum Overview. In all its curricular choices, KCGPA will consider:

- Student diagnostic information, gathered via collaboration with potential feeder schools
- Suitability for English Language Learners and special education students
- Coherence within a STEAM framework
- Opportunities for Social and Emotional Learning
- Opportunities for the development of a positive self-concept for young women

Balanced Literacy: Foundational Literacy Skill and Content Knowledge Development

To foster its value of Growth and to address a wide range of literacy needs (See Section A.5: Target Population), KCGPA will provide balanced literacy instruction that supports students at their individual level. These classes will be coupled with grade level, content-focused work in Humanities (English and Social Studies/History) and in Science, Technology, and Engineering (STE). These three classes will work together: Balanced Literacy will differentiate for rapid skill development while the Humanities and STE classes will ensure equitable access to content knowledge through complex, grade level text.

²⁴ E. Werner, "Resiliency in Development." *Current Directions in Psychological Science*. June 1995.

KCGPA will monitor student literacy development via the Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress (STEP) assessment from the University of Chicago. Students struggling with foundational skills like phonemic awareness and decoding will receive a program-based reading intervention (e.g. Wilson Reading) during Balanced Literacy class five days a week. In keeping with research that shows the impact of content knowledge on comprehension,²⁵ students who are significantly behind grade level will receive scaffolded support to fully participate in the Humanities and STE classes even if they cannot yet access the texts independently. During Balanced Reading class, students will benefit from the supports below:

- Explicit instruction in phonics and word study via a competency-based progression, moving from phonemic awareness to phonics to word study
- Explicit instruction in fluency and practice through repeated reading
- Vocabulary instruction in specific word meanings and effective strategies to attack unfamiliar words to address three Tiers of vocabulary: (1) everyday words heard in conversation, (2) academic vocabulary such as vary, calibrate, and saunter, and (3) domain-specific vocabulary.
- Shared reading and close reading to study text in order to uncover both its inherent meaning and how the author produced that meaning
- Remediation and acceleration through guided reading
- Listening and speaking through shared, guided, and close reading that teaches students to use academic discourse to express their idea about text and use evidence to support them.²⁶
- Personalized learning and independent reading to ensure multiple opportunities for writing, explicit vocabulary instruction, phonics, and grammar through personalized learning programs.
- Literacy centers and stations to give students time to practice new skills

As young women develop more reading independence, they will engage in increasingly layered academic discourse grounded in text. Extension activities include an emphasis on written responses to literature, in which students use writer's notes and/or Post-Its to track their thinking about the text. This activity promotes student metacognition and provides teachers with powerful instructional data. Literacy centers, combined with personalized learning and guided reading, will provide each student with a differentiated reading experience that effectively works to accelerate reading proficiency.

Humanities and Science, Technology, and Engineering: Literacy Focused on Domain-Specific Content Knowledge Development

The foundational metacognitive reading skills developed in the Balanced Literacy block are critically important. Because knowledge of a text's topic has a greater impact on comprehension than a student's generalized reading ability,²⁷ KCGPA will also focus on building student knowledge in concert with their foundational skills through content-rich Humanities and STE classes.

A key strategy in this effort will be the use of text sets focused on a single topic. Research demonstrates that students who read a set of conceptually coherent texts demonstrate more knowledge of the concepts in and target words in their texts than students who read a set of unrelated texts.²⁸ In fact,

²⁵ Walter Kintsch. *Comprehension: A Paradigm for Cognition*. Cambridge University Press. 1998.

²⁶ Deborah A. Goff, et al. "The Relations between Children's Reading Comprehension, Working Memory, Language Skills and Components of Reading Decoding in a Normal Sample." *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 18 No. 7-9. Dec. 2005.

²⁷ Recht, D. R., & Leslie, L. "Effect of prior knowledge on good and poor readers' memory of text." *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 1988; Willingham, D. T. "How knowledge helps." *American Educator*. Vol, 30, No. 1. 2006.

²⁸ Cervetti, G., Jaynes, C., & Hiebert, E. "Increasing opportunities to acquire knowledge through reading." *Reading More, Reading Better*. The Guilford Press. 2009.

students can acquire vocabulary up to four times faster when they read texts on the same topic.²⁹ For example, students may read a series of texts focused on sustainable fisheries management, each of which contributes to students' knowledge base of biology, ecology, commercial fishing practices, and government's regulatory role. Depending on the texts, tasks, and students' needs, these texts could be used to support a Humanities unit on the role of government or a STE unit on ecology. The following two sections outline how these classes deepen student knowledge and skills in their respective disciplines.

Humanities

KCGPA will combine the disciplines of English Language Arts (ELA) and Social Studies/History because of fundamental agreement with the assertion of the Common Core State Standards that when literacy and content are integrated, learning becomes more meaningful and authentic. Just as importantly, a content-focused approach to literacy development also builds the knowledge needed to comprehend complex, grade level text.³⁰ In the Humanities block, students will:

- Master grade level standards from the MLS for English Language Arts & Literacy and the MLS for Social Studies through shared and close readings of grade level texts and authentic documents
- Develop written and oral responses to text and build writing, speaking, and listening skills and knowledge

To integrate ELA and Social Studies standards, KCGPA will explore rigorous ELA curricula like EL Education's ELA modules and incorporate Social Studies units from sources like the Edward Brooke Charter Schools, a set of high-performing urban schools that use a similar Humanities structure. Units will be selected to ensure alignment with the MLS for Social Studies, provide opportunity for high-level academic discourse in speaking and writing, engage all students with complex text, and support the positive identity development and exploration of the power dynamics in the intersections of gender and race to support young women in achieving the school's mission.

To support deep content and standards mastery, students will consistently produce writing that is clear, well-developed, and compelling. While students will do significant volumes of writing in all their classes, their writing will find its fullest expression in the Humanities class. Writing workshop will support students to engage with sophisticated ideas in class texts as they in turn develop their own writing. KCGPA will avoid over-reliance on teaching set formulas for any genre of writing. Formulaic writing is not fun to read or write, nor does it support students' internalization of the deeper logical structure inherent in effective writing. Instead, students will develop a writer's identity and see themselves as young women who have important things to say and powerful stories to tell.

Through writing workshop, KCGPA will help students to understand that writing is a process and that they will only become good at it if they do it often. Students will write daily. Within writing workshop, a lesson will typically begin with a short analysis of pre-written work (created by a peer, published author, or teacher) and a discussion about what the author did to make that piece of writing effective. Next, students will apply their learning to their own work during an extended independent writing block. Teachers will confer with students individually or in small groups, providing targeted, transferrable feedback. Consistent, high quality writing conferences lead to tremendous growth throughout the course of a year and provide students with the confidence necessary to keep going when they struggle.

²⁹ Landauer, T. K., & Dumais, S. T. "A solution to Plato's problem: The latent semantic analysis theory of acquisition, induction, and representation of knowledge." *Psychological Review*. 199.

³⁰ Achievethecore.org. "Text Complexity." <https://achievethecore.org/page/2725/text-complexity>

Science, Technology, and Engineering (STE)

KCGPA's STE curriculum will focus on helping students master the four domains articulated in the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS): physical sciences, life sciences, earth and space sciences, and engineering, technology and applications of science. STE will be inquiry-based, rely on content-focused literacy development, and emphasize principles of scientific thinking and interdisciplinary connections with students' math learning. Students will see that derivatives and integrals in calculus grow from the same conceptual tree as slope and rate of change and will be able to connect their mathematical thinking to analysis of population densities in biology. These connections will be supported by aligned curricula and daily co-planning time for all grade level teachers.

KCGPA's approach to STE content instruction will parallel the literacy development principles in the Humanities block. STE teachers will also leverage text sets to ensure a high volume of reading to advance students' content knowledge and ability to continue learning more through independent reading about scientific topics. There will be less emphasis on the full writing workshop model so that more time is available for hands-on labs and similar learning experiences central to scientific investigations and engineering experiments. However, students will produce a significant volume of writing supported by expectations that are more explicitly taught in Humanities.

KCGPA is exploring the use of standards-based curriculum from Lawrence Hall of Science's Full Options Science System (FOSS). FOSS integrates a strong literacy focus through frequent close reading for content. It focuses on a hands-on, inquiry-based approach that includes a variety of pre-planned scaffolds and opportunities for differentiation. It also includes clearly developed structures to support teachers' intellectual preparation, including exemplar responses to key assignments and labs.

Mathematics

KCGPA's math program will ensure students master prior grade standards they may have missed while building deep understanding of MLS grade level expectations. To ensure mastery, KCGPA will especially focus staff and students' attention on the three aspects of rigor as they appear in each standard:³¹

- *Conceptual understanding.* Mastery of the MLS depends on conceptual understanding of key concepts, such as place value and ratios. Students must be able to ground work in concepts so that they are able to see math as more than a set of mnemonics or discrete procedures.
- *Procedural skill and fluency.* The MLS call for speed and accuracy in calculation. Students are given opportunities to practice core functions such as single-digit multiplication so that they have access to more complex concepts and procedures.
- *Application.* The MLS call for students to use math flexibly for applications in problem-solving contexts. In content areas outside of math, particularly science, students are given the opportunity to use math to make meaning of and access content.

KCGPA's math program will stem from areas that research shows are critical to the development of both procedure and understanding: multiple representations, side-by-side comparisons, decomposition, and a systematic progression from concrete representation to the semi-concrete to the abstract algorithm. The National Mathematics Advisory Panel's review of the research indicates that "the mutually reinforcing benefits of conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and automatic (i.e., quick and effortless) recall of facts" are critical in mathematics instruction."³² KCGPA's mathematics program will

³¹ Student Achievement Partners. *Common Core State Standards Shifts in Mathematics*.

<https://achievethecore.org/page/900/the-common-core-state-standards-shifts-in-mathematics>

³² National Mathematics Advisory Panel. *Foundations for Success: The Final Report of the National Mathematics*

build students' active participation and ability to lead mathematical discussions and be able to use academic language to explain their thoughts and processes, both orally and in written proofs.

Every KCGPA student will receive at least 400 minutes of math instruction, spread across four 85-minute class periods and one 60-minute class period for the entire year. This schedule allows students to have access to a rigorous and challenging math curriculum that also addresses foundational numeracy skills and knowledge on which more advanced math is based. All math courses focus on the MLS standards.

KCGPA will build its math instruction from a standards-based curriculum such as Eureka Math, with appropriate modification for the MLS. KCGPA may also consider leveraging an open-source math curriculum like those from Achievement First or Match Fishtank, which provide inquiry-based and rigorous approaches to real world problems, which are presented through text rather than through formulaic, repetitive problem sets or surface-level, predictable word problems.

KCGPA expects to use a combination of math curricula to build a solid foundation in conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application. Teachers will scaffold learning using:

- Station rotations that include small group instruction, personalized, and collaborative learning to address students' areas of weakness and learning goals
- Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) to develop conceptual understanding of mathematics
- Problem Solving Tasks to support application of mathematical concepts

KCGPA's math curriculum will prepare young women to celebrate the struggle of solving challenging problems. Each year, students will grow more and more confident in their ability to reason their way through math, seeing themselves as logical and capable thinkers. The development of this identity will be a crucial step towards building a lifelong love for and proficiency in mathematical thinking.

Fine Arts

KCGPA's founders agree with the core concept of the National Core Art Standards: "In dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts, people express ideas and emotions that they cannot express in language alone. In order to understand the range and depth of the human imagination, one must have knowledge of the arts."³³

Every student will have two 60-minute periods of Fine Arts per week to leverage the benefit of fine arts on academics and Social and Emotional Learning, especially for at-risk populations such as low-income and ELL students.³⁴ These classes will be aligned to the MLS for Fine Arts and National Core Art Standards. KCGPA will identify and modify curricula during its pre-opening year for these classes. They will also tie to the Science, Technology, and Engineering and Mathematics coursework in a variety of ways, from the use of drawing, painting, and careful observational skills in science experiments to the exploration of the application of mathematical principles in art such as the use of effective proportion, symmetry, or ratios to build three-dimensional perspective.

Advisory Panel. 2008. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/mathpanel/report/final-report.pdf>

³³ <http://www.lenoxps.org/morris/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/06/Massachusetts-Art-Frameworks.pdf>

³⁴ Angela J. Renish. "Art Education, Literacy, and English Language Learners: Visual Arts Curriculum to Aid Literacy Development. Master's Thesis. Philadelphia: Moore College Arts & Design, 2016. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED567781.pdf>; Masoumeh Farokhi and Masoud Hashemi. "The impact/s of using art in English language learning classes." *Science Direct*, Vol. 31. 2012.

KCGPA will also seek to develop robust partnerships with area nonprofits that offer arts programming, such as the Kansas City Art Institute or the Coterie Theater. These partnerships will support students in engaging in robust programming that may lay outside the bounds of a typical school budget. KCGPA has budgeted funds to support these partnerships. The physical education and fine arts block is scheduled at the end of the day to enable flexible scheduling for these types of partnerships.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

KCGPA will integrate SEL into the course map for each core content area. KCGPA intends to adopt integrated curriculum approaches during the pre-opening year through a partnership with Nashville's Valor Collegiate Academies, which is sponsored by the Chan-Zuckerberg Foundation to train other schools in their proprietary SEL structures. Ultimately, KCGPA's goal in providing strong SEL is to drive its mission of ensuring young women develop a strong sense of identity, clear sense of purpose, and a critical lens to navigate the way in which gender, race, and other signifiers are represented in the home, school, and broader cultures they engage in.

KCGPA will support SEL through a variety of other strategies, including "looping" teachers with students, using Personalized Learning Plans for each student, and employing a strong daily advisory structure. This approach is discussed in more detail in Section A.8: School Climate and Culture, including the implications for staff development.

World Languages

World languages will not be part of the regular course progression in middle school; however, students will have the opportunity to take an online language course through Middlebury Interactive beginning in 6th grade. This personalized learning program will be an option that students may choose during the Electives block as part of their Personalized Learning Plan, which is supported by their Advisor and parents/guardians. Please see Section A.8: Culture and Climate for more information on this process.

In high school, students will be required to take at least 3 years of World Language as part of a standard core class with a full-time or part-time teacher.

Expeditions

For one week in the late spring, the schedule will change to allow students to participate in real world, experiential learning. This practice is grounded in the work of EL Education, High Tech High, and Summit Public Schools. Students will participate in in-depth courses run in collaboration with local organizations, often with a lens of service-learning at the foundation of the experience. Students will explore an area of interest and apply their academic learning so that its relevance in the real world becomes self-evident.

During Expeditions, students will often be outside the school in non-traditional, experiential learning spaces such as farms, museums, workplaces, or theatres. This will enable young women to contextualize and apply their learning, step out of their comfort zones, and envision new futures for themselves.

Physical Education and Health

KCGPA's physical education and health program will keep students active, fit, and healthy. The program will align to Missouri Learning Standards for Health/Physical Education and include classroom-based sessions as well as activities in the school's gymnasium and outdoors. Students will set goals around personal health and fitness as a part of their Personal Learning Plans and will participate in a full block of Physical Education and Health twice per week.

KCGPA's focus on Social and Emotional Learning includes a focus on physical, emotional, and mental health, which allows for the "whole girl" to be fully recognized at school. Students will learn about social/emotional/mental health resources, as well as physical health topics such as nutrition and sexual health. The Advisory program, in which every student meets during the school day in a group to address non-academic topics with a teacher, is a time when health and wellness will be addressed in addition to the Physical Education and Health classes.

Students will also engage in frequent light exercise (e.g. yoga), mindfulness, and similar activities during twice-daily breaks between their classes. These activities will be designed to develop young women's self-awareness of the connections between their physical, emotional, and mental states and support their ability to direct their energy and attention.

Though not an explicit part of physical education, students will also be physically active during many classes, as research (and common sense) shows that being confined to a desk for extended periods of time limits energy and focus.³⁵ For example, teachers will frequently use stand-pair-shares to get students engaged physically with new thought partners around the room. Another simple but effective tool will be used frequently: walls will be lined with whiteboards that students will use create a mind map for an essay or explore a math problem. This structure keeps students physically engaged and makes their thinking visible to one another and to the teacher, resulting in improved academic growth.

Curriculum Development Timeline

The limited time KCGPA will have to prepare students to succeed in college and beyond requires a strong curriculum design process in the school's pre-opening year. The founding team will use this time to research and gather materials from the nation's highest performing schools and focus intensely on iterating them to best suit the needs of the young women KCGPA seeks to serve. KCGPA will approach the task of curriculum design through the lens of backwards design, aiming to ensure that fully articulated sequences of learning exist for 5th to 12th grade prior to launch.

As KCGPA grows, all grade levels, including high school, will have curriculum planned well in advance of their launch. This is an important reason for the early hire of key instructional leaders. KCGPA will prepare for the added complexity of high school curricular planning by continuing to engage all staff in significant development that supports effective planning, such as AP Institutes or participation in training with the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

KCGPA will provide teachers with full curricular resources, including a scope and sequence for each subject in each grade, detailed syllabi for each course listing the skills and concepts to be mastered, and a database of unit and daily lesson plans that account for days for re-teaching standards on which students are struggling, thus allowing the scope and sequence to be adjusted by each teacher to meet students' needs. KCGPA will also provide teachers with Destination Assessments, proven source materials, catalogues of effective strategies, and ample time throughout the year for curriculum adaptation and refinement. Providing the founding staff with this high level of support will allow them to focus on addressing students' needs from the very first day of school.

