

# Missouri Charter Public School Application Cover Sheet Form

NAME OF PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL: BELIEVE STL Academy

NAME OF NOT-FOR-PROFIT 501 (C) (3) ORGANIZATION HOLDING THE CHARTER:

BELIEVE Schools

PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON: Teagan Vonderheit

Title/Relationship to Non Profit: Teagan Vonderheit/Director of Growth

Mailing Address: 2540 North Capitol Avenue

Telephone (Primary): 317-692-1692

Telephone (Secondary): 317-692-1692

Email Address: tvonderheit@believeschools.org

GOVERNING BOARD CHAIR:

Title/Relationship to Non Profit: Board Chair

Mailing Address: 2540 North Capitol Avenue

Telephone (Primary): 901-409-8763

Telephone (Secondary): 901-409-8763

Email Address: boydalexandra@gmail.com

Ü cá Yããóô²/æđəYăYáíc

CHARTER SCHOOL PHYSICAL ADDRESS ☒ NOT KNOWN

Charter School Management Organization (CMO/EMO/ESP) ☐ No CMO/EMO/ESP

Part of BELIEVE Schools, Inc (CMO)

The proposed charter school will reside in the following school district: St. Louis Public Schools

The proposed charter school, if approved, intends to open in: Fall 2024

## ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

Projected grade level and enrollment over the term of the charter:

SCHOOL YEAR	GRADE LEVELS SERVED	YEAR (20XX)
1st	9	YEAR 1 – 2024-2025
2nd	9-10	YEAR 2 – 2025-2026
3rd	9-11	YEAR 3 – 2026-2027
4th	9-12	YEAR 4 – 2027-2028
5th	9-12	YEAR 5 – 2028-2029

GRADE LEVELS 9th TO 12th PROJECTED TOTAL ENROLLMENT: 400-450

THE SCHOOL INTENDS TO BE AT FULL ENROLLMENT IN: 2027-2028

## 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 revocation after sponsorship. 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.

CHAIRPERSON SIGNATURE *Dr. Alexandra Boyd*

DATE 02/01/2023 14:1

PRINTED NAME Dr. Alexandra Boyd

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/FOUNDER/PRINCIPAL SIGNATURE *Kimberly Neal-Brannum*

PRINTED NAME Kimberly Neal-Brannum

TITLE/ROLE Executive Director

DATE 02/01/2023 03:5

By submitting your application to the Missouri Charter Public School Commission, the applicant agrees to participate in a common application and the web based compliance and governance tool if sponsored by MCPSC.

INITIAL *Kmn*

DATE 02/01/2023 03:57 UTC

Document Reference : 16657bb8-6c0f-458c-9cda-972117dd6dle  
Document Title : BELIEVE Schools, Inc  
Document Region : Northern Virginia  
Sender Name : Teagan Vonderheit  
Sender Email : tvonderheit@believeschools.org  
Total Document Pages : 2  
Secondary Security : Not Required  
Participants

1. Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org)
2. Kimberly Neal-Brannum (kneal@believeschools.org)

## Document History

Timestamp	Description
02/01/2023 03:14AM UTC	Sender downloaded document.
02/01/2023 03:47AM UTC	Document sent by Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org).
02/01/2023 03:47AM UTC	Email sent to Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org).
02/01/2023 03:47AM UTC	Document viewed by Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org). 67.9.148.27 Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; Intel Mac OS X 10_15_7) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/108.0.0.0 Safari/537.36
02/01/2023 03:51AM UTC	Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org) has agreed to terms of service and to do business electronically with Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org). 67.9.148.27 Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; Intel Mac OS X 10_15_7) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/108.0.0.0 Safari/537.36
02/01/2023 03:51AM UTC	Approved by Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org). 67.9.148.27 Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; Intel Mac OS X 10_15_7) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/108.0.0.0 Safari/537.36
02/01/2023 03:51AM UTC	Email sent to Kimberly Neal-Brannum (kneal@believeschools.org).
02/01/2023 03:56AM UTC	Document viewed by Kimberly Neal-Brannum (kneal@believeschools.org). 45.26.71.67 Mozilla/5.0 (iPhone; CPU iPhone OS 16_2 like Mac OS X) AppleWebKit/605.1.15 (KHTML, like Gecko) CriOS/109.0.5414.112 Mobile/15E148 Safari/604.1
02/01/2023 03:57AM UTC	Kimberly Neal-Brannum (kneal@believeschools.org) has agreed to terms of service and to do business electronically with Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org). 45.26.71.67 Mozilla/5.0 (iPhone; CPU iPhone OS 16_2 like Mac OS X) AppleWebKit/605.1.15 (KHTML, like Gecko) CriOS/109.0.5414.112 Mobile/15E148 Safari/604.1
02/01/2023 03:57AM UTC	Signed by Kimberly Neal-Brannum (kneal@believeschools.org). 45.26.71.67 Mozilla/5.0 (iPhone; CPU iPhone OS 16_2 like Mac OS X) AppleWebKit/605.1.15 (KHTML, like Gecko) CriOS/109.0.5414.112 Mobile/15E148 Safari/604.1
02/01/2023 03:57AM UTC	Document copy sent to Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org).
02/01/2023 03:57AM UTC	Document copy sent to Kimberly Neal-Brannum (kneal@believeschools.org).

Document Reference : e347d493-da10-4cb5-945a-458d30e322f6  
Document Title : BELIEVE Schools, Inc  
Document Region : Northern Virginia  
Sender Name : Teagan Vonderheit  
Sender Email : tvonderheit@believeschools.org  
Total Document Pages : 3  
Secondary Security : Not Required  
Participants

1. Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org)
2. Dr. Alexandra Boyd (alexandra.boyd@slu.edu)

## Document History

Timestamp	Description
02/01/2023 04:12AM UTC	Sender downloaded document.
02/01/2023 04:20AM UTC	Document sent by Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org).
02/01/2023 04:20AM UTC	Email sent to Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org).
02/01/2023 04:21AM UTC	Document viewed by Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org). 67.9.148.27 Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; Intel Mac OS X 10_15_7) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/108.0.0.0 Safari/537.36
02/01/2023 04:21AM UTC	Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org) has agreed to terms of service and to do business electronically with Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org). 67.9.148.27 Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; Intel Mac OS X 10_15_7) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/108.0.0.0 Safari/537.36
02/01/2023 04:21AM UTC	Approved by Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org). 67.9.148.27 Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; Intel Mac OS X 10_15_7) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/108.0.0.0 Safari/537.36
02/01/2023 04:21AM UTC	Email sent to Dr. Alexandra Boyd (alexandra.boyd@slu.edu).
02/01/2023 14:07PM UTC	Document viewed by Dr. Alexandra Boyd (alexandra.boyd@slu.edu). 68.91.255.60 Mozilla/5.0 (iPhone; CPU iPhone OS 16_2 like Mac OS X) AppleWebKit/605.1.15 (KHTML, like Gecko) Version/16.2 Mobile/15E148 Safari/604.1
02/01/2023 14:07PM UTC	Document viewed by Dr. Alexandra Boyd (alexandra.boyd@slu.edu). 3.217.177.208 Mozilla/5.0 (iPhone; CPU iPhone OS 16_2 like Mac OS X) AppleWebKit/605.1.15 (KHTML, like Gecko) Version/16.2 Mobile/15E148 Safari/604.1
02/01/2023 14:12PM UTC	Dr. Alexandra Boyd (alexandra.boyd@slu.edu) has agreed to terms of service and to do business electronically with Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org). 68.91.255.60 Mozilla/5.0 (iPhone; CPU iPhone OS 16_2 like Mac OS X) AppleWebKit/605.1.15 (KHTML, like Gecko) Version/16.2 Mobile/15E148 Safari/604.1
02/01/2023 14:12PM UTC	Signed by Dr. Alexandra Boyd (alexandra.boyd@slu.edu). 68.91.255.60 Mozilla/5.0 (iPhone; CPU iPhone OS 16_2 like Mac OS X) AppleWebKit/605.1.15 (KHTML, like Gecko) Version/16.2 Mobile/15E148 Safari/604.1
02/01/2023 14:12PM UTC	Document copy sent to Teagan Vonderheit (tvonderheit@believeschools.org).
02/01/2023 14:12PM UTC	Document copy sent to Dr. Alexandra Boyd (alexandra.boyd@slu.edu).

# Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b>		
1.	Application Cover Sheet	
2.	Table of Contents	
3.	Technical Checklist	
<b>Education Plan (A)</b>		
A.1	Mission, Vision, Philosophy	p.1
A.2	Curriculum and Instruction	p.9
A.3	Assessing Student Performance	p.36
A.4	Calendar and Daily Schedule	p.45
A.5	Target Population	p.53
A.6	Special Student Populations	p.62
A.7	School-Specific Goals and Objectives	p.68
A.8	School Climate and Culture	p.73
<b>Organizational Plan (B)</b>		
B.1	Missouri Non-Profit	p.86
B.2	Governing Board Composition	p.90
B.3	Management and Operation	p.92
B.4	Staff Recruitment, Retention, Replacement, and Training	p.94
B.5	Student Recruitment and Enrollment	p.102
B.6	Parent/Guardian, Community, Higher Education & Employee Involvement	p.109

<b>Business Plan (C)</b>		
C.1	Budget	p.114
C.2	Financial Management	p.117
C.3	Facilities	p.123
C.4	Contracted Services (non CMO) Insurance, Transportation, Food Service	p.129
<b>Pre-Opening and Closure Plans (D)</b>		
D.1	Pre-Opening Plan	p.132
D.2	Closure Plan	p.132

## Appendices

<b>Education Plan Appendices</b>		
A.2.1	Sample College and Career Pathways	p.139 - 140
A.2.2	Scope and Sequence: Geometry (Units 1-2) & Algebra 2 (Units 1-2)	p.141 - 154
A.2.3	Scope and Sequence: English 2, English 3, and English 4	p.155 - 157
A.2.4	Employee Value Proposition	p.158
A.2.5	Scope and Sequence: Teacher Professional Development	p.159 - 161
A.3.1	Scope and Sequence: Employability Standards Grades 9-12	p.162 - 166
A.3.2	Purpose Pathway Meetings	p.167 - 170
A.4.1	Proposed School Calendar	p.171

A.4.2	Proposed Daily School Schedule	p.172 - 173
A.4.3	McKinney-Vento Guidebook	p.174 - 176
A.8.1	Level Up System	p.177 - 179
A.8.2	Sample Integrated Studies Sample Unit (Math)	p.180
<b>Organizational Plan Appendices</b>		
B.1.1	Documentation of Missouri Nonprofit Status	p.181
B.1.2	Articles of Incorporation	p.182 - 186
B.1.3	Corporate Bylaws	p.187 - 200
B.1.4	Documentation of IRS Status	p.201
B.1.5	Board Member Surveys & Conflict of Interest Statements	In Progress - Will finalize once board members are finalized in March.

B.1.6	Criminal Background & Family-Care Safety Registry Check Requests	In Progress - Will finalize once board members are finalized in March.
B.1.7	Sunshine Law Manual	p.202 - 204
B.1.8	Liability Insurance Quote	p.205 - 206
B.1.9	Memorandum of Understanding: BELIEVE Circle City and BELIEVE STL	p.207 - 210
B.4.1	Prospective Executive Leadership Team Resumes	p.211 - 215
B.4.2	BELIEVE Schools Pay Scale ( <i>Sample</i> )	p.216
B.5.1	Letters of Support	p.217 - 219

<b>Business Plan Appendices</b>		
C.1.1	5-Year Budget and Statement of Cash Flows	p.220
C.1.2	Commitment Letter from The Opportunity Trust	p.221 - 227
C.2.1	Internal Controls - BCCHS will adapt to BSTLA	p.228 - 234
C.2.2	Selective Insurance Quote	p. 235 - 236
C.2.3	EdOps Scope of Work	coming soon
<b>Pre-Opening and Closure Plans</b>		
D.1.1	Pre-Opening Plan	p.132
D. 1.2	Closure Plans	p.132 - 138



## Executive Summary BELIEVE STL Academy

The mission of BELIEVE STL Academy, a campus of BELIEVE Schools, Inc, is to develop students into leaders through a community that fosters their agency, autonomy, and acceleration—providing a foundation for future independence and success. Our mission arises from 20+ years of education experience across the country. While all cities are different, one thing is similar, Black, Brown, and under-estimated students from under-resourced communities are demonstrating lower academic achievement rates than those of their counterparts from predominantly white, affluent communities. We believe this lower performance stems not from the children themselves but from the school systems that have historically not been designed to truly support and develop our children. BELIEVE was created to change that. BELIEVE's mission and vision, early plans, and initial launch occurred in Indianapolis but was composed of diverse, experienced leaders from across the country.

The ever-changing world requires thoughtful and intentional approaches to learning. BELIEVE STL Academy's model is framed around adapting to the changing world and ensuring students have the knowledge, access, and skill sets to adapt to the world. With this, our approach is centered around three central pieces that are aligned to our pillars:

**Agency in Action:** All BELIEVE STL Academy students will engage in identity and leadership development, social and emotional learning, and social justice and impact programming.

**Acceleration in Action:** BELIEVE STL Academy students will follow Missouri Graduation Requirements (24) to earn the majority of their high school credits by the end of their junior year. Through our early college and career partnerships, students will be dually enrolled in at least (1) college or career course by the end of their 10th grade year. Additionally, students will have access to multiple AP courses throughout high school. Students will have rigorous curriculum and course work to ensure they are prepared for college and career pathways.

**Autonomy in Action:** All BELIEVE STL Academy students, in collaboration with their family and Village leader, will develop a Purpose Pathway Plan, which is a 6-8 year individualized plan aimed at attaining the skills and credentials necessary to launch their post-high school plan.

BELIEVE STL Academy is committed to continuing the mission of BELIEVE Schools, Inc in the state of Missouri. Through a strong early college and career academic focus, rigorous and joyful learning, operational excellence, social emotional learning practices, and a small, safe environment, BELIEVE STL Academy seeks to become one of the highest performing high school options in the city of St. Louis.

Information Required by Missouri State Law		
Statute	Description	Page Numbers
160.400.2 160.400.4 160.400.5	Located in an eligible district	53
160.400.3 160.403	Sponsored by an eligible sponsor	86
160.400.7, .8, Charter 355	Missouri non-profit	86
160.400.11	Sponsorship fees are in budget	115
160.400.14	Criminal background checks and family care safety registry conducted for all members of governing board	87
160.400.15	No board members hold office or is an employees of the school; or provides services	87
160.405.1	Submitted and approved by sponsor	90
160.405.1	Submitted copy of application to local school district and State Board of Education within five business days of submission to sponsor	90
160.405.1	Performance contract (covering 160.400-160.425, 160.349)	90
160.405.1.(1)	Mission and vision statement for charter	90
160.405.1.(2)	Description of the organizational structure	90
160.405.1.(2)	Bylaws of governing body	90
160.405.1.(2)	Description of parent, professional educator, community involvement in governance and operations	90
160.405.1.(3)	Financial plan for first three years of operation (MCPSC requires the term of the charter)	90
160.405.1.(4)	Description of policy for securing personnel services	129
160.420.3.	Personnel employed by charter school shall participate in the retirement system of the school district	100
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	85
160.420.2	Noncertificated instruction personnel limited to 20%	99
160.405.1.(4) 160.415.2	Personnel qualifications	97
160.405.1.(4)	Professional development plan	96
160.405.1.(5)	Description of grades and ages of students served	90
160.405.1.(6) 171.031	School calendar of operation, at least equal to 160.011	46
160.405.1.(7)	Description of pupil performance standards	70
160.405.1.(7) 160.405.4 (6)	Description of academic program performance standards including indicators, measures, metrics and targets;	70
160.405.1.(7)	Indicators, measures, metrics and targets for academic program performance	70
160.405.1.(7)	Goals on graduation, standardized tests and academic growth	70
160.405.1.(8)	Description of educational program and curriculum	pg 1-86
160.405.1.(9)	Five year term for the charter	90
160.405.4. (4) 160.405.1.(10)	Procedures for monitoring financial accountability of charter consistent with MO financial accounting manual	117
160.405.1.(11)	Health, safety and other legal requirements	132

160.405.1.(12)	Description of student discipline policy	73
160.405.1.(12) 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; student eligible under terms of judicial settlements; procedures ensure admission of students with disabilities in nondiscriminatory manner	104, 107, 115
160.405.1.(13)	Description of the school's grievance procedures for parents and guardians	111
160.405.1.(14) 160.405.8 160.405.9	Charter School Agreement detailing sponsor intervention, revocation of charter (policies and contract)	TBD
160.405.1.(15) 160.405.16.(6)	Closure procedures (MCPSC closure plan plus applicants additional steps)	132
160.405.1.(15)	Closure procedures include transition of student records	137
160.405.1.(15)	Closure procedures include archival of business operations	132-138
160.405.1.(15)	Closure procedures include transfer or repository of personnel records	137
160.405.1.(15)	Closure procedures include submission of final financial records	137
160.405.1.(15)	Closure procedures include resolution of any remaining financial obligations	137
160.405.1.(15)	Closure procedures include disposition of charter school assets	134
160.405.1.(15)	Closure procedures include notification plan to parents, district, retirement, state board of education	133
160.405.1.(16)	Description of special education and related services available	64
160.405.4.(1)	Nonsectarian in programs	106
160.405.4.(1)	Nonsectarian admissions policies	106
160.405.4.(1)	Nonsectarian employment practices	116
160.405.4.(1)	Nonsectarian operations	129
160.405.4.(2)	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on health	128
160.405.4.(2) 167.115-167.117	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on safety	128
160.405.4.(2) 160.261 167.161 167.164 167.171	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on minimum educational standards	84
167.518	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on academic assessment	84
167.020.	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on transmittal of student records	61
160.041	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on minimum school days and hours	46
168.133	Comply with state, county, city laws and regulations on employee criminal history background checks and family care safety registry; all employees	94
160.405.4.(4)	LEA complies with all requirements of ESSA as it relates to federal audit requirements	122
160.405.4.(4)	Debt included in repayment plan in financial plan	122
160.405.4.(5)	Provide a comprehensive instructional program for at least one grade or age group, K-12	pg 1-86
160.405.4.(5)	Provide a comprehensive instructional program for at least one grade or age group,( early childhood optional)	pg 1-86
160.405.4.(6)(a) 160.514	Design a method to measure pupil progress toward pupil academic standards	36
160.405.4.(6)(a) 160.514	Establish baseline student performance in performance contract during the first year	36
160.405.4.(6)(a)	Collect student performance data	36-45

160.405.4.(6)(a) 160.518	Participate in the statewide assessment	36
160.405.4.(6)(a) 160.522	Complete and distribute annual report card as prescribed	43-44
160.405.4.(6)(a) 160.410	Provide data required for the student of charter schools	104
160.405.4.(7) 162.670- 162.710 IDEA Section 504	Comply with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding student with disabilities	64
160.405.4.(8)	Documentation a copy of the application was submitted to local district	TBD
160.405.4.(8)	Statement outlining reasons for approval by sponsor related to 160.400-160.425 and 167.349	TBD
160.405.14.(1)	Chief financial officer maintains a surety bond	123
160.405.14.(2)	Chief financial officer maintains an insurance policy	123
160.415.1	Collect and report average daily attendance, free and reduce lunch, special education and limited English proficiency pupil count	71
<b>For high risk or alternative schools</b>		
160.405.4.(6)(b)	Performance measures based on mission, curriculum, teaching methods and services	
160.405.4.(6)(b)	Comprehensive academic and behavioral measures to determine student meeting performance standards on a different and specified time frame	
160.405.4.(6)(b)	Annual report shall include comprehensive measures of student progress	
160.405.5.(1)	May include alternatives for students to obtain credit	
<b>For education service providers/charter management organizations</b>		
160.415.7.(1)	Evidence of success in serving similar student population including demonstrated academic achievement, successful management on non-academic school functions	10
160.415.7.(2)	Term sheet for duration of service contract outlining the roles and responsibilities of the governing board, school staff, service provider	In Progress- Currently finalizing terms with lawyers and support teams. Draft MOU is included in Appendices B.1.9.
160.415.7.(2)	Term sheet for the duration of service contract outlining scope of services and resources provided by service provider	
160.415.7.(2)	Term sheet for the duration of service contract outlining performance evaluation measures and timelines	
160.415.7.(2)	Term sheet for the duration of the service contract outlining compensation structure, including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the service provider	
160.415.7.(2)	Term sheet for duration of service contract outlining methods of oversight and enforcement	
160.415.7.(2)	Term sheet for duration of service contract outlining CMO Investment disclosure	
160.415.7.(2)	Term sheet for duration of service contract outlining conditions for the renewal and termination of the contract	
160.415.7.(3)	Disclose any know conflict of interest between the school governing board and proposed service provider or any affiliated business	87
160.415.7.(4)	Disclose and explain any termination or nonrenewal of contracts for equivalent services for any US charter school within last five years	Currently finalizing terms with lawyers and support teams. Draft MOU is included in Appendices B.1.9.
160.415.7.(5)	Assurance charter school legal council reports to the governing board	
160.415.7.(6)	Process for approval of service provider expenditures intent to bill charter school have prior approval of governing board or designee	

## A.1 – Mission, Vision, Philosophy & Goals

BELIEVE Schools (*BELIEVE STL Academy*) is applying to open a 9-12 high school in the Fall of 2024 in the heart of St. Louis' Central Corridor. BELIEVE will launch with ninth grade and grow an additional grade each year; by 2028-2029 we will be a 9-12 high school. We will partner with organizations throughout the St. Louis area to provide programming to support our model.

The world is shifting, and BELIEVE is a high school for the current time. College is no longer the single leading pathway to financial independence and success for our nation's youth. Students must be given exposure and access to additional avenues to high-wage, wealth-building opportunities – whether through a college or a career program. BELIEVE Schools is dedicated to creating equitable, rigorous, and joy-filled spaces for students to learn, grow, and develop.

### Our Mission

**BELIEVE STL Academy is a public college and career preparatory high school dedicated to the achievement of students in the St. Louis area. Our mission is to develop students into leaders through a community that fosters their agency, autonomy, and acceleration— providing a foundation for future independence and success.**

Replicated from our [original campus](#) in Indianapolis, BELIEVE STL Academy will ensure all students graduate with an associate's degree or a career certification in a high-demand, skilled career alongside their high school diploma. This will be achieved through meaningful and purposeful community partnerships that will help elevate the student and the St. Louis community.

### Our Vision

**BELIEVE graduates will be equitable, independent, and influential citizens within their local and global communities.**

### Core Values

**Child-Centered:** Every decision is made from a child-centered perspective. We BELIEVE in the potential of ALL students.