On an annual basis, KCGPA's staff will review student achievement data, including MAP scores, to determine how to improve the curriculum. The team will compare results to goals to determine whether

³⁵ Deborah Rohm Young, et al. "Sedentary Behavior and Cardiovascular Morbidity and Mortality." American Heart Association, Inc. 2016. <http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/early/2016/08/12/CIR.0000000000000440>

curricula are effectively supporting fulfillment of the school’s mission. Analysis will look at data trends across the entire school, as well as by specific subgroups of the student population. Teachers will use this analysis to make curricular adjustments through collaboration with one another and instructional leaders that emphasizes research and refinement rather than creation. A timeline for this process is outlined in Appendix A.2.2: Curriculum Development and Training Timeline.

Beyond this annual, formal revision process, curriculum development will occur less formally through weekly cycles of curriculum internalization and adaptation that will both drive staff development and address student needs. These processes are discussed in the following section.

Integrated Curriculum Development and Professional Development (PD)

As Robert Marzano argues, for KCGPA’s curricula to truly be “guaranteed and viable,” KCGPA must plan proactively to close the gaps that so often emerge between what is intended, what is implemented by teachers, and what is actually attained by students.³⁶ A critical goal of curriculum development will therefore be to build teachers and leaders’ capacity to systematically plan and adjust instruction in order to close the gap between intended and attained levels of learning. KCGPA leaders and teachers will continually assess this gap via the Cycles of Professional Learning detailed below. In so doing, KCGPA’s curricula will build teacher and leader capacity by:

- Developing staff’s content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge through internalization of curricula
- Ensuring staff can see and leverage vertical alignment and interdisciplinary connections
- Maximizing staff time focused on intellectual preparation and anticipating student needs rather than developing curricula from scratch

KCGPA’s curricula will not function alone in building staff capacity in these ways. The curricula will work together with standards, competencies, and assessments that define learning outcomes and student work that reveals levels of attainment. Staff must routinely connect these resources to assess effectiveness and adjust. KCGPA will therefore ground nearly all development in standards, competencies, assessments, curriculum, and student work. Staff will use these resources to develop deep and nuanced connections between academic skills and knowledge and the priority needs of the young women they serve. This approach is inspired by the framework below from Educational Resource Strategies (ERS), a nonprofit that is a national leader in addressing the challenges described in *The Mirage*, a study which found very little impact on student achievement as a result of most school systems’ PD efforts.³⁷

Educational Resource Strategies’ Framework for Curriculum-Driven Professional Learning	
Component	Description
Rigorous, Comprehensive Curricula and Assessments	<p>Ensure that all schools have access to rigorous and coherent curricula, assessments, and other instructional resources aligned to College- and Career-Ready Standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad and deep instructional resources • Carefully vetted • Designed for teacher adaptation • Continuously improved
Content-	Organize teachers into teams, led by content experts, that have the time, support,

³⁶ Marzano, Robert J. *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*. Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development. 2003.

³⁷ TNTP. *The Mirage*. 2015. https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP-Mirage_2015.pdf

Focused, Expert-Led Collaboration	<p>and culture of trust and learning to collaborate on instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared-content teams • Sufficient time • Leadership by content experts • Agendas, protocols, tools, and data • Culture of trust and agency
Frequent, Growth-Oriented Feedback	<p>Provide regular feedback from content experts that is focused on helping teachers improve instructional practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized attention from coaches • Sufficient time for observation and feedback • Support for content experts

KCGPA seeks to address the first component of this framework through the selection and ongoing development of standards-aligned curricula. KCGPA will use the following PD processes to address the second and third components, thereby closing the gap between the intended and attained curricula.

Internalization of standards and competencies before instruction. KCGPA will provide teachers with development and time for collaboration to unpack standards and competencies and identify intended learning outcomes. During the launch year, teachers will begin this work as early as January 2019 (as consultants) and no later than May 2019. A deep understanding of the arc of learning and connections across years will be critical for effective planning and differentiation. For example, in 5th grade math, teachers will examine standards across grades through the lens of rigor (conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application) via close study of MLS. Teachers will also leverage resources like the Common Core State Standards Mathematical Progressions,³⁸ Student Achievement Partners’ *Coherence Map*,³⁹ and Building 21’s competency maps⁴⁰ to envision clear progressions of knowledge and skill as they:

- Carefully read the language of the standard and competency and its connecting standards and/or competencies in prior and upcoming grade levels
- Annotate and consider precisely what the standard/competency asks students to know and do
- Identify the key knowledge and academic skills needed to demonstrate mastery

Internalization of assessments and adaptation of curricula before instruction. Once teachers have used standards to see a coherent vision of learning progressions, they must have time to analyze actual assessments to build more nuanced expectations for student mastery at the appropriate level of rigor.⁴¹ Teachers will build on their work of internalizing standards by engaging in the following activities:

- Complete Destination Assessments, including those for one’s own grade and other key benchmarks in other grades to ensure vertical alignment
- Create and/or analyze exemplars of student responses to Destination Assessment items
- Identify connections between the language of the standard/competency and assessment items
- Map required knowledge, skills, and thinking processes into concrete learning objectives

³⁸ Common Core Standards Writing Team. “Progressions for the CCSS in Mathematics.” 2013. <https://achievethecore.org/page/254/progressions-documents-for-the-common-core-state-standards-for-mathematics>

³⁹ Coherence Map. Student Achievement Partners. <https://achievethecore.org/page/1118/coherence-map>

⁴⁰ Building 21. <https://sites.google.com/a/philasd.org/competencyeducation/competencies>

⁴¹ Paul Bambrick-Santoyo. *Driven by Data: A Practical Guide to Improve Instruction*. Jossey-Bass. 2010.

- Compare the standards and assessments with existing curricular resources
- Adapt curricular resources to fully align with MLS expectations and anticipated student needs

Internalization and adaptation of curricula during instruction via Cycles of Professional Learning (CPLs). As instruction occurs, teachers will engage in ongoing cycles of curriculum and lesson study in vertical content teams. In the first few years, when these teams will still be smaller, leaders and consultants will represent the perspective of upper-grade teachers and curriculum and assessment resources. This structure is grounded in the work of researchers like Liping Ma⁴² and Helen Timperley⁴³ and represents the heart of ongoing teacher content learning. Content teams will include teachers responsible for SWD and ELL students. Teachers will examine their curriculum concurrently with analysis of student assessments to determine gaps in student skills and knowledge. Teacher teams will pair this analysis with reflection on their own practices and intensive study of relevant knowledge and pedagogical skill-building resources. This process will ensure that teachers bridge the gap between grade level expectations and current student performance by:

- Deepening their content and pedagogical knowledge via study of curriculum and best practices
- Identifying student needs via analysis of student work
- Modifying curricula via collaborative planning that addresses student needs

CPLs will be driven by curriculum, assessment, and student work and occur in the structures below:

- *Interim assessments (IAs).* IAs will occur every six to eight weeks to provide clear benchmarks for measuring progress. Grade level and subject matter data will be analyzed by instructional leaders, teachers, and expert consultants from The Achievement Network. Teachers will compare their students' performance to goals and to other high-performing urban schools in order to identify areas where reteach lessons and other interventions are necessary to ensure student mastery. For more information, please see Section A.3: Assessing Student Performance.
- *Weekly content team meetings.* Content teams will engage in curriculum internalization protocols, analysis of student work, and shared learning to improve their own practice. For example, a team of ELA teachers might engage in internalization protocols that involve reading standards and curricular materials, completing and reflecting on key tasks, and debriefing together the choices made by curriculum writers. After looking at student work, they may see that students are struggling to write using the Tier 2 vocabulary they taught. To enhance their knowledge and skills before developing a reteach plan, the team of teachers may study best practices for academic vocabulary instruction in a text like Doug Lemov's *Reading Reconsidered*, engage in shared planning activities, and practice instructional delivery techniques together.
- *Weekly instructional rounds.* To follow up on student and teacher learning goals identified in content team meetings, instructional leaders and teachers will engage in instructional rounds together. This will support ongoing calibration of expectations, teacher capacity development, and planning and coaching focused on the highest-leverage areas for student growth.
- *Weekly, data-based cycles of observation and feedback for individual teachers.* KCGPA will use Relay Graduate School of Education's systems for teacher observation and feedback. These are inspired in part by approaches articulated in Diane Sweeney's *Student-Centered Coaching* and Paul Bambrick-Santoyo's *Leverage Leadership*. Teacher observation and feedback will be centered in evidence of student and teacher practice. For example, exit ticket data will be

⁴² Liping Ma. *Knowing and Teaching Elementary Mathematics: Teachers' Understanding of Fundamental Mathematics in China and the United States.* Routledge. 2010.

⁴³ Helen Timperley. "Using Evidence in the Classroom for Professional Learning." Paper presented to the Ontario Education Research Symposium. 2010.

analyzed during coaching sessions (as appropriate) and potentially be used to discuss next steps and re-teaching. Coaches and teachers will use this evidence to articulate individual teacher goals that will most rapidly advance student learning. They will then co-plan and practice together to ensure mastery of those goals. Coaches will also support teachers with co-planning and feedback on curriculum, unit, and weekly lesson plans.

- *Co-planning and coaching using daily formative assessments for individual teachers.* Though interims and weekly CPLs provide valuable data points for school leaders and staff, KCGPA will also collect data daily so teachers can immediately respond to any skill set that is not mastered. At the end of each class, students will complete an exit ticket which assesses class objectives. Teachers will also be trained in data driven instruction and effective comprehension monitoring to immediately adjust instruction to ensure that students fully grasp the material.

These structures will provide the foundation for teachers and leaders to address their own and their students' learning needs while simultaneously improving curricula. KCGPA believes that external experts can significantly improve staff's bar of expectations, knowledge, and skills as they engage in this work.

KCGPA will engage a network of external experts to support staff development, including:

- Active collaboration with YWLN and other high-performing urban schools
- Achievement Network
- Consultants with content-specific expertise (e.g. a math curriculum consultant)
- EL Education
- The Fellowship for Race and Equity in Education
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- Promise54
- Relay Graduate School of Education
- Student Achievement Partners
- Teach like a Champion's Train the Trainer programming
- UnboundEd
- UChicago STEP Literacy Programming

A.3: Assessing Student Performance

Assessment for Learning

The primary purpose of assessment at KCGPA is to inform instruction so that every student achieves rigorous learning goals. KCGPA's staff will collaborate to develop the mindsets and pedagogical skills to see every moment they spend with students as an opportunity to assess understanding and adjust instruction. When a teacher asks a question and sees confusion in students' responses, they will use the moment to gather data. Rather than giving students the correct answer and moving on, they will consider whether students simply need wait time to process the question, the habit of mind and/or the time to consult their notes, or a series of scaffolded questions to break the rigorous initial question into its component parts. All of these options allow the teacher to use student misunderstanding to enhance learning. This mentality of constantly assessing understanding and adjusting instruction represents the value of Growth and will be central to young women seeing mistakes as learning opportunities.

In addition to constant in-class assessment and adjustment, staff will devote time daily and weekly to analyzing student work. Please see Section A.2: Curriculum and Instruction for more detail on that process. Staff will also use formative, interim, and summative assessments to develop longer term plans for instruction. Taken together, these practices will ensure a laser-like focus on student learning.

Standards and Competency Based Grading

KCGPA will use a standards and competency-based grading system that reinforces growth mindsets. Carol Ann Tomlinson and Jay McTighe define this as grading that focuses on “measuring students’ proficiency on well-defined course objectives”⁴⁴ rather than traditional letter grades that can obscure the actual learning students are attaining. KCGPA’s standards-based grading system will include:⁴⁵

- Alignment to clear learning goals and criterion or proficiency-based performance standards
- Goals and criteria that are available ahead of time
- Pre-selected assessments (tests, quizzes, projects, etc.) used for grading purposes
- Emphasis on the most recent evidence of learning when grading
- Separation of achievement from effort/behavior

KCGPA’s standards-based grading system will help families, teachers, and young women to focus on learning as the ultimate measure of success. It will reinforce the core value of growth through expectations of constant revision and improvement until mastery is achieved. KCGPA will also monitor key data points like attendance, homework, and non-academic measures of success. These will be included in weekly progress reports and will be celebrated across the school to ensure that all stakeholders understand the critical role that these inputs play in students’ learning and growth.

Foundational and Extension Academic Standards

Because of its college-ready mission, KCGPA will extend beyond MLS Grade Level Expectations to consider Advanced Placement (AP) and ACT College Readiness Standards. KCGPA’s school leader will continue additional research during the pre-opening year to finalize standards, assessments, and curricula. Because many students will not yet be proficient in the MLS when they enter 5th grade, the MLS will therefore occupy a prominent place in grades 5-8, though not to the exclusion of more rigorous standards in preparation for high school. Assessments in grades 9-12 will increasingly align to standards beyond the MLS such as ACT College Readiness Standards and AP, with the MLS providing the floor of expectations that all students must meet and exceed. Ongoing collaboration among vertical content teams and cross-disciplinary teacher teams will ensure that standards are aligned across grade levels and that students are prepared for college and career. For a list of standards by subject area, please see Appendix A.3.1: Standards by Subject.

An 8th grade ELA class can serve to illustrate the impact of using foundational and extension standards. Interim assessments at 8th grade will still largely be aligned to MLS. AP rigor will be introduced through open-ended, AP-aligned tasks that require students to do close reading and textual analysis with texts at Lexile and qualitative complexity levels above the expectations of the MLS.

With the confidence that has been developed through KCGPA’s culture and Social and Emotional Learning, young women will take risks, make mistakes, and celebrate the learning and sense of self-efficacy that comes from engaging in challenging, college-preparatory tasks. They will engage in productive struggle as they leverage their content knowledge and academic skills to break down initially intimidating text and analyze it with a depth and precision that will prepare them for a college preparatory high school program. As the year progresses, students will engage in increasing numbers of AP-aligned tasks in projects, interims, and competency-based assessments. They will at the same time receive fewer scaffolds as they internalize more content, skills, and approaches to these rigorous tasks.

⁴⁴ Carol Ann Tomlinson and Jay McTighe. *Integrating Differentiated Instruction & Understanding by Design: Connecting Content and Kids*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. 2006.

⁴⁵ Ken O’Connor. *How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. 2002.

Competencies to Ensure Standards are Synthesized and Applied

In addition to academic standards, KCGPA will use competencies such as those developed by New Hampshire⁴⁶ or Building 21⁴⁷ to:

- Ensure that students synthesize and apply multiple standards in real-world meaningful contexts
- Define what application-level mastery looks like across content areas by outlining clear, performance-based tasks and criteria for success
- Reinforce growth mindsets through revisions and multiple attempts at mastery
- Allow students to advance to new or more challenging material based on levels of mastery
- Organize and connect standards for families, students, and staff in easily comprehensible ways

For example, an STE competency focused on applying math concepts to scientific problems might require 7th graders to apply ratio, rate, and percent to an experiment where they move a given mass as efficiently as possible by designing and testing transmissions with interlocking gears. This task requires application of numerous standards and makes the connections clear.

This approach aligns to KCGPA's participatory teaching methods that are intended to maximize student understanding. Further, it aligns to KCGPA's STEAM programming and goal of ensuring young women are self-directed, confident, learners who can use their skills and knowledge to solve real-world challenges.

Destination Assessments to Define Success and Monitor Progress

KCGPA will use "Destination Assessments" to support teachers and students in focusing limited time and attention on priority standards and competencies. These assessments will support progress monitoring to ensure that all students are being challenged and supported to meet a high academic bar, and that adjustments to instructional plans for students are made that prioritize early intervention where skills or knowledge are not yet mastered. KCGPA's Destination Assessments will also support vertical alignment across grade levels, and fall into two categories:

- *External assessments.* These assessments will be externally validated, formative and summative, and focused on academic standards. For example, teachers will monitor progress using assessments such as STEP, NWEA MAP, Missouri Assessment Program, ACT, and AP.
- *Internal assessments.* These assessments will be internal, formative and summative, and address academic standards, competencies, and Social and Emotional Learning goals. For example, students may engage in an EL Expedition, conduct a project in which they research and present on how to maximize equity in Kansas City's economic development plans, synthesize their English and Social Studies discussion notes from a unit to prepare for a public debate, or independently plan and execute a scientific or engineering experiment.

To ensure that reteaching and reassessing will not limit the amount of content students receive, KCGPA will embed many of these assessments in the standard curriculum and projects. Teachers will receive significant training and support in maximizing the use of classwork and formative assessments to drive instructional planning so that KCGPA students experience a culture of assessment *for* learning rather than a constant assessment *of* learning that takes away valuable instructional time.

Destination Assessments: Internal

⁴⁶ See https://www.education.nh.gov/innovations/hs_redesign/competencies.htm

⁴⁷ See <https://sites.google.com/a/philasd.org/competencyeducation/competencies>

KCGPA will use a range of internal assessments to ensure that all students receive the supports necessary to succeed on the path to college and beyond. A series of assessments will be used at different junctures throughout the year so that staff can identify and address gaps swiftly and purposefully.

Formative Classroom Assessments. Teachers will administer formative assessments of student learning daily. Assessments will be used to check understanding of skills and knowledge that students must master as they work towards readiness for larger Destination Assessments and to modify instructional plans accordingly. Formative classroom assessments may include a wide range of methods drawn from KCGPA's foundational pedagogical sources like *Teach like a Champion 2.0*.

Interim Assessments (IAs). Every six to eight weeks, students will take interim assessments in all core content areas. The math and ELA assessments will be provided by The Achievement Network (ANet) through 8th grade and adapted from high-performing schools beginning in 9th grade. ANet's ELA interim assessments include an open-response writing prompt which requires students to respond to a text. These prompts will be scored by a rubric aligned to the MAP composition assessment standards. The science and social studies six-week assessments will be developed by KCGPA's founding team after consultation with other high-performing schools. Staff will update these assessments in future years as needed. The results of these assessments, which KCGPA teachers will be able to access within 72 hours of administration, will be detailed and robust to support instructional planning. After each series of assessments, PD time will be dedicated to analyzing results to determine overall classroom and grade level performance. Teachers will also analyze individual student performance on various standards to identify who will benefit from specific interventions. Teachers will use class time to reteach and reassess standards that students have not mastered using the instructional model (e.g. whole group, small group, personalized learning, etc.) best suited to addressing students' needs.

Competency Based Assessments, Unit Assessments, and Final Exams. Teachers in each content area will use a mix of competency-based assessments and unit assessments to determine student mastery levels. This approach reflects the structure of many college classes, where grades stem from both traditional tests of content knowledge and tasks like research papers that illustrate a student's extended independent thinking about a topic. Students in a Humanities class, for example, might prepare in independent study groups for a traditional exam testing content knowledge. The teacher would assess (though not for a grade) Social and Emotional Learning through the quality of their collaboration and study habits and content standards through their test responses. The teacher would also assign a timed, open-notes essay that requires use of literature and historical documents to respond to a question students have not encountered before. By giving young women a combination of rigorous assessments of knowledge and skills alongside application-level tasks, KCGPA's teachers will use assessment as an opportunity to support young women in stretching beyond their comfort zone and taking risks as they learn collaboratively and independently.

Destination Assessments: External

Missouri Assessment Program. KCGPA will administer all state required assessment tools in accordance with Missouri Revised Statutes §160.518 and will complete and distribute an annual report card as prescribed in §160.522 and §160.410(4). KCGPA's goal is that each student will demonstrate growth toward proficiency on the MAP Grade-Level Assessments (MAP) each year. KCGPA will also prepare students for all relevant Missouri End-of-Course assessments, for example Algebra I for 9th graders. KCGPA will use data collected from the annual MAP assessments to measure the progress of its students over time by grade level and subject area as well as by subgroup. When there is a gap between MAP

achievement results and KCGPA's goals, for all students or for a subgroup, KCGPA will adjust programming and determine additional supports that non-proficient students will receive to rapidly achieve proficiency. MAP data will provide a picture of which areas of instruction are effective, which students need extra support, and student progress towards key learning goals.

The results of this annual analysis and subsequent action plans will be distributed to all the school's stakeholders, including the Board, school employees, and parents. Advisors will discuss MAP scores and other critical assessment information with families, as well as any plans needed to advance the student.

English Language and Literacy Diagnostic. During late August and early September, all incoming KCGPA students will be diagnosed to determine their reading level. This literacy assessment will be especially critical for identifying students with large skill gaps to ensure they immediately receive appropriate intervention. KCGPA is considering using the UChicago STEP (Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress) Literacy Assessment for both initial screening and ongoing progress monitoring through 9th grade. KCGPA will continue research during the pre-opening year to determine additional progress monitoring tools used by high-performing schools for English Language Learners. Currently, KCGPA is considering the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test for identification of ELL students.

NWEA MAP. KCGPA will use a nationally norm-referenced growth assessment to measure academic progress of students three times per year. The strongest candidate to serve this purpose is the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP), which provides an adaptive exam that can be aligned to MLS while also gauging performance nationally. The school leader will finalize the decision to adopt NWEA MAP or a similar assessment in the pre-opening year.

ACT. All KCGPA students will take the ACT at least twice in their 11th grade year. To gauge academic progress towards ACT-level rigor, students will also take the ACT Aspire exam at the end of their 8th grade year. Multiple ACT practice exams will occur during the 10th and 11th grade year in combination with an externally-provided ACT prep course to both gauge progress and support student growth.

AP. All students at KCGPA will enroll in at least one AP course and take the corresponding exam. This practice will ensure that teachers and leaders design programming to meet rigorous, college-ready standards and to provide students with equitable access to AP coursework. AP courses will begin in 11th grade so that teachers can focus on deep mastery of the foundational content and skills that will be needed for success in those courses. Pre-AP classes will begin as early as 9th grade.

Assessments of School Culture and Social and Emotional Learning

KCGPA will use additional non-academic assessments to ensure staff focus on key Social and Emotional Learning goals and apply the same rigorous approach to improving instruction and supports in non-academic domains. These assessments will not have grades associated with them, but instead will be used for supporting the development of KCGPA's overall program.

Social and Emotional Learning. KCGPA will research and procure appropriate assessments like the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment or those developed by the Riverdale Country School and KIPP New York City's partnership with psychologists Angela Duckworth, Martin Seligman, and Chris Peterson.

Culture and climate data. KCGPA will measure individual and school-wide progress toward non-academic goals via annual surveys of families, biannual surveys of students and staff, and a comprehensive culture and climate data system that tracks attendance, homework performance, and

behavior data. In addition to using data to generate daily supports and interventions (e.g., Homework Club, tutoring, Restorative Justice), the system will produce a weekly summary report for every student. The reports, distributed on Fridays, will be reviewed by every student, advisor, and parent/guardian before being returned to the school on Monday morning. Student scores are averaged over time to give an accurate picture to all stakeholders of non-academic performance. This data will not be the only data driving student behavior planning and conversations with families, as the Social and Emotional Learning and Personalized Learning Plans will also heavily inform planning behavior supports and interventions.

Culture walkthroughs. Staff will also use instructional rounds protocols with a detailed culture rubric to assess key influencers on learning like behavioral engagement (percent of students following directions) and cognitive engagement (percent of students engaged in the thinking processes demanded by a learning task). This data will be used to support teacher coaching and PD design around culture.

Transparent Communication of Assessment Data

In addition to using assessment data to adjust instruction, KCGPA will also consistently share data with its stakeholders to inform an ongoing conversation about where the school is meeting its goals and where adjustments need to be made based on values-aligned input and feedback.

- *Sponsor and General Public.* KCGPA will use its website and that of its sponsor to disseminate board meeting information, financial and academic progress reports, and similar important information during each school year. As prescribed in state policy and Missouri Revised Statutes §160.522 and §160.410(4), KCGPA will also complete and distribute an annual report detailing student performance and progress towards goals. KCGPA will also use Missouri's Annual Performance Report (APR) to share student achievement and state testing data as information becomes available.
- *Board.* The Board will receive an annual report. This report will include all internal and external assessment data relevant to the school's accountability goals. If a policy change is required because significant gaps exist between the school's performance and its goals, the Board will enact its policy development process and make necessary organizational decisions. Monthly board meetings will also include routine updates on all Key Goals and metrics.
- *Students and families.* KCGPA recognizes that family understanding of and engagement in assessments is critical to supporting students, and will keep students and parents informed by:
 - Sending home weekly progress reports with class grades and behavior data. Student grades in core subject areas are the primary determinant of their promotion from one grade level to the next. Advisors will communicate biweekly with families about student progress and collaborate to identify additional supports. Students will use these reports to make the academic and behavioral adjustments necessary to achieve their goals. This data will be available online at all times, and KCGPA will use printed documents as well to ensure parents can access the information.
 - Meeting with families in person for at least three formal report card conferences each year to discuss their daughter's progress.
 - Providing a summary of homework each night and asking 5th - 8th grade families to check and sign that their daughter has completed all homework each night.
 - Hosting events in which families are invited to the school to celebrate student work.

Promotion Policies Focus on Mastery

KCGPA's use of standards and competency-based grading, in combination with aligned assessments and curricula, will enable consistent evaluation of student achievement across grade levels and subject areas. These grades will be a central part of progress reports, report cards, and school-wide

accountability systems to ensure sustained focus on student learning. Students will have multiple opportunities to revise and improve their grades as a demonstration of their having mastered critical content before advancing to the next grade level, for example by revising a major work of mastery like a project or essay.

KCGPA's summer programming for student recruitment will also support additional opportunities for returning students to demonstrate mastery. To be promoted, students must pass all academic courses by earning at least a 70. A student who fails one or more academic classes or is absent from school more than 10 days during the year (3 tardies per semester count as an absence) will repeat the current grade. Any extenuating circumstances will be determined and documented by the school leader. KCGPA will not offer high school grades beyond grade 9 during this proposed charter term, so high school graduation requirements are not included here.

The criteria used to determine promotion will apply to students with disabilities. Students who meet the goals of their IEP will not be considered for retention but may be considered at-risk and eligible for interventions. If a student is an English Language Learner, and is making adequate progress, the student will not be considered for retention but may be eligible to receive interventions.

KCGPA will work incredibly hard with students and families to ensure that students are able to master the content and skills necessary to be successful each year. Ultimately, we believe that promoting students who are not ready to be successful is a disservice to the student and simply puts off for the future the hard work of ensuring that she is academically prepared. Through parent orientations, community meetings, Dream Team meetings, letters home, and a wide variety of other means, KCGPA will build a culture where mastery of concepts is paramount and being prepared for success in college and life will be more important to students and families than graduating in eight years.

If a student is not earning at least a 70 in each of her classes, the school will begin formal conversations with the student's parents about grade promotion and retention immediately. Frequent communication between teachers and families will continue after each assessment, ensuring that students and parents remain part of the school community even if they are retained. Part of the parent agreement, which will be signed at the start of each school year, will communicate this plan so parents know to expect communications regarding promotion status.

If a student is recommended for retention while at KCGPA, the teacher team responsible for that student will revise the Personalized Learning Plan to include appropriate interventions. This plan will be supported by teachers in conjunction with the school leadership team and the student's parents/guardians.

A.4: School Calendar and Daily Schedule

KCGPA Offers More Time to Maximize Learning

For students to make significant achievement gains, KCGPA will provide 32% more time for learning than is required. KCGPA will provide an extended school day and an extended academic year filled with bell-to-bell instruction. Additional time will provide students with the support needed to prepare for rigorous postsecondary programs.

School Calendar

KCGPA will maintain a calendar of 184 days, with 142 full days and 42 early release days. Monday through Thursday, the school day will run from 7:50am - 4:05pm, or 8 hours and 15 minutes. To

accommodate staff development and other events, the school day on Fridays and designated early release days will be shortened to end at 1:24pm, or 5 hours and 34 minutes.

KCGPA students will receive a total of 1,402.5 hours of instruction over the course of a year, not including after-school tutoring and activities. The academic year will exceed the required 174 days and 1,044 hours of instruction by 359 hours, or 36%, thus providing significant additional time for students to achieve academic growth. The annual calendar for the first year of operation can be found in Appendix A.4.1: Annual Calendar for First Year of Operation.

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule will remain the same in 5th - 8th grades. Beginning in 9th grade, students will move to a modified block schedule with two days per week remaining closer in structure to the blocked classes available in middle school, and three days per week containing a more traditional schedule with 50 minute periods. This high school schedule allows for additional content classes while preserving extended learning time for deeper exploration, labs, and projects.

Additional academic and behavioral support programs (e.g. tutoring, Homework Club, Restorative Justice) will run from 4:15-5:15pm on Monday through Thursday and 1:34-2:30pm on Fridays.

KCGPA will follow Kansas City Public School's schedule for holidays and closures. Makeups for up to six inclement weather closure days will be added to the calendar at the end of the year as needed. Staff and parents/guardians will be informed in advance to avoid conflicts with vacations and other summer commitments.

The following appendices contain detailed schedules and an overview of a typical day for a student.

- Appendix A.4.1: Annual Calendar for First Year of Operation
- Appendix A.4.2: Sample Daily Schedule
- Appendix A.4.3: A "Day in the Life" of a Student

A.5: Target Population

Equity Drives KCGPA's Prioritization of Zip Codes

Kansas City's history of segregation continues to significantly impact the educational outcomes of people of all races/ethnicities. In initial family interviews during the drafting of this charter application, many parents echoed the words of this mother: "My daughter's in second grade. I had to get her in [to Scuola Vita Nuova]. But I don't know where I can send her for high school. I'm worried she won't be safe or have a real chance." This parent's concern is unfortunately supported by the performance data of available secondary school options in KCPGA's priority zip codes, which is detailed below.

KCGPA's design directly addresses the inequitable school discipline and academic achievement gaps that exist for students in its priority zip codes. To achieve its mission of equity, KCGPA seeks to serve students with "high-risk" factors as defined by R.S. Mo 160.405.2(4). KCGPA's initial and long-term recruitment efforts will ensure that student demographics (e.g. family income status, race) and learning needs (e.g. percentage of SWD and ELL students) reflect those of Kansas City Public Schools.

KCGPA proposes to prioritize enrollment in the following zip codes, which contain the schools represented in the analysis of school results in Appendix A.5.1: Academic Results and Demographics for Schools in KCGPA's Priority Zip Codes, School Year 2016-2017. KCGPA will prioritize service to 64053,

64108, 64109, 64120, 64123, 64124, 64125, 64126, 64127, 64128, 64129, 64130.

These zip codes contain the largest “service gaps” based on analysis completed by IFF, which defines service gaps as follows: “Supply is the number of seats based in performing schools. Demand is the number of children living in a neighborhood. The difference between supply (performing seats) and demand (students) is the service gap. Each neighborhood is ranked [to identify] the highest-need areas in which children have the greatest need for better access to performing schools.”⁴⁸

Based on its equity-focused mission, KCGPA will prioritize the zip codes identified by IFF as having the highest service gaps, which correlate with neighborhoods that have been and continue to be racially segregated. KCGPA aims to directly challenge the disparities between segregated neighborhoods on either side of the “Troost Wall,”⁴⁹ illustrated by the following U.S. Census data.⁵⁰

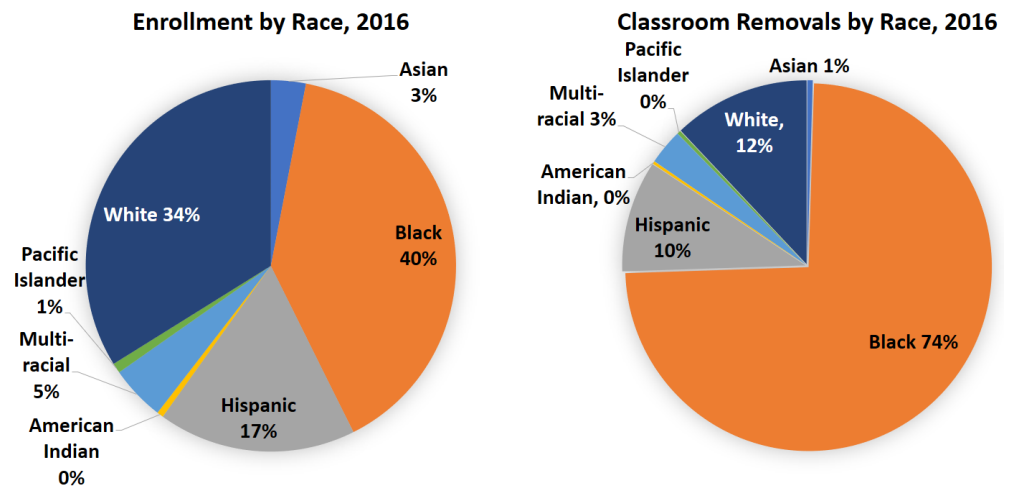
- Life expectancy varies from lower-income to higher-income zip codes by 8-14 years
- Median household incomes vary by \$50,000 to \$100,000
- Educational attainment, as measured by the percent of adults with a bachelor’s degree or higher, varies from an average of 10% to 45% and higher

KCGPA’s mission to ensure its graduates fulfill their full potential, earn college degrees, and lead meaningful and impactful lives is by design focused on ensuring that young women from these zip codes can lead for the change that will support not just their own and their families’ futures, but the future of their community.

School Discipline Data for Priority Zip Codes

As discussed in Section A.1: Mission, Vision, Philosophy, and Goals, a large body of research shows that educators’ beliefs about race, gender, and other signifiers of “difference” have significant impacts on their application of discipline. Though girls experience proportionally less discipline incidents than boys, the graphic below

shows that young women of color across the Kansas City metro experience a disproportionate application of discipline.⁵¹ A proportional application of discipline would mean the pie graph on left and right are



⁴⁸ See <https://iffchgo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=bcf2c9b30f684c5581ccdace6211973e>

⁴⁹ Kevin Fox Gotham. *Race, Real Estate, and Uneven Development: The Kansas City Experience, 1900-2000*. State University of New York Press. 2002.

⁵⁰ United States Census Bureau. *2011-2015 American Community Survey*. 2016.

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>

⁵¹ Martin-Anderson, Sarah. “School Suspension as a Determinant of Health.” Presentation for Kansas City School Suspension Summit. September 6, 2017.

mirror images.

As discussed in Section A.8: School Climate and Culture, KCGPA’s plan for a positive, supportive, and teaching-oriented (as opposed to punitive) approach to behavior seeks to change these disparities. KCGPA’s staff will devote a tremendous amount of time to proactive development around equity-focused, culturally relevant pedagogies as well as analysis of discipline and academic data across subgroups to ensure that the core value of equity is achieved in this critical area.

Academic Data for Priority Zip Codes

Student achievement remains unacceptably low for students across KCGPA’s priority zip codes.⁵² Though there are some schools that outperform their area peers, only three schools within KCGPA’s priority zip codes had more than half of students proficient in both English Language Arts and mathematics in 2016-2017 as measured by the Missouri Assessment Program. Roughly one third of students are proficient or advanced; two thirds score as Basic or Below Basic. The following table shows proficiency rates across charter and district schools in KCGPA’s priority zip codes. For more data on schools located within KCGPA’s priority zip codes, please see Appendix A.5.1: Academic Results and Demographics for Schools in KCGPA’s Priority Zip Codes, School Year 2016-2017.