**Relationships:** We love coming to work each day. We create safe spaces for all voices to be heard. We keep our commitments. We hold ourselves accountable. We communicate effectively and courageously with all stakeholders.

**Growth Mindset:** We take an innovative approach to all of our work. We accept feedback and reflect in order to be our best selves. We understand that change is inevitable, and we remain open to new ideas.

**Own Your Impact:** We produce high-quality work and outcomes. We understand that our actions and judgments impact our students and the Village. When WE win, I win. We celebrate our wins and show gratitude.

**Village:** We are change-makers and a family. We are collaborative problem solvers who lean on each other through the wins and challenges of this dynamic work. It takes a Village to raise a child.

## **Educational Philosophy**

Below are the five pillars of BELIEVE's educational philosophy. These pillars were created to be upheld in every BELIEVE school, from school design to decision making, and to be present every day with students, families, team members, and our external community.

### **Agency**

- Knowledge is power.
- Kids who are academically prepared for their future will be able to advocate for themselves and chart their own course to success.
- An excellent education cultivates critical thinking skills; BELIEVE students will have the curiosity, criticality, and voice to shape their local and global communities by advocating for causes that matter to them.
- We must protect students' access to knowledge regardless of the ebbs and flows of trends in education and staffing challenges in the education profession. To that end, we acknowledge that we can best support our students and teachers by founding their courses on published, research-backed, expert-reviewed ([edreports.org](https://edreports.org)) core curricula in Mathematics and English Language Arts.
- We recognize that our starting points may be different; however, we're all working towards similar goals and outcomes for success. We never lower the bar for any student. We believe that all students are capable of meeting high expectations but might need differentiated support or a more individualized approach. We know that holding students to high expectations will prepare them to have agency in their adult lives.

### **Acceleration**

- The course sequence and pace of course completion at a traditional American high school is biased towards the college-going, and—by extension—in favor of those who are financially prepared to afford college (or those lucky enough to receive substantial financial assistance).
- At BELIEVE, we accelerate students' high school course completion by frontloading high school courses in the first two years of high school, thereby creating room in the last two years of high school for college coursework, internships, apprenticeships, and career exposure. This acceleration benefits students by

creating a critical buffer between a student's secondary education and their postsecondary pursuits.

- The term acceleration may sound aggressive, as if we prioritize a “faster is better” philosophy, but we believe that “faster is better.” That is, when students complete their traditional high school course requirements earlier in their high school career, they create room in their schedules to explore various postsecondary options within the guardrails of a small-school environment—where they have access to adults who know them, care for them, and can advise them through questions and challenges. For instance, the student who is unsure of whether they want to pursue training for a trade or go to college benefits greatly from the opportunity to take a college course in high school. They get to dip their toe into a college experience during high school rather than jumping in completely after high school when they have a smaller social support network and greater financial responsibility for their education.
- Acceleration of traditional high school coursework creates time for postsecondary exploration in a holding environment, launching students on a trajectory to success in college or career after high school.
- Most employers are currently providing leadership training and development in diversity, equity, and inclusion work; BSTLA students will be prepared to lead this work. Our students will develop the soft skills needed to both excel in the workplace and be active and contributing members in their communities. In addition, BSTLA students will be better prepared for the demands, choices, and rigors of college life. Our model is designed to mimic the rigorous challenges of both college and career, with the guardrails of a supportive environment to make sure the transition from high school to total autonomy is a smooth one. We anticipate this approach leading to better overall quality of life outcomes for our students regardless of the postsecondary path they choose.

### **Autonomy**

- Through our implementation of the Reading Apprenticeship framework for disciplinary literacy, we explicitly develop students' metacognition skills. Students learn to monitor their own comprehension, self-identify when and where their understanding breaks down, and deploy strategies to unconfuse themselves. This explicit support for self-sufficient problem solving in reading across the content areas develops students' confidence in problem solving and helps them to become autonomous managers of their own learning<sup>1</sup>.
- We support students' ability to self-manage through our Level Up System. Through the Level Up System, students have the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to be self-sufficient and independent. More about the Level Up System can be found in Section A.8 – School Climate and Culture.. When students are able to demonstrate these skills, they are able to “Level Up” and earn privileges– like no uniform, open campus, and more.

---

<sup>1</sup> Schoenbach, Ruth, et al. *Reading for Understanding: How Reading Apprenticeship Improves Disciplinary Learning in Secondary and College Classrooms*. Wiley, 2012.

## **Village**

- It takes a Village. Together we can raise much stronger children than any one of us could raise alone.
- Everyone belongs. We love and celebrate the diversity of our team, our students, and our community. Our students', families', and team members' multiple identities, talents, life experiences, and perspectives are our strength.
- Scholar success is dependent on a strong partnership between the school, family, and community. We believe our most important partnership lies with our families. Families want what is best for their child. Through our model, we have targeted and intentional programs in place to build the connection between school and home to ensure all of the students' stakeholders are informed, on the same page, and have a voice in the child's education.
- Community partnerships are key to our model and programming. We are working with organizations like St. Louis Community College, St. Louis University (SLU), Harris-Stowe State College, Rung for Women, and SIU School of Medicine to provide rigorous academic and career programming for all of our students. We believe that all children need to be informed and aware of what is happening in their communities. We will work with organizations to create meaningful partnerships that allow our students to serve, gain knowledge, and use their voice for change and good within the community.
- Relationships are the joy of the journey. We stick together over four years and beyond to build lasting bonds that will sustain us through our successes and challenges.

## **Exposure**

- We expose students to a wide range of college options through frequent college visits, both locally and nationally. We have taken groups of students to visit local Indianapolis colleges, such as Marian University, IUPUI, and Butler University. We have also taken the BELIEVE Indianapolis Campus Class for 2024 on a Saint Louis college trip, during which they visited Washington University, Saint Louis University, University of Missouri-St. Louis, SIUE, and others. Soon, our Class of 2025 students will make the same St. Louis college trip that last year's group made, and the Class of 2024 will be traveling to the greater Atlanta area to visit colleges there.
- We expose students to a wide range of career options in a variety of formats: workplace tours, career panels, job shadowing, internships, and work-study programs. For example, in the Spring of 2022, students at our Indianapolis campus participated in a job shadowing day that included over 35 of the city's largest employers as host sites for the job shadowing day; these employers included Eli Lilly, Indy Chamber, Eskenazi Health, The Children's Bureau, FedEx, Teach for America, The Patachou Foundation, and more.
- We expose students to the arts and to artists in our community by contracting with community partners to teach arts elective courses. For example, students at our Indianapolis campus have enrolled in Dance with [libada Dance Company](#) and Performing Arts with [Asante Children's Theatre](#)—just to name a few.



- We expose students to issues in our local community and methods of advocating for issues that matter to them. In Indianapolis, we have taken the entire school to the Statehouse to speak out on education issues that impact them, and we have taken small groups of students to community hearings and forums.
- We expose students to new cultures and identities. While we celebrate the many identities our students bring, we also want students to learn about each other's identities. We strive to celebrate all identities in ways that are authentic and go beyond "holidays and heroes" celebrations. We accomplish this by resisting single narratives of identities and instead exploring multiple histories, people, and experiences connected to various identities.
- We expose students to positive representations of themselves. We believe that representation matters and that students should see themselves represented in the curriculum. To that end, we strive, particularly in our ELA classes, to select texts by authors who share our students' identity markers, and to approach Eurocentric texts with a critical lens. In our history classes, we aim to resist Eurocentric and male-centric retellings of history, and we accomplish this by adopting a woman-authored curriculum that focuses on primary sources representing a plurality of identities and perspectives. In instances where we find that existing curricular materials do not meet the standards of relevance we hold for our school community, we will work to create high-quality curricular materials based on existing high-quality resources. In such cases, members of BELIEVE's instructional leadership team will work in close conjunction with teachers of the course to develop curricular materials that align with Missouri Learning Standards and that ensure students experience rigorous, relevant learning every day.
- We expose students to mental health counseling, meditation, and open conversations about methods of emotional regulation and self-care. All BELIEVE students have access to therapists in a virtual format, and many of our students meet with therapists on site.

## **School Innovation**

The ever-changing world requires thoughtful and intentional approaches to learning. BELIEVE STL Academy's model is framed around adapting to the changing world and ensuring students have the knowledge, access, and skill sets to adapt to the world. With this, our approach is centered around three central pieces that are aligned to our pillars:

**Agency in Action:** All BELIEVE STL Academy students will engage in identity and leadership development, social and emotional learning, and social justice and impact programming.

**Acceleration in Action:** BELIEVE STL Academy students will follow Missouri Graduation

Requirements (24) to earn the majority of their high school credits by the end of their junior year. Through our early college and career partnerships, students will be dually enrolled in at least (1) college or career course by the end of their 10th grade year. Additionally, students will have access to multiple AP courses throughout high school. Students will have rigorous curriculum and course work to ensure they are prepared for college and career pathways.

**Autonomy in Action:** All BELIEVE STL Academy students, in collaboration with their family and Village leader, will develop a Purpose Pathway Plan, which is a 6-8 year individualized plan aimed at attaining the skills and credentials necessary to launch their post-high school plan. Purpose Pathway Plans will include the rigor of their course schedule, scaffolded responsibility/autonomy through a milestone tracker, and development of passion projects through an electronic portfolio of BELIEVE STL Academy experiences. Over their four years, students will evolve into change agents empowered to design their life's trajectory.

## Target Population

The ideal location for BELIEVE STL Academy (BSTLA) will be in the central corridor so it is convenient for families across the city. It is our goal to be easily accessible for students in both North, West, and South St. Louis. Transportation or accessibility should not be a barrier for families seeking a high quality college and career focused high school. We anticipate our population to be dispersed across the following zip codes: 63110, 63112, 63118, 63104, 63108, 63106, 63109, 63107, and 63139. BSTLA will be a school of choice for families throughout the city—similar to SLPS magnet schools—and does not intend to be a “neighborhood school”.

According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](https://www.census.gov/), in 2021, there were 10,792 students in grades 9-12 within the city of St. Louis, MO. Of this population, ~95% are people of color. With Free and Reduced Lunch data from surrounding districts and schools, we anticipate approximately 100% of our population to qualify for FRL<sup>2</sup>.

BSTLA plans to launch in the Fall of 2024 with 125 9th grade students and slow-grow into a 9-12 high school by its fourth year—ultimately serving 400-430 students. BSTLA will serve students who historically have not had access to the academic rigor, programming, support, and individualized postsecondary planning that their counterparts in more affluent districts or neighborhoods traditionally have. Through partnerships with higher education institutions, students will have exposure to postsecondary programming. Through partnerships with local employers and skilled-trade organizations, students will have exposure to career opportunities. Regardless of a student's postsecondary plans at the outset of their high school career, BSTLA will provide intensive exposure to a multitude

---

<sup>2</sup>“United States Census Bureau.” *Census.gov*, <https://www.census.gov/>. Accessed 2023.

of college and career pathways, thereby increasing the student's agency to make informed, financially-sound decisions about their postsecondary plans.

## **Graduate Profile**

**Independent:** BELIEVE graduates are creative, innovative, and strategic thinkers. They have taken ownership and accountability for their future. They are self-sufficient. They have the time management, personal organization, and problem-solving skills to be valuable, competitive candidates for work that is fulfilling and financially rewarding.

**Informed and Influential Citizens:** BELIEVE graduates understand why diversity, equity, inclusion, and representation matter and how these impact their everyday life. They stay informed about issues that impact themselves as well as their local and global communities, and they advocate for causes that matter to them.

**Academically Prepared:** BELIEVE graduates are academically prepared for their future. Whether they pursue a college or career pathway, they have the knowledge, skill sets, and experiences to be successful.

**Financially Literate:** BELIEVE graduates understand key principles of personal finance, and they consistently apply those principles to cultivate their own financial health and to build generational wealth.

**Healthy and Whole:** BELIEVE graduates thrive because they know how to maintain their well-being autonomously. They value their mental and physical health and know how to care for both. They are equipped with the social and emotional skill sets to build healthy relationships with others.

## **Performance Goals**

**Goal 1:** Each year, BSTLA students will average at least 50 points pre-to-post growth on the PSAT 8/9 (9th grade), PSAT 10 (10th grade), and SAT (11th grade).

**Goal 2:** 85% of students enrolled at BELIEVE STL Academy for a three consecutive year period will complete 90% of Missouri's 24-credit diploma and [one special endorsement](#) by the end of junior year.

**Goal 3:** 85% of students enrolled in an early college or career program by the beginning of their senior year.

**Goal 4:** By the end of year 4, at least 35% of founding BSTLA students will achieve a rating of proficient or advanced on their EOC assessments for ELA, with <5% of students scoring below basic. By the end of year 4, at least 50% of founding BSTLA students will achieve a rating of basic, proficient, or advanced on their EOC assessments for Math.

**Goal 5:** For the first three years, BELIEVE STL Academy will maintain at least a 90% Average Daily Attendance (ADA).

**Goal 6:** 80% Teachers achieve a rating of “Proficient” or higher on the [Charlotte Danielson Teacher Evaluation Rubric](#) at the end of each school year.

**Goal 7:** 85% of Parents and guardians are “satisfied or highly satisfied” with school culture, academics, and leadership through the [POSSIP](#) and [Kelvin Survey](#) during each academic school year.

**Goal 8:** Each year, for the first four years, 80% of students enrolled at BELIEVE STL Academy will return for the following school year.

**Goal 9:** Within the first three years, BELIEVE STL Academy will demonstrate strong fiscal management by maintaining 60 days unrestricted cash on hand through the first three years.

**Goal 10:** For each year of operation, 90% of board members will attend 90% of the scheduled board meetings.

## **Vision of Success**

In order to ensure we are working towards our long-term goals and aligned with our mission, we have created a Vision of Success that maps out Year 1, Year 3, Year 5, and Year 10.

### **Year 1 Vision**

BELIEVE STL Academy will open in the fall of 2024 with 100-125 ninth graders. By the end of the school year, all students will have hit their academic and social and emotional goals. Students will show at least 65 points of growth on the PSAT 8/9. We will retain 90% of our founding staff members. We will have strong parent satisfaction throughout the school year, as evidenced by monthly and quarterly satisfaction surveys.

### **Year 3 Vision**

Our founding students will have three years of BELIEVE programming and academics and will show acceleration by having an average GPA of 3.0 and at least 65 points growth year over year on the SAT. 100% Students are on track to complete 90% of Missouri’s 24-credit

diploma and [one special endorsement](#) by the end of junior year. 75% of students will be dually enrolled in a college or career program by the end of their junior year. Our enrollment will be stable while enrolling an additional 125 students each school year, setting our school up for financial success.

### **Year 5 Vision**

After 5 years of open doors, BELIEVE will be fully-enrolled. Our founding class will have graduated with a high school diploma, an associates degree, industry certification, and/or have enrolled in a career program or college upon graduation. Students will have graduated with their portfolio to take with them for life after high school. Graduates will have left BELIEVE not only academically prepared but also as informed citizens who are ready to influence and change the world.

**Year 10 Vision** After 10 years, BELIEVE will become the example of what high school should be like for students in the St. Louis area and across the country. BELIEVE wants to leave a legacy and support generational changes in St. Louis and in the national education landscape. BELIEVE hopes to continue replicating strong school models that are exemplars culturally, academically, and operationally. Like our first site, BELIEVE STL Academy exhibits some of the highest staff retention, academic performance, and school culture rates across the country. BELIEVE will be a culturally responsive, inclusive, and supportive environment for all people. Our model will develop leaders and ensure that all students leave prepared to engage in the 21st century workforce and community. Our graduates will be financially literate, and create generational wealth in their families. Our students will be game changers in their careers and communities. We will be the highest performing high school for black, brown, and immigrant students in the St. Louis area.

## **A.2 - Curriculum & Instruction**

All BSTLA students will pursue a Missouri 24-Credit Diploma while also participating in dual enrollment courses to prepare for college or career. We will accelerate students' preparation for postsecondary plans through our early college and career partnerships. Students will be dually enrolled in at least (1) college or career course by the end of their 10th grade year; the aim of this dual enrollment experience is to provide early exposure to the rigor needed to succeed after high school. The overall structure of our program is designed to frontload the majority of high school coursework in 9th and 10th grade so scholars have room in their 11th and 12th grade years for personalized educational pathways. BSTLA students will still take some high school courses on-site during 11th and 12th grade, but they will largely spend their time in dual enrollment courses or work-based learning opportunities.

### **Program Design Overview**

We believe that the strength of an individual's agency is derived from the strength of their education. We aim to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet

the demands of college and career and ultimately to thrive in adulthood. To achieve this end, students at BELIEVE STL Academy (BSTLA) will engage with a rigorous curriculum that is primarily aligned to the Missouri Learning Standards (MLS). Some courses will also align with standards that better inform the course, such as AP standards for AP courses. All courses will prepare students for success on the SAT college entrance exams, BELIEVE's quarterly challenge tests, and Missouri's End-of-Course assessments. Additionally, students will pursue a high school course sequence aligned to earning Missouri's 24-credit diploma and at least one special endorsement. With the intentional selection of curriculum that has a track record of success at [BELIEVE Circle City High School in Indianapolis](#)—and working with local school leaders to determine what's working in the region—we will provide a fully comprehensive curriculum that meets the needs of all children.

BELIEVE recognizes that Missouri is predominantly an ACT-focused state. To align with the state and city-wide efforts, BELIEVE will administer the ACT to 11th-grade students, but our curriculum will be aligned primarily to Missouri Learning standards and, as needed, to Common Core State Standards.

We have selected our English Language Arts and Mathematics curricular materials based on their high rating on [edreports.org](#) and based on the preliminary success we have seen with these curricula at our Indianapolis campus. Ninth and tenth grade English Language Arts courses will implement the [Odell High School Literacy program](#), rated green on [edreports.org](#). Additionally, ninth and tenth grade ELA, Social Studies, and Science courses will all support students' reading comprehension by implementing [WestEd's Reading Apprenticeship Literacy Framework](#). Reading Apprenticeship is a Tier 1 ESSA Evidence-Based Intervention. By implementing the Reading Apprenticeship instructional approach, our BELIEVE STL Academy teachers will address students' reading comprehension skill gaps while supporting them to acquire subject-specific content knowledge. Our Mathematics courses will implement the [Carnegie Learning High School Math Solution Traditional curriculum](#).

Much of the curriculum has already been selected and will be reviewed by a committee of stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, and administrators) in 5-year cycles. Where a new curriculum needs to be selected, committees of stakeholders will be formed approximately six to nine months before implementation, which will allow time for review and ordering of curricular materials as well as time for teachers to internalize the curriculum. Teachers' progress with regard to internalizing the curriculum will be monitored via coaching and evaluation. Data sources for this coaching and evaluation will include review of teachers' unit plans and lesson plans in relation to course standards and curriculum design, review of teachers' instruction via observation and feedback, and review of student work via weekly data meetings. These observations, feedback, and notes will live in Whetstone and are based on Uncommon Schools' *Get Better Faster* Scope and Sequence (Appendix A.2.5) for Instructional Development as well as on the Danielson Rubric.

BSTLA's courses will be fully aligned to Missouri Learning Standards and, where applicable, to Missouri's End-of-Course Assessments, and our pacing guides will reflect that alignment. In cases where we have adopted curricular materials that are not explicitly aligned to Missouri Learning Standards, such as the Odell High School Literacy Program, we have focused on aligning our courses with the Common Core State Standards, with the knowledge that both of these standards maintain a high bar for student learning and closely mirror, or complement, the Missouri Learning Standards. The chart below provides a general overview of our plan for ensuring our courses are aligned with Missouri Learning standards. Appendix A.2.1 has sample pathways for [college](#) and [career](#) that demonstrate how students can begin dual enrollment coursework before the end of 10th grade.

## Course Sequence & Standards Alignment

**The Guiding Standards:** The [Missouri Learning Standards](#) (MLS)<sup>3</sup>, as well as the Common [Core State Standards](#) (CCSS)<sup>4</sup> and the [Next Generation Science Standards](#) (NGSS)<sup>5</sup> are used as a foundation to guide curriculum and instruction.

Subject	Course	Source	Standards	24 Credit Requirement	Anticipated Grade Level Completion
MATH	Algebra 1	Carnegie Learning High School Math Solution Traditional	Aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) <sup>6</sup>	1 credit	9th grade
	Geometry	Carnegie Learning High School Math Solution Traditional		1 credit	10th grade
	Algebra 2	Carnegie Learning High School Math Solution Traditional		1 credit	11th grade
	Varies by Individual Student Pathway: Course possibilities include: Precalculus, Calculus, AP Calculus, Quantitative Reasoning, AP Statistics, Statistics, dual-enrollment college math, etc.			½-1 credit	12th grade
ELA	English 1	Odell Education High School Literacy Program, 9-10 A	Aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) <sup>7</sup>	1 credit	9th grade
	English 2	Odell Education High School Literacy Program, 9-10 B		1 credit	9th grade
	English 3	Odell Education High School Literacy Program, 11-12 A		1 credit	10th grade
	English 4	Odell Education High School Literacy Program, 11-12 B		1 credit	10th grade
	Varies by Individual Student Pathway: Course possibilities include: AP English Language & Composition, AP English			0-1 credit	11th & 12th grade

<sup>3</sup> For more information on Missouri Learning Standards, see:

<https://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/curriculum/missouri-learning-standards>

<sup>4</sup> For more information on the Common Core State Standards, see:

<https://learning.ccsso.org/common-core-state-standards-initiative>

<sup>5</sup> For more information on the Next Generation Science Standards, see: <https://www.nextgenscience.org/>

<sup>6</sup> BELIEVE Schools will edit Carnegie Learning's High School Math Solution curricula to maintain alignment with the MLS as necessary.

<sup>7</sup> BELIEVE Schools will edit Odell Education's High School Literacy Program curricula to maintain alignment with the MLS as necessary.

	Literature, dual-enrollment college English, etc.				
Social Studies	World History	<i>Teaching World History Thematically: Essential Questions and Document-Based Lessons to Connect Past and Present</i> (Metro, 2020) <sup>8</sup>	Missouri Learning Standards (MLS) <sup>9</sup>	1 credit	9th grade
	American History or AP US History	<i>Teaching U.S. History Thematically: Document-Based Lessons for the Secondary Classroom</i> (Metro, 2017) <sup>10</sup> or <a href="#">Fabric of a Nation</a> (Stacy & Ellington, 2020)		1 credit	10th grade
	American Government	<i>American Government 3e</i> , (Krutz & Waskiewicz, 2021) <sup>11</sup>		1 credit	11th grade
	Varies by Individual Student Pathway: Course possibilities include: Economics, Psychology, AP Psychology, AP World History			0-1 credit	12th grade
Science	Physical Science	TBD	<a href="#">MLS for Physical Science</a>	1 credit	9th grade
	Biology or AP Biology	TBD	<a href="#">MLS for Life Science</a> <a href="#">MLS for Earth and Space Science</a>	1 credit	10th grade
	Chemistry	TBD	<a href="#">MLS for Physical Science</a> <a href="#">MLS for Earth and Space Science</a>	1 credit	11th grade
	Varies by Individual Student Pathway: Course possibilities include: Physics, Project Lead the Way Biomedical Sciences, AP Chemistry			0-1 credit	12th grade
Fine Arts	Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theater, Visual Arts	Programming will be provided by contracted community partners. <sup>12</sup>	Missouri Learning Standards for Fine Arts	½ credit - 9th grade ½ credit - 10th grade	
Physical Education	Physical Education	TBD	<a href="#">MLS for Physical Education</a>	½ credit - 9th grade ½ credit - 10th grade	
Practical Arts	Varies by Individual Student Pathway: Course possibilities include: Computer Science, Publications, Career & Technical Education courses, etc.			1 credit	Varies by Individual Student Pathway
Health	Health Education	TBD	<a href="#">MLS for Health Education</a>	½ credit	9th grade
Personal Finance	Personal Finance	TBD	<a href="#">MLS for Personal Finance</a>	½ credit	Varies by Individual Student Pathway

<sup>8</sup> Metro, R. (2020). *Teaching World History Thematically: Essential Questions and Document-Based Lessons to Connect Past and Present*. New York: Teachers College Press.

<sup>9</sup> BELIEVE Schools will use these foundational texts to build MLS-aligned scope and sequence guides for these Social Studies courses.

<sup>10</sup> Metro, R. (2020). *Teaching World History Thematically: Document-Based Lessons for the Secondary Classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

<sup>11</sup> Krutz, G., & Waskiewicz, S. (2021). *American Government 3e*. Houston, Texas: OpenStax.

<sup>12</sup> BELIEVE Schools will work with community partners to ensure programming meets Missouri Learning Standards for Fine Arts.



Electives	Varies by Individual Student Pathway	TBD	Varies by course	7 credits	Varies by Individual Student Pathway
-----------	--------------------------------------	-----	------------------	-----------	--------------------------------------

## Our Approach to Curriculum Selection

To ensure BELIEVE STL Academy is closing the achievement gap and students are able to demonstrate growth, BELIEVE carefully and intentionally selects curricula that align with the demographic, social, and emotional needs of students. These selections are handpicked by our Academic Team to ensure they meet [EdReports](#) standards of quality, and our curriculum selections are supplemented by culturally responsive content and pedagogy to ensure students have the necessary skills in all areas of life.

### Core Curriculum

In ninth and tenth grade, BELIEVE students take double-blocked reading and writing courses rooted in Odell's High School Literacy Program; additionally, students' ninth- and tenth-grade history and science courses focus heavily on discipline-specific reading strategies, informed by [WestEd's Reading Apprenticeship framework](#), which aligns with the Autonomy pillar of our educational philosophy. BELIEVE's math program is rooted in the Carnegie Learning High School Math Solution curriculum, with a strong emphasis on tailoring a student's math education to their individual needs. For example, many BELIEVE students take a math remediation course to address lost learning while concurrently taking their core math coursework. Meanwhile, students performing at high levels in math have the opportunity to accelerate their math education by taking dual credit math courses at the local community college. The combination of reading-dense courses and differentiated math programming has shown promising results, with our first class of students (Class of 2024) making an average of 62 points growth on their SAT composite score in SY21-22 and our second class of students (Class of 2025) making an average of 75 points growth on their SAT composite score in SY21-22. It is worth noting that our students made these gains as 10th and 9th graders respectively—while taking the SAT test (not PSAT 8/9 or PSAT 10) which is typically taken by 11th graders. We are proud of the impact our program is making for our students, particularly because our growth well outpaces what [College Board](#) defines as typical annual growth (40 points overall growth for 9th graders and 50 points overall growth for 10th graders).

### Social Emotional Learning

Outside of the academic classroom, BELIEVE students have daily exposure to social, emotional, and mental health resources and programming that ensure they are healthy and whole. BELIEVE partners with [nXu Pop](#) which is a curriculum implemented school wide for social and emotional programming. Students complete activities and engage in the work during their daily Village time. Village serves as a student's "family" while at school. They are placed in a single-gender group their freshmen year, and students stay in their Village until they graduate. The Village Model provides a

supportive environment for students to make friends, support one another, and have conversations on topics that are relevant to their lives.

At BELIEVE, all students are placed into Villages during summer orientation. More information about the Village Model is in Section A.8 – School Climate and Culture. Students are placed into a Village with roughly 10-15 other same grade level students. Villages meet twice daily to set goals, track progress of their 4-year long portfolio projects, participate in social and emotional activities and exercises, and create an environment where students feel supported and safe. Village is a time for students to receive support from a friend on a project or study for a test. It's an integral part of the student experience at BELIEVE.

### **Lesson Planning and Curriculum Implementation**

To lay the foundation for strong lesson planning, teachers first engage in long-term planning for their course. They reference standards and existing curricular materials to prepare unit plans and grading plans. They then refer to their unit plan as guidance to inform their daily lesson planning. The expectations for daily lesson planning are for teachers to start by doing the student work of the lesson; they build out answer keys and/or examples and analyze that work to deepen their understanding of lesson objectives and key points. Following that thought work, teachers develop a written lesson plan using BELIEVE's lesson plan template, which prompts the teacher to consider common misconceptions as well as opportunities for differentiation for exceptional learners and English language learners. This approach aligns with the mastery and rigor tenets of our academic model; it supports a focus on mastery by building teachers' awareness of which parts of the lesson will serve as assessments of student learning, and it supports rigor by helping the teacher to consider highest-level performance via exemplar response development.

BELIEVE STL Academy's curriculum can be adapted for students learning English as a new language by first training teachers on the adaptations they should make to support their students learning English as a new language. Teachers will receive ongoing training on the eight components of the [SLOP](#) model with the overarching goal of supporting teachers, especially our general educators, to make effective professional judgments about matching the specific features of the SLOP components with each part of their daily lessons to best meet the needs of their students. Some standard practices that BELIEVE STL Academy's teachers will be trained on include setting language objectives in addition to content objectives, presenting information in a way that maximizes comprehensible input, supporting student-to-student interactions by utilizing varied groupings within a lesson, methods for prompting students to elaborate orally and provide multi-word responses, and reviewing and reinforcing key concepts by regularly reviewing lesson assessments with students.

### **Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners**

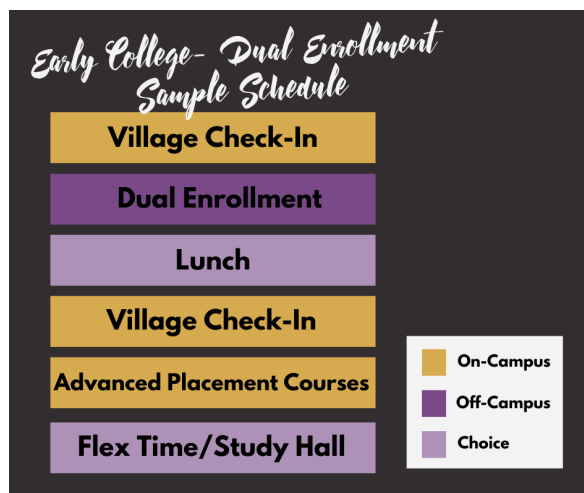
BELIEVE St. Louis Academy's curriculum can be adapted for students with special education needs also by ensuring our teachers know how to meet all of their students' learning needs. As a baseline, teachers will receive ongoing training on Universal Design for Learning to optimize the learning experience for all students. They will also receive training on how to read a student's IEP or IEP summary and how to adjust instruction to meet that scholar's needs so the scholar has

unimpeded access to learning experiences that will allow them to achieve the grade-level standards for the course. Teachers will learn how to best support scholars with special learning needs by being trained on how to identify and leverage strengths and how to remove barriers to learning and provide accommodations and modifications that support students' identified learning needs. Teachers will receive support in adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of their students with special education needs by having access to a one-on-one instructional coach who can help the teacher make decisions about differentiating instruction and by receiving feedback on lesson plans from their coach. BELIEVE St. Louis Academy's lesson plan template requires teachers to detail the specific accommodations and modifications they will make within the lesson for each of their students with special education needs.

In addition, BELIEVE St. Louis Academy will employ one certified special education teacher per 24 special education students and 2 paraprofessionals per 24 students to ensure maximum support in both the general education and special education setting.

BELIEVE St. Louis Academy's curriculum is designed to support students who enter below grade level by providing Tier 2 support in math, reading, and writing via courses students take during acceleration block, which is a period built into the school day to provide remediation or acceleration depending on students' needs. The three courses that are available for students who enter BELIEVE STL Academy below grade level are Math Lab, Developmental Reading, and Language Arts Lab. Students are placed in these classes based on a combination of scores from the 8th grade [Missouri Assessment Program \(MAP\)](#) Math and ELA tests and the [Edmentum Quantile Test math screener](#) as well as the Houghton [Mifflin Harcourt Reading Inventory](#) reading screener. Students will also participate in ongoing Edmentum math and reading assessments to determine appropriate placement.<sup>13</sup> Students who enter BELIEVE STL Academy above grade level have access to higher level coursework. For example, some freshmen may be placed in sophomore level math or higher, they may be placed in dual-enrollment courses, AP courses, and/or double-block science.

The schedule sample of a BELIEVE STL Academy 9th grade student can be found in Appendix A.4.2



<sup>13</sup> We have selected Edmentum Quantile Testing and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Reading Inventory Testing as our assessment screener tools because these have proven useful at our Indianapolis campus; however, we will adjust our assessment screener tools as necessary to meet Missouri guidelines.

## Mathematics at BELIEVE St. Louis Academy

The core tenets of BSTLA's math program support the development of our students' agency, acceleration, and autonomy. The following is our vision for excellent math instruction:

- **Socially Constructed:** The teacher facilitates opportunities for students to develop deep conceptual understanding; the teacher achieves this thorough intellectual preparation for instruction (doing math work of the lesson, identifying key points, anticipating errors and misconceptions, planning for real-time data gathering, prompt statements, and checks for understanding, and matching instructional modalities to the demands of the learning). In execution, students will appear to be leading their own learning in collaboration with each other as a result of the teacher's careful preparation in advance of the lesson—students will be productively struggling, supporting and challenging one another, and utilizing precise academic language in discussion of the lesson concepts.
- **Student Centered:** Students have the opportunity to develop procedural fluency and deepen their conceptual understanding through independent practice. Excellent math instruction provides time for students to learn by doing; thus, students must have time to practice independently with timely feedback at the point of error. Excellent math instruction not only provides time for students to practice grade-level content, but it also accounts for varying degrees of math skill and understanding. At the lesson level, teachers meet students' math remediation needs by providing multiple access points, and at the course level, we meet students' math remediation needs by providing a Math Lab course to address students' learning gaps from their K-8 education.
- **Data-Driven:** Excellent math instruction necessitates that the instructor maintains a daily practice of planning to gather the right data, gathering it, analyzing the data, and adjusting subsequent instruction accordingly. Additionally, excellent math instructors are adept at gathering and responding to real-time data so they can adjust instruction as needed in the moment. BSTLA teachers are trained in multiple methods of data collection, guided in how to analyze data, and skilled at adjusting instruction in response to data.

To achieve our vision of excellence in math instruction, we have selected [Carnegie Learning's High School Math Solution Traditional curriculum](#). This curriculum has two core components, which Carnegie Learning has dubbed "Learning Together" and "Learning Individually". The Learning Together component of the curriculum utilizes a consumable math textbook (MATHbook), and the Learning Individually component utilizes intelligent software (MATHia) that provides just-in-time support and tracks student progress as they practice skills related to the grade-level lesson. The curriculum is designed to have

students spend approximately 60% of their time learning together and 40% of their time learning independently.

The Learning Together component of the Carnegie math curriculum is designed to support collaborative meaning making and deep conceptual understanding through the three core instructional elements of each lesson:

- *Engage - Activate student thinking by tapping into prior knowledge and real-world experiences. Provide an introduction that generates curiosity and plants the seeds for deeper learning.*
- *Develop - Build a deep understanding of mathematics through a variety of activities. Students encounter real-world problems, sorting activities, worked examples, and peer analysis—in an environment where collaboration, conversations, and questioning are routine practices.*
- *Demonstrate - Reflect on and evaluate what was learned. Ongoing formative assessment underlies the entire learning experience, driving real-time adjustments, next steps, insights, and measurements.*

The Carnegie Learning math curriculum has served us well at our Indianapolis campus thus far. In the 2021-2022 school year, our 10th-grade students averaged over 40 points of math growth from their beginning-of-year to end-of-year SAT test, and preliminary results for this year's 9th-grade students are also promising—indicating that they have already achieved an average of 39 points of math growth from beginning-of-year to middle-of-year (with 69% of students growing 20 points or more in half a school year). We attribute this growth to the rigorous grade-level math content students learn via the Carnegie Learning High School Math Solution curriculum as well as to our double-blocked math courses. See the table below for a typical week in 9th-grade math at BSTLA.

Mathematics: Day at a Glance 9th Grade		
Algebra 1		
<b>Schedule:</b>  50 minutes	<b>Purpose:</b>  The purpose of the Algebra 1 course is to provide students with grade-level math instruction aligned to the Missouri Learning Standards (MLS) for Algebra 1.  Through a combination of collaborative inquiry and discussion-based learning as well as individualized independent practice, students will develop a deep understanding of Algebra 1 concepts and procedural fluency in Algebra 1 skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Activator/Bell Ringer (Engage)</li> </ul>	<b>Assessment:</b>  <b>End-of-Course Exam:</b> Measure student mastery of Missouri Learning Standards for Algebra 1.  <b>End of Topic Test:</b> End of Topic Tests are similar to unit tests. Each module in the Carnegie curriculum contains 2-3 topics consisting of anywhere from 5 to 25 lessons. End of Topic tests allow teachers to gauge students' retention of Topic

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Connect to prior knowledge, build off intuition, establish a situation</i></li> <li>● Introduce Objectives</li> <li>● Learning Activity 1 (Develop) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Investigation, classification, worked example, peer analysis, real-world problem solving, mathematical problem solving</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● Learning Activity 2 (Develop)</li> <li>● Independent Practice (MATHia)</li> <li>● Exit Ticket (Demonstrate) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Exit ticket procedures, exit ticket application, generalization, graphic organizer, writing task</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>content.</p> <p><b>Daily Exit Tickets:</b> These brief formative assessments allow teachers to build off of strengths or fill gaps in subsequent instruction.</p>
<b>Math Lab</b>		
<p><b>Schedule:</b></p> <p>50 minutes</p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b></p> <p>The purpose of the Math Lab course is to address students' learning gaps from their K-8 education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Activator/Bell Ringer</li> <li>● Activity 1</li> <li>● Activity 2</li> <li>● Practice</li> <li>● Exit Ticket</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assessment:</b></p> <p><b>Diagnostic Assessment:</b> Quantile testing allows us to determine students' levels of math proficiency.</p> <p><b>Daily Exit Tickets:</b> These brief formative assessments allow teachers to build off of strengths or fill gaps in subsequent instruction.</p>

### Math Scope & Sequence

At BSTLA, we implement the scope and sequence from Carnegie Learning's High School Math Solution Traditional curriculum. The Carnegie math curriculum units are organized into modules which are subdivided into topics. The chart below describes the scope and sequence for Algebra 1. See Appendix A.2.2 for the sample units from the scope and sequence for Geometry and Algebra 2.

### Math Scope & Sequence - Algebra 1

#### Math Module Descriptions

**Module 1: Searching for Patterns**

- Topic 1 - Quantities and Relationships
- Topic 2 - Linear Regressions

Students will investigate a variety of function families, recognizing their key characteristics. They will identify and categorize functions based on characteristics. They will expand their knowledge of lines of fit to determine whether it is appropriate to use a linear model and differentiate between correlation and causation.

**Module 2: Exploring Constant Change**

- Topic 1 - Linear Functions
- Topic 2 - Solving Linear Equations and Inequalities
- Topic 3 - Systems of Equations and Inequalities

Students will explore different forms of linear equations and write equations for parallel and perpendicular lines. They will continue their work with solving equations and solving literal equations. They will build on their work with systems to develop new strategies for solving systems and explore systems of linear inequalities.

**Module 3: Investigating Exponents and Roots**

- Topic 1 - Introduction to Exponential Functions
- Topic 2 - Operating with Radicals

Students will explore the properties of exponential functions. They will distinguish between exponential growth and decay and solve real-world problems modeled by exponential functions. They will expand their work with writing equivalent expressions to operate with radical expressions.

**Module 4: Describing Samples and Distributions**

- Topic 1 - Samples and Statistics
- Topic 2 - Two-Variable Categorical Data

Students will expand their work with random samples to analyze different sampling methods. They will create two-way frequency distributions, relative frequency distributions, and conditional relative frequency distributions. They will analyze the data for any possible trends or associations.

**Module 5: Maximizing and Minimizing**

- Topic 1 - Polynomial and Rational Expressions
- Topic 2 - Introduction to Quadratic Functions and Equations

Students will explore operations with polynomials. They will investigate the structure and symmetry of quadratic functions. Building on their work with equations, they will solve quadratics using various methods, including the Quadratic Formula. They will investigate complex numbers.

**Literacy at BELIEVE St. Louis Academy****Literacy Vision**

We believe literacy is a key element of agency. Our vision of a literate person is rooted in the work of Gholdy Muhammad's historically responsive literacy model<sup>14</sup>. We believe a literate person is one who:

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad, G. (2020). *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy*. New York: Scholastic.



- Understands and is self-affirmed in their many and complex identities (IDENTITY)
- Is proficient at reading, writing, speaking, and listening (SKILL)
- Is equipped with academic knowledge (INTELLECT)
- Thinks critically, especially about matters of power, equity, oppression, and antiracism (CRITICALITY)
- Derives pleasure from their own literacy (JOY)

With this vision in mind, we design and redesign—ever reflecting, growing, and revising—learning experiences in BELIEVE’s Humanities courses that will honor, nurture, and accelerate our students’ continued literacy development. See BELIEVE’s Vision for Literacy in Appendix A.2.3 for details on how the pillars of our literacy vision connect to our ELA and history courses.

English Language Arts: Day at a Glance 9th Grade		
English 1		
<p><b>Schedule:</b></p> <p>50 minutes</p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b></p> <p>The purpose of our English 1 course is to provide students with grade-level English Language Arts instruction aligned to the Missouri Learning Standards (MLS) for English Language Arts Grade 9-10.</p> <p>This course implements Odell’s High School Literacy Program 9-10A curriculum. This course is designed to “build knowledge and enhance the skills students possess through student-centered and student-led analysis of robust texts and topics” (Odell, 2020).</p> <p>Lessons consistently begin with an activator and end with an exit ticket; a variety of learning activities comprise the heart of each lesson; the Odell program prioritizes activities that engage students in “closely and deeply reading diverse text formats; developing vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and usage fluency; speaking and listening through rich discussions on complex texts and topics; and writing as a process of thinking deeply and explaining ideas” (Odell, 2020).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activator/Bell Ringer</li> <li>• Discuss</li> <li>• Read</li> <li>• Write</li> <li>• Discuss</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assessment:</b></p> <p><b>Unit Culminating Task:</b> Each unit ends with a summative assessment known as the Culminating Task. Culminating Tasks may be written or oral tasks. Written Culminating Tasks span a range of task types, including literary analysis and argumentative, narrative, and expository writing. Presentation tasks require students to demonstrate competency in reading and speaking (Odell, 2020).</p> <p><b>Section Diagnostics:</b> Each unit is made up of several sections, which generally consist of five to ten lessons. Each section has a Section Diagnostic, in which students have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge on a formative assessment. Section Diagnostics include, but are not limited to, writing a paragraph or multiple</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exit Ticket</li> </ul>	<p>paragraphs, delivering a presentation, or engaging in an academic discussion, such as a Socratic Seminar (Odell, 2020).</p> <p><b>Daily Exit Tickets:</b> These brief formative assessments allow teachers to build off of strengths or fill gaps in subsequent instruction.</p>
--	---	---

### English Language Arts Scope & Sequence

At BSTLA, we implement a scope and sequence from [Odell's High School Literacy Program](#). This curriculum is designed to allow for choice and flexibility; teachers and administrators can work together and work with the larger school community to select the units that are a best fit for the school community. At BELIEVE's Indianapolis campus, this flexibility has served us well by allowing us to select core texts that represent our students' identities as well as identities that have traditionally been underrepresented in the canon of literature typically taught in American high schools—thereby allowing us to uphold one of the core tenets of our educational philosophy: exposure. At BSTLA, we will work with the wider school community (students, parents, and teachers) to select the Odell units that are most meaningful to our community. The chart below describes a sample unit progression for English 1. See Appendix A.2.3 for sample scope and sequence documents for English 2, English 3, and English 4.

### English Language Arts Scope & Sequence (Sample) - English 1

ELA Unit Descriptions
<p><b>Unit 1: Foundation Unit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central Question: Who changes the world?</li> <li>Unit Texts &amp; Multimedia: "The Danger of Silence" by Clint Smith (TED Talk), "Introduction" from <i>The Tipping Point</i> by Malcolm Gladwell (Book Excerpt), "How to Start a Movement" by Derek Sivers (TED Talk), "Inaugural Address, 20 January 1961" by John F. Kennedy &amp; Ted Sorensen (Speech), Excerpt from <i>The Prince</i> by Niccolo di Bernardo dei Machiavelli (Book Excerpt), "Agents of Change" by Phil Patton (Article), "The Malala Effect: Her Global Fight for Girls' Rights" by Genevieve Roth (Article), "How to Give a Killer Presentation" by Chris Anderson (Article)</li> </ul> <p>In this unit, students will study specific moments in history and culture when significant changes occurred. They will begin by exploring the concept of change, considering how contexts can give rise to change and individuals who become the agents of change. They will then use their</p>

understanding to explore how change occurs in various aspects of society like politics, technology and science, considering figures from President John F. Kennedy to Malala Yousafzai. In small research teams, students will explore a specific area of their interest, conducting their own research into change agents. Their work will culminate in presentations from each research team to enrich their understanding of the unit's central question: Who changes the world? (Odell, 2020).