Academic Results for Schools in KCGPA’s Priority Zip Codes, School Year 2016-2017			
	ELA % Proficient or Advanced	Math % Proficient or Advanced	Science % Proficient or Advanced
Primary Schools Average	37%	26%	19%
Secondary Schools Average	36%	24%	18%
Overall Average	40%	30%	22%

For a simpler metric that a parent or family member might access, the table below shows data from GreatSchools.org, a nonprofit that compiles schools’ performance on all state assessments in all subgroups and assigns a single value for a school on a scale of 1 to 10. While a single number certainly does not tell the complete story, it is a useful tool for an overall academic comparison of schools. The average score for KCPS and charters in KCGPA’s priority zip codes is 2.1 out of 10. The table below shows the performance of charter school organizations that KCGPA intends to emulate.⁵³ KCGPA is designing its foundational practices based on the work of these high-performing school systems to ensure that every student is prepared for college and career success.

Average GreatSchools Ratings for High-Performing Charter Organizations	
School	Rating
Denver School of Science and Technology, Denver	9
Ewing Marion Kauffman School, Kansas City	8
Noble Street Schools, Chicago	8
Summit Public Schools, San Francisco Bay Area	9
Uncommon Schools, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York	9
University Academy, Kansas City	8
Valor Collegiate Academies, Nashville	10
YES Prep, Houston	9

⁵² Missouri Comprehensive Data System. <https://mcds.dese.mo.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

⁵³ Greatschools. <https://www.greatschools.org/>

Average	8.8
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College and Career Readiness Data for Priority Zip Codes

Finally, the table below⁵⁴ shows a 64% graduation rate and college readiness rates that reveal unacceptably low odds of achieving college and career success within available secondary schools.

This table includes ACT composite scores, which range from 1-36 and represent the average of scores across English, mathematics, reading, and science. According to ACT’s research, a score of 21 “represents the level of achievement required for students to have a high probability of success (a 75 percent chance of earning a course grade of C or better, a 50 percent chance of earning a B or better) in such credit-bearing college courses as Psychology and U.S. History - first-year courses generally considered to be typically reading dependent.”⁵⁵ The average composite scores below show a significant gap in performance as compared to the minimum college-ready standard of a 21. For context, the average score of 16 falls is less than the midpoint of the difference between a 21 and a 12, which can be achieved by blind guessing.

Graduation Rates and ACT Scores for Secondary Schools in KCGPA Priority Zip Codes, SY 2016-2017			
	4-Year Grad Rate	Composite ACT	% of Grads Taking ACT
Alta Vista High School	62%	17	84%
Central Academy of Excellence	58%	15	78%
DeLaSalle Charter High School	53%	14	n/a
East High School	61%	15	79%
Frontier STEM High School	80%	16	94%
Northeast High School	62%	15	78%
Average	64%	16	83%

KCGPA Seeks to Reverse Dropouts and Attrition to Private Schools and Surrounding Districts

Finally, KCGPA seeks to reverse the net loss of students in KCPS boundaries due to dropouts, enrollment in private schools, and attrition to other districts. DESE data shows that enrollment in secondary schools is significantly lower than enrollment in primary schools across the KCPS boundaries.⁵⁶ 57% of the city-wide student population is in the seven primary grades (PK-5) while only 43% is in the seven secondary grades (6-12). This gap is even more significant when recognizing that PK enrollment is not universal, so one would expect to see slightly higher enrollment in secondary grades.

In light of the demographic, discipline, and academic data presented in this section, KCGPA recognizes that there is a high probability that young women living in KCGPA’s priority zip codes will be one or more years behind their peers academically as measured by MAP testing data. KCGPA is intentionally designed to serve young women in the middle and upper grades who may be one or more years behind both their state and national peers and rapidly increase their academic proficiency.

KCGPA Prioritizes Service to Special Student Populations

KCGPA strives to be a magnet for families who seek excellent supports for young women defined by MO

⁵⁴ Missouri Comprehensive Data System. <https://mcds.dese.mo.gov/Pages/default.aspx>
⁵⁵ *Reading Between the Lines*. ACT. 2006. https://achievethecore.org/content/upload/act_reading_between_the_lines_research_ela.pdf
⁵⁶ Missouri Comprehensive Data System. <https://mcds.dese.mo.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

statute as “at-risk.” KCGPA will widely advertise that it welcomes and embraces diverse learners. The school’s founding board chair leads University Academy, which was one of 11 charter schools nationally recognized as an Exceptional Charter School in Special Education by The National Association of Special Education Teachers. The school’s founding CEO regularly led SWD and ELL students to outperform state proficiency averages and achieve college-ready scores on the SAT and ACT in two New Jersey charter schools. The founding school team sees excellence in service to these student populations as a central part of its mission of equitable access to strong postsecondary options.

KCGPA will also strive to serve young women who may be pregnant or a parent, currently or recently homeless, or who have faced multiple suspensions. Both its high-expectations, high-support academic program and staffing model are designed to offer the academic and Social and Emotional supports necessary for success for students in these circumstances, including science-based sex education in Physical Education and Health, Personalized Learning Plans that provide for specific supports and interventions to support mastery, a Family and Community Engagement Coordinator who will help the student connect to appropriate support services like prenatal care, low cost day care, or parenting classes. Ultimately, KCGPA will do whatever is necessary to ensure that the student does not fall behind and stays on track to graduate.

Overall, KCGPA will seek to enroll a student population reflective of the demographics of KCPS. Based on eligibility rates within KCGPA’s priority zip codes, KCGPA expects to serve a student population that is roughly 95% eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch, 50% classified as Limited English Proficient, and 15% eligible for Special Education Services.

KCGPA’s program is designed to develop foundational skills for both students with disabilities and English Language Learner students through a combination of intensive, focused literacy development (which is often a fundamental reason for a student’s Limited English Proficiency and/or Special Education classification), targeted small-group instruction, personalized learning, and push-in or pull-out support specific to the SWD or ELL student’s needs.

Anticipated Enrollment

KCGPA has monitored levels of engagement across its priority zip codes, including metrics like email and phone inquiries and attendance at community forums and Community Design Collaboratives. As of March 2018, a year and a quarter prior to its launch, the founding team has received more than 50 requests for enrollment forms. Early news coverage has also sparked significant interest,⁵⁷ with an influx of requests for more information both from families and community-based organizations. KCGPA’s team has observed that its all-girls, high expectations, and high support model resonates deeply with community leaders and families, who expressed consistent interest in attending the school.

KCGPA is committed to locating in its priority zip codes, offering transportation, and engaging in proactive and ongoing family and student recruitment to serve its ultimate mission of ensuring young women receive an equitable education and can lead meaningful, impactful lives. Please see Section B.5: Student Recruitment and Enrollment for further discussion of this commitment.

⁵⁷ For example, see: Benson, Lisa. “All-girls charter school may be coming to KCMO.” Feb 27, 2018. <https://www.kshb.com/news/local-news/all-girls-charter-school-may-be-coming-to-kcmo>; Moxley, Elle. “Kansas City Charter High School Planned For Girls Only.” February 26, 2018. <http://kcur.org/post/kansas-city-charter-high-school-planned-girls-only#stream/0>

KCGPA will enroll an initial 5th grade cohort of 100 young women and add 100 young women at 5th grade each year thereafter. Based on KCGPA’s analysis of DESE enrollment data within its priority zip codes, KCGPA will need to enroll 11% of eligible 5th grade girls to meet its enrollment target of 100 founding 5th graders. Based on the experiences of local charter schools, KCGPA is planning on an annual attrition rate of 10%. KCGPA will backfill from a wait list at 5th through 9th grades. Student attrition and mobility are more fully discussed in Section B.5: Student Recruitment and Enrollment.

Beyond its first 5-year charter, KCGPA plans to grow to serve 5th - 12th grades. KCGPA’s anticipated enrollment is outlined below for this charter term. KCGPA will revise anticipated enrollment by special student populations as it builds a recruitment database in the pre-opening year.

KCGPA Projected Enrollment, Years 1-5					
	19-20	20-20	21-20	22-20	23-20
5 th Grade	100	100	100	100	100
6 th Grade		100	100	100	100
7 th Grade			100	100	100
8 th Grade				100	100
9 th Grade					100
Total Enrollment	100	200	300	400	500
Middle School Enrollment	100	200	300	400	400
High School Enrollment	0	0	0	0	100
Free or Reduced Lunch	85	170	255	340	425
Special Education	15	30	45	60	75
Limited English Proficient	25	50	75	100	125

A.6: Special Student Populations

Asset-Based Philosophy

KCGPA believes that young women with special learning needs have incredible strengths to offer to the school community and to be leveraged in their own growth. KCGPA rejects the deficit-based beliefs that are often attached to a variety of student classifications. KCGPA’s founding team has seen firsthand the incredible levels of commitment, growth, and leadership that all students are capable of. The school will seek to provide exemplary service to all students with special learning needs and fully expects to see unparalleled growth and contributions to the school community from them.

Inclusive Learning Environment

KCGPA believes – and research repeatedly demonstrates⁵⁸ – that every classroom should be an environment which is inclusive of the educational needs of all children. KCGPA has structured its foundational approaches to curriculum, instruction, and assessment accordingly. Further, KCGPA believes that a continuum of services must be available through the school so that all students can participate fully in all programming.

Inclusion at KCGPA will be based on a co-teaching model. Within the inclusive classroom, core content teachers, Learning Support Specialists (LSS) for ESL and Special Education (SPED), and Paras/Aides will collaborate to deliver instruction together. Co-teaching will be designed to maximize the talents of all

⁵⁸ Bui, Xuan, Carol Quirk, Selene Almazan, Michele Valenti. *Inclusive Education Research & Practice*. Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education. 2010. http://www.mcie.org/usermedia/application/6/inclusion_works_final.pdf

educators and to present co-teachers as having equal knowledge and authority. Co-teachers will have clearly defined roles that clarify how often they meet to collaborate, when materials will be created or modified, to what extent they co-plan, and how to best divide instruction within a lesson. Generally, the core content teacher will be responsible for delivering standards and competency based content and collaborating with the LSSs and Paras/Aides to design accommodations and modifications. The LSSs will be responsible for making changes to the lesson plan and classroom materials to scaffold instruction for ELL students and implement IEPs for SWD. All teachers will be trained in effective co-teaching strategies and provided with ongoing support to maximize the impact of co-teaching.

Inclusive learning honors the diversity of young women’s cultural, intellectual, physical, and social and emotional backgrounds, and provides educational supports and opportunities that remove barriers to learning and enables full participation in the school program. Each student feels that she is a valued member of the school community and is provided the resources to realize her full potential. Inclusive Learning practices include:

Sheltered Content Instruction (SCI). To accommodate the linguistic and cultural diversity of its student population, KCGPA will use an inclusive educational model that integrates SCI into all phases of student learning experiences. Research shows that SCI leads to increased student performance among ELL students.⁵⁹ Sheltered content instruction will include

- *Design and Plan*. Content and language objectives are accessible and supplementary materials are available to support student learning
- *Build background knowledge*. Academic concepts are explicitly linked to students’ backgrounds and previous learning, and key vocabulary is emphasized using multi-modal approaches such as visual and auditory cues
- *Build comprehension*. Teacher uses language structures (simple sentences, clearly enunciated words, simple directions) and body language/gestures to ensure comprehension and uses concept-building strategies (visual cues, modeled/shared/guided/ independent practice)
- *Interactions*. Students can discuss concepts with peers and wait-time is consistently built into classroom routines
- *Practice and Application*—students have opportunities to consistently apply concepts and language using reading, writing, and listening strategies (see *Reading and Writing Workshop* below)
- *Lesson delivery*—learning is appropriately paced, active, and student-centered
- *Review and Assessment*—teachers consistently use a variety of ways to assess student comprehension and mastery of learning (conferring, check-ins, competency-based assessments).

Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum. Every teacher will see themselves as a reading and writing teacher, and will engage in deep, ongoing PD to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to be effective. Students need to read and write in a variety of contexts inclusive of discipline-specific language. Teachers will provide frequent practice for students to use a common set of reading and writing strategies along with discipline-specific supports.

Collaboration focused on student work and student needs. Department and grade level teams and whole-staff professional development will include consistent use of protocols to analyze student work.

⁵⁹ Jana Echevarria, MaryEllen Vogt, and Deborah J. Short. *Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners: The SIOP Model*. Pearson. 2016.

Teachers will engage with the actual work of their students to identify precise areas of need and to share and learn from each other's expertise in differentiating instruction to address varying student needs.

Block scheduling. Extended classes allow teachers to develop deep understanding of individual student's strengths and needs.⁶⁰ This approach, combined with an average of 85 minutes of collaborative planning time each day, provides time for teachers to get to know their students and design lessons that explore the full conceptual depth of any topic they are teaching.

Ultimately, KCGPA believes that the greatest responsibility for successfully educating students with special needs lies within core classroom. Through PD and collaborative support, teachers will receive extensive development on effective intervention strategies targeted towards students' greatest needs. These school-wide structures are the first step in meeting the needs of students performing below or above grade level. Additional supports are introduced for students who are performing more than one level below or above her actual grade level, are not meeting standards in one or more core subjects, or have persistent challenges with academic or behavioral expectations.

Students with Special Needs

Relevant legal frameworks. KCGPA will adhere to national and state policies regarding special education identification and accommodations: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B, Americans with Disabilities Act Title II, Rehabilitation Act Section 504, and applicable Missouri statutes, primarily sections 162.670 to 162.710. In compliance with Federal law, KCGPA will annually submit to DESE a local compliance plan that indicates how a free and appropriate public education will be provided to children with disabilities. The School will comply with the local compliance plan, the state plan, and state and federal laws and federal regulations. KCGPA will serve all students regardless of ability and will comply with all state and federal statutes, including Title II of the ADA, the IDEA, and Section 504. KCGPA will educate students with disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and with their nondisabled peers, to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's IEP. The school will not discriminate in admission or enrollment against students having or suspected of having disabilities.

All students with special service needs will be identified in accordance with the federal Child Find requirements (34 CFR §300.125). KCGPA will conduct a full and individual initial evaluation, in accordance with 34 CFR §300.305 and 34 CFR §300.306, before the initial provision of special education and related services to a student. If a determination is made that a child has a disability requiring special education and related services, an Individualized Education Program or IEP will be developed for the child in accordance with 34 CFR §300.320. The IEP will be in effect at the beginning of the school year and will be reviewed and revised periodically, and at a minimum annually. The IEP Team for each child with a disability shall include all individuals specified in 34 CFR §300.321. In addition, KCGPA will provide transportation for students requiring special education services in compliance with 34 CFR §300.323.

Special education processes and procedures. To ensure that all students' needs are well met, KCGPA will hire teaching staff who have the appropriate special education licensure. KCGPA will hire a Director of Student Support (DSS) with experience leading effective special education programs to work closely with

⁶⁰ "Prisoners Of Time: Report of the National Education Commission on Time and Learning." National Education Commission on Time and Learning. April 1994. <https://www2.ed.gov/pubs/PrisonersOfTime/index.html>

leaders, teachers, and students to provide accommodations and modifications as needed. The DSS will also oversee the inclusion program by supporting teams of co-teachers, observing co-teaching, and giving feedback on accommodations that are made to classroom materials. The DSS will also maintain records and ensure that all staff meets the needs of all students with disabilities.

Identifying students with disabilities, IEP development and implementation. Upon enrollment, families will complete questionnaires to identify if their child has received special education services or has been diagnosed as having a disability. Once students are enrolled in the school, the DSS will communicate with families whose students are already receiving special education services. The staff will implement existing IEPs and provide an appropriate education in the LRE. If a student with an IEP is not making effective progress, the special educator will convene appropriate stakeholders and, if appropriate and only with parent consent, the team will make changes to the IEP.

KCGPA will use a Child Study Team (CST), a small team of licensed special and general education teachers, to respond to the specific learning needs of all students in the general education classroom, provide continuous support, and, when appropriate, evaluate students for special education services.

The CST is engaged after initial academic or behavioral concerns for a student result in a failed intervention. At that point, a teacher completes a CST referral form and the student's parents are informed. The CST meets to evaluate the student's classroom performance and prescribes an intervention to address the obstacle(s) to academic success. Through this process, the CST creates a comprehensive plan that includes strategies and structures for staff to employ. Over the next 3-5 weeks, members of the CST periodically observe the implementation of the plan and reconvene to evaluate its effectiveness. The CST uses observation and assessment data to decide which strategies and interventions to continue, modify, and discontinue. If the adjusted plan is effective, the CST continues its ongoing monitoring, evaluation and adjustments. If the plan is not effective, the CST will consider referring the student to an outside resource for more specialized evaluation.

When an evaluation indicates evidence of a disability and that special education services are appropriate, an IEP team consisting of the parents, DSS, a regular education teacher, and the student (if age and developmentally appropriate) will develop an IEP for the student and special education services will be provided. All IEPs will be evaluated annually and revised as needed by the IEP team. All students receiving special education services will be reevaluated at least once every three years.

Instructional Models. KCGPA will serve students with disabilities within an inclusive co-teaching model to the greatest extent appropriate. KCGPA believes that students with disabilities benefit from additional adult support, and that there are significant benefits of two teachers collaborating to plan and deliver high quality instruction. Some of these structures include a clear deadline by which the general education teacher provides the special education teacher with materials that need to be modified for each student with an IEP and a built-in time for co-teachers to meet with the DSS to discuss achievement data of students with disabilities. Each teacher will be responsible for implementing the IEPs of all students in their classes and seeking support in implementation when necessary. Significant levels of staff professional development will support this approach.