### **Unit 2: Development Unit**

- Central Question: How does perspective shape our understanding of events?
- Central Text: *The Book of Unknown Americans* by Cristina Henríquez

In this unit, students will read *The Book of Unknown Americans*, a novel by Cristina Henríquez, and will explore the central question: How does perspective shape our understanding of events? They will examine the novel, along with a collection of short stories, memoirs, narrative poetry, and literary non-fiction, to understand how authors use literary elements and narrative techniques to explore meaning and convey themes. They will also analyze constructs that help define character and perspective: culture, ethnicity, gender, life experience, adversities, and triumphs. To synthesize what they have learned about the elements of storytelling, they will rewrite a vignette from *The Book of Unknown Americans* from the perspective of another character (Odell, 2020).

### **Unit 3: Development Unit**

- Central Question: How do images change the world?
- Unit Texts & Multimedia, Sample List: "Origins of Photojournalism" published by The American Battlefield Trust (Article), Edward Curtis photographs by Edward S. Curtis (Images), "Edward Curtis' Epic Project to Photograph Native Americans" published by Smithsonian Magazine and YouTube (Documentary), "An Intimate View of MLK Through the Lens of a Friend" by Madison Horne (Informational Article), "Letter from Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King, Jr. (Essay), "No More: The Children of Birmingham 1963 and the Turning Point of the Civil Rights Movement" by McKay and Miranda Jessop (Documentary), *Police Using Dogs to Attack Civil Rights Demonstrators, Birmingham, Alabama* by Charles Moore (Image), "What the Still Photo Still Does Best" by Hank Klibanoff (Article), *Falling Man* by Richard Drew (Image), "Introduction" from *Imprisoned in a Luminous Glare: Photography and the African American Freedom Struggle* by Leigh Raiford (Excerpt)

In a study of the development and impact of photojournalism as a catalyst for change in the world, students will investigate the central question: How do images change the world? They will examine photographic images and related informational texts centered around the roots of modern photojournalism in Civil War photography, Edward Curtis's The North American Indian project, Dorothea Lange's Depression-era Migrant Mother photographs, Charles Moore's photographs of the Civil Rights Movement, and Richard Drew's photograph of 9/11's Falling Man. They will study how iconic photos such as these capture, represent (or misrepresent), and influence the events of history, and they will develop their own positions about the importance of a selected American photojournalist (Odell, 2020).

#### **Unit 4: Application Unit**

- Central Question: What do I want to research?
- Unit Texts: Students will use inquiry questions to find sources that help them answer their Central Research Question. These sources can range from print texts to web-based texts, multimedia, interviews, and texts from units explored earlier in the year.

Students will consider what has really interested them from the many questions, texts, and topics they have studied throughout the year. They will join a team of peers who share their interests, come up with their own research question, explore it, and report back to the community about what they learned and why others should care about it. They will develop skills, methods, and learning habits that build our proficiency in conducting deep research on a topic. They will learn to ask important questions about the world, use those questions to critically explore the themes that interest them, and, consequently, open themselves to new knowledge. Building off of what they have learned in previous units, students will deepen their abilities to find information, evaluate the validity of their sources, make connections between ideas, and organize what they find. As they move through their research, students will return to their initial inquiry questions and refine them, coming up with better, richer answers. Eventually, this exploration will lead them to a growing perspective, rooted in deep understanding, and it will strengthen their ability to express meaning in any medium. Throughout the course of their work, students will reach out to their community by listening actively to others and building on their knowledge. Finally, they will take on distinct roles in their team to write and deliver a detailed, clear, and engaging final presentation to their audience. They will evaluate each other's research, reflect on their own breakthroughs and challenges during the research process, and benefit from their peers' responses to their work (Odell, 2020).

### **Summer Pilot Program**

Each summer, 20-25 middle school students will be selected for our Summer Pilot Program. The purpose of this program is to expose students to the Early College Experience. Not only will they have access to highly regarded programming and curriculum, but they will have the opportunity to build relationships with classmates and educators as they prepare for high school. Below is a description of the program.

#### **Healthcare, Science and History Summer Pipeline Program: An Immersive Early College Experience**

*A weeklong residential college experience that will immerse students in healthcare, science and history. A pilot partnership between BELIEVE Schools, SIU School of Medicine, Looking for Lincoln and other leading cultural and higher education institutions in Springfield, Illinois.*

**Project Lead:** Jawn Manning, BELIEVE Schools, [jmanning@believeschools.org](mailto:jmanning@believeschools.org)

*Students:* 10-15 high school sophomores and juniors from BELIEVE St. Louis Academy

*Timeline:* July 11-15 student experience, preparation beginning immediately. (sample schedule here: [Daily Schedule](#))

*Goal:* a pilot program that can be scaled to serve students in the St. Louis, Indianapolis and southern Illinois regions.

The program will involve three main components: a residential stay on a college campus, an immersive week of health and science training at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, and a four-day exploration of history and leadership at world-renowned Abraham Lincoln sites. For this pilot phase, Southern Illinois University and Looking for Lincoln will provide programming in-kind, at no cost. All remaining costs for the 2023 pilot pertain to staff, transportation and lodging.

**Health Science** : Immersive experiences at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine For 4+ hours each day, students will be immersed in healthcare simulations, problem-based learning sessions, and preparatory activities created by Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. SIU School of Medicine is a pioneer in medical education, one of the most decorated teaching institutions in the world of healthcare.

For nearly two decades, SIU School of Medicine has operated P4: the Physicians Pipeline Preparatory Program, which provides medical school experiences to high school students in the Springfield area, with a special focus on youth underrepresented in medicine. The Summer Institute will adapt the P4 experience as follows:

- Interactions with Standardized Patients, in which students practice skills with real-life individuals (actors portraying patients) in a simulated clinical environment. This will take place in the School of Medicine Professional Development Laboratory and the Memorial Learning Center.
- Surgical skills training in the Folse Center for Surgical Skills, a pioneering teaching lab where medical residents practice and hone their surgical skills, moving from rudimentary techniques to real-life surgical skills.
- Problem-based learning sessions, held in small groups in the Medical Library at SIU School of Medicine. Students will be presented with a patient case and will work together through research and inquiry to work towards a diagnosis and treatment. PBL is the primary method of academic instruction at SIU School of Medicine. Indeed the term “Problem Based Learning” was coined by SIU founding faculty member Howard Barrows - the PBL sessions that students will complete are rooted in his foundational teachings.
- Mentorship sessions with medical students and other learners, including lunch panels and small group roundtables, as well as lectures from select faculty.

- Tours of SIU teaching and research facilities, including the Pearson Museum and the Memorial Learning Center.

## **History**

Humanities, History and Leadership with Looking for Lincoln

The organization Looking for Lincoln will curate and provide a world-class experience that will explore the life, time and history of Abraham Lincoln.

Day 1: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum visit and tour, with a discussion with Christian McWorter, State Lincoln Historian

Day 2 : Old State Capitol House of Representative Chamber and the “House Divided” speech, led by Justin Blandford, superintendent at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Day 3: Tour of Abraham Lincoln Home and Jameson Jenkins site led by Tim Townsend, Historian for the Lincoln Home National Historic Site

Day 4: Lincoln’s Tomb and culminating event led by Dr. Sam Wheeler, former Illinois State Historian and current director of programs at the Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission.

Looking for Lincoln is the coordinating entity for the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area. For more than a decade, LFL has operated the LEAD program, a longitudinal program for high school students that teaches and explores leadership through Abraham Lincoln’s life and times. The experiences above are among “the greatest hits” of the LEAD experience.

## **Residential College Experience:**

On-campus at University of Illinois at Springfield

For five days and nights, students will stay on-campus at the University of Illinois at Springfield, with access to on-campus amenities including the student center, cafeteria, recreational center and gym.

Some of the benefits of early college exposure include the promotion of a college going culture and foundational skills in navigating college systems. Early college exposure also boots students' confidence in their ability to attend college and provides increased awareness around what to expect when they get to college.

## **Conclusion**

## About BELIEVE and SIU

BELIEVE Schools are an early college and career preparatory high school focused on fostering the academic achievement, autonomy, and agency needed to be a contributing member of our evolving society. We strive to create a positive community by developing our students and staff emotionally, socially, and culturally. BELIEVE Schools works with historically under-estimated youth in the St. Louis community, equipping them with skills needed to become well-adjusted, civically engaged, and financially stable adults.

SIU Medicine is a publicly assisted medical school and a clinical practice focused on the health care needs of downstate Illinois. The School of Medicine is part of Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. For more than 50 years, SIU Medicine has been an innovative leader in medical education and a key player in the development of the regional academic medical center in Springfield. Set amid the city's growing Mid-Illinois Medical District, the school is a driving force in improving the population's health. Our student experience focuses on empathetic values and a philosophy of treating patients as people, not diseases. Creative, interactive training makes our graduates among the most skilled and confident clinicians in the nation.

## Social-Emotional Learning

In efforts to live out our mission of developing the whole child, BELIEVE incorporates social-emotional learning into all aspects of the school day. At our Indianapolis campus, we've done a lot of intentional work to normalize mental and emotional health and remove the stigmas around counseling and therapy. We are proud to have over 50% of our student population enrolled in mental health services at the school each week for free.

Additionally, our staff have access to the same services with our providers for free.

Teachers don't have to leave school in the middle of the day- they can join a zoom or meet in-person with their licensed therapist. Additionally, we have a partnership with OpenSeat which provides life coaching for students via zoom on a weekly basis. We will provide these same services at our St. Louis campus as well. We're exploring various partners in the city that can provide in-person and/or zoom services for our students and staff.

Villages at BELIEVE provide a foundation for our schoolwide culture, policies, and practices for social and emotional learning. Village programming is aligned to the five SEL competencies as defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). These competencies include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making<sup>15</sup>.

**Self-Awareness:** The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.

---

<sup>15</sup> What Is the CASEL Framework?" CASEL.org, CASEL, 2023, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/#responsible>. Accessed 2023.

**Self-Management:** The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations.

**Social Awareness:** The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts.

**Relationship Skills:** The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups.

**Responsible Decision-Making:** The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations.

## **Other Areas of Focus**

**Personal Finance:** All BELIEVE students will graduate with a half credit in Personal Finance. Students will take courses focused around budgeting, personal finance, credit score, and building wealth. These courses will meet the Personal Finance Requirements of the MLS. In addition to traditional teaching methods and curriculum, students will have the opportunity to participate in Junior Achievement programming such as [JA Personal Finance 2.0](#), [JA Finance Park](#), and [JA Be Entrepreneurial](#) to further cultivate personal financial responsibility and to explore the practical elements of concepts discussed in class.

**Fine and Practical Arts:** All BELIEVE students will earn at least one full credit of a fine art and practical art. Through partnerships with STLCC, Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis, and other organizations, students will have the opportunity to participate in a diverse range of fine and practical arts tailored to their specific interests and desired areas of exploration. In addition, Freedom Fridays at BELIEVE will provide the space and time for additional, offsite experiences in the various focus areas of students' courses.

**Physical Education, Health, and Wellness:** All BELIEVE students will earn at least one full credit of physical education and at least a half credit in health. In addition, all students will earn their CPR/AED/Heimlich/First Aid certification before they graduate high school.

**World Languages (*optional but encouraged*):** BELIEVE scholars will have the opportunity to earn high school credit in Spanish and/or college credit in the following world languages: Spanish, French, Chinese, or American Sign Language.

## **Professional Development for Implementation of the Education Program**

The role educators play in our students' trajectory has direct correlation to students' success. With that, we recruit, develop, and retain educators who represent our students, care about our students, and are equipped with the knowledge, compassion, and experience to support our students. Teaching is a challenging field. The number of educators leaving the field annually is alarming. That is why at BELIEVE, we are taking an innovative approach to teacher and staff support. Since our launch in 2020, we've crafted a strong Employee Value Proposition to ensure our team members feel valued, seen, and supported. We are proud to report that at our Indianapolis campus, we have retained 100% of our founding instructional staff (Year 1), and we are on track to retain 100% of our current instructional staff. Learn more about our Employee Value Proposition in Appendix A.2.4.

BELIEVE St. Louis Academy, like our Indianapolis campus, will be a special place: Students will exhibit joy in their daily experience and pride in their school, and staff members will know the gratification of creating a culture where students can thrive and leading students to strong learning outcomes. Simple as it sounds, we know that in schools such joy, pride, and success are the outgrowth of excellent preparation and ongoing reflection, development, and responsive action. BSTLA intentionally builds in time and space for the important work of ongoing professional development:

- **Daily Double Preparation Periods:** All BSTLA teachers have two 50-minute blocks in their day reserved to allow time for the full teaching cycle to take place. We know that time spent with students in active instruction is just one part of the important work a teacher does; significant work must take place outside of instructional time to ensure that instruction is effective. As such, we make sure that all teachers have two daily planning periods. One of these periods is reserved for planning for instruction (intellectual preparation, materials preparation, etc.), and the other period is reserved for grading student work, analyzing performance data, and adjusting upcoming instruction in response to data.
- **Friday Planning Days:** While our daily double prep periods allow for teachers to engage in rich day-to-day instruction work, we know that teachers also need time for long-term planning, reflection on previous units, and internalization of upcoming units. To that end, we make sure that all teachers have at least one long-term planning day per quarter to allow them to step out of the day-to-day work and tend to the yearlong arc of instruction via unit planning. Given BSTLA's Freedom Friday model, teachers are not engaged in instruction for their regular courses on Friday. Rather, they typically spend Fridays with their Village students. We implement a regular rotation of subbing out 2-3 teachers each Friday so that all teachers have 4 full days (1 day per quarter for each teacher) away from the school building to engage in self-directed long-term planning.
- **Weekly One-on-One Meetings with Instructional Coach:** Teachers at BSTLA will each have a dedicated instructional coach to support their development as



educators on a weekly basis. While we have a clearly defined vision for students' academic experience at BSTLA, we also recognize that to achieve our vision, teachers will need comprehensive training on the many understandings and skill sets this vision demands. The vision is singular, but teachers are not—they come to us with a wide array of educational, work, and life experiences. At our Indianapolis campus, we have achieved high rates of teacher retention by pairing each teacher with a dedicated instructional coach who can be the mediator between the demands of their BSTLA role and their unique needs and ways of meaning making as individuals.

- Weekly Friday-Morning Academic Professional Development:** Every Friday morning, BSTLA teachers will participate in a 90-minute academic-focused professional development session while students participate in elective programming provided by local community partners. Friday professional development sessions are recorded and accompanying materials are provided to teachers; this allows teachers to access PD even when they are out of the building on a Friday for their quarterly unit planning. The scope and sequence for these Friday morning PD sessions is based on Uncommon Schools' *Get Better Faster* scope and sequence for professional development. Access a detailed description of [this scope and sequence](#) in Appendix A.2.5. The table below provides a general overview of the yearlong professional development progression.

Time Frame	Focus Area	
	Classroom Culture	Rigor
<b>Summer PD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building Teacher-to-Student Relationships and Classroom Community</li> <li>Develop Essential Routines and Procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write and Internalize Lesson Plans</li> <li>Principles of <i>Understanding by Design</i> and Unit Plan Planning</li> <li>Unit Plan Unpacking</li> </ul>
<b>Quarter 1 PD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building Teacher-to-Student Relationships and Classroom Community</li> <li>Roll Out &amp; Monitor Routines</li> <li>Engage Every Student</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent Practice</li> <li>Respond to Student Learning Needs</li> <li>Unit Plan Unpacking</li> </ul>
<b>Quarter 2 PD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting Students' Academic Success and Deepening Classroom Community</li> <li>Set Routines for Discourse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Student Discourse 101</li> <li>Lead Student Discourse 201</li> <li>Unit Plan Unpacking</li> </ul>
<b>Quarter 3 PD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting Students' Academic Success and Deepening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data-Driven Instruction</li> <li>Differentiation</li> </ul>

	Classroom Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joy Factor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit Plan Unpacking</li> </ul>
<b>Quarter 4 PD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting Students' Academic Success and Deepening Classroom Community</li> <li>• Joy Factor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data-Driven Instruction</li> <li>• Differentiation</li> </ul>

BSTLA will provide ongoing professional development throughout the school year and in the summer. Teachers participate in three weeks of intensive summer professional development. For teachers who are new to our school or new to the profession of teaching, summer instructional professional development focuses primarily on training teachers in the facets of our model and our expectations for excellence in teaching and learning. For our returning teachers, summer professional development focuses on reflection on and deep internalization of units as well as ongoing professional development and data analysis to learn about and prepare for incoming and rising students. Teachers also engage in weekly 90-minute sessions of academically-focused professional development. The chart below describes topics for professional development at BSTLA.

### Professional Development Plan

Topic	Activities	Frequency	Lead By
<b>BELIEVE Teacher Intensive - Summer PD</b>  Three week orientation that covers onboarding, HR, BELIEVE programs and expectations, school safety, and school culture development.	Teacher/School Handbook	Summer Orientation	Principal & Dean of Operations
	Culture & School Expectations	Summer Orientation	Principal and Dean of Culture
	Instruction	Summer Orientation	Principal, CAO, Dean of Instruction, and Department Chairs
<b>Data Review &amp; Systems</b>  A focus on data-driven instruction and how data is an integral part of the school, decision-making, and student outcomes.	Assessments (EOC/Benchmark)	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and CAO
	IEP/Accommodations	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and CAO
	Culture as it Correlates to Student Success	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and Dean of Culture
	Surveys: Student, Family, and Staff	Summer Orientation	Principal and CAO
<b>School Safety, Culture, and Systems</b>	Digital Systems: SIS, SchoolRunner, and more.	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal & Dean of Operations

Welcoming staff to an inclusive, family-like environment where everyone feels prepared, safe, and understands the school's systems.	Building and Classroom Safety	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal & Dean of Operations
	Our Approach to School Culture and Discipline	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and Dean of Culture
	Social Emotional Learning	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal & Dean of Students
<b>Academics &amp; Instruction</b>  Focusing on student and teacher engagement, teacher strategies, and how to improve outcomes for students.	Unit Planning ( <i>Understanding by Design</i> ) and unit unpacking/internalization	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	CAO, Principal, Dean of Instruction, Department Chairs
	Assessment Analysis (Quarterly Course Assessments and Benchmark Assessments–i.e., PSAT, SAT, EOC Exams)	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	CAO, Principal, Dean of Instruction, Department Chairs
	Lesson Planning Expectations & Best Practices	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	CAO, Principal, Dean of Instruction, Department Chairs
	Classroom Culture	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	CAO, Principal, Dean of Instruction, Department Chairs
	Rigor	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	CAO, Principal, Dean of Instruction, Department Chairs
	Universal Design for Learning	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	CAO, Principal, Dean of Instruction, Department Chairs
	Reading Apprenticeship Framework	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	CAO, Principal, Dean of Instruction, Department Chairs
	Co-Teaching	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	CAO, Principal, Dean of Instruction, Department Chairs
	Sheltered Instruction for Multilingual Learners	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	CAO, Principal, Dean of Instruction, Department Chairs
	Grading and Analyzing Student Work	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	CAO, Principal, Dean of Instruction, Department Chairs

## Teacher Supports at BELIEVE

We have a simple saying at BSTLA that reflects our core value of being child-centered in all that we do: “Kids over adults.” When we constantly make every decision by asking ourselves, “What’s best for kids?” we succeed in living out our child-centered values. We also know that to do what is best for kids, we must support the adults who work with them daily.

We aim to provide comprehensive support to our teachers through the five core components of our teacher support plan, which includes:

- Intellectual Preparation
- Observation, Coaching, & Feedback
- Data Analysis
- Personal & Professional Goal Setting and Monitoring
- Formal Teacher Evaluation

The chart below shows the frequency of teacher supports at BSTLA.

Weekly	Quarterly	Semesterly	Annually
Intellectual Prep  Observation, Feedback, & Coaching  Data Analysis	Intellectual Prep (Friday Planning Days)  Personal & Professional Goal Setting and Monitoring  Data Analysis	Formal Teacher Evaluation  Data Analysis	Data Analysis of End of Course Assessments

**Intellectual Preparation:** BSTLA teachers engage in two forms of intellectual preparation at regular intervals: lesson internalization and unit plan unpacking. Teachers receive training and coaching on both forms of internalization. For lesson internalization, teachers complete the student work of the lesson to produce and analyze exemplary responses; they then analyze their examples in collaboration with their coach to identify criteria for success and to predict errors and misconceptions. This practice prepares teachers to gather and respond to real-time, lesson-level data. Meanwhile, unit plan unpacking prepares teachers to make connections between individual lessons and long-term learning outcomes. The unit packing process requires teachers to create and analyze examples for summative unit assessments and then analyze their unit calendar to identify key inflection points and critical lessons in the arc of the unit plan. This unit planning work demands that teachers have extended thought-work time; thus, we have built in Friday Planning Days (as

described above) to provide teachers with time for unit-level intellectual preparation.

**Observations, Feedback, and Coaching:** Observation and feedback cycles are a key component of teacher support at BSTLA. While we strive to prepare BSTLA teachers as well as we possibly can during summer onboarding and ongoing professional development, we also know that if we want our teachers to be excellent practitioners, we must see them practice their craft, identify strengths and areas for growth, and provide feedback and coaching. Individualized teacher support via observation and feedback takes place weekly at BELIEVE. Each teacher has a dedicated coach who serves as the bridge between BSTLA's Classroom Culture and Rigor expectations and the individual teacher's strengths and needs as a practitioner. All of BSTLA's instructional coaches meet weekly to share data from their observations, analyze trends, and tailor weekly academic professional development sessions to grow teachers' practice; they then observe for evidence of implementation of professional development learnings in teachers' classrooms the following week. BELIEVE uses the Danielson Rubric to score teacher evaluations and for feedback.

**Data Analysis:** BSTLA academic leadership team members (Principal, Dean of Instruction, department chairs) will monitor student learning through weekly data meetings, quarterly unit assessment data, semesterly standardized assessment data, and Missouri's End of Course assessments (as applicable by course). Instructional coaches primarily focus on quarterly unit assessments as critical components of their teacher coaching; coaches review unit assessments and teacher exemplars prior to unit test administration so their familiarity with these assessments can inform their weekly observations and weekly formative assessment data review with teachers. After teachers administer their unit assessments, instructional coaches monitor the data and work alongside teachers to plan next steps for supporting students and planning future instruction. The academic leadership team also monitors beginning-of-year (BOY), middle-of-year (MOY), and end-of-year (EOY) standardized assessments and uses the data to inform subsequent professional development sessions.