KCGPA anticipates serving a significant range of student needs, including multi-handicap, autistic and mildly cognitively-impaired students. In cases where these students' IEPs dictate the need for a low teacher-to-student ratio or alternative curriculum, it may be necessary to place them in substantially separate classroom settings. KCGPA will directly operate all facets of its special education program and

will be responsible for evaluating and hiring staff to meet the needs of all students. KCGPA will rely on three primary instructional models:

- *Full inclusion.* A student attends general education classes all day and receives accommodated and/or modified instruction and instructional materials by a special education certified teacher or Para/Aide in accordance with the IEP.
- *Substantial inclusion.* A student attends mostly general education classes but also receives accommodated and/or modified small group and individual instruction in a separate setting by a special education certified teacher or Para/Aide in accordance with the IEP.
- *Substantially-separate.* A student receives modified instruction in a small group or individual setting apart from the general education population by a special education certified teacher or Special Education Aide in accordance with the IEP.

Instructional methods will be developed and revised for students through ongoing teacher communication, are dependent on each student's specific disability, and can be used in each of the full inclusion, substantial inclusion, or substantially-separate classrooms. Methods include, but are not limited to, the methods outlined in Appendix A.6.1: Instructional Methods for Specific Disabilities. KCGPA is committed to meeting all goals identified in IEPs.

Evaluation of special education program. KCGPA will formally evaluate its special education programming every spring. During this time, KCGPA's school leader and DSS will review student performance in the school's special education program, including individual student progress towards yearly IEP goals, including progress reports, report cards, monitor reports from special education teachers, and statewide assessments. The results of this analysis will inform programmatic revisions, including professional development, to better ensure that students are making progress towards IEP and academic goals.

Special education staffing. The following table overviews the staffing profile that KCGPA is assuming. The number of staff and percentage of time spent by grade level will depend upon enrolled students' needs. KCGPA currently anticipates needing at least one full-time Learning Support Specialist and one full-time Special Education Para/Aide per grade level.

- *Director of Student Support (DSS).* Monitors and assesses all SWD and ELL student support programs, manages all special education staff and the CST, develops all staff via PD. Requires Master's Degree, ESL certification, and 5 years SWD and ESL teaching experience.
- *Learning Support Specialist (SPED) - Inclusion.* Designs and implements curricular accommodations and modifications required by IEPs, manages IEP review and evaluation process for students. Requires SPED certification.
- *Learning Support Specialist (SPED) - Substantially-Separate.* Designs and implements specialized curricular accommodations and modifications required by IEPs, manages IEP review and evaluation process for students. Requires SPED certification with focus on specific disability.
- *Special Education Para/Aide.* Assists special education teachers to ensure IEP compliance. Requires relevant child-care experience and references.

Specific positions and the proportion of each position's time that will be dedicated to SPED instruction may vary from original projections based on the needs that will be served. In cases where an IEP requires specialized services not offered by KCGPA's special education staff, such as speech, physical and occupational therapy, the school will contract with external providers. KCGPA's founding team stands ready to make budgetary adjustments depending on the actual need for such services.

Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Relevant legal frameworks. KCGPA anticipates that roughly half of students will need support in developing English language proficiency. KCGPA will adhere to national and state policies regarding LEP identification and education: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title III, Secs. 3111–3141; 20 U.S.C. 6821–6871, and applicable Missouri statutes under Chapter 160. KCGPA will refer internally to ELL students as “Emerging Bilingual” to emphasize an asset-based perception of bilingualism and a commitment to strengthening the languages that students bring with them.

Identifying English Language Learners (ELL). Students with English language learning needs will be identified through a Home Language Questionnaire, included in multiple languages during the enrollment process. If the student’s home language is not English, KCGPA staff will conduct an interview with the student and parent, with interpreters provided to ensure clear communication. If the student speaks a language other than English, or little to no English, the DSS or designee will administer the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (WAPT). The DSS and a team of staff members will then use those results, teacher input, conversations with parents, and prior academic performance to determine whether the child qualifies as an ELL. If a child is designated as ELL, the DSS and the teacher team will devise an instructional plan for providing ESL support by a licensed ESL teacher and SCI in all classes.

During this identification process, KCGPA seeks to afford every opportunity to help students understand the school’s policies and become active members of the school community. Translators will be employed to support these efforts. KCGPA recognizes that parents have a right to decline ELL services for their child and will follow all appropriate regulations when this scenario occurs.

Serving ELL students. KCGPA will use a research-based SCI model to support ELL students. KCGPA will serve ELL students differently depending on their needs and their level of English proficiency as outlined below. Services will be provided by licensed ESL teachers. Students more proficient in English will receive predominantly mainstreamed instruction with additional SCI support to meet the specific child’s needs. For additional information, please see Appendix A.6.2: Instructional Methods for Specific English Language Learning Categories.

Progress monitoring of ELL students. On an annual basis, ELL students will be assessed and, as appropriate, reclassified to a new ESL level or determined to be proficient in English. Each ELL will be re-assessed in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English by trained personnel. During this process, the following data will be considered: NWEA MAP testing results; a student’s performance in classes, ESL Progress Reports, school-based assessments, teacher observations, and statewide testing results. KCGPA will schedule meetings with parents to discuss findings and recommendations.

KCGPA will strive to support language proficiency growth such that all ELL students can be reclassified within three years at the school. Staff will consider reclassifying ELL students when they have earned an overall composite score on ACCESS of at least a 5 with reading and writing scores of at least a 4.0 and are able to demonstrate the ability to perform all class work in English. When a student appears to be proficient in English, the school will follow the process of reclassifying a student from an ELL to a Former LEP status. KCGPA will monitor the progress of its students for two years after they have been reclassified from ELL status to Former LEP status, or until graduation from KCGPA, whichever is earlier.

ELL staffing. In addition to hiring a proportionate number of ESL-certified teachers to serve our students effectively, KCGPA will ensure that its ELL students are instructed by teachers who are qualified to

shelter instruction and who receive ongoing development in ELL strategies and supports. KCGPA's goal is to have all content teachers and other appropriate staff complete ESL training and certifications as appropriate for their role and the proportion of ESL students that KCGPA serves. KCGPA anticipates at least one LSS for ESL per grade level, who would report to the DSS. KCGPA will revise its staffing model as needed based on ELL student enrollment.

Evaluation of ELL program. KCGPA will formally evaluate the effectiveness of its ELL program every spring. During this time, KCGPA's school leader and instructional leaders will review student performance including ELL progress reports, report cards, monitor reports of Former LEP students, LSS qualitative assessments, and statewide assessments. The results of this analysis will inform programmatic revisions, including professional development, to better ensure that students are making progress to learn English and academic subject content successfully.

Homeless Students

KCGPA's general structures will provide support for homeless students, including breakfast, lunch, and snacks, long school hours, and individualized attention through advisory. In addition, KCGPA will ensure full compliance with the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) made applicable to Missouri under R.S. Mo 167.020.1. KCGPA's full homeless policy will be approved by the Board in the pre-opening year and will include the following:

- A process for identification of homeless students
- Criteria for enrollment of homeless students in their school of origin or school of residency
- An outline of provision of comparable services to homeless students
- A process for transportation of homeless students and records keeping
- A designation of a homeless liaison and specification of duties under McKinney-Vento
- Immunization of (and exceptions made for) homeless students
- Dispute resolution procedures

KCGPA's homeless liaison will be submitted to DESE through the district contact personnel during the August cycle of the core data collection system. The homeless liaison will be responsible for assisting homeless children and youth with enrolling and accessing school services, informing parents, school personnel and others of the rights of homeless children and youth, and collaborating with the state homeless coordinator, families and students, and KCGPA staff. They will play a vital role in ensuring young women experiencing homelessness are enrolled and succeeding in school. KCGPA will ensure that the educational rights of homeless students are communicated through the school's recruitment and enrollment materials and that policies are clearly posted throughout the school.

Gifted/Talented Students

KCGPA's college-preparatory, standards-based curriculum and instruction will be designed to challenge students at all levels and maximize the extent to which they can self-pace and explore extended learning opportunities in areas of interest. In addition, there are opportunities for advanced students at each grade level to further develop and accelerate their knowledge and skills. Every student will have a Personalized Learning Plan supported by the advisor that allows student to identify additional learning goals and plan for extension or acceleration. KCGPA's model of Balanced Literacy ensures targeted small group instruction for advanced students to ensure that they remain appropriately challenged by their school work. In addition, KCGPA will use several ed-tech programs designed to tailor instruction to each student's skill level. Frequent projects and annual Expeditions also provide opportunities for advanced students to progress with additional challenge and supporting scaffolds.

Lesson plans will frequently incorporate “challenge” problems to ensure that all students encounter materials in each of their classes that they will find engaging. At the high school level, pre-AP and AP classes will be offered to all students to ensure that they remain challenged by their school work and to ensure that all students are prepared for college-level coursework.

A.7: School-Specific Goals and Objectives

Overview

Every successful charter school has clear goals and measures designed to track progress toward overall objectives, as well as provide staff with vital data which can be used to modify or enhance curriculum and instruction throughout the school year. The goals listed in this section provide the cornerstones of ongoing improvement and accountability for KCGPA.

More detailed benchmarks and schedules for implementation of assessments will be determined during the pre-opening year. These Key Goals will stand as the most direct link between the school’s vision for its students and the measurable ways in which fulfillment of that vision can be gauged. By meeting the goals listed below, the school will comply with AYP, MAP results, and other recommended measures outlined in the Missouri Monitoring and Renewal Framework. The Board will be accountable to The Missouri Charter Public School Commission, the school’s sponsor, for attainment of these goals and overall success of the school. KCGPA reserves the right to modify aspects of the Key Goals listed below with school board approval and appropriate sponsor engagement and/or approval.

For a list of Key Goals, please see Appendix A.7.1: KCGPA Key Goals. For a comparison set of peer schools, please see Appendix A.7.2: Peer Schools.

A.8: School Climate and Culture

Values-Aligned, Supportive Community

In visits to the highest performing public and private schools in the country, the most common predictor of outstanding academic achievement was a values-aligned, positive culture that had clear, high expectations for every student and staff member. While it is tempting to focus only on academic achievement, great schools invest first and foremost in school culture because staff and student achievement are heavily influenced by the culture around them.⁶¹ KCGPA believes strongly in engaging its school community and that what holds a community together is not compliance mere with rules but the maintenance of healthy relationships. For young women to truly find their voice, KCGPA will ground its cultural practices in the work of the highest-performing YWLN schools as well as the Social and Emotional Learning structures developed by Valor Collegiate Academies.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

SEL is based on the understanding that students flourish when they can develop supportive relationships that make learning challenging, engaging, and meaningful. SEL programming at KCGPA will focus on helping young women to develop a strong sense of identity, set goals, build resiliency to overcome problems, and cultivate empathy to support constructive relationships with adults and peers. There is especially strong evidence of SEL improving outcomes for diverse learners, including:⁶²

- Achievement scores averaging 11 percentile points higher than students who did not receive SEL

⁶¹ Berger, Ron. *An Ethic of Excellence*. Heinemann. 2003.

⁶² Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. “Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.” 2015. <https://secondaryguide.casel.org/casel-secondary-guide.pdf>

- Greater motivation to learn, deeper commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behavior
- Decreased disruptive class behavior, noncompliance, aggression, delinquent acts, and disciplinary referrals
- Fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal

KCGPA recognizes that the development of student’s social and emotional skills and knowledge are as important to their future success and happiness as their academic skills. SEL at KCGPA will be standards and competency based and integrated into core content classes and pedagogy (e.g. through the use of Student Achievement Partner’s *Instructional Practice Guides*). While mastery of an SEL standard may look different from mastery in math, authentic assessment for learning and ongoing reflection will ensure that SEL instruction is approached with the same intentionality as core content classes. KCGPA’s SEL practices will undergo further refinement as the School Leader and CEO continue visits to high-performing schools and research during the pre-opening year. SEL will include both student-centered and environment-focused approaches, including the following.⁶³

Daily Advisory. A hallmark of YWLN’s approach, advisories meet each day to build community, review progress to goals together, work through challenges, and engage in sustained SEL. KCGPA will use a blend of YWLN advisory curriculum and SEL curriculum from Valor Collegiate Academies and similar high-performing school networks, which will be developed in the pre-opening year. Advisories will be a foundation of the school’s culture, community, and SEL. Appendix A.8.3: Sample Social and Emotional Learning Unit Overview shows a typical SEL unit.⁶⁴ In a given week, students might engage in:

- SEL curriculum and assessments
- Facilitated discussions about topics of importance to the students
- Mindfulness practice
- Priority, energy, and time management
- Fun relationship and confidence-building activities like improv games
- A shared lunch with time for informal conversation and relationship-building

Advisors will work in grade teams to determine and address students’ priority SEL needs. Curriculum and assessments will provide the broader framework for instruction and selection of appropriate content over time so that students experience a coherent learning sequence. Grade team leads will work together to ensure ongoing vertical alignment and spiraling. Advisors will be equipped with a topically organized set of YWLN advisory resources that have been curated for more than 20 years. Though SEL will occur in advisory, learning will be reinforced in core content classes. All teachers will have an advisory to support integration from the SEL curriculum into core content classes.

Personalized learning plan (PLP) and dream teams. Dream teams provide a structured way to include parents, clergy, coaches, and other students in a network of support around each young woman. Feedback from families at the Achievement First charter network has consistently highlighted the value of having multiple stakeholders available to support each student. Instead of traditional parent-teacher

⁶³ Joseph Zins, et al. “The Scientific Base Linking Social and Emotional Learning to School Success.” *The Foundations of Social and Emotional Learning*. 2004.

⁶⁴ Kaufman, Laurie and Katy Shamitz. “Complete Stranger to BFF: Using the New and Improved Friendship Sequence to Teach Students to Evaluate Their Peer Relationships and Make True Friends.” Social Thinking Global Providers’ Conference. 2016.
https://scho.schd.ws/hosted_files/socialthinkingglobalprovide2016/49/Kaufman%20%26%20Shamitz%20slides.pdf

conferences, students will lead dream team meetings. These meetings will reflect a similar structure to the Student-Led Conference approach developed by EL Education.⁶⁵

PLPs will be developed and reviewed through this structure, with additional time and support for PLPs occurring in advisories and core content classes. Developing character, social and emotional skills, and core values will be important parts of the PLP process. Students will set goals around each of these areas and will meet with their dream team about their growth in these areas. Over the course of a school year, a dream team will meet at least three times to review progress on their goals, including report cards and progress reports. PLPs will be available online for the student and family to review together.

Continuous learning (looping). Research shows that students, and especially struggling learners, achieve greater levels of achievement when transitions between multiple teachers are minimized.⁶⁶ Looping allows for deeper relationships where students feel known as learners and their growth can be closely supported. For that reason, advisors will loop with their advisories for all 8 years. In addition, in grades 5-9, two teachers from each grade band who are ready to lead the next grade's academic and cultural development will loop with students to support both students and new staff each year. Teachers who would benefit from an opportunity to teach the same grade level a second time before looping will serve as the foundational team for the new staff and students at that grade level during growth years. After the school is fully grown, some looping will continue at both the middle and high school levels.

Daily community circle. Students will begin each day in community circle. This structure will focus on addressing the community's needs and will be led by young women to maximize opportunities for public speaking and group facilitation. Structure will vary: Monday may be a whole-group space to come together and reflect on an important current event or issue in the school community and Tuesday may involve students and staff connecting in small groups of to share shoutouts, check in with one another, and so on. Regardless of the structure or leaders, community circle has three goals:

- Reflect on and improve the community's alignment with its mission and core values
- Build a trusting space where students can share their thoughts and feelings with one another
- Reflect on and/or celebrate shared goals and achievements
- Build opportunities for authentic, shared leadership

Student and Faculty Senate. A team of faculty and students nominated by their peers from each advisory will work with the leadership team to develop culture. Senate will also approve advisory and grade level plans for practices and events important to a healthy culture and community. For example, students will earn the use and management of common spaces and student "lounges" by planning in advisories and grade teams for what norms of that space will be and how those norms will be maintained. This practice will allow young women to engage in and learn from authentic decision-making and leadership responsibilities. Senate will also organize and lead community events and address school culture needs with appropriate staff support. KCGPA will aim for students to own and manage as much of their experience of school culture as possible to support the mission of developing confident leaders.

Core Values Celebrations. The KCGPA community will value growth and achievement in SEL and character development equally along with academic growth and achievement. This value will be

⁶⁵ Berger, Ron, et al. *Leaders of Their Own Learning: Transforming Schools Through Student-Engaged Assessment*. Jossey-Bass. 2014.

⁶⁶ Montalvo, G. P., et al. "Liking or disliking the teacher: Student motivation, engagement and achievement." *Evaluation and Research in Education*. 2007.

reflected in cultural celebrations. Practices like a Core Values Shoutouts Box gives all community members an opportunity to celebrate fellow community members for being a positive force within the culture. Students will also write each other shout-out “postcards,” nominate peers for Student of the Week awards, and use similar activities to routinely celebrate core values.

A frequent refrain from staff who facilitate learning around SEL is the extent to which they are also developing in novel and sometimes surprising ways. SEL is applicable to adults, and many staff will not have had prior exposure to SEL frameworks. For this reason, KCGPA will engage staff in learning and reflection around the same goals we work with students on, with two primary outcomes:

- Staff will internalize SEL with greater depth and teach it with greater investment and clarity
- Staff themselves will grow and learn, embodying the idea that we are all on a continuous learning journey towards our best selves

Restorative Justice

KCGPA’s culture will focus on supporting every student to develop to her fullest potential by constantly asking ourselves: how can we maximize our young women’s long-term development? To answer this question, staff will operate with the assumption that culture breaches stem not from a lack of will, but from a lack of awareness, knowledge, or skill in effectively meeting one’s needs, solving problems, or self-regulating a behavior.⁶⁷

KCGPA’s teaching and learning oriented approach to student discipline recognizes that punishment tends much more to suppress behavior than to change it in the long term. KCGPA administrators and teachers will not permit misbehaviors to derail learning; nor will they permit a short-term, control-focused discipline model to obscure each young woman’s potential to self-regulate her behavior with the right relationships and support. KCGPA will avoid discipline that excludes students from instruction when possible because students often miss the opportunity to explore new behaviors and may miss instruction.

Restorative Justice is central to KCGPA’s approach to student discipline and aligns to its core values. Within the context of student discipline, restorative justice has three goals:

- *Accountability*. Strategies provide opportunities for wrongdoers to be accountable to those they have harmed, and enable them to repair the harm they caused to the extent possible.
- *School safety*. Strategies that build relationships and empower both students and staff in the community to take responsibility for the well-being of its members ensure a safe community.
- *Social and emotional competency development*. Restorative justice seeks to increase the social and emotional competencies of those who have harmed others, address underlying factors that lead to harmful behaviors, and build on the strengths and assets of each student.

KCGPA will ground its Restorative Justice practices in the work of Valor Collegiate Academies and Oakland Unified School District. KCGPA will focus on the following primary student supports:

- *Restorative circles*. Restorative circles focus on four strategies:
 - *Modeling*. Students and staff model what positive behaviors look, sound, and feel like
 - *Problem-solving*. Through role play or structured discussions, students brainstorm and identify solutions to problem behaviors
 - *Building communication skills*. Students learn how to communicate what they need and

⁶⁷ SecondStep.org. “Second Step Middle School Review of Research.” <http://www.cfchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/research/second-step-middle-school-review-of-research.pdf>

- *Building community.* Students play an active role in creating a safe, caring, and trusting environment that supports the development of social and emotional competencies.
- *Mediation.* Mediation typically occurs for more serious problems involving two or more students. A trained mediator will work with students through a step-by-step process that includes helping students and/or staff to understand the problem, the harm that impacted the parties involved, and constructive solutions. One of the primary goals is to avoid escalation of the conflict and to find long-term solutions.

The Dean of Students and school counselors will coordinate restorative circles and develop staff in effective facilitation via summer PD, grade level team meetings, and ongoing Friday professional developments. Of course, in the case of criminal behavior such as a student bringing a weapon to school, a different process will be followed per school policies regarding safety and legal issues.

Clear Expectations and Consequences (EC)

Shared EC have been identified as key components of prevention programs in schools that accelerate academic achievement, diminish problem behaviors, and increase readiness for learning.⁶⁸

Beyond developing all staff, including operational team members, to ensure consistent implementation and predictability for students, the KCGPA discipline system will be defined by the question “how does this event allow us to develop this young woman?” Every discipline decision will be focused on structuring the consequence for each community member’s action so as to push that student’s growth in SEL and character development.

KCGPA will have extremely clear and consistent EC for behavior at all grade levels. As students progress from grade to grade, they will experience a significant, though gradual, release of responsibility to ensure development of authentic leadership. Every EC will be explicitly tied to a core value and a long-term arc of development. The complete system of EC will be grounded in lessons learned from other YWLN schools and refined by the School Leader and founding team in the pre-opening year, and will include the elements below.

Positive behavior support. In combination with Restorative Justice, KCGPA will use a tailored positive behavior support approach. KCGPA believes that all students can learn the skills necessary to be successful in school, to demonstrate KCGPA’s core values and character strengths, and to use these skills and values to become successful in college and life. A positive behavior support system approaches behavior from an educational, proactive perspective that requires positive relationships and a preventative approach. Therefore, KCGPA’s Code of Conduct will define expected behaviors first, then school rule infractions, followed by possible strategies for correcting the behavior. As with academics, KCGPA will celebrate students for meeting and exceeding behavior expectations.

Logical consequences. KCGPA will respond to repeated misbehavior using a system of logical consequences. Using logical consequences combines a high level of behavior expectations with a climate that is responsive to the social and emotional development of students. The goal is to help students notice and reflect on the connections between their actions and the consequences of those actions. Logical consequences are respectful, relevant to the student’s actions, and realistic, including

⁶⁸ National Research Council. *Losing Generations: Adolescents in High-Risk Settings*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. 1993. <https://doi.org/10.17226/2113>.

- *Relax and Return.* Relax and Return is a consistent, calm, and non-punitive strategy for helping students develop self-control while preserving the smooth flow of the classroom. When students themselves or a teacher recognizes the need to refocus, a student goes to a designated spot in the classroom with a timer and sometimes an object to help relax and refocus. This spot is separate from the group but close enough that the student is still engaged in instruction.
- *Reparation.* Reparation could just as easily be called “you broke it, you fix it.” As a key principle of Restorative Justice, reparation gives students the opportunity to take responsibility by fixing the damage they have caused. If a student loses control and knocks something over, makes a mess, or damages someone else’s property, they are expected to fix what they broke. This can mean “fixing” it when a student has damaged someone’s feelings. Repairing what has been broken ensures that the student understands the consequences of her actions and the importance of taking responsibility.
- *Loss of privileges.* Privileges are opportunities to practice being reliable and taking responsibility for following the expectations independently. If a student is splashing water at the drinking fountain, they may lose the privilege of getting a drink with peers and instead do so at another time with adult supervision.

Merit and demerit system. KCGPA will use a merit and demerit system to reinforce EC within the classroom and in non-academic settings. Staff will be incredibly consistent in following their grade level EC because of the practice-oriented development and ongoing calibration and support they will experience. Building on and celebrating positive behaviors will always be a focus at KCGPA, and when negative behaviors are identified, the consequence will be clear and tied to a learning-focused outcome. Monitoring the system will be the responsibility of each advisor, and trends will be addressed by the grade team leaders and school leader.

This system will support teachers in maintaining consistent expectations across classrooms. It is not designed, however, to be an end in itself or the primary means of behavior management. Teacher development will heavily emphasize means of actively supporting students in the behaviors that maintain an orderly, learning-focused environment. If a teacher over-relies on demerits to manage their classroom, KCGPA’s instructional leaders will work closely to support that teacher with foundational management skills that preclude a need for reliance on demerits.

Uniforms. Uniforms promote a scholarly environment and reduce stress and expense for families and students. Uniforms will be chosen to avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes and will carefully consider costs to families. KCGPA has budgeted funds to support families who need financial assistance in meeting the uniform expectations. The exact uniform will be determined in the pre-opening phase with significant family and student input to ensure it will receive broad support from all stakeholders.

Graduated discipline system (GDS)

For each Stage of the KCGPA model there will be a GDS that describes the levels of action taken by KCGPA as students mature in relationship to the EC.

- *Prescriptive and behavior-focused.* In most behavioral areas, KCGPA’s initial EC will not give much room for error or choice for students. Students will be given very clear expectations and consequences, and the GDS consequences will generally focus on individual consequences.
- *Collaborative and outcomes-focused.* In service of its mission of developing young women who have independent, strong voices, as students demonstrate improved self-regulation and mastery of the EC, they will earn increasing autonomy to design behaviors that meet shared community agreements. Instead of “there will be no talking in the hallways between classes,”

the expectation will shift to “classes in session and staff working will not be disturbed by students changing classes.” Students will agree on expected outcomes rather than expected behaviors. If the outcome is not met, part of the consequence will involve discussion of how they decided to achieve a certain outcome and how that decision did or did not work to achieve that outcome.

Special Student Populations

KCGPA intends to serve students with special educational needs exceptionally well. In keeping with the core values, all staff and students will seek to meaningfully include others in their school community. This belief will be critical to developing a welcoming and supportive culture for all students, and especially for students who may have had difficult experiences in prior schools. Student leaders at KCGPA will be models for how to treat all students with kindness and respect, and the school community will expect all members to live these values every day via the strategies below.

Advisory group coaching. The advisory will be held to very high standards for proactive inclusion of all its members. Even in a school that will be as emotionally and physically safe as KCGPA, students will still make mistakes. Advisory groups will ensure these mistakes are learning opportunities. Advisories will watch for their members and talk with their advisor if they see bullying or meanness, especially with students who may have difficulties in social settings or disabilities that can make them possible targets for unkind behavior.

Personalized Learning Plan (PLP). When developing the Personalized Learning Plan, the advisor, student, and family will set goals that will help the student grow in all areas of her life. For example, a student with Asperger’s Syndrome may have a 504 Plan that specifies how teachers should interact with her during class time. While a Learning Support Specialist may work with the student to develop skills in recognizing facial expressions, the PLP may be used to set additional goals around making friends and taking risks in class. Typical goals on the PLP in this case may be: “I will introduce myself to one new student per week and ask them questions about themselves to get to know them better. I will ask Jade in my advisory for help with choosing students to introduce myself to.” These goals will be monitored by the advisor and family and may be shared within the advisory so that peers can support also.

Student and Faculty Senate. the Senate will help when requested by advisors and students. An example might be the one given above, where a student with Asperger’s has set a goal to get to know new people. The advisor may ask for the help of the Senate, who may find volunteers to eat lunch with the student. In circumstances like these, students will receive coaching on how to balance acting responsibly and kindly while not acting out of pity or a sense of obligation.

KCGPA will also provide extensive orientation and ongoing development experiences for students, families, and staff to support the practices described above. For an overview of these plans, please see Appendix A.8.1: Orientation and Ongoing Development to Support Climate and Culture.

B: Organizational Plan

B.1: Missouri Non-Profit

Kansas City Girls Preparatory Academy (KCGPA) is organized as a Missouri nonprofit, 501(c)(3) corporation incorporated pursuant to the Missouri Nonprofit Corporation Act (R.S.Mo. §355).

Members of the KCGPA Board of Directors (the Board) will operate all times as stewards of public finances and public trust and as decision-making public servants as defined in R.S.Mo. §105.450 for

purposes of the financial disclosure requirements. The Board is aware that it will be exempt from all laws and rules related to schools, governing boards, and school districts, except for those provided in 160.400 to 160.425 R.S.Mo..

Upon approval of this proposal, KCGPA will hold the charter and be responsible for:

- Governing all schools in the Local Education Agency (LEA)
- Meeting the terms of the five year contract with the Missouri Charter Public School Commission
- Fully complying with Missouri’s Sunshine Law, state ethics requirements, and all applicable provisions and statutes, including the regulations set out in Missouri Revised Statutes §610.010 to 610.030, including but not limited to: holding public Board, Committee, and Subcommittee meetings with adequate advance public notice; publicly documenting Board activities, including all Board meeting minutes and Board meeting attendance rosters, with closed meetings and records allowed in some limited circumstances; permitting recording of meetings; recording minutes including voting records and making those minutes available to the public; abiding by all rules regarding electronic transmission of messages relating to public business; maintaining records of closed meetings; and, ensuring public accessibility (except as otherwise provided)
- Operating with the awareness that the Board is liable for acts in office as if it were a duly elected school board, and holding appropriate liability insurance
- Ensuring all Board members complete criminal background checks and Family Care Safety Registry requests checks as required by 160.400.14 R.S.Mo.
- Ensuring all Board members submit the financial disclosure forms and annual conflict of interest statements required by the Missouri Ethics Commission, which prohibit: receiving compensation other than reimbursement of actual expenses incurred while fulfilling duties as a member of the Board; holding any office or employment from the Board, the school, or the school’s sponsor while serving as a Board member; serving as an employee of a company that provides substantial fee-for-services to the school

The Board has adopted a set of corporate bylaws, which set forth the method of election of officers of the Board, consistent with R.S.Mo. §355.326, and a conflict of interest policy. The Board has also filed a Federal Form 1023 request for tax-exempt status with the U.S. Department of Treasury, which has been approved. The following provides documentation of KCGPA’s legal status and relevant Board policies.

- Appendix B.1.1: Articles of Incorporation
- Appendix B.1.2: Corporate By-laws
- Appendix B.1.3: Documentation of Missouri Nonprofit Status
- Appendix B.1.4: Documentation of IRS Nonprofit Status
- Appendix B.1.5: Criminal Background and Family Care Safety Registry
- Appendix B.1.6: Evidence of Application Submission to Kansas City Public Schools.
- Appendix B.1.7: Compliance with Nondiscrimination Laws.
- Appendix C.2.1: Conflict of Interest and Financial Management Policies

B.2: Governing Board Composition

High Expectations, Accountability, and Informed Oversight

The Board’s governance philosophy is built on the tenets of high expectations, accountability, and informed oversight. The Board appreciates the importance of employing a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is an accomplished educator with strong leadership and communication skills to foster a climate of collaboration and excellence. The Board will empower the CEO to manage the operations of the school and implement programs that advance the school’s mission. The Board will grant the CEO the autonomy

needed to successfully and strategically lead the school. High expectations will be established for the CEO, and the Board will hold her/him accountable for meeting or exceeding such expectations. In turn, the CEO will be tasked with providing the Board with the academic, financial, and operational information needed to effectively govern and to make informed decisions. The academic, financial, and operational viability of the school is ultimately the Board's responsibility. Specifically, the Board will:

- Set the strategic direction for the school
- Hire, set compensation for, and evaluate the CEO
- Ensure compliance with applicable laws, bylaws, and the charter
- Approve and oversee the annual budget
- Ensure the financial health of the school through careful monitoring and proactive action
- Engage in community outreach and fundraising efforts
- Hire an independent auditor
- Provide oversight of academics and programs

The Board recognizes the value of involving key stakeholders in the governance process and will actively engage them. As noted above, the Board will ensure all meetings and documents are open and easily accessible to the public. The Board will actively encourage members of the community to attend meetings. The Board will also actively and regularly seek input from stakeholder groups, including parents, community members, and local businesses and organizations, through various methods such as surveys, presentations, gatherings, and forums. Through engaged conversation with the KCGPA community, the Board gain the input, feedback, and perspective needed to serve that community well.

Evaluating the Success of the School, CEO, and the Board

Success of the School. Success will be evaluated by measuring against the Key Goals outlined in Section A.7: School-Specific Goals and Objectives. During every meeting, the Board will be updated about the school's progress towards these goals through a consistent dashboard that reveals trends and changes in performance over time. Underlying data will be available as needed to inform decision-making.

Success of the Chief Executive Officer. The Board's CEO Support and Evaluation Committee will be tasked with completing an annual evaluation of the CEO. The Committee will use the support and tools provided by Charter Board Partners to fulfill this role. The Board will establish annual personal performance goals, student and school-wide academic goals, and operational and financial goals collaboratively with the CEO, all of which will be aligned to the school's mission and core values. The Committee will continuously monitor the progress made towards such goals as the year progresses. The CEO's leadership will be evaluated across six categories:

- Cultivating a diverse and inclusive learning community and climate
- Implementing rigorous academic programs and meeting school goals
- Developing faculty and improving teaching and leadership
- Establishing and maintaining rich relationships with stakeholder groups
- Leading with KCGPA's mission and values

The evaluation of the CEO will occur throughout the entirety of the school year. The CEO Support and Evaluation Committee will also interview faculty members and leverage staff surveys throughout the year to inform the annual evaluation. Upon completion, the Committee will provide a report to the Board of Directors recommending action about the CEO's employment status.

*Success of the Board of Directors.*⁶⁹ Annually, the Board of Directors will evaluate its own performance through a formal self-review to maintain a high level of performance and to invest each member in her/his professional growth. The Board will determine success by analyzing the academic, operational, and financial performance of the school. Individual baseline criteria for evaluations will include:

- Knowledge of KCGPA's mission and values
- Attendance at Board, Committee, and Subcommittee meetings
- Contribution to Board discussions and decision making
- Role in responsible financial decisions and oversight
- Involvement in strategic decisions
- Understanding of student performance data
- Level of support given to the CEO and members of the leadership team
- Appropriate discernment between governance and management decision-making

The evaluation process will include the following steps;

- *Agreement about Board and individual member performance criteria.* During the initial Board training, members will agree on general performance standards for all Board members as well as additional standards for the chairperson.
- *Development of collective and individual goals by Board members.* The Board as a whole and individual members will develop goals for the year. These goals are in addition to the baseline performance standards described above.
- *Annual Evaluation Process.* Board members will use an evaluation tool to determine the quality of the Board's overall performance and their individual performance in the general performance categories and progress towards goals. The evaluation process will include:
 - Rubric-based tools to score their performance in each general performance category
 - An output document that highlights strengths and weaknesses with specific evidence
 - A conference with a coach or mentor to review and adjust evaluation outputs and reflect on developmental priorities
- *Post-Evaluation Check-In.* Approximately six weeks after the annual evaluation, Board members will meet with a coach or mentor to discuss progress made on the improvement plans described in the evaluation output. Members will adjust and prioritize actions based on progress.

Board Member Recruitment

Because the Board must always be a capable and high functioning entity for the school to meet its goals, it is a major responsibility of the Board to ensure the school has structures in place to attract talented candidates. The CEO and existing Board members will actively leverage personal, professional, and community connections to identify new Board members. Of particular importance will be expertise in law, education, real estate, finances, and fundraising. Candidates must have a demonstrated commitment to Kansas City and a deep commitment to KCGPA's mission and core values. Annually, the Governance Committee will analyze the Board's composition to determine its short and long-term needs. This inventory will include succession planning for Directors and Officers of the Board.

The Board will approve a nominating policy and procedures before adding additional members. All Board candidates will follow a multi-step process designed to ensure both a mission fit and the necessary skills and qualities needed. The school plans to up to a total of 7-9 members before KCGPA opens. This process will occur between January 2018 and the school's launch in August 2019.