**Personal & Professional Goal Setting and Monitoring:** On a quarterly basis, BSTLA teachers will meet with the principal and their instructional coach to check in on their progress towards meeting their personal and professional goals. These goals are set during initial meetings at the beginning of each academic year and followed up on quarterly. Through many years of BELIEVE's founders working with novice teachers and through our experience at our Indianapolis campus, we have found that personal goal setting with teachers contributes to their success and retention. When the leadership team has genuine interest in teachers' personal goals and follows up at regular intervals, we can also troubleshoot and problem solve alongside teachers, supporting them to have their needs met and to re-energize. Many times we have used qualitative data from personal goal setting meetings to make adjustments to our teacher support strategy. We also use these quarterly meetings to set professional goals—all teachers have at least one course-based goal that varies only by course (e.g., "80%+ of students will grow 40 points or more on the Math section of the PSAT 8/9 from BOY to EOY), one professional-practice-based goal aligned to indicators from Missouri's formal teacher evaluation guides, and one individualized professional goal that the leadership team helps them to set based on their individual career goals.

**Formal Teacher Evaluation:** The Principal completes two formal evaluations annually. These are completed in Whetstone where teachers can view results, feedback, and next steps in real-time. Formal evaluations are discussed during teachers Q2 and Q4 meetings with their coach and Principal. For their first two years in the profession, new teachers will be evaluated using [Missouri's New Teacher Feedback Forms](#). Teachers in their third year and beyond will be evaluated via [Missouri's Growth Guide](#).

## Instructional Priorities

At BSTLA, we focus on a few instructional priorities to make sure we are delivering on the promise of each of the pillars of our educational philosophy: agency, acceleration, autonomy, village, and exposure. The chart below identifies our key instructional priorities and explains why we devote our focus to these.

Key Action	Explanation
<b>Double-block ELA and Math in grades 9 &amp; 10</b>	At BSTLA, students will spend two 50-minute blocks in English Language Arts instruction and two 50-minute blocks in math instruction daily. The central promise of our model is that students will be prepared for immediate entry into college or a high-wage, high-demand career upon graduation. For success in either of these endeavors, our students must have high-level proficiency in the three most basic, fundamental outcomes of education: reading, writing, and math. While we recognize that colleges and employers seek many other skill sets in addition to these, we know that our alumni will struggle to secure wealth-building employment if they have gaps in any of these three areas. By frontloading heavy instruction in these areas in the first two years of high school, we simultaneously accelerate students' education and create more room in their later high school years for continual development of their proficiency in these areas if needed.
<b>Utilize Published, Highly-Rated Curricula for Core Subject Areas</b>	For too long, many K-12 schools—and charter schools in particular—have made the harmful mistake of teaching content-free curriculum (Wexler, 2019) <sup>16</sup> , but for students to be prepared for the challenges of college and career, there is simply no replacement for knowledge. At our Indianapolis campus, we have prioritized knowledge by adopting published, highly-rated curricula for our core Math and English Language Arts Classes. This choice supports knowledge in a variety of ways: the Odell High

<sup>16</sup> Wexler, N. (2019). *The Knowledge Gap: The Hidden Cause of America's Broken Education System—and How to Fix It*.

	<p>School Literacy Program has knowledge as one of its core design pillars, which means that all units are designed to develop depth of understanding of relevant topics. The Carnegie High School Math Solution program supports knowledge acquisition through its focus on conceptual understanding via collaborative discussion and writing. Lastly—and perhaps most importantly—we choose to implement published, highly-rated curricula because we aim to maximize our teachers’ effectiveness by limiting demands on their time. When teachers have a baseline high-quality curriculum from which to work, they can focus on unit and lesson internalization rather than creation. The provision of a baseline curriculum allows teachers to accelerate their success in the profession by narrowing their focus to internalization and execution.</p>
<p><b>Prioritize Dual Enrollment over Dual Credit</b></p>	<p>At our Indianapolis campus, we have seen the confidence and autonomy of our students skyrocketed as they succeed in the opportunity to leave their high school building and take classes on a community college campus. They gain a level of independence that would be difficult to replicate in a high school classroom, especially at a small high school. They learn that not all professors have the same expectations, and they must learn to identify these variations and adjust to them. They learn to interact academically with college-age and adult peers, and they learn what it means to manage their time without a bell schedule or the oversight that high school teachers provide when they see students daily. Dual enrollment supports acceleration, autonomy, and exposure for our students and will be a key priority at BSTLA.</p>
<p><b>Reading Across the Content Areas</b></p>	<p>At BSTLA, learning in all core courses (Math, ELA, Social Studies, and Science) is text-based. All of these courses demand reading proficiency. To support students in meeting this demand, we train teachers in the Reading Apprenticeship literacy framework so they can explicitly teach discipline-specific reading strategies and support students’ content knowledge acquisition as well as their metacognition as readers. Additionally, the Reading Apprenticeship literacy framework accounts for the social dimension of reading; as students engage in content area reading, they also engage in metacognitive conversation with peers, which reinforces the core understanding that reading is a meaning-making process, we all approach texts in different ways, and we can support each other in filling our reading strategy toolboxes and talking about our reading process with each other. In this way, Reading Apprenticeship supports the Village, Agency, and Autonomy facets of our model.</p>

**Prioritize Research-Based Best Practices Over Singular Approaches to Learning**

At BSTLA, we will not take a singular approach to instruction (e.g., all discussion based, all blended learning, all direct instruction) for several reasons. We believe in the social and the personal dimensions of learning; students need well-facilitated social meaning making opportunities as well as independent practice opportunities with frequent, timely feedback—to emphasize a single format, such as personalized online learning, would ignore that learning is both personal and social. All students benefit from learning in a variety of formats<sup>17</sup> The nature of the skills and content to be learned should drive the selection of instructional methods<sup>18</sup> Drawing upon a broad spectrum of research-based best practices guards against educational experimentation on our students and upholds our responsibility to act in our students’ best interest.

## **A.3 – Assessing Student Performance**

### **BELIEVE’s Approach to Student Assessment**

As required by the State of Missouri in statute [RSMo 150.518](#) and [RSMo 160.405.4.\(6\)\(a\)](#), BELIEVE will administer End-of-Course assessments for all students in Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, English I, English II, American Government, Biology, and Personal Finance.

In addition to End of Course Assessments, BSTLA will conduct additional assessments to gauge aptitude and progress, pursuant to [RSMo 160.405.4\(6\)\(a\)](#) and [RSMo 160.514](#) Upon entry, all students will complete a Lexile and quantile test. These scores, along with 8th grade report cards, will help determine course scheduling and placement for 9th grade. Students will complete these tests annually while at BSTLA to ensure growth and development is occurring in these areas. Lastly, BELIEVE will test 9th grade students on the PSAT 8/9, 10th grade students on the PSAT 10, and 11th grade students on the SAT. Although BELIEVE recognizes that city and state-wide, Missouri uses ACT as the baseline test, BELIEVE has selected to use SAT for several reasons:

- The city of St. Louis is not currently pushing city-wide data sharing. Currently, BELIEVE partners with large, competitive networks, like The Noble Network in Chicago, to compare data. BELIEVE will continue to do this with BELIEVE Circle City and The Noble Network as well as any STL schools that wish to participate. BELIEVE works with a Data Manager who will request and collect data from interested schools.

<sup>17</sup> Saphier, Haley-Speca, & Gower, 2008

<sup>18</sup> Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008



- BELIEVE will test 11th-grade students on the ACT and SAT. Since we want students to live choice filled lives and don't want to push students into a single standardized test as data shows students score differently depending on the test.
- Our courses are currently aligned with Common Core State Standards. We will combine these existing metrics with Missouri Learning Standards to ensure students are academically prepared for college and career; we are confident that this academic program will also prepare students to perform well on the SAT and ACT in their junior year.

## Assessment Overview

Assessment	Grade Level	Course	Interval
<b>EOC Assessment: Algebra I</b>	9th	Algebra I	1 time (end of course)
EOC Assessment: Geometry*	10th	Geometry	1 time (end of course)
EOC Assessment: Algebra II*	11th	Algebra II	1 time (end of course)
EOC Assessment-English I*	9th	English I	1 time (end of course)
<b>EOC Assessment-English II</b>	9th	English II	1 time (end of course)
<b>EOC American Government</b>	11th	American Government	1 time (end of course)
American History	10th	American History	1 time (end of course)
<b>EOC Biology</b>	9th/10th	Biology	1 time (end of course)
Personal Finance*	10th/11th	Personal Finance	1 time (end of course)

WIDA	9th-12th	(Not Course Specific)	1 time per year
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) Reading Inventory Benchmark Assessment	9th-12th	English Language Arts	3 times per year (August, December, May)
Edmentum Quantile Benchmark Assessment	9th-12th	Math	3 times per year (August, December, May)
PSAT 8/9, PSAT 10, SAT Assessments	9th-11th	Reading, Writing & Language, Math	3 times per year (August, December, May)
Math Unit Assessment	9th-11th	Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II	~10 times per year (2-3 tests per quarter)
English Language Arts Section Diagnostics & Culminating Tasks (Unit Assessments)	9th-10th	English 1, English 2, English 3, English 4	Culminating Task: ~4 times per year (1 per quarter)  Section Diagnostics: ~12 times per year (~3 per quarter)
Formative Assessments: Checks for Understanding, Exit Tickets	9th-12th	All Subjects	Daily
BASEline Social Emotional Learning Survey	9th-12th	Village	Quarterly

\*Asterisk denotes optional End-of-Course Assessments

### State Mandated Tests

In addition to administering required End-of-Course assessments, we will also administer non-required End-of-Course assessments. With agency as a core tenet of our educational philosophy, we embrace the philosophy of End-of-Course assessments; we believe that high-quality, comprehensive assessments hold teachers and students to a high bar

regarding learning outcomes. BSTLA's academic team will use data from these assessments to gauge teacher effectiveness and inform future instructional decisions for the respective courses.

### **Lexile Assessment**

Students entering high school arrive with a wide range of reading proficiency levels, and our job is to support all students to proficiency by the end of high school. BSTLA's academic team will utilize Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) Lexile testing to assess reading levels for students entering high school and to ensure students are experiencing growth. These tests will be given three times per year, and students' schedules will be designed and/or adjusted based on their performance results from these tests.

### **Quantile Assessments Assessment**

Likewise, students entering high school arrive with a wide range of math proficiency levels. BSTLA's academic team will utilize [Edmentum Quantile](#) testing to assess math levels for students entering high school and to ensure students are experiencing growth. These tests will be given three times per year, and students' schedules will be designed and/or adjusted based on their performance results from these tests.

### **SAT**

BSTLA will utilize the SAT as the primary standardized assessment tool to measure students' growth and proficiency year-over-year throughout high school. Some may wonder why we have chosen the SAT when the ACT is a more commonly used assessment in Missouri. We have made this intentional choice for several reasons. Most importantly, we have a wealth of comparison data for the SAT, which will allow us to hold a high bar of performance for teachers and students. Our flagship campus in Indianapolis uses the SAT, so we have three years of pre-to-post comparison data. We have led the charge for data transparency locally in Indianapolis; as a result of our efforts and support from The Mind Trust, we have two years of citywide pre-to-post SAT data for Indianapolis. Since the SAT has been in use in Chicago for the past five years, we also have access to five years' worth of pre-to-post SAT data for Chicago. Given that Missouri requires neither the ACT nor the SAT as a state-mandated test, we have chosen to utilize the SAT because the wealth of comparison data will allow us to gauge our performance. Currently, there is no widely available ACT comparison data in Saint Louis or Missouri to which we can compare our students' performance. Additionally, we are confident that our SAT focus will not put our students at a disadvantage for college admissions—most colleges accept SAT and ACT for admission. We will, however, ensure that all of our juniors take the ACT every year; thus, our students will be positioned to decide which test scores they want to use for college applications. Overall, due to the absence of state-mandated nationally normed assessments in Saint Louis with pre-to-post data available for comparison, we feel strongly that the best way to assess performance will be to utilize the SAT as our primary standardized assessment tool for now.

BSTLA will utilize the SAT suite of assessments (PSAT 8/9, PSAT 10, and SAT) three times per year to monitor students' proficiency in Reading, Writing & Language, and Math. We have used this approach at our Indianapolis campus as a way of measuring student growth (and, by extension, teacher effectiveness) and as a way of gauging our scholars' proficiency in comparison to their peers nationwide. At our Indianapolis campus in August 2021, our ninth-grade scholars' mean composite score on the SAT was 721, and in May 2022 their mean score was 796—demonstrating an average growth of 75 points. Our ninth-grade scholars made their strongest growth in EBRW (evidence-based reading and writing), averaging 46 points of growth on the reading and writing sections of the SAT. Our tenth-grade scholars earned a mean composite score of 768 when they took the SAT in August 2021. When they took the SAT in May 2022, their mean score had risen to 830—demonstrating an average growth of 62 points. Our tenth-grade scholars made their largest gains in math, averaging 42 points of growth on the math sections of the SAT test. Overall, we are pleased with our scholars' growth, as it outpaces what CollegeBoard deems typical annual growth (CollegeBoard's grade-level SAT benchmarks indicate that ninth graders should typically grow 40 composite points in one year, and tenth graders should typically grow 50 composite points in one year). At BSTLA, we will continue to use standardized tests at key intervals to gauge students' growth and proficiency.

### **Quarterly Unit Assessments**

While standardized assessments allow us to measure growth and proficiency, they do not capture the wide range of evidence we must see to gauge students' mastery of other important indicators of student learning, such as the Missouri Learning Standards (MLS), the Next Generation Science Standards, and AP course standards. To gather data on a broader range of student learning—and to more nimbly move the needle on student learning—teachers need a clear vision of exemplary learning outcomes. Unit assessments provide that for teachers. When teachers can anchor instruction in alignment with meaningful summative assessments that require students to engage in extended writing, presentation, teamwork, performance, etc., they can utilize formative assessments to consistently address errors and misconceptions so students learn and ultimately perform well on quarterly unit assessments. At BSTLA, these assessments will serve as quarterly gauges of student learning and teacher effectiveness.

### **Social-Emotional Learning Survey**

The [BASEline](#) is a tool for measuring students' SEL growth. It is a full-scale research-validated screener comprising 41 questions, spanning four SEL domains. This powerful self-reporting measure is structured to help measure all five of CASEL's main competency groups. The results allow customized support for students' social-emotional needs. We understand that DESE is taking steps to incorporate SEL measurement in the new MSIP 6 framework and we will work to ensure that our SEL measurement processes align with those expectations.

**Employability Standards:** BELIEVE has established a foundation of Employability Standards that are

used to guide programming for students. These standards have been developed to support students exiting high school with the skills needed to be successful and thriving citizens. While Missouri does not have its own set of standards, BELIEVE will utilize the State of Indiana's while working with the Commission to determine any additional areas of focus. Scope and Sequence for Grades 9-10 and grades 11-12 can be viewed in Appendix A.3.1.

## **Data-Driven Decisions**

At BELIEVE, data is at the forefront of all decision making. Historically, BELIEVE has devoted lots of time, talent, and financial resources to ensuring we are tracking data tightly at the school level but also across the city. We will carry these behaviors to St. Louis as we compare not only our network sites, but also regionally among other schools.

### **School Level Data**

As outlined above, BSTLA will regularly gather data from multiple sources. We will use this data to inform school-level decisions, such as decisions about programming and schedules. We will use data from students' performance on Lexile and Quantile testing to determine which students should be scheduled in Math Lab and Developmental Reading. We will use data from beginning of year (BOY), middle of year (MOY), and end of year (EOY) PSAT and SAT testing to gauge the effectiveness of our academic program and make adjustments as needed. For example, at our Indianapolis campus, data from mid-year testing has informed instructional changes to support teachers who are struggling and to increase the impact of teachers who are performing well. We will also use schoolwide data points, such as attendance and GPA by village, as indicators of school health and the effectiveness of our academic program.

### **Grade/Cohort Level Data**

BSTLA will primarily use four data points to evaluate progress of grade levels and cohorts of students. We will use Missouri's end-of-course assessments to evaluate mastery of course standards where EOC assessments are available, and we will use a suite of practice PSAT 8/9, PSAT 10, and SAT tests each year to measure percent of students making growth from beginning of year (BOY) to middle of year (MOY), MOY to end-of-year (EOY), and BOY to EOY. We will also use SAT data to evaluate our students' proficiency in comparison to nationwide data. We will also utilize Lexile testing and CaptiAssess testing as universal screening tools for reading, and we will use Edmentum's Quantile testing as our benchmark test for math. These assessments will allow us to measure the impact of staffing, curriculum, instructional, and scheduling decisions (inputs) at each grade level so we can continue doing what is working and adjust as needed.

### **Individual Student Data**

BSTLA will utilize several individual student data points to evaluate the progress of individual students. Each semester, we will gauge students' performance by examining their credits earned toward the completion of their diploma. We will also gauge students' performance by their GPA, Lexile test, Quantile test, and pre-, mid-, and post scores on the

PSAT or SAT test for their grade level. This data will inform decision making, in conjunction with the student and their family, about the best short-term and long-term academic path for the student to follow.

To gauge the progress of our individual students who are multilingual learners, we will utilize WIDA data to gather information about their current proficiency levels. At our Indianapolis campus, over 25% of our students are multilingual learners, so we view WIDA data as an invaluable resource for understanding how to best support our multilingual learners in their acquisition of English. BSTLA teachers will review WIDA scores for their students and refer to can-do descriptors based on language proficiency levels to adjust instruction as needed to best support multilingual learners and provide sheltered instruction.

To evaluate the progress of our exceptional learners, we will refer to the same data points we refer to for all students (credits earned, GPA, benchmark tests), and we will also refer to the goals outlined in students' IEPs. Special educators at BSTLA will use all of these data points, in addition to the following: qualitative data from low-inference notes gathered via running record while observing students in multiple classroom settings, interviews with the student, interviews with the parent/guardian, review of past records, and quantitative data from testing. Special educators at BSTLA will use all of these data points to support our exceptional learners to access grade-level curriculum and instruction and thrive in school. We will use data points such as credits earned, grades, and benchmark test performance to gauge the extent to which our exceptional learners' needs are being met.

## **Promotion and Graduation**

BELIEVE STL Academy has the following policy regarding standards for promoting students to the next grade:

- In order to be promoted to the next grade level or graduate, students must pass, and thus earn, the credits from all classes in which they are enrolled during the regular school day and school year. Students who fail a class will be required to enroll in a corresponding make-up class in order to be promoted to the next grade level or graduate.
- Students who do not meet all the requirements at least one week before the subsequent school year must make up the credit in the summer or the following school year. When documented accommodations are relevant (e.g. medical), promotion eligibility will be made on an individual basis.

The primary factor that would cause a student to be retained would be if a student fails two or more core courses and does not engage in credit recovery during summer academy. BELIEVE STL Academy will provide a number of academic supports to keep students on track and avoid failing

courses. BELIEVE STL Academy will also support students through the credit recovery process; the instance of a student being retained will be rare due to all of these supports.

Through our Beyond BELIEVE program, our Student Services teams will be able to effectively track students post high school. While we recognized MSIP 6 required follow up days is 180, our goal is to track no less than 2 years and up to 6 years. BELIEVE Schools, Inc. is currently codifying this program and will launch it in Summer 2023.

## **Data Reporting and Usage**

BELIEVE will continue to utilize two tools for the housing and storage of student data. Currently, we utilize Alma for our Student Information System (SIS). This is where we track student records, transcripts, scheduling, medical records, and more. To supplement, we use SchoolRunner for grade books, grade reports, to track behavior and culture data, and more. SchoolRunner serves as the public data source for teachers, parents, and students. Parents and students are provided access to their accounts during summer orientation so they have on-demand access whenever they choose throughout the school year.

### **Reporting to Parents**

BELIEVE hosts summer orientation sessions over the summer to provide families with information regarding data delivery and our approach to data. Parents and guardians will have the opportunity to see a sample report card so they understand what they should be looking for on the report. The BELIEVE team understands the importance and significance of the high school report card, leading to a transcript. With that, the BELIEVE team takes the time to review grading policies with families during orientation. A full breakdown of grading policies will also be accessible to families at all times via the Student and Family Handbook and online. Additionally, the site's leadership team will review the various touch points throughout the year where parents have face to face meetings with the students' Village leader and school administration called Purpose Pathways. An in-depth review of Purpose Pathway Meetings can be viewed Appendix A.3.2.

### **Report Cards**

Student report cards will summarize student performance, progress and assessment at the end of each quarter. Semester report cards will be more comprehensive and include additional data around GPA, behavior reports, and more. BELIEVE report cards are intentionally crafted to provide the student and parent/guardian with as much information and feedback on their student as possible. Teachers are required to provide commentary for all students within their classes or Village. Comments are required to be in-depth and speak to the child's growth, development, and performance during the time frame. Report cards will be distributed four times during the school year. Report cards are previewed at

the end of each quarter during the purpose pathway meeting. This provides an opportunity for parents and/or students to ask questions, raise concerns, and work with teachers to implement plans for the next quarter. Annual end of year report cards will be provided to students and families in alignment to [RSMo 160.405.4.\(6\)\(a\)](#) and [RSMo 160.518](#).

Weekly grades will be accessible to scholars and families through our online student information system (SIS). Parents and scholars will be supported and encouraged to regularly track grades in their courses.

### Grades

Letter Grade	Percent	GPA	Letter Grade	Percent	GPA
A+	97-100	4.3	C	73-76	2.0
A	93-96	4.0	C-	70-72	1.7
A-	90-92	3.7	D+	67-69	1.3
B+	87-89	3.3	D	63-66	1.01
B	83-86	3.0	D-	60-62	0.7
B-	80-82	2.7	F	0-59	0.0
C+	77-79	2.3			

Honors classes are awarded a 0.5 GPA point bonus, and Advanced Placement/Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit classes are awarded a 1.0 GPA point bonus when calculating weighted grade point averages. Pass/fail classes are credit bearing; however, they do not factor into grade point averages. Pass/fail requirements are determined by campus. Full credit classes have twice the impact on GPA calculations than half credit classes.

Semester grades are calculated in the following way:

Semester 1			Semester 2		
Quarter 1 Grade	Quarter 2 Grade	Final Exam	Quarter 3 Grade	Quarter 4 Grade	Final Exam
45% ↓	45% ↓	10% ↓	45% ↓	45% ↓	10% ↓
Overall Semester 1 Grade			Overall Semester 2 Grade		

### Annual Report

As required by DESE, BELIEVE will utilize the Annual Report for performance reporting



and metrics. Student Achievement data will be reviewed and broken down annually to clearly identify academic performance of students by sub-groups (*i.e: ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, grade, english-language learner, special education student etc*).

## **A.4 - School Calendar & Daily Schedule**

BELIEVE STL Academy was created keeping in mind the demands, needs, and workloads of both students and staff members. Our calendar is designed to adapt to the needs and desires of the modern world. BELIEVE STL Academy will operate on a mid-August to early-June time frame. This allows for periodic breaks throughout the school year and a two month summer break. To eliminate the “summer slide” and to provide students with a safe environment over the summer, BELIEVE operates a 3-4 week long summer school program which provides students the opportunity to remediate, accelerate, or make up credits for a course if necessary.


As is true at our Indianapolis campus, BELIEVE operates on quarters. Each quarter is ten weeks long. As part of our EVP, all BELIEVE staff, teachers, and students have access to “strategic breaks.” We’ve intentionally designed our calendar so that all members of the BELIEVE community have *at least* one break or Self-Care opportunity each quarter. As indicated in our academic calendar, these breaks can be a 3-day weekend or one of the standard seasonal/holiday breaks. We’ve found this to be very beneficial for our staff—allowing for them to have to take care of themselves, rest, make appointments, or travel. We’ve found that through this schedule employees take less days off, miss work less, and are present for our students more. In addition, at the end of each quarter, teachers are provided a Data and Gradebook day. This day serves as a time for teachers to ensure their gradebook is accurate, up-to-date and allows time for report card completion. During these days, Leadership team members create intentional and targeted programming for students. Programming includes digital portfolio work time, career panels, social justice and advocacy sessions, or social emotional wellness sessions like mindfulness, yoga, and more. Data and Gradebook Days also provide teachers time to collaborate with their teams and coaches to reflect and strengthen lessons for the next quarter or semester.

On a weekly basis, the BELIEVE schedule varies from most high schools. BELIEVE operates on a Monday-Friday schedule with Monday-Thursday being strictly academic days where a majority of the students’ day is focused on academic-facing courses while still including Village twice a day. Fridays, at BELIEVE, are known as Freedom Fridays. These days are structured to include non-academic classes while including credit-bearing programming like personal finance, practice and fine arts, college and career readiness, and more. Additionally, on Fridays, BELIEVE dismisses at 2PM allowing for weekly 2-hour blocks of professional development with teachers. As previously mentioned, one Friday a month, teachers have early release, where they leave at 2PM with students.

**Breakdown of Academic Calendar** Each school day runs from 8:00am-3:30pm and in total, students receive 175 days or 1,225 hours (excluding daily lunch break) of regular and extended instruction each school year which is in accordance with [RSMo 160.041](#) and [RSMo 171.031](#). This statute requires LEAs to provide a minimum of 1,044 hours of instruction each school year. BELIEVE has identified 6 makeup days, totaling 42 hours, in case of missed school days due to inclement weather per [RSMo 171.031](#). Six makeup days will be included in the school calendar and marked distinctly once the calendar is finalized. A proposed School Calendar can be found in Appendix A.4.1.

The regular school year is divided into four quarters consisting of two semesters. Parents receive weekly grade reports from their students' Village leader while also receiving a quarterly report card during their child's Purpose Pathway Meeting. During this meeting, the Village leader does a thorough review of the report card and helps plan, strategize, and set goals for the next quarter. At the end of each semester, a more comprehensive report card is mailed home or given to parents during Purpose Pathway Meeting, that reflects the entire school year, behavioral reports, and other documentation to support their child's Pathway. This includes but is not limited to: Dual Enrollment grade reports, portfolio review and progress updates, review of IEP or ILP, and Behavior records.

A copy of the 22-23 BELIEVE Circle City Academic Calendar can be found below. BELIEVE STL Academy Academic calendar will mirror the layout of this while being aligned to Missouri state requirements and regulations.


**BELIEVE** Circle City | 2022-23 Academic Calendar

June 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

July 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

August 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

September 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

October 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

November 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

March 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	


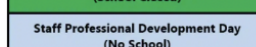
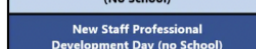
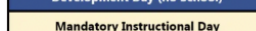
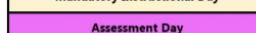
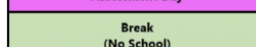
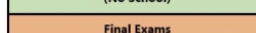
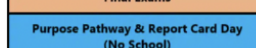

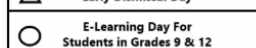
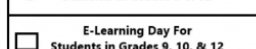
April 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

May 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

June 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

July 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Semester 1 August 3 – December 20		Semester 2 January 6 – May 25	
Quarter 1 Aug 3 – Oct 7	Quarter 2 Oct 10 – Dec 20	Quarter 3 Jan 6 – Mar 10	Quarter 4 Mar 20 – May 25
August – 20 days September – 21 days October – 19 days November – 17 days December – 14 days <b>SEMESTER 1 TOTAL = 91 days</b>		January – 17 days February – 19 days March – 18 days April – 18 days May – 18 days <b>SEMESTER 2 TOTAL = 90 days</b>	

KEY	
	Holiday (School Closed)
	Staff Professional Development Day (No School)
	New Staff Professional Development Day (no School)
	Mandatory Instructional Day
	Assessment Day
	Break (No School)
	Final Exams
	Purpose Pathway & Report Card Day (No School)
	Early Dismissal Day
	E-Learning Day For Students in Grades 9 & 12
	E-Learning Day For Students in Grades 9, 10, & 12

## Benefits of BELIEVE Calendar

Our academic calendar has been carefully crafted and adjusted over the first two years in operation. We collected feedback from parents, students, and staff members each year which was taken into account and implemented into the calendar. With that, we'll be operating on a similar schedule while following Missouri State guidelines. Upon the first year of operation, we will survey and request feedback from families when crafting the calendar for year two.

- **Benefits for Teachers:** The academic calendar was designed with teachers at the forefront. Our schedule allows for teachers to maintain work life balance. Every month, staff and students have (at a minimum) a three-day weekend. Our teachers work extremely hard to ensure our students are prepared and successful. This allows them some type of break every month to recharge and relax. Additionally, we've structured our calendar so that students are released at 2PM every Friday with teachers leaving at 2PM one Friday per month. Additionally, our calendar is structured so teachers have one Friday off per quarter for planning purposes. A sample of this can be found below.

### Semester 2 Friday Planning Day Rotation

Date	Programming	Teacher Out	Coverage
1/13	9th Grade – NCAA Hall of Champions 11th/12th Grade JA Finance Park	Teacher 1, Teacher 2	Teacher 1 → Teacher 11 Teacher 2 → Admin 1
1/20	11/12 College Visit (Purdue)	Teacher 3, Teacher 4	Teacher 3 → Teacher 2/Admin 1 Teacher 4 → Teacher 14
1/27	11/12 College Visit (Central State)	Teacher 5, Teacher 6	Teacher 5 → Teacher 8 Teacher 6 → Admin 3
2/3	9th College Visit (IUPUI); 11/12 College Visit (Franklin College)	Teacher 7, Teacher 8, Teacher 9	Teacher 7 → Teacher 9 Teacher 8 → Teacher 5 Teacher 9 → Admin 2
2/10	10th Grade College Visit (Anderson University)	Teacher 10, Teacher 11, Teacher 12	Teacher 10 → Teacher 13 Teacher 11 → Teacher 1 Teacher 12 → In-House Sub 1
2/17	Career: Healthcare	Teacher 13, Teacher 14, Teacher 15	Teacher 13 → Teacher 10 Teacher 14 → Teacher 4 Teacher 15 → In-House Sub 1
2/24	Mastery Manager PD		
3/3	All Grades Off Campus (Children's Museum, Courthouse, ISU)	Teacher 5, Teacher 9, Teacher 3	Teacher 5 → Teacher 2 Teacher 9 → Admin 2 Teacher 3 → Admin 1
3/10	Whole School Service		
3/17	Spring Break		
3/24	9th US District Courthouse	Teacher 1, Teacher 2,	Teacher 1 → Teacher 11

		Teacher 6	Teacher 2 → Admin 1 Teacher 6 → In-House Sub 1
3/31	Upperclassmen Trip / 9th & 10th Brickyard Crossing		
4/7	No School		
4/14	9th Grade Job Shadowing	Teacher 11, Teacher 13	Teacher 11 → Teacher 1 Teacher 13 → Teacher 10
4/21	4/21 - Community Service	Teacher 8, Teacher 15, Teacher 10, Teacher 14	Teacher 8 → Teacher 5 Teacher 15 → In-House Sub 1 Teacher 10 → Teacher 13 Teacher 14 → Teacher 4
4/28	Sophomore College Trip		
5/5	9th Grade UIndy College Trip	Teacher 7, Teacher 12, Teacher 4	Teacher 7 → Admin 2/Teacher 9 Teacher 12 → In-House Sub 1 Teacher 4 → Admin 1
5/12	Freshman Camping Trip		
5/19	Capstone Presentations		

## Daily Schedule: Key Components

### Daily ELA Instruction

At BELIEVE, all students will partake in double blocked ELA and Math courses. It's imperative that students have the ability to read no matter their future pathway. Reading, comprehension, and writing are the foundation for everyone. Without these standard skills and abilities, we recognize that life will be increasingly difficult.

ELA @ BELIEVE	
Class	Components
<b>English 1</b> (9th Grade) (50 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guided study of complex literary and nonfiction texts</li> <li>Reading Apprenticeship<sup>19</sup></li> <li>Speaking, listening, discussion</li> <li>Writing and grammar</li> </ul>
<b>English 2</b> (9th Grade) (50 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guided study of complex literary and nonfiction texts</li> <li>Reading Apprenticeship</li> <li>Speaking, listening, discussion</li> <li>Writing and grammar</li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> Schoenbach, R., Greenleaf, C., and Murphy, L. (2012). *Reading for Understanding: How Reading Apprenticeship Improves Disciplinary Learning in Secondary and College Classrooms*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

<b>English 3</b> (10th Grade) (50 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided study of complex literary and nonfiction texts</li> <li>• Reading Apprenticeship<sup>20</sup></li> <li>• Speaking, listening, discussion</li> <li>• Writing and grammar</li> </ul>
<b>English 4</b> (10th Grade) (50 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided study of complex literary and nonfiction texts</li> <li>• Reading Apprenticeship<sup>21</sup></li> <li>• Speaking, listening, discussion</li> <li>• Writing and grammar</li> </ul>
<b>World History</b> (9th Grade) (50 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided study of complex primary source texts</li> <li>• Reading Apprenticeship</li> <li>• Writing</li> <li>• Real World/Historical Texts</li> </ul>
<b>American History</b> (10th Grade) (50 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided study of complex primary source texts</li> <li>• Reading Apprenticeship</li> <li>• Writing</li> <li>• Real World/Historical Texts</li> </ul>
<b>Reading Foundations</b> (50 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveled-reading</li> <li>• Remediation of word recognition and reading comprehension</li> <li>• Read aloud and fluency practice</li> </ul>

### Daily Math Instruction

As stated, all students will take double blocked math courses which support remediation for any gaps that need to be filled or for acceleration for students who are on grade level and ready to advance. BELIEVE recognizes the importance and need for students to have standard levels of math competency no matter their post-high school plans. Whether they want to enter the early career path or early college, there are skill assessments and exams that require, at minimum, basic math and algebra skills. By double blocking math, students have the opportunity to interact and familiarize themselves with math more frequently preparing them for the future.

### Math @ BELIEVE

<sup>20</sup> Schoenbach, R., Greenleaf, C., and Murphy, L. (2012). *Reading for Understanding: How Reading Apprenticeship Improves Disciplinary Learning in Secondary and College Classrooms*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

<sup>21</sup> Schoenbach, R., Greenleaf, C., and Murphy, L. (2012). *Reading for Understanding: How Reading Apprenticeship Improves Disciplinary Learning in Secondary and College Classrooms*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Math (Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry): 50 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students enrolled in state required courses that also align to the early college model</li> <li>• Classes may occur at BELIEVE or at one of our early college partners depending on level and aptitude of the student.</li> </ul>
Math Lab or Accelerated Course: 50 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for students to practice foundational skills and build confidence with math</li> <li>• Opportunity for students to receive individualized supports for specific skill gaps</li> <li>• Opportunity for students to accelerate and take an additional course or college course if they have the data to show</li> </ul>

### Daily Schedule

BELIEVE's school day will be from 8:00am to 3:35 pm with breakfast starting at 7:30 am Monday through Friday. Office hours are offered Monday-Thursday from 3:35 pm-4:45 pm. All BELIEVE teachers are required to hold office hours at least one day per week. Since we double block ELA and math, students spend more time practicing skills that matter most—reading, writing, and practicing math.

### Daily Instructional Minutes

	Average Daily Instructional Minutes	Total Instructional Minutes per Week
English Language Arts	100	400
Mathematics	100	400
Science	50	200
Social Studies, Humanities	100	400
Personal Finance, Practical Arts ( <i>Once per week</i> )	120 ( <i>Friday only</i> )	120

### BELIEVE Daily Bell Schedule

The proposed daily schedule can be viewed below. This schedule includes the

Monday-Friday bell times versus the alternative schedule followed on Fridays for Freedom Friday.

<b>Sample Bell Schedule</b>	
8:00-8:15	Village
Period 1: 8:20-9:10	Period #1
Period 2: 9:14-10:04	Period #2
Period 3: 10:10-11:00	Period #3
Period 4: 11:04-11:54	Period #4
11:55-12:25	Village
12:26-12:56	Lunch B
Period 5: 12:57-1:47	Period #5
Period 6: 1:51-2:41	Period #6
Period 7: 2:45-3:35	Period #7
3:35	Dismissal
3:35-4:30	Office Hours

### Daily Schedule for Staff

The schedule below is an example of a BELIEVE teachers' daily schedule. It's imperative that we provide teachers adequate time to plan, internalize, and reflect on their courses, students, and grade student work. With that, all BELIEVE teachers receive two 50 minute prep periods daily. With this time, we've found teachers to be more prepared for their classes, gradebooks are kept updated, and our school culture is more calm. When teachers feel supported and aren't required to do all grading and planning outside of school hours, they are going to perform better which ultimately supports our students' learning and performance. A full Proposed Daily School Schedule can be found in Appendix A.4.2.

<b>Sample Schedule for a BSTLA Humanities Teacher</b>						
	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tues</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thurs</b>	<b>Friday Schedule</b>	<b>Fri</b>

<b>Village</b>	10th Grade Village (15 mins)	10th Grade Village (15 mins)	10th Grade Village (15 mins)	10th Grade Village (15 mins)	<b>Whole School Announcements (30 mins)</b>	10th Grade Village / Whole School Announcements
<b>1st Period</b>	American Literature	American Literature	American Literature	American Literature	<b>A Block: Arts Block</b>	Academic Professional Development (90 mins)
<b>2nd Period</b>	Prep Period: Analyzing Data/Grading	Prep Period: Observation Feedback & Looking at Student Work (LASW) w/ Instructional Coach	Prep Period: Analyzing Data/Grading	Prep Period: Analyzing Data/Grading		
<b>3rd Period</b>	Prep Period: Planning for Instruction	Prep Period: Planning for Instruction	Prep Period: Planning for Instruction	Prep Period: Planning for Instruction	<b>B Block: BELIEVE Block</b>	10th Grade Village
<b>4th Period</b>	American Literature	American Literature	American Literature	American Literature		
<b>Lunch/Village</b>	10th Grade Village	10th Grade Village	10th Grade Village	10th Grade Village	<b>C Block: College, Career, &amp; Community</b>	10th Grade Village
<b>Lunch/Village</b>	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
<b>5th Period</b>	American Literature	American Literature	American Literature	American Literature	<b>Student Dismissal 2:30pm</b>	Staff Meeting / Village Planning
<b>6th Period</b>	American Literature	American Literature	American Literature	American Literature		
<b>7th Period</b>	Reading Group	Reading Group	Reading Group	Reading Group		

## Day in the Life

At BELIEVE, there is a standard bell schedule. However, every student's day may look different depending on their Purpose Pathway Plan. A student may spend a portion of their day at St. Louis University or Harris Stowe in dual enrollment courses or at St. Louis Community College for early career programs. Additionally, a student may leave school on Friday mornings for fine arts programming and classes. A sample "Day in the Life":

*Gabby is a freshman at BELIEVE STL Academy. She lives in St. Louis and she has a complicated history with school. She lives with her mom and two sisters, and it takes her 31 minutes to get to school each morning.*

*Gabby usually arrives at school around 7:35 AM so that she can grab breakfast and talk to her best friend before school starts. She has a few classes with her friend, but her friend stays later than Gabby because she struggles academically. Gabby loves listening to the old school music that plays in the multi-purpose room during breakfast. Around 8:00 AM, Gabby goes to sit with her Village Leader, Ms. Jones, who is taking morning attendance. The music ends and the morning announcements begin. Each day of the week it's something new. It's Monday, so it's Meditation Monday. Justin Bieber's "Born to Be Somebody" plays promptly at 8:05 AM, and everyone closes their eyes and thinks about the lyrics and the possibilities of life. This always gives Gabby clarity and sets her day up for success.*

*At 8:15 AM Gabby heads to her locker and her first period class, which starts at 8:20 AM. Gabby's first class is Honors Algebra I Math, and it is a bit of a challenge for her. She is motivated by seeing her mastery*



tracker displayed in her classroom. The second period of the day is Composition. She enjoys the peer editing, and the quiet time to focus with music playing (she has earned music privileges through the Level Up System). It's almost lunch time, and she only has one more class to go. Pre-AP Biology is one of her favorite classes. She is working hard for the opportunity to sit for the AP BIO test in the Spring. Only the strongest students get the opportunity, and Gabby has been going to office hours every Wednesday for an hour to Accelerate into the select group.

Lunch time! Gabby heads straight to the Student Lounge. She brought a K-Cup to make hot tea, and a package of noodles. She loves that she earned the Open Lunch option, and can go to the Lounge at lunch. The last 10 minutes of the lunch period Gabby hops on the treadmill. She has been taught the importance of physical movement and wants to get her blood flowing for the end of the day. Gabby finishes lunch and heads to her last few classes. She has US History and Freshman Literature. Both classes are easy for her because she is a strong reader. In US History they are taking Cornell Notes in a lecture style class. However, her last class is very different. They use the Harkness Model, and it is discussion based. They read text and then discuss the main idea and author's intent before asking each other critical questions. She loves how the class is run. The teacher is just the facilitator; BSA students push each others' thinking. Gabby has a perfect end to her academic day. Gabby's end of day is spent in Village. She loves Ms. Jones, she loves her Village sisters, and she loves hearing all the crazy things that happen in the lives of her group. Each day is structured differently. Some days the topics are based on career exploration, and some days they talk about current events and how it affects their lives. Today's topic is about the medical field. Ms. Jones is sharing 10 different careers in medicine, how much they make, what they do everyday, and the demand for the role.

Gabby was excited to learn more about the different career options in the medical field. Next month, Gabby is able to select her job shadowing opportunity for Freedom Friday and now has a better idea of where and who she wants to shadow! Gabby finishes her day around 3:30 P.M., and decides to stay after school for office hours to get extra assistance in Pre-AP Bio with her classmates. Gabby is excited to share with her classmates that she completed the Knowledge Assessment at St. Louis University and will start taking her first college class next semester. Gabby begins to look through prerequisite options presented to her via email from her Dean of College and Career. After Gabby finishes her research and studying for Pre-AP Bio, Gabby packs up and heads to the Metro with friends from her neighborhood. They hop on the bus, and are home by 5:00PM. Gabby has a ton of homework and reading to do. She reminds her mom that her Exploration Meeting is coming up and she starts to share all the things she wants to do. Gabby plans to stay focused and leave BSA with an Associate's Degree or more! Gabby is excited to start dual enrollment next semester because this means she'll have more freedoms at school and open campus!

## **A.5 Target Population**

The ideal location for BELIEVE STL Academy (BSTLA) will be in the central corridor so it is convenient for families across the city. Equally important, is BELIEVE's proximity to SLU, HSSU, and STLCC as our programming and student schedules will align heavily with these partners. It's imperative that we are close to partners so students have access to their campuses and resources. It's our goal to be easily accessible for students in both North, West, and South St. Louis. Transportation or accessibility should not be a barrier for families seeking a high quality college and career focused high school. We anticipate our population to be dispersed across the following zip codes: 63118, 63104, 63108, 63106, 63109, 63107, and 63139. BSTLA will be a school of choice for families throughout the City – similar to SLPS magnet schools – and does not intend to be a “neighborhood school”. BSTLA will be located in an eligible district pursuant with [RSMo 160.400.2](#).

BSTLA plans to serve students who historically have not had access to the rigor, programming, and support that their counterparts in more affluent districts or neighborhoods traditionally have. Through partnerships with higher education institutions, students will have exposure to post-high school programming, which can help make the transition to college and career smoother and more successful. BELIEVE STL Academy plans to launch in the Fall of 2024 with 125 9th grade students and slow-grow into a 9-12 high school by year four, ultimately serving 400-430 students.

According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), in 2021, there were 10,792 students in grades 9-12 within the city of St. Louis, MO. Of this population, ~95% are people of color. With Free and Reduced Lunch data from surrounding districts and schools, we anticipate approximately 100% of our population to qualify for FRL.

### **Projected Enrollment**

BELIEVE will open in the fall of 2024, serving 9th grade only. By year 4, BELIEVE will be a robust 4-year high school serving roughly 400-430 students. In Year 1, BELIEVE will aim to enroll roughly 100-125 9th grade students. As in Indianapolis, BELIEVE St. Louis Academy aims to be a slow-grow school. Culture and community foundations are more successful and strong when the school starts out small. This initial number of students allows us to implement and fund our programming. Following year 1, BELIEVE will enroll 75-100 9th grade students as students matriculate through. The 27-28 school year will be BSTLA's first year as a full-grown school serving 9th-12th grade.

### **Admission Policy & Student Attrition**

Student attrition is normal and to be expected. With that, BELIEVE proactively plans for students to move out of the community or transfer to other schools. If a student does leave mid-year, BELIEVE will replace the student with a student on the waitlist in grade 9 and 10. Due to the structure of our model, BELIEVE will not enroll students mid-year in grades 11 and 12. BELIEVE does not plan to enroll students in 11th and 12th grade at the start of the school year as it will be difficult for the student to align to our course sequences.