⁶⁹ Adapted from: Cornell-Feist, Marci. *Board Meetings: A Guide for Charter Schools*. The High Bar. 2011.

Board Member Onboarding and Ongoing Development

Much like KCGPA's school staff, the board will conduct significant onboarding and ongoing development to ensure that all members fully understand the philosophy and approach of the school, the Board's operations, and all relevant Missouri Statutes.

KCGPA's board will work with Charter Board Partners as a resource for ongoing development. To ensure new members receive the support they need, a series of onboarding sessions will address the following, all of which will be available in a central electronic repository:

- Mission and vision
- Student demographic and enrollment data
- Key design elements and principles
- Overview of Board policies
- Role of the Board of Directors and functions of Committees

The Board will also create a professional development calendar that outlines the specific timeline, scope, and success measure of each activity. Potential professional development activities include:

- Finance, governance, and similar trainings
- Engaging in shared reading or professional development on topics relevant to KCGPA's unique location, model, and student population
- Visiting high-performing schools
- Attending community events
- Applying best practices for charter school governance through on-demand resources, webinars, and virtual coaching from BoardOnTrack or Charter Board Partners

For an overview of the founding team, please see Appendix B.2.1: Bios of Founding Team.

B.3: Management and Operation

In developing its organizational structure, KCGPA has considered the appropriate span of control for each leader in terms of number of direct reports and functions they are responsible for. KCGPA has also considered how to develop and sustain team cohesion. Please note that job descriptions include detailed qualifications and responsibilities for each role discussed here. For more detail, please see:

- Appendix B.3.1: Organizational Chart
- Appendix B.3.2: Staffing Schedule
- Appendix B.3.3: Job Descriptions

Roles and Responsibilities

Board and CEO. The Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for KCGPA's success and will monitor ongoing data and status updates on key leaders' responsibilities, data regarding progress towards the goals set forth in the charter, and critical information regarding any issues or concerns on a timely basis. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for ensuring that the Board has appropriate information and transparency into programming and operations, including the dissemination of an annual report to the Board, Sponsor, and all other stakeholders. Please see Section B.2: Governing Board Composition for more detail regarding the Board and CEO's functions.

School leaders. The School Leaders will report to the CEO. School leaders will oversee, continually evaluate, and will be accountable for all their school's programs. They will serve as the instructional

leader of their school and oversee its curriculum development and assessment. They will also be responsible for developing a strong pool of successors through sustained focus on developing the capacity of the school's leadership team through ongoing coaching/feedback, development plans, and strategic peer collaboration and development structures. The founding middle school leader, Tara Haskins, will begin in July 2018 and will have a full year of development, working in concert with the CEO, to plan for launch. The development year will include a competency-aligned leadership development program, including residencies at high-performing schools in Kansas City and nationwide.

School leadership team. At scale, both the middle and high school's leadership teams will be composed of a team of five: the School Leader, Dean of Students, Instructional Coaches for STEAM and Humanities, and Director of Student Support for SWD and ELL students. Responsibilities for these roles will be clearly defined for all staff. These responsibilities are designed strategically to maximize the time and effectiveness of each leader, allowing them to focus entirely on supporting teachers. However, when they come together as a team, KCGPA will rely on Patrick Lencioni's guidance for effective leadership teams in *The Advantage*. Leaders will be expected to step outside of their day-to-day role and operate with the leadership team's broader goals as their primary responsibility. They will receive training and support from the School Leader in developing a culture of trust and healthy conflict that ensures the best ideas win out and are implemented in a manner appropriate to their urgency and importance.

Instructional Coaches for STEAM and Humanities (ICs). The ICs, in conjunction with the School Leader, will help direct the instructional program, focus on curricular and assessment issues, and supervise and coach teachers. The ICs will work extremely closely together, under the guidance of the school leader, to both develop teacher capacity through ongoing coaching and implement systems such as curriculum writing and data driven instruction that maximize teacher effectiveness. Rather than a single Director of Curriculum and Instruction, KCGPA's content-focused approach to literacy and to concept development in math, science, engineering, and technology demands instructional leaders with deep content knowledge, an ability to focus their own ongoing learning on their core content areas, and a continued grounding in the work of direct support and development for teachers.

Dean of Students (DOS). The Dean of Students will help promote and manage school culture, student discipline, and family outreach. This position will also manage the Counselor/Social Worker positions for each school to ensure a unified and proactive approach to developing student culture and managing student discipline. The DOS is responsible for planning systems and training staff to address all health and safety concerns, including responsibility for mandatory reporting, administering suicide risk assessments, and protocols for active shooters.

Director of Student Support (DSS). In addition to the four above roles, the DSS will ensure that all students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and at-risk students receive the support that they need to achieve at the highest levels. This role manages and develops Learning Support Specialists for ESL and SPED, actively collaborates with ICs to ensure effective co-teaching and push-in/pull-out supports are being offered, and works with operations staff and all teachers to develop strong IEPs and systems of support for students.

Director of Finance and Operations (DFO). To ensure that school leaders can focus exclusively on instructional content and truly serve as the school's educational leader, the CEO will manage a DFO. This role will be responsible for the facility and administrative operations, including managing all non-instructional staff. The DFO will also manage day-to-day issues and operations for the school, develop and implement operational systems, ensure compliance with federal, state and local regulations

(including The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), and ensure that all accountability and financial data is being kept, revised, and recorded regularly and accurately. This role will also manage:

- Operations Managers or Coordinators (title will depend on experience and specific responsibilities) responsible for day-to-day operations and administrative functions
- Development Manager or Coordinator responsible for fundraising
- Family and Community Engagement Coordinator responsible for family engagement and student recruitment
- Data and Assessment Manager or Coordinator responsible for data systems and reporting
- Office Manager/Registrar responsible for welcoming visitors and maintaining updated state Core Data/MOSIS records in collaboration with the Data and Assessment Manager or Coordinator

All staff will undergo criminal background checks and Family Care Safety Registry checks per 160.408 11.

B.4: Staff Recruitment, Retention, Replacement and Training

Staff Culture Focused on Continuous Improvement

Exceptional schools depend on a team that is deeply committed to their core values and willing to challenge and support one another to uphold those values in the face of obstacles. Structurally, KCGPA follow the organizational chart in Appendix B.3.1 to ensure clear roles and responsibilities, team structures and sizes, and a focus of every adult on identifying and meeting students' needs. Culturally, KCGPA staff will receive ongoing development and support in developing a strong voice and sense of responsibility for offering supportive affirming and adjusting feedback to all other staff members. For example, if a teacher on lunch duty notices a routine or procedure that could make the lunchtime smoother and more enjoyable for staff and students, s/he will be actively encouraged to offer insights and feedback to the Director of Finance and Operations and Dean of Students, who share responsibility for designing those systems. This open, supportive feedback will be critical to developing "vulnerability-based trust" and going beyond a "culture of nice"⁷⁰ to ensure the school continuously improves.

To ensure that staff understand that trusting, supportive feedback will be a hallmark of KCGPA's culture, core values will be woven into the recruitment and hiring process. KCGPA aspires to be a school where educators see the opportunity to engage in unparalleled development and a close-knit community.

Staffing Schedule

KCGPA's goal is to build a strong team with key instructional leaders hired as early as possible to provide time for capacity-building, to continuously develop and refine curriculum and long-term plans, and to ensure a successful launch. KCGPA has therefore budgeted for its founding School Leader to join in May 2018 and for a Director of Finance and Operations and Family and Community Engagement Coordinator to join by July 2018. This would enable a strong founding team to lay the cultural, academic, and operational foundations during the pre-opening year. In addition, KCGPA has budgeted to hire founding teachers as consultants in January 2019 so that they can begin early work with curriculum and other onboarding activities before their full-time start in May 2019. For a complete staffing schedule matched to student enrollment over the life of the charter, please see Appendix B.3.2: Staffing Schedule.

In both the middle and high school, KCGPA assumes that it will prioritize the hires of STEAM

⁷⁰ MacDonald, Elisa. "When Nice Won't Suffice: Honest discourse is key to shifting school culture." Learning Forward, June 2011. Vol. 32 No. 3.

https://www.fpsct.org/uploaded/Teacher_Resource_Center/Team_Resources/Teamwork_Toolkit/Constructive_Conroversy/When_Nice_Won%27t_Suffice.pdf

instructional coaches first and add a second coach for Humanities at each school in its second year. This assumes that school leaders, who will be responsible for direct teacher coaching in Year 1 of their respective schools, are more likely to have a humanities background given typical talent market conditions. However, if the school leader has a STEAM background, then coaches will be hired in the opposite order to complement that strength.

During the first year of the high school, the established middle school principal will continue to manage the Director of Student Support, who is in turn responsible for all SPED and ELL services. This will allow the new high school leader to devote her/his full attention to building a strong, college-preparatory culture and academic program. In the high school's second year, 2024-2025, a second Director of Student Support reporting to the high school principal will be hired. The middle and high school Directors will work closely to ensure alignment. KCGPA will also carefully study its enrollment data and student needs as it grows to make ongoing adjustments to the number of full time employees and the percent of their time needed to address goals in students' IEPs and to meet the needs of English Language Learners.

Art/Music/Drama classes will be provided through partnerships and consultants in the first two years of the school, which is one of the reasons the schedule positions those classes at the end of the academic day for flexibility in scheduling. By Year 3, KCGPA will hire a full-time position to lead these classes.

Personnel Policies

Prior to hiring staff other than the founding CEO, KCGPA will adopt a complete set of nonsectarian personnel policies governing the hiring, compensation, evaluation, promotion and termination of employees. Personnel policies will ensure that all staff enroll in the appropriate pension fund by required deadlines and engage mandated reporter and ethics trainings. All staff will receive and sign a copy of a Staff Handbook during hiring and will receive training on key components throughout the school year. Policies will also include procedures to ensure that KCGPA complies with all teacher certification requirements for charter schools as set forth by the State of Missouri, including:

- Requirements that teachers maintain appropriate certifications
- Prohibitions against the employment of teachers whose certificate or license has been suspended or revoked by the Missouri State Board of Education
- Limits to employment of no more than 20% non-certified instructional staff, provided that all non-certified personnel are supervised by certified instructional personnel

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In its pre-opening year, KCGPA will develop an explicit commitment and strategy to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. This will focus on ensuring achievement of similar outcomes across subgroups with respect to advancement, pay and recognition. Measurable goals will be developed and publicly tracked as a part of this process, which will be supported by participation in a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion cohort sponsored by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and led by Promise54, a nonprofit formed by Bellwether Education Partners.

Because of the important focus on curriculum development and staff recruitment and hiring during its pre-opening year, KCGPA will prioritize these areas of practice for implementation of its DEI strategy. KCGPA has already established rigorous internal goals and strong external outreach to networks of educators who reflect the diversity of its students. As a result of this work, KCGPA received 74 applications for its Founding School Leader role, of whom 64% were educators of color and 82% were women. To continue building a highly diverse recruitment pool, KCGPA has budgeted \$4,500 during its

pre-opening year for additional support from talent consultants who specialize in this area to provide as-needed support in systems design and implementation.

Substantive Professional Development for All Roles

KCGPA sees staff development as deeply interwoven with the content of the curriculum it expects students to engage in. Section A.2: Curriculum and Instruction discusses KCGPA’s integrated approach to standards, competencies, curriculum, assessment, instruction, and professional development.

Because of the mission, core values, and target population, all staff will engage in ongoing learning about the intersections of race, gender, language, religion, and other “floating signifiers” that impact staff and students’ identity development and the development of a mission-aligned community.

In addition, operations staff will engage in non-instructional development opportunities through role-specific collaborations with others at high-performing schools, access to role-specific coaches or consultants, and professional development opportunities by relevant organizations. For example, the Development Manager or Coordinator might attend an intensive training with For Impact, a nonprofit that offers high-quality training in fundraising strategies and tactics.

Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention Focus on Core Values and Role-Specific Competencies

To emphasize core values, KCGPA’s hiring committee will ensure that job candidates’ experience of recruitment and interviewing is grounded in a culture of vulnerability-based, trusting feedback and tight-knit community from their very first communications with the KCGPA team. A multi-pronged recruitment strategy will be used to build a high volume of qualified applicants for all roles and a pool of candidates for future hiring. For an overview of this strategy, please see Appendix B.4.1: Staff Recruitment Plan.

In addition to the recruitment strategies noted in Appendix B.4.1, core values and role-specific competencies will be reinforced during the hiring process via multiple rounds of interviews that assess applicants based on their alignment with KCGPA’s culture and instructional philosophy. In addition to one-on-one and team interviews, all teaching candidates will deliver a sample lesson, followed by evidence-based reflection, coaching, and live practice. Then, the candidate will lead a second sample lesson where feedback is implemented, followed by a candidate reflection. This process allows for assessment of technical capacity as well as a candidate’s growth mindset. Just as importantly, it ensures candidates experience the same type of coaching and feedback they will find once joining the team.

KCGPA’s staff retention plan will similarly be driven by core values, strong development for all staff, and research on employee engagement. After basic needs like salary and hours are met, teacher retention is driven by a variety of factors. Gallup’s Q12 Survey will serve as an organizing framework for maximizing team member’s engagement over time. KCGPA will adopt strategies as follows to address critical elements in this framework.⁷¹ For an overview of this plan, please see Appendix B.4.2: Staff Retention Plan.

B.5: Student Recruitment and Enrollment

Community-Engaged School

KCGPA is motivated by the commitment to provide excellent schools that are rooted in the community it serves. KCGPA will invest in significant community outreach to develop partnerships designed to reach

⁷¹ Rodd Wagner and James Harter. *12: The Elements of Great Managing*. Gallup Press. 2006.

the families most in need of strong educational options, to inform the educational model based on the needs expressed by members of the community, and to provide additional services that will help prepare students for success in college and career.

KCGPA recognizes that there are many families that may not learn about KCGPA without proactive communication. KCGPA will actively publicize its program through a variety of media and means, beginning no later than August 2018. These efforts will be led by a Family and Community Engagement Coordinator (FCEC) who will be hired full-time in August 2018. The FCEC will have a significant budget allocation – roughly \$35,000 – to support advertising and outreach in the pre-opening year to ensure that KCGPA connects with families who will most benefit from its services and meets its enrollment targets.

Recruitment Strategy

Experts in school-community engagement are clear that a strong foundation for future collaboration and engagement is built on interpersonal interactions in the community. As the Annenberg Institute on School Reform at Brown University states, “While research has shown that parent and community participation are essential to school improvement, many schools, especially those in low-income and working-class communities, fall far short of meaningful engagement.”⁷² The Annenberg Institute identifies the following best practices for meaningful community engagement, all of which KCGPA will prioritize in community outreach efforts for enrollment applications:

- Door knocking in the surrounding neighborhoods
- Reaching out to parents, students and community members through after-school and neighborhood programs
- Reaching out to parent-teacher associations
- Organizing neighborhood walks to meet families
- Reaching out to young people through community-based organizations
- Reaching out to partner organizations and “connectors” like community leaders

During its pre-opening year, the Board will develop and approve a policy regarding transgender student enrollment and retention, with the goal of maintaining alignment to its values of equity and an inclusive school community. It will likely use guidelines promulgated by the National Coalition of Girls Schools for supporting transgender students for development of this policy.⁷³ For more information, please see:

- Appendix B.5.1: Student Recruitment Plan
- Appendix B.5.2: Admission and Enrollment Policy
- Appendix B.5.3: Lottery Policy
- For enrollment projections, please see Section A.5: Target Population.

Student Transience and Attrition

KCGPA has devoted considerable attention to creating a program to which students and families can commit for eight years. KCGPA will provide regularly scheduled, highly focused family engagement opportunities to make the school a friendly and useful place for students and families. KCGPA will also prioritize selection and support for teachers and leaders who are passionate about building true community with families.

⁷² “Getting Started in Education Organizing”

http://annenberginstitute.org/sites/default/files/product/428/files/Resources&Strategies_low.pdf

⁷³ National Coalition of Girls Schools. “Transgender Position Statement.” 2017.

http://www.ncgs.org/Pdfs/Transgender/NCGS_TransgenderPositionStatement_2017.pdf

The Kansas City Area Education Research Consortium has analyzed 2015-2016 school year data from DESE that reveals extremely high rates of student mobility in the KCPS boundaries, with nearly 1 in 6 students transferring schools. Even with the most proactive strategies in place, KCGPA anticipates mobility and attrition over time. When it occurs, KCGPA will backfill from its wait list in grades 5-9. KCGPA's Board will approve specific policies for backfilling during the pre-opening year.

KCGPA also expects student mobility throughout the year. KCGPA will work with receiving and sending schools to share student records. To ensure that students who join midway through the year have a seamless, structured entry to the school's culture and expectations, KCGPA will proactively support them as discussed in Section A.8: Culture and Climate.

Retention Strategy

KCGPA's retention strategies are designed to maximize the number of students who successfully complete the program in full and are listed in detail in Appendix B.5.4: Student Retention Plan. KCGPA's retention plan will focus on three objectives:

- 1) Ensure systems are in place to identify struggling students and get them the support they need
- 2) Provide families with regular communication and transparency about their child's progress
- 3) Uphold clear and supportive policies and procedures

B.6: Parent/Guardian, Community, Higher Education, and Employee Involvement

KCGPA recognizes that the long-term success of its mission depends on engaging its community in service of a shared goal: the success of young women from the neighborhoods in its priority zip codes. KCGPA believes that real partnerships are built on shared, mutual learning and an authentic give and take. KCGPA has begun community engagement more than two and a half years in advance of the school's planned opening and will continue and strengthen engagement to ensure that the school's launch represents the culmination of an inclusive, shared effort.