With student movement being frequent, BELIEVE will participate in the lottery process which can be viewed in Section B.5. If more students enroll at the start of the school year than there are seats available, then we will conduct a lottery where random names will be selected through a fair system, as further described in Section B.5.

For enrollment, it's our goal that 80% of students who are enrolled on October 1st are enrolled with us the following October 1st. This data will be tightly tracked through our SIS provider and in partnership with a Data Manager through [EdOps](#). *Families that relocate or move out of the City of St. Louis will be excluded from the percentage.*

We feel this goal is obtainable as BELIEVE Indianapolis experienced an 85% attrition rate in year 1, and 78% in year 2. During year 2, following COVID, we experienced a large number of students who wished to remain in virtual learning who then transferred or families that

decided or were forced to move and relocate.

### Diversity is Part of Our Ideation

St. Louis is an extremely diverse and racially segregated city. St. Louis ranks among the most segregated cities in the United States, according to [USA Today's July 2019 ranking](#). We recognize that this is reflected, too, at the high school level where we see affluent high schools outperforming most city schools. **We exist to change that.** Due to the history of slaveholding, St. Louis is still severely racially divided. For the majority of the 20th century, St. Louis experienced segregated housing inequities and an overwhelming sense of distrust and interaction among races, according to [EdPost](#).

As St. Louis natives, where they attended Vashon High School and Rosati-Kain high School, our Executive Director and Principal Resident are eager to be home in their city to help change the narrative and landscape for black, brown, and underserved youth. In order to serve a diverse student population effectively and equitably, BELIEVE recognizes that all students must see themselves reflected in their teachers and staff members in the building. As outlined in [The power of a black teacher](#) a study found that black and white students had significantly higher achievement when their instructor was of the same race. However, white students are far more likely to experience instructors that look like them creating more favorable outcomes for white students<sup>22</sup>.

With that, as at BELIEVE Circle City High School in Indianapolis, BELIEVE STL Academy will make the commitment that at least 80% of the staff reflects the students served. BELIEVE STL anticipates serving a community of roughly 50% black, 30% latinx, 10% asian, 10% white, mixed-race, or other. Additionally, we expect approximately 80%-90% of students to qualify for FRL(Free-Reduced Lunch).

### St. Louis City Demographics

According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), in 2021, there were 10,792 students in grades 9-12 within the city of St. Louis, MO. Of this population, ~95% are people of color. With Free and Reduced Lunch data from surrounding districts and schools, we anticipate approximately 80%-90% of our population to qualify for FRL<sup>23</sup>.

St. Louis City Demographic Data by Race	
Demographic	Percent
Black	43.97%
White	47.40%

<sup>22</sup> Hobbs, Michael. "Edge: The Power of a Black Teacher." *Edge: Carolina Education Review*, 2020. UNC School of Education, [https://ed.unc.edu/2020/09/08/the-power-of-a-black-teacher/#::~:~:text=One%20study%20found%20Black%20and,benefit%20\(Dee%2C%202004\)](https://ed.unc.edu/2020/09/08/the-power-of-a-black-teacher/#::~:~:text=One%20study%20found%20Black%20and,benefit%20(Dee%2C%202004))

<sup>23</sup> United States Census Bureau. "Census.gov," <https://www.census.gov/>. Accessed 2023.

Asian	3.69%
Hispanic	4.51%
Two or More Races	3.04%

While data reflects a roughly 50/50 split among Black and White residents, this is not what is reflected in schools. 80% of students enrolled in the city's district and charter schools are Black which equals twice the amount of black individuals in city limits, according to [researchgate.net](https://www.researchgate.net). For additional context, [DESE](#) reported in 2018 that 79.8% of students enrolled identified as Black, while only 13% were white. This suggests that white families are choosing to send their kids out of the district or to a private school.

### Target Population & Community Demographics

BELIEVE plans to be geographically located to serve families and students. The chart below indicates the diversity of this area.

Zip Code	Total Population	Black Population	White Population	Total Poverty Rate	Median Household Income
<b>63110</b>	16,992 <sup>24</sup>	25.92%	65.08%	10.1%	\$62,732 (5.2% below 10k/month)
<b>63108</b>	19,842 <sup>25</sup>	23.43%	52.5%	23.7%	\$51,092 (14.4% below 10k/month)
<b>63112</b>	18,068 <sup>26</sup>	63.25%	27.0%	22.0%	\$41,806 (15.6% below 10k/month)

### High Schools in Target Zip Code

According to [ThinkHealthSTL](https://www.thinkhealthstl.org/), there are approximately 3,672 children aged 10-17 in our target zip codes. The chart below shows a breakdown of the student population by zip code.

Zip Code	Reported # of Kids Age 10-14	Reported # of Kids Age 15-17	Reported # of Kids Age 18-20
<b>63110</b>	786	490	782

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.city-data.com/zips/63110.html>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.thinkhealthstl.org/?module=demographicdata&controller=index&action=index&id=24300&sectionId=935>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.city-data.com/zips/63112.html>

<b>63108</b>	475	442	1,696
<b>63112</b>	919	560	585
<b>Total</b>	2180	1492	3,063

While also looking at relevant census data, it was important for the BELIEVE team to look at current enrollment at high schools within the same zip codes or boundaries. The chart below outlines enrollment at neighboring schools.

<b>School Name</b>	<b>Zip Code</b>	<b>2021-2022 Enrollment</b>	<b>2020-2021 Enrollment</b>	<b>2021-2022 FRL %</b>
<a href="#">KIPP St. Louis High School</a>	63103	559	509	100%
<a href="#">Gateway Science High School</a>	63109	356	325	48.2%

### **Target Population: Meeting the Needs**

BELIEVE's mission, curriculum, teaching methods, services, and programming were carefully crafted and designed to meet the needs of the students we serve in both Indianapolis and St. Louis. With the goal of developing students into independent and influential citizens within their local and global communities, BELIEVE has intentionally designed supports and programming that meet the needs of our families and students.

### **Curriculum Design & Selection**

BELIEVE chooses and selects curriculum that is aligned to the Missouri Learning Standards and with BELIEVE's overarching mission and vision for student learning. BELIEVE puts an emphasis on the following learning strategies:

- Double Blocked ELA + Math
  - Our double-blocked ELA sequence in 9th and 10th grade supports students by accelerating their completion of high school course credit requirements as well as remediating any learning gaps from students' K-8 instruction, and creating more flexibility for career certification courses. More information about the double blocked ELA + Math can be found in Section A.4 - *School Calendar & Daily Schedule*.
- Gifted & Talented/Accelerated Track
  - We recognize that while some students enter high school with significant learning gaps, others enter high school ready for greater challenges and having already earned some high school math credit. We support students who are ready for advanced learning by adjusting their schedules to enroll them in dual enrollment courses and higher level high school math courses as early as ninth grade. While many large high schools offer accelerated

paths for gifted and talented students, BSTLA will benefit our community by providing a gifted and talented option within the attentive and close-knit setting of a small school.

- Montessori Principles
  - In the Montessori model, the child directs their own learning pathway. BSTLA mirrors this in the Villages model that each student is a part of from the time they enroll at BSTLA. The various ways that the Villages model supports individualized and student-directed learning can be found in *A.2 - Curriculum & Instruction*.
- Data Informed Instruction
  - *A.3 - Assessing Student Performance* details the ways data will inform decision making at BSTLA so that the needs of students are held paramount. Beyond using data to track student learning and inform curriculum and instruction, students will be empowered to use data to inform their own learning pathways.
- Individualized Learning Pathways
  - Within a school community, the learning needs are as many and varied as the students. Although we believe that all students should have access to instruction that is informed by the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), we also believe that all students should have access to high school learning pathways that best meet their individual needs and goals. At our Indianapolis campus, we take a student-centered approach to scheduling, in alignment with our “Child-Centered” school value. Each students’ schedule is made by hand, and is informed by both qualitative and quantitative data. This process, while potentially deemed inefficient, is how BSTLA fulfills its promise of individualized learning pathways for each student.

## **Expectations and Culture**

BELIEVE’s culture system is unique and truly one of a kind. As it was created and developed by the founding team and refined over the first two years of operation, expectation and culture systems are designed specifically for the students that we serve. Mirroring the standard corporate ladder, the Level Up System (LUS), was designed to provide students with real-world expectations and practices so they are prepared for life after college. The LUS was crafted to help students develop autonomy and agency so they can be self-sufficient, starters, and critical thinkers. This system, or the privileges accessed through it, are common in affluent neighborhoods and districts; however, not in black and brown communities. **BELIEVE is changing that.**

## **Village Model**

The Village Model is the first Tier 1 step to proactively approaching potential culture issues. As a BELIEVE student, students are placed into a Village with 10-15 other same-grade students who together for all four years of high school. The Village serves as a family, at school. They keep students accountable, provide support when needed, and are opportunities to meet friends in high school. Through the Village program, students have

the opportunity to build a tight knit relationship with their Village Leader and peers so they have someone to lean on throughout the year. Additionally, the Village Leader helps provide weekly support and check-ins with the student to eliminate any potential issues—missing working, absences, poor grades etc.

### **Social Emotional Learning**

In order to be whole, contributing members of society, it's imperative that students are prepared and supported holistically. With that, BELIEVE is proud to offer a variety of social emotional learning services and supports for students and staff, for free. Students have access to free therapy and counseling services at BELIEVE and/or free life coaching through OpenSeat. We've found that these efforts lead to a more calm, peaceful, and safe environment for students so they can focus on the things that matter most— education and relationships with friends, classmates, and teachers while preparing for their future.

### **Investing in Staff and Teachers**

Without strong and experienced educators, our school model would not be possible. The quality of teachers is one of the most important components to a successful school. BELIEVE Circle City has experienced this with a 100% retention rate of staff from year 1 to year 2 and 89% returning from year 2 to year 3. To support teachers, BELIEVE offers a variety of intentional programming and services:

- Competitive Benefits Packages
- Strategic Monthly Vacations
- Early dismissal one Friday a month
- Quarterly Data Days
- Robust and Weekly Professional Development

### **College, Community, and Career Programming**

A central piece to our model, College, Community, and Career has its own block every week. Through partnerships with local colleges and universities, BELIEVE will offer early college and career programming to its students through various partners. Fridays at BELIEVE are known as Freedom Friday. Fridays are broken into three blocks:

- **A Block:** A Block is the time for students to complete courses in practical and fine arts, PE/Health, Personal Finance and more. Courses during this time are required as part of the Missouri Learning Plan and are from 8am-10am every Friday.
- **B Block:** B Block is a one hour block of time every Friday for students to engage in social emotional learning activities, personal growth projects, and future planning. During this time students work on self-identification activities, digital portfolios, and college and career research.
- **C Block:** C Block is a two hour block every Friday where students participate in activities related to College, Community, and Career. Activities include: career panels, college tours, community service projects, job shadowing, and more.

Freedom Fridays are an integral part of our model as they expose students to programming

and opportunities that are otherwise unavailable or inaccessible. These programs and opportunities further set students up for a successful transition to college and career.

### **Family-First Design**

The BELIEVE team understands the importance of having a strong relationship between school, parent/family, and student. All stakeholders must be aligned and working towards the same goal in order for the student to be successful and supported. With this in mind, we created the Village model that serves as the family-like system at school for students. They are paired with a group of same gender students and a Village leader who they spend all four years of high school with. This group of students operates as a unit and meets twice per day. They are able to support each other, help with homework, study for exams, or serve as accountability buddies. With the Village model, our Purpose Pathway program was created. Purpose Pathway meetings happen 2-4 times per year depending on the students' progress. During these meetings the Village leader, parent/guardian, and student meet to review the quarter, behavior records, set goals, and discuss other important issues or barriers the student might be facing at home or school. We've found that these systems help families feel informed and that someone is looking out for their student at school with our overall parent satisfaction score as a 2.73 out of 3.0.

### **High Risk Student Populations**

As defined in [RSMo 160.405](#), a "high risk" student as follows: "A student is one who is at least one year behind in satisfactory completion of course work or obtaining high school credits for graduation, has dropped out of school, is at risk of dropping out of school, needs drug and alcohol treatment, has severe behavioral problems, has been suspended from school three or more times, has a history of severe truancy, is a pregnant or parenting teen, has been referred for enrollment by the judicial system, is exiting incarceration, is a refugee, is homeless or has been homeless sometime within the preceding six months, has been referred by an area school district for enrollment in an alternative program, or qualifies as high risk under department of elementary and secondary education guidelines."

During the enrollment process, BELIEVE provides the opportunity for families to identify and disclose any pertinent information. This information is sometimes also identified when the school collects the students' previous records and transcripts from their previous school or during the purpose pathway meeting. It is required that a full transcript, grade report, behavior report, and medical records are received by BELIEVE from the receiving school before the student starts classes. When information is identified, the proper school based personnel are identified to ensure the students' file is updated and that they are receiving adequate and proper services. Additionally, all students will partake in initial screeners through [OpenSeat](#), where licensed Life Coaches conduct intensive interviews. If the coach feels the student could potentially be "at-risk" or benefit from additional services, they have the ability to recommend the student for additional counseling and therapy services. At BELIEVE, we meet the needs of "high risk" students in the following



ways:

## **Services**

Alongside strong academic support, BELIEVE's afterschool programs and extracurricular offerings provide at-risk students the opportunity to find joy, safety, and purpose in their free time. While "high risk" students typically face more barriers, challenges, and stress than most students, it's important for these students to find a balance and escape between some of the stressors, challenges and academics. Through intentional planning, "at-risk" students have the opportunity to participate in a club or activity once per week during 7th period. Additionally, BELIEVE plans to offer a variety of sports and clubs depending on student interest and involvement. These will serve as safe and consistent outlets for students to be involved with that keep them engaged and in-school.

Additionally, if the "high risk" student is classified as Title I, they will have access to our robust Title I service offerings. Like at BELIEVE Circle City High School, BELIEVE STL Academy will offer a Title I Resource space for students to request necessary learning materials, supplies, books, hygiene products, uniform pieces etc. While "at risk" students face so many challenges and barriers, access to necessary resources and supplies should not be part of the stress. The Dean of Operations (DOO) serves as the Title I coordinator ensuring only Title I students have access to these resources and are tracked accordingly.

If it is identified that a student is struggling, they may be assigned office hours after school where they can meet with a teacher and a group of students for support. If a student requires more one-on-one assistance, they can request tutoring sessions from their teachers or BELIEVE identifies student ambassadors at the beginning of the second semester each year. These students can also get volunteer hours by supporting their peers with assignments.

At BELIEVE, mental health services, counseling and other support are part of our standard programming and support for all students, especially students who are at-risk. These services are imperative to support students who have experienced trauma or impacting situations at home that might make school more difficult. Additionally, these services provide an outlet for students to share positive experiences or new changes in their lives.

## **Homelessness or Migrancy**

Additionally, BELIEVE will enact policies to assure full compliance with McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act made applicable under [RSMo 167.020.1](#) and the Missouri State Plan for Homeless Children and Youth. As in Indianapolis, the DOO, will serve as the McKinney-Vento Liaison who is responsible for tracking and coordinating efforts on behalf of students and families. BELIEVE Schools, Inc also has a McKinney-Vento guidebook that ensures compliance at all levels throughout the school year. This handbook will be implemented at BELIEVE STL Academy. The guidebook can be found in Appendix A.4.3.

## A.6 - Special Student Populations

### Commitment to Learners

BELIEVE Schools is deeply committed to meeting the needs of diverse learners so that all students are set up for success in their post secondary endeavors and beyond. At BELIEVE we know that all students are capable of success academically, socially, and emotionally when provided with appropriate support. Our academic and cultural programming is designed to meet the needs of all students from all backgrounds including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, gifted and talented students, and students who may have previously struggled to achieve academic success in their K-8 experiences. At BELIEVE, our priority is to provide a free and appropriate public education to all students who enter our doors. Our low teacher to student ratio will allow individualized instruction and support for students to meet the challenge of our academically rigorous content and provide adequate social support for students to feel seen, heard, and valued. BELIEVE is committed to serving diverse learners in the least restrictive environment, suitable to their specific needs. Special education services will be provided to identified students in accordance with state and federal law and BELIEVE has systems in place to support the identification of students with disabilities at the high school level.

### Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) + Response to Interventions (RTI)

MTSS is an integrated, multi-tiered system of instruction, assessment, and intervention designed to meet the 23 achievement and behavioral needs of all learners. It is a framework designed to ensure high-quality instruction. The MTSS framework aligns to the Missouri Continuous School Improvement Process. The essential components to MTSS include: Instruction and Intervention, Data and Assessment, Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices, Problem-Solving, and Stakeholder/Family Involvement.

<b>BELIEVE Schools, MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Supports) Process</b> <i>Each RTI Team will maintain a google doc of all of its students in the MTSS process. Teachers will use a google form to document strategies used with students. They will also maintain a portfolio of student work to demonstrate student progress.</i>	
Steps	Supports
<b>Tier 1</b> All students receive high-quality, scientifically based instruction differentiated to meet their needs and are assessed periodically to identify gifted and struggling learners who need additional support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RTI Team Support (general education teacher, social worker, special educator, transition specialist, family)</li> <li>• Research-based curricula</li> <li>• Instruction in the general education classroom</li> <li>• 500 minutes of ELA</li> <li>• 225 minutes of Math</li> <li>• 225 minutes of STEM</li> <li>• Reteach weekly</li> <li>• Monitoring and charting of student progress.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic, interim, curricula, portfolio and summative assessments</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tier 2</b> Tier 2 consists of academic interventions, small group instruction, and other supports that are aligned to the core curriculum. It is designed to help students who need support in addition to the instruction/intervention they receive in Tier 1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RTI Team Support (academic counselor, social worker, special educator, transition specialist, family)</li> <li>• Research-based curricula</li> <li>• Instruction in the general education classroom</li> <li>• 500 minutes of ELA</li> <li>• 225 minutes of Math</li> <li>• 225 minutes of STEM</li> <li>• Reteach weekly</li> <li>• Targeted interventions</li> <li>• Small groups are provided with an increased level of intensity with classroom teachers weekly.</li> <li>• Monitoring and charting of student progress.</li> <li>• Diagnostic, interim, curricula, and summative assessments</li> <li>• If the student meets the expectations of Tier 2, the classroom teachers will continue paying close attention to the student's progress to make sure that the gains are maintained and progress remains steady.</li> <li>• When a student is not successful at the Tier 2 level of intervention, the teacher meets with the RTI Team and parents to decide what is best for the student and to plan next steps.</li> <li>• Depending on the student, the Tier 2 level of intervention and support will be adjusted for: change in small group session length, frequency of small group sessions, group size, or type of curriculum.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tier 3</b> Tier 3 is a more targeted intervention administered by a special educator guided by individualized and recursive data. This is provided to students who need intensive and deeply individualized help in addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RTI Team Support (academic counselor, social worker, special educator, transition specialist, family)</li> <li>• Research-based curricula</li> <li>• Instruction in the general education classroom</li> <li>• 500 minutes of ELA</li> <li>• 225 minutes of Math</li> <li>• 225 minutes of STEM</li> <li>• Reteach weekly</li> <li>• Monitoring and charting of student progress to help the teachers decide if changes in instruction are needed.</li> <li>• Progress monitoring tells us if the student is meeting his or her established goal.</li> <li>• School staff will have a chart of progress up-to-date and close-at-hand.</li> <li>• Diagnostic, interim, curricula, and summative</li> </ul>

	<p>assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualized Interventions</li> <li>• Small groups are provided with an increased level of intensity with special educators typically working with only a small group of three to five students.</li> <li>• The length of each instructional session may be increased at this level.</li> <li>• Increased frequency of sessions with special educator</li> <li>• When the student is successful at Tier 3, RTI Team members, parents, and the student will decide the best way to maintain success: to continue the intense instruction or to have the child receive other interventions.</li> <li>• Individual student instruction plan</li> <li>• If students are not successful in Tier 3, information about a student's response to instruction and progress during each instructional level will be helpful in the process of determining whether the student has a learning disability along with testing.</li> </ul>
--	---

## Students with Disabilities

BELIEVE is dedicated to providing all students with a high-quality education. It is the responsibility of the Principal and Special Education Coordinator to ensure that Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Education for All Handicapped Students Act of 1975 and all special education statutes outlined in [RSMo 160.405.1\(16\)](#) and [RSMo 162.670-995](#) will be followed with fidelity. It is imperative that the Special Education team and school leaders adhere to state and federal compliance mandates. The Special Education team, in conjunction with school leaders, will be charged with guaranteeing all relevant prior records are received and that move-in and annual case conference reviews are held in accordance with the timeline outlined in the Missouri State Plan for Special Education, Part B . Section 504 Plans and IEPs of newly enrolled scholars will be

examined to determine what services the scholars require, and to create a plan of action for BELIEVE to meet these needs. If additional resources are needed beyond those that BELIEVE currently offers, BELIEVE will seek outside providers to ensure the school can provide the full continuum of services needed.

The school will educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, with their non-special education peers, to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's IEP. Specifically, BELIEVE will:

- Develop an Acceleration Team from the time of opening, including a special Education Coordinator (who will coordinate all annual reviews for each student's IEP and ensure that parents are regularly informed of their child's progress) and

certified special education teachers, as well as consult with speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, and counselors who can be contracted on an as-needed basis.

- Use the MTSS process to ascertain early identification of students to effectively address their needs. Students are identified based on diagnostic assessments at the beginning of the year, interim assessments throughout the year, content area unit summative assessments, or low performance on summative assessments. Teachers may additionally identify a student based on classroom performance and/or parent report. Teachers, along with Acceleration Team Members, will develop individual intervention plans that, along with students' IEPs, ensure that students are on track to achieve at or above grade level and to meet or exceed the school's accountability goals.
- Provide rigorous training and coaching to ensure general classroom teachers are knowledgeable about the needs of students with disabilities, are informed of their responsibilities for particular students, receive the support they may require to implement a student's program, and implement any necessary modifications or accommodations in their classes. Weekly data meetings with instructional coaches and special education coaches will allow faculty to look specifically at student data and effectively develop targeted intervention plans.
- Provide space and develop a schedule that allows students to receive needed services outside of the classroom while minimizing disruption to their regular instruction.
- Inform parents/guardians of their child's progress on a regular basis through telephone calls, notes home, personal visits, and meetings, as well as a written report at least four times annually.
- Make every effort to obtain students' previous school records within a reasonable timeframe. All special education records and files will be maintained in the Lumen Touch's Bright SPED portal for IEPs. Using this secure system will allow for quicker access to student records, collaboration with the entire case conference team and current updates on pertinent information and legislation, and monitoring of records and IEPs by school staff and contracted consultants to ensure compliance and progress for all students receiving special education services.
- Review IEPs and Section 504 Plans of incoming students upon enrollment with the goal of determining what services can reasonably be provided using school resources and what will need to be provided via contract with an external provider. The special education coordinator will hold a move-in case conference within 10 school days, which will include the special education coordinator, parents/guardians, general education teacher, and the Principal.
- Closely monitor assessment data, Milestone Tracker, and grades to inform the Purpose Plan and ensure all students are able to realize their goals.