As KCGPA grows, school leadership will establish specific times for families and community stakeholders to meet with leaders and teachers, through routine coffee hours at neighborhood venues, office hours at the school, invitations to board meetings, and so on. The specific strategies and timing to achieve maximum engagement and transparency will be adjusted as the team learns more from its community engagement work during the pre-opening year.

KCGPA will evaluate potential partners through consistent use of an evaluation tool that includes fit/mission alignment, quality of service offerings, funding/cost, and measurable impacts on students. All external partners and community members who might interact with students will be required to undergo criminal background and Family Care Safety Registry checks.

Parents/Guardians

Parent and family engagement is a critical ingredient in successful schools. Parents and families want to be involved in the school culture and their child's learning. KCGPA will use the following strategies to ensure that KCGPA parents/guardians are active, knowledgeable partners in the school.

- *Family Advisory Council (FAC)*. KCGPA will create a FAC to support families' ability to voice concerns and identify emerging opportunities at the school. Both the middle and high school will have a FAC, which will be led by elected co-chairs. FAC or their designees will participate as non-voting members in Board meetings.
- *Staff development to maximize family engagement*. KCGPA's advisors will have biweekly contact

with families and establish lasting relationships. To support advisors and other staff, KCGPA will use resources from the Flamboyant Foundation, a national leader in family and community engagement. KCGPA will also seek to participate in SchoolSmart Kansas City's Family & Community Engagement Fellowship, which also supports strong family engagement strategy.

- *School design.* Through a Community Design Collaborative, families are being included in the design, development, and implementation of learning priorities to ensure that the learning is relevant and supported by all adults in the young women's lives.
- *Meetings and events.* KCGPA will host a broad array of events to engage families, from talent shows to cultural fairs to breakfasts where families can get to know staff and one another.
- *Recruiting sessions.* From the very start of the recruiting process, KCGPA will work to make all parents feel welcomed and inspired by the KCGPA culture. Recruiting sessions will involve current students and parents (after year 1) who will explain the school culture.
- *Parent orientations.* KCGPA will offer a 90-minute session on multiple dates and varying times to provide a comprehensive introduction to the KCGPA culture for families. We will seek to ensure 100% participation to build a trusting relationship between families and the school. Parents/guardians will be personally called by their advisor and invited to each event.
- *Participation and volunteer opportunities.* Parents and families will be encouraged to volunteer or participate in as many facets of the school as possible.
- *Translation services.* KCGPA has already contracted with Jewish Vocational Services to provide translation services as part of its family/parent interviews during the charter application drafting process. Second languages will also be prioritized in staff hiring.

Community Input on School Design

As discussed in Section A.1: Mission, Vision, Philosophy, and Goals, KCGPA will ask its community partners to serve as critical friends to support the school in maintaining its values and achieving its mission. This will depend on a simple, ongoing strategy: KCGPA will identify important functions and decisions and, when appropriate, engage its community and families in a process of input and feedback to ensure those functions and decisions are addressed with core values and community interests in mind. In addition, KCGPA will use the following strategies in the pre-opening phase.

- *Community forums and parent/family interviews.* To gather input on the idea of starting a new school and on its core programmatic elements, KCGPA's founding team has been conducting a series of community forums and parent/family interviews, starting in 2016. Forums have been held in a variety of places around Kansas City (e.g. public libraries, Northeast Community Center) and have garnered significant interest, including families with eligible students, community-based business owners, religious leaders, current and former KCPS school board members, KCPS and charter school administrators, civic leaders, governmental agency representatives (e.g. Housing and Urban Development), area philanthropic organizations, and YWLN staff.
- *School design.* Through a Community Design Collaborative that began in February 2018, families and community members are being included in KCGPA's design to ensure that the learning is relevant and supported by all adults in the young women's lives.

Community Engagement and Partnerships

Our plans have been embraced by the Mayor of Kansas City, who is on the founding board, neighborhood associations and families, area teachers, and many other community stakeholders, all of whom recognize the need for Kansas City's deserving young women to receive an excellent education. KCGPA's founding team has been thrilled by the positive response and interest in partnership from many area organizations. KCGPA has begun informal conversations and, upon approval of this proposal,

will seek to formalize partnerships that serve the following areas:

- *Athletics*. The northeast KC-area soccer program Global FC, which has a focus on serving the immigrant and refugee communities, is an excellent example of the type of athletic partnership that KCGPA will foster to provide robust opportunities for competitive athletics programs.
- *Fine arts*. As discussed in Section A.2: Curriculum and Instruction, KCGPA will seek to develop strong connections with local arts organizations to foster students' creative output in drama, visual arts, and music.
- *Professional development*. KCGPA is committed to being a collaborative partner in the Kansas City education landscape. We see this collaboration with other schools and external partners as essential to long-term success in our mission. We must think systemically about how to address the needs not just of our own students, but of the larger Kansas City education system. To that end, KCGPA will seek to learn from others and to share its learnings through active collaboration (e.g. shared learning walks with instructional leaders) and open resources on its website.
- *Extracurricular, community, and service opportunities for students*. KCGPA will seek to partner with community centers like the Don Bosco Center and nonprofits such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters. KCGPA believes that offering service learning opportunities, mentorship opportunities, and other extracurricular learning experiences are critical for young women's development.
- *University partnerships to develop a strong talent pipeline*. KCGPA has begun exploring opportunities to partner with local universities to offer shared learning and training opportunities. Ideally, university students could serve as tutors to develop their instructional skills and gradually take on larger groups of students to support as their management skills improve. KCGPA staff could benefit from the expertise of university instructors and curriculum.
- *Tutoring*. KCGPA will seek tutors from all its partners to engage them in the core mission of the school and offer them additional opportunities to support students.

Staff Involvement

Staff will be heavily involved in decision-making through a tremendous amount of ongoing engagement around the culture and academics of the school, including:

- *Multiple points of input and feedback on key decisions*. Friday afternoon PDs will often engage staff in collaborative problem-solving protocols to address issues that merit staff input. In addition, staff will lead planning committees for different areas of the school. They may volunteer for these roles or, as a stretch assignment, have these responsibilities delegated to them with appropriate support. Finally, school leaders will design clear processes for making significant decisions or completing major projects. These processes will involve establishing clear goals, roles, and criteria for success along with transparent points of input and feedback.
- *Hiring process*. One of the most powerful ways to build a values-aligned community is to engage staff in hiring so that all team members can calibrate on the behavioral look-fors that the team seeks in adding new members. A hiring process will be established that engages all staff members in different aspects of the interviewing and debriefing process for new hires.
- *State of the school meetings*. Roughly every two months, KCGPA's leaders will host a "state of the school" meeting where a staff member will facilitate a discussion protocol that surfaces feedback, with a focus on identifying strategic issues (e.g. an area of values misalignment) in addition to tactical issues (e.g. bus duty scheduling). These meetings will be voluntary and occur during school hours to ensure access for staff with after-school commitments.
- *Student and Faculty Senate*. As noted in Section A.8, a team of staff and students will work with school leadership to develop and support a strong, values-aligned culture.

C: Business Plan

C.1: Budget

KCGPA's budget reflects its mission and core values. The budget outlines the material plan for everything from the school's pre-opening curriculum development work, to its facility acquisition and phased build-out, to its significant staffing support for SWD and ELL students. As a founding school leader and other key leaders are hired, they will have an opportunity to review and revise elements of the budget. While some line items may be adjusted during normal revisions, the bottom line revenues and expenditures presented in this application accurately represent expected finances over the school's first five years of operation. Please see the following for more information:

- Appendix C.1.1: Five Year Operational Budget
- Appendix C.1.2: Cash flow for Pre-Opening Year
- Appendix C.1.3: Cash Flow for Opening Year
- Appendix C.1.4: Budget Contingency Plans

Budget priorities

Great teachers. KCGPA seeks to put as much of every dollar as possible into direct support of students and development of its staff. Small classroom sizes and a low ratio of students to teachers ensures that SWD and ELL students receive needed support. KCGPA has budgeted an average of \$3,700 per full time employee for professional development resources. For classroom teacher, support teacher, and staff to student ratios, please see Appendix B.3.2: Staffing Schedule.

Leadership capacity for a strong launch and sustained growth. KCGPA's budget prioritizes pre-opening year activities to ensure a strong launch, including: curriculum development, staff and student recruitment, and early hires for the founding School Leader, Director of Finance and Operations, Family and Community Engagement Coordinator, and Development Coordinator or Manager. The budget also prioritizes bringing on key leaders like Instructional Coaches as early as possible during the school's growth phase to prioritize capacity-building and planning.

Student support. KCGPA's budget also aims to maximize the support teacher staff to student ratio, as KCGPA will market heavily to families with SWD and ELL students and plans to serve them well. A Director of Student Support will manage a Learning Support Specialist (LSS) for students with disabilities, for ELL students, and a Para/Aide for every 100 students. In addition, a Dean of Students and a full time Counselor/Social Worker will help develop a strong climate and culture through proactive student support. KCGPA will staff one of each of these two positions for every 200 students.

Effective contingency planning. KCGPA is planning for a variety of potential challenges, including lower than projected student enrollment, lower than projected fundraising, higher than projected fixed costs (e.g. debt service or salaries), unanticipated large facilities costs, and lower than anticipated state or federal revenues. For more detail, please see Appendix C.1.4: Budget Contingency Plans.

C.2: Financial Management

Financial Controls and Procedures

KCGPA will adopt financial practices consistent with its fiduciary responsibility for public funds. The CEO, Director of Finance and Operations (DFO), and Board of Directors will work together to establish systems and procedures for managing the school's finances. In its pre-opening phase, KCGPA has engaged both EdOps, an organization that provides operational and financial supports for charter schools, and Shannon Spradling, Chief Financial Officer of Guadalupe Centers and the Alta Vista Schools, to provide

expert guidance in developing policies, procedures, and financial management systems for a successful launch. KCGPA's budget aligns with DESE expectations, the financial documentation requirements of the Annual Secretary of the Board Report (R.S.Mo. §162.821), and the Missouri Financial Manual.

KCGPA's fiscal year will run from July 1 to June 30. The CEO, DFO, and Board Finance Committee will be responsible for preparing a detailed budget and cash flow statement each year, which will be submitted to the Board of Directors by April 30 for review and by June 30 for approval each year. The DFO will also prepare monthly balance sheets and statements of activity for the Board.

KCGPA will engage an independent certified public accounting firm to conduct an annual audit that meets federal and local auditing requirements, is conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and meets all standards required of Missouri public and charter schools. Financial records, short and long-term, will be maintained in a manner that complies with public school retention laws. In addition, KCGPA will prepare and submit all necessary federal and state tax returns. KCGPA will also share an annual report with its sponsor that provides detailed information about the school's academic program and financial health.

For more information, please see:

- Appendix C.2.1: Criteria for Internal Control Policies
- Appendix C.2.2: Conflict of Interest Policies
- Appendix C.2.3: Financial Management Policies
- Appendix C.2.4: Office Methods and Data Management Policies

C.3: Facility

Facility Needs

As with every aspect of the school, KCGPA's facility will be designed to reinforce its mission and core values. Classrooms will provide space for flexible grouping during station rotations. Common spaces will be designed to be warm and inviting, with couches and bean bags available for staff and students to congregate in. KCGPA's program requires four core content classes per grade along with arts spaces, pull-out spaces for SPED and ELL services, and a multi-purpose room.

Thanks to the generous support of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, KCGPA has received services from the Illinois Facilities Fund (IFF) to analyze the financial and space needs of its academic program and develop appropriate facility plans. IFF is currently assisting with a feasibility analysis of facility options in our priority zip codes, development of a space needs program, a facilities development and operations budget, and analysis of KCGPA's overall financial capacity for facility costs.

KCGPA will ensure accessibility for students, staff, and community members with physical disabilities pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act. For a draft outline of specific facility space needs, including the number and size of classrooms, common areas, administrative areas, and recreational spaces, please see Appendix C.3.1: Space Needs Program. KCGPA is still exploring the most cost-efficient phased development approach with IFF and an architecture firm, Gastinger-Walker.

Financing and Budget

Based on initial analysis, KCGPA intends to pursue a lease that allows for growth and keeps all occupancy costs below 15% of budget. KCGPA is working with IFF to examine facilities financing options through their role as a Community Development Financing Institution. KCGPA is also exploring commercial financing. KCGPA has begun fundraising for capital costs and has enjoyed strong early

commitments. KCGPA will begin the public phase of its capital campaign after 60% of the goal is met. KCGPA's facilities budget accounts for the following costs.

- Facility acquisition costs: lease down payment, architect and design fees, legal fees, pre-opening tenant improvements or renovations, and storage/movers
- Core and shell lease payments
- Tenant improvement and Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment debt payments
- Building maintenance and repairs: alarm services, cleaning services, elevator inspections, fire and security alarm installations, HVAC maintenance, pest control, and an operating reserve in case of unexpected large expenses like a significant HVAC repair cost
- Exterior services: landscaping, lawn, and snow removal services, trash removal, and parking
- Building services: security services, gas, electric, phone/internet, water/sewer, property insurance, and any property taxes

C.4: Contracted Services

Policies and Procedures for Contracted Services

As a recipient of public funds, KCGPA will act as an appropriate and effective steward of all contracted services. Please see Appendix C.4.1: Policies and Procedures for Contracted Services for more information. These policies and procedures are intended to ensure that all contracted services and procurements:

- Adhere to all relevant state and federal law
- Are the outcome of free and open competition, including transparent and consistent RFP specifications and bid materials; and advertisements placed in appropriate media as required
- Maintain transparency in transactions for all purchases, both above and below the Board-approved purchasing threshold
- Are well-documented, including: evidence of open competition; criteria for decision-making that provides for a reasonable choice, with cost being the primary decision criterion; identifies what is allowable by law and budget; identifies the allocation of costs

Procurement Timeline

KCGPA will observe the following timeline for procuring contracted services during its pre-opening year:

- April 2018 – finalize facility lease agreement and plan accordingly for needed security, maintenance, and facilities-related services
- May 2018 – pursue charter approval with the Missouri State Board of Education
- August 2018 - release RFPs and post ads for food, transportation, and facilities-related services
- September 2018 - release RFPs and post ads for legal services, technology, special education evaluations, and professional development and curriculum consultants

Liability Insurance

Final decisions regarding contracts for services, such as insurance, are pending charter approval and will be completed through a competitive bid process. KCGPA has identified a potential insurance provider and allocated funds to purchase appropriate coverage. KCGPA will ensure that the chief financial officer is insured and has a surety bond. Please see Appendix C.4.2: Liability Insurance Quote for details.

Transportation

To fulfill its mission of equitable access for all students to an excellent education, regardless of access to personal transportation, KCGPA plans to provide transportation to all students in its priority zip codes. KCGPA will also provide transportation for students whose IEP requires accommodations and for

students who are homeless. KCGPA will develop a full transportation plan in the pre-opening phase in collaboration with the provider, including location of stops, policies and procedures, and bus scheduling.

KCGPA will align its level of service for grades 5-8 to KCPS and provide transportation for all students living outside a half mile radius from the school. In grades 9-12, KCGPA will provide Kansas City Area Transportation Authority bus passes for students. For the purposes of budgeting, KCGPA is conservatively estimating a 10% state transportation reimbursement rate and is aware that state transportation aid is provided only for students outside a one-mile threshold. KCGPA's budget assumes that 90% of all students will need transportation. Please see Appendix C.4.3: Transportation Quote.

D: Pre-Opening and Closure

D.1: Pre-Opening Plan

For the purposes of this application, KCGPA's pre-opening phase runs from July 2018 through June 2019. The project plan in Appendix D.1.1 outlines key task areas and the position primarily responsible for completion of the task. These tasks and timelines may change as the school moves forward, and the list is by no means exhaustive. The outline demonstrates KCGPA's capacity to plan for its start-up year and demonstrates the need for hiring key leaders well in advance of the school's opening.

KCGPA's independent fundraising will provide financial resources during the school's pre-opening phase to ensure all essential tasks are supported and completed. The priority of the start-up year is to accomplish critical organizational development tasks in anticipation of a strong launch in the 2019-2020 school year. A secondary priority is to develop leadership at the school and build networks with leaders of other high-performing schools through residencies and development opportunities.

D.2: Closure Plan

If closure of one or more of our schools is necessary, the Board will work with our sponsor and school leadership to ensure the orderly closure of the school(s). Any liabilities of the LEA shall be satisfied in accordance with the Sponsor's closure procedures and the procedures provided for in chapter 355, R.S. Mo, and in full compliance with 160.405.1(17) R.S.Mo. KCGPA's priority will be to protect the best interests of displaced families and staff and ensure all liabilities are satisfied.

Appendix D.2.1: Closure Plan outlines key actions following a decision to close, organized into the following general categories:

- *Immediate Tasks.* Immediately and within one week of the decision to close, a transition team dedicated to ensuring the smooth transition of students and staff and to close the school's business will be formed. To ensure transparent communication, the transition team will notify our students and their parents/guardians, faculty and staff, local school districts, and the Missouri State Board of Education of the decision to close the school.
- *Ongoing Activities.* Through completion of the closure process, the transition team will ensure that instruction, school and board operations continue through closure.
- *Pre-Closure Tasks.* Within 30 days of the decision to close, the transition team will identify closure reserve funds and the acceptable use of such funds to support an orderly closure.
- *Post-Closure Tasks.* Within one week to 120 days after the last day of instruction, dissolution tasks will include parental notification of final report cards, archival and transfer of student records, extensive financial reporting (including a closeout audit), and submission of final reports to our sponsor, DESE, and the Missouri State Board of Education as applicable.