To meet the needs of our students with IEPs, we will have a Special Education Coordinator who will provide professional resources and development to all teachers to ensure we are

meeting the needs of those students who have IEPs as well as those who are struggling to meet growth goals.

BELIEVE desires to support a full spectrum of services to meet the needs of its scholars and recognizes that there are providers that offer areas of specialty. BELIEVE will contract out for several services such as Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy. We plan to partner with [Miriam School and Learning Center](#). We are in the early stages of conversations as we prepare for our student population. These outside services will be overseen by the Principal and the Special Education Coordinator. Special education staff will be expected to monitor and adhere to all respective timelines outlined in Missouri IEPs and communicate weekly with the administrative team to ensure progress is being made on all educational goals.

BELIEVE will employ a full-time social worker. In order to meet the evolving social and emotional needs of our students, we feel it is necessary to have a full-time team member to work with our students in this capacity. This role will also provide an extra expert to support our students as an Acceleration Team Member while also serving as an extra layer of home-school support.

BELIEVE will also provide a space for needed services outside of the classroom. BELIEVE anticipates that scholars with disabilities will need to be supported by the special education staff through both inclusion and resource services; however, the goal is to ensure scholars receive instruction in the least restrictive environment for the maximum period of time as determined by their IEPs.

Due to the fact that general education teachers will share common planning time with special education staff members (embedded in the weekly schedule), special education teachers will be available to support the general education teacher in regard to planning, data analysis, and providing the necessary accommodations and modifications required to address the needs of each individual scholar. Quarterly, along with the report card, the Teacher of Record (TOR) will also be required to send home Progress Monitoring Data. The Acceleration Team will also be required to collaborate with the Academic Counselor to ensure proper testing and instructional accommodations are given and followed with fidelity.

### **English Learners**

Due to the target population, BELIEVE anticipates that language barriers will exist for some students and families who enroll at BSTLA. BELIEVE firmly believes that language should not be a barrier for accessing any of our services/experiences. There is also a strong and welcomed possibility that we will attract other cultures, ethnicities, and races. At BSTLA, English Language Learners will be identified through a DESE approved Language Use

Survey (LUS) which will be included in their incoming enrollment paperwork<sup>27</sup>. This survey includes three tiers of questions meant to understand more about the student's linguistic and educational background.

Every student identified as a potential EL by the LUS will be screened within the first 30 calendar days after enrollment. BSTLA will use WIDA's Online Screener for students in 9th grade through 12th grade. All screeners will be administered by a trained employee. The screener will produce a series of scores by domain and an overall English language proficiency (ELP) score.

### **Eligibility Criteria for ELD Services**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>The Student IS ELIGIBLE for ELD Services if they:</b>	<b>The Student is NOT ELIGIBLE for Services if they:</b>
9th Grade through 12th Grade	Has an overall composite proficiency level of 4.5 or below	Has an overall composite proficiency level of 5.0 or higher.

If the student is eligible, the student will be placed in BELIEVE's Language Instruction Program and the parents or guardians will be notified in a language they can understand. BELIEVE will use DESE's recommended notification form. There are occasions where parents may opt-out or reuse the services provided by BELIEVE. Once returned, the notification form will be kept in the student's permanent file. In addition, BELIEVE will accurately code the students in the Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS).

If the student qualifies for services, the ESL Coordinator will work with a team (general education teacher and family) to create an Individual Learning Plan to provide the support needed. The ESL Coordinator will have access to ongoing professional development to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students. It will be expected that the ESL coordinator facilitates regular professional development for teachers to encourage best practices. BSTLA will also provide translators for all family meetings to ensure that the family is fully capable of being involved in determining the support that will be provided to their child. The family will be provided with a report, in their native language, once it is finalized. Individualized Learning Plans will include instruction in the following areas: reading, writing, comprehension, listening, and speaking and will be aligned to Missouri Learning Standards. This instruction may be delivered using scaffolds (translated classwork, teacher provided notes, translated audio books, etc.) or by small group pull out. The ESL coordinator will also facilitate any necessary testing accommodations.

---

<sup>27</sup> English Language Development | Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. "Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, <https://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/curriculum/english-language-development>. Accessed 2023.

BELIEVE will follow guidance from DESE, outlined in the chart below, when considering reclassification.

<b>Access Scores</b>	<b>BELIEVE Action</b>
4.7-6.0	The student must be exited barring additional evidence suggesting the student should remain in the Language Instruction Program.
Below 4.7	The student must remain in the Language Instruction Program barring additional evidence that the student is capable of fully participating in a classroom where English is the sole language of instruction.

BELIEVE will monitor EL students who have been exited from the Language Instruction Program for two years and document their progress. They do not receive accommodations, modifications or alternative assessments, and do not take the ACCESS for ELs.

### **Gifted & Talented Students**

At BSTLA, gifted and talented students will flourish. Section [162.675, RSMo](#), defines gifted children as “those children who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth and stimulation could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a standard grade level curriculum.” Academically gifted students will have the opportunity to progress through the academic trajectory at an accelerated rate to the average general education student. In addition, students who score well above grade level and earn a 3.5 GPA or higher in the first semester of their 9th grade year will be allowed to enroll in a dual enrollment course during the second semester of their 9th grade year or summer following 9th grade (at no expense to the family). BSTLA’s model is designed to serve students at all levels. Students who enter BSTLA that have not been previously identified as gifted but are above grade level based on MAP Reading and MAP Math results will be enrolled in Honors Algebra or Geometry for Honors English I for ELA. Additionally, these students will be screened and evaluated pursuant to DESE’s Gifted Program Guidelines.

## **A.7 - School-Specific Goals and Objectives**

At BELIEVE Schools, Inc, we operate with the idea that all students are deserving of a safe, nurturing, and joy-filled learning environment. It is our mission to ensure that every student has access to early college and career readiness to ultimately achieve future independence and success. Through our model and programming, students will develop agency,



autonomy, and acceleration in order to achieve this. However, the journey to achieving this looks different for every student. All students hold different strengths and weaknesses and require unique, individualized approaches to help them in achieving greatness.

As outlined in section A. 1 - Mission, Vision, Philosophy, & Goals, we BELIEVE in providing an enriching, safe, and rigorous learning environment for all students. In order to achieve the results through expectations we set, it's imperative that all students, staff, parents, and community members are aligned on our Educational Philosophy. In order to achieve these goals, we recognize the hard-work, dedication, and commitment it requires of our students and staff. In order for a student to be prepared and successful in the 21st century, a BELIEVE graduate will reflect the following qualities:

- Independent
- Informed and Influential Citizens
- Academically Prepared
- Financially Literate
- Healthy and Whole

In order to achieve our academic goals, BELIEVE must be a well-rounded, safe, and joy-filled community. With that, our goals were crafted to create whole-school greatness. Students and staff cannot achieve academically without adequate support—strong student attendance, family and community engagement, culturally-relevant curriculum and programming, and operational and financial excellence.

The chart below outlines BELIEVE's goals that will be guiding principles as we prepare for launch.

### **School Specific Goals & Measures for Success**

**Goal 1:** By year two Students will achieve 3 points of pre-to-post growth on the Explore (*9th grade*), 3 points of pre-to-post growth on the Plan (*10th grade*), and 3 points of pre-to-post growth on the ACT (*11th grade*).

**Goal 2:** 85% of students enrolled at BELIEVE STL Academy for a three consecutive year period will complete 90% Missouri's 24-credit diploma and [one special endorsement](#) by the end of junior year.

**Goal 3:** 85% of students enrolled in an early college or career program by the beginning of their senior year.

**Goal 4:** By the end of year 4, at least 35% of founding BSTLA students will achieve a rating of proficient or advanced on their EOC assessments for ELA, with <5% of students scoring below

basic. By the end of year 4, at least 50% of founding BSTLA students will achieve a rating of basic, proficient, or advanced on their EOC assessments for Math.

**Goal 5:** For the first three years, BELIEVE STL Academy will maintain at least a 90% ADA.

**Goal 6:** 80% Teachers achieve a rating of “Proficient” or higher on the Charlotte Danielson Teacher Evaluation Rubric at the end of each school year.

**Goal 7:** 85% of Parents and guardians are “satisfied or highly satisfied” with school culture, academics, and leadership through the POSSIP and Kelvin Survey during each academic school year.

**Goal 8:** Each year, for the first four years, 80% of students enrolled at BELIEVE STL Academy will return for the following school year.

**Goal 9:** Within the first three years, BELIEVE STL Academy will demonstrate strong fiscal management by maintaining 60 days unrestricted cash on hand through the first three years.

**Goal 10:** For each year of operation, 90% of board members will attend 90% of the scheduled board meetings.

## Academic Goals

This section outlines the Academic Performance Goals set by the Founding BELIEVE STL Academy Team, pursuant to [RSMo 160.405.1.\(7\)](#) To measure academic success, BELIEVE STL Academy, will assess students on the following:

**Goal 1:** Each year, BSTLA students will average at least 50 points pre-to-post growth on the PSAT 8/9 (9th grade), PSAT 10 (10th grade), and SAT (11th grade).

*Assessment Tool:* The Pre-ACT assessments: Explore, Plan and ACT.

*Rationale:* In order for students to be college-ready, they must improve their ACT scores year over year in order to be eligible for highly selective universities.

**Goal 2:** 85% of students enrolled at BELIEVE STL Academy for a three consecutive year period will complete 90% Missouri's 24-credit diploma and [one special endorsement](#) by the end of junior year.

*Assessment Tool:* Will be measured and tracked via Student Information System and through our Dean of Early College and Career team.

*Rationale:* To live out our model, it's important that students are on track to complete their Missouri 24-credit diploma with special endorsement before they start their senior year.

**Goal 3:** 85% of students enrolled in an early college or career program by the beginning of their senior year.

*Assessment Tool:* Will be measured and tracked via Student Information System and through our Dean of Early College and Career team.

*Rationale:* To live out our model, it's important that students are engaging with rigor and challenging coursework to prepare them for life after high school.

**Goal 4:** By the end of year 4, at least 35% of founding BSTLA students will achieve a rating of proficient or advanced on their EOC assessments for ELA, with <5% of students scoring below basic. By the end of year 4, at least 50% of founding BSTLA students will achieve a rating of basic, proficient, or advanced on their EOC assessments for Math.

*Assessment Tool:* Missouri Assessment Program (MAP)

*Rationale:* The state of Missouri assesses student proficiency based on the MAP. BELIEVE has set performance standards that are rigorous but realistic.

## **School Culture and Environment Goals**

**Goal 5:** For the first three years, BELIEVE STL Academy will maintain at least a 90% Average Daily Attendance (ADA).

*Assessment Tool:* Missouri Assessment Program (MAP)

*Rationale:* Daily attendance and reports to DESE (pursuant to [RSMo 160.415](#)) will use ADA calculation tracked in the student information system (SIS). While not tied to BELIEVE's attendance goal, the school will also report data on the number of students who qualify for FRL, who receive Special Education Services and who are identified as English Language Learners to DESE, as required by [RSMo 160.415](#).

**Goal 6:** 80% Teachers achieve a rating of "Proficient" or higher on the Charlotte Danielson Teacher Evaluation Rubric at the end of each school year.

*Assessment Tool:* "Charlotte Danielson Teacher Evaluation Rubric. Teacher scores will be stored on Whetstone, part of SchoolMint"

*Rationale:* Schools are most powerful and effective, when teachers are strong. In order to achieve academic goals, teachers must be licensed, effective, and consistent.

**Goal 7:** 85% of Parents and guardians are "satisfied or highly satisfied" with school culture, academics, and leadership through the POSSIP and Kelvin Survey during each academic school year.

*Assessment Tool:* POSSIP and Kelvin Survey Systems

*Rationale:* The BELIEVE team feels that it's imperative to receive feedback from parents, who are our most important stakeholders. To measure parent satisfaction and overall happiness, we aim to receive 85% of parents/guardians "satisfied or highly satisfied" with all questions as part of POSSIP and Kelvin Surveys.

**Goal 8:** Each year, for the first four years, 80% of students enrolled at BELIEVE STL Academy will return for the following school year.

*Assessment Tool:* Student Enrollment Data/ SIS

*Rationale:* In order to create a community where students want to come to school every day, they must feel loved, safe, and supported. Student retention data signifies the success and strength of the school's culture.

## **Financial and Governance Goals**

**Goal 9:** Within the first three years, BELIEVE STL Academy will demonstrate strong fiscal management by maintaining 60 days unrestricted cash on hand through the first three years and receive clean financial audits annually.

*Assessment Tool:* Annual Secretary of the Board Report

*Rationale:* The amount of cash on hand determines if a school can pay expenses on time or make payroll. The [National Resource Center on Charter School Finance & Governance](#) recommends schools have 30-60 days of unrestricted cash on hand.

**Goal 10:** For each year of operation, 90% of board members will attend 90% of the scheduled board

meetings.

*Assessment Tool:* Board on Track

*Rationale:* Having an active and engaged board is important to the BELIEVE Network Team. In order for that to be true, BELIEVE board members must be present for meetings.

## **A.8 - School Climate and Culture**

### **BELIEVE School Climate: In Spirit, Ethos, & Norms**

BELIEVE was created with equity at the forefront, and the school's policies on student culture are shared in alignment with [RSMo 160.405.1.\(12\)](#). Without equitable systems, planning, framing, and academics— we cannot live out our divine mission of ensuring all students leave BELIEVE independent and informed citizens within their community. BELIEVE students will be model citizens in our school, our community, and our world. Students will engage with a series of innovative activities, courses, and texts that will allow them to evolve into the best version of themselves. By enrolling students from all over St. Louis City, we will be charged with setting high expectations, providing a system of accountability, and nurturing our students to develop the skills to be conscious and contributing members of society.

Our students should embody self-respect, self-regulation, and be self-starters. We expect BELIEVE students to be exceptional and represent themselves, their school, and their community well in all settings. We plan to do this by creating a micro-society environment that is governed by a student tribunal council, restorative practices, real-life consequences, and practical behavioral expectations. In addition, the BELIEVE experience will be infused with love and support from a nurturing staff. We plan to grow our students by providing bounded autonomy. All students will start their high school career with a structured accountability system. However, once students demonstrate and develop requisite skills, they will slowly be released to a more autonomous structure. BELIEVE will develop and use a Milestone Tracker to assess the mindsets and behaviors that research has deemed crucial to success in life. With clear and high expectations, it's been proven students will rise quickly and be afforded all the same privileges of their more affluent counterparts.

BELIEVE will share with parents and students a high level overview of the model during student orientation over the summer. We've found it's important for both students and parents to have equal buy-in and understanding of the system. Our plan is based on models with years of implementation that have allowed students the freedom to leave campus, explore their community, and manage a college-like schedule during their high school years. Prestigious schools like the University of Chicago Lab School, where our former President Barack Obama's children attended, have these structures built in so that students develop the maturity, responsibility, and focus needed to be successful in life. This school boasts over a 1400 mean composite on the SAT, a score that is in line with other independent schools that <sup>14</sup> utilize similar structures (Attachment 9). Historically, these models haven't been designed to serve underserved and underrepresented black and brown

students, but we believe that all students should have access to this type of environment. The BELIEVE Schools, Inc autonomy structure is the first of its kind in St. Louis, but we hope that it will not be the last as we continue to grow and expand.

We also aim to develop students who are creative and critical thinkers, lifelong learners, culturally competent citizens, well-rounded individuals, and collaborative team players. We believe that educators must explicitly teach social-emotional and 21st century skills to our students and give them opportunities to practice these skills. We also know the value that educators play in our students' trajectory, and believe that educators need to continually develop so they can better support our students. Most importantly, we feel that learning should be fun, and we seek to instill a true love of learning in each of our students that will last well beyond their elementary and high school years.

These beliefs led us to redefine what school culture and discipline systems look like. BELIEVE crafted its own and has successfully launched and implemented the systems at BELIEVE Circle City High School in Indianapolis.

### **Village Model**

Each staff member will be responsible for 10-15 students in a group called Village. The Village will serve as the home-school liaison. The dynamics of the Village will be a family-like atmosphere that will provide a support system for BELIEVE students. This group will share goals (academic and personal), serve as accountability partners, and tutor each other when needed. The curriculum during this time will focus on identity, community, college, and career exploration. The group will bond during an initial camping trip, which will include a variety of team-building activities. During the year, they will actively participate in community service, engage in physical fitness activities, and take career exploration trips on Fridays. This group will meet daily, and will be a key factor in the student experience at BELIEVE STL Academy.

BELIEVE students will be expected to reach certain milestones regularly in order to increase their levels of autonomy. These milestones will be clearly defined at the beginning of every year through Exploration Plan Meetings, Vision Planning, and Purpose Path Meetings. We expect parents to support and engage in the process of reviewing milestones to support their students' progress. As students progress through the Milestone Tracker they will be allowed more freedom during the day and in their Friday afternoon scheduling. This increased autonomy will be approved by all stakeholders, and clear expectations will be set in order to retain it. Each milestone will comprise smaller skills that should be developed throughout each quarter.

### **BELIEVE Milestone Tracker**

Collaboration				
Date	Standard	Emerging	Approaching	Mastery
	9-10.SE.3: Able to listen to others' ideas and respect different ways of being and doing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.SE.5: Able to show care for people like them and people different from them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.SE.7: Able to approach conflict in collaborative manner and work toward solutions using a strength based lens that respects individual or cultural differences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Aptitude Awareness				
Date	Standard	Emerging	Approaching	Mastery
	9-10.M.1: Seek and participate in challenging learning activities related to career goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.LS.4: Demonstrate how to conduct a job search utilizing current search engines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Regulation				
Date	Standard	Emerging	Approaching	Mastery
	9-10.WE.1: Demonstrate control over self while considering the future impact of choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Self Discipline				
Date	Standard	Emerging	Approaching	Mastery
	9-10.WE.1: Demonstrate control over self while considering the future impact of choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.SE.7: Able to approach conflict in collaborative manner and work toward solutions using a strength based lens that respects individual or cultural differences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Integrity				
Date	Standard	Emerging	Approaching	Mastery
	9-10.SE.1: Develop awareness of personal safety skills and the consequences of irresponsible behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.WE.6: Apply ethical decision making skills to establish and maintain responsible personal and professional relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Attention to Detail				
Date	Standard	Emerging	Approaching	Mastery
	9-10.LS.9: Complete activities and assignments thoroughly and accurately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Initiative				
Date	Standard	Emerging	Approaching	Mastery
	9-10.WE.2: Complete tasks or activities with minimal prompting and guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.WE.3: Utilize self-efficacy to plan and achieve goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.SE.2: Come to class prepared to learn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Adaptability				
Date	Standard	Emerging	Approaching	Mastery
	9-10.M.2: Able to view feedback as data that helps the learning process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.M.3: Demonstrate awareness of strengths and weaknesses while accepting constructive criticism from others to improve results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.WE.5: Able to exercise flexibility in responding to change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Time Management & Organization				
Date	Standard	Emerging	Approaching	Mastery
	9-10.WE.1: Demonstrate control over self while considering the future impact of choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.WE.2: Complete tasks or activities with minimal prompting and guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.WE.3: Utilize self-efficacy to plan and achieve goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9-10.WE.4: Demonstrate organizational skills while completing project based learning experiences and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## BELIEVE Code of Ethics

BELIEVE's Code of Ethics is posted in every classroom and open space in our buildings. It's important for all BELIEVE Community members to know, abide, and live out our core values. Core Values are shared with staff at the kick-off of every summer PD. Without staff buy-in, understanding, and expectation setting, it's impossible to implement with students. Our Core Values guide every decision made on behalf of BELIEVE. In support, during all team and staff meetings, our Core Values provide a frame of reference to ensure our thinking, and perspective are aligned with our mission and goal as a collective.



### **Philosophy on Student Behavior and Level Up System**

In order to be independent and contributing members of society, students must be taught standard societal and behavioral norms. With that, we cannot expect students to be policed or treated without autonomy and personal decision making. After many years in networks that contributed to the school to prison pipeline, BELIEVE Founders decided to create their own Culture System called the Level Up System (LUS). The LUS will be broken down into Tiers and be developmentally and culturally appropriate for our students. The Tiers will be leveled every year students are with us based on a gradual release of autonomy and responsibility. Students will need to demonstrate mastery of mindsets and behaviors in the same way that they will have to master academic standards. The LUS will include soft skills that have been identified for our students to be successful in life. BSTLA students will be expected to reach certain Milestones regularly in order to increase their levels of autonomy. These Milestones will be clearly defined at the beginning of every year through Purpose Pathway Plan Meetings and Vision Planning. We expect parents and guardians to support and engage in the process of reviewing Milestones to support their students' progress. As students progress through the Milestone Tracker they will be allowed more freedom during the day and in their Friday afternoon scheduling. This increased autonomy will be approved by all stakeholders, and clear expectations will be set in order to retain it. Each Milestone will comprise smaller skills that should be developed throughout the quarter. These skills will add up to the Milestone and the increased autonomy that accompanies it. Students with disabilities who initially struggle with mastering all skills outlined within the Level Up System will be provided with custom goals outlined in their IEPs towards mastery of their milestones. When necessary, customized behavior plans will



be created to adjust the Level Up System to the specific needs of a student. More information about the Level Up System can be found in Appendix A.8.1.

BSTLA will have a clear set of expectations and norms in the school. Our system will be based on dynamics similar to those present in a code of conduct. We will not follow a traditional discipline system. Our goal is to develop autonomous young adults that have agency in their life outcomes. BSTLA will develop these skills by setting high expectations and holding students accountable to meeting their goals. Parents will be intimately involved in the development of their student's plan, and they will have 24-hour access to their academic and behavioral performance via SchoolRunner. They will also be notified weekly of student progress and quarterly during in-person meetings.

STUDENT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT				
Level	Objective	Key Expectations	Milestone Tracker	Implications
<b>Tier 1</b>	Expectation setting to build Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calm classrooms</li> <li>• Quiet hallways</li> <li>• Positive flex spaces (including lunch)</li> <li>• Soft skill development</li> </ul>	Weekly points calculation	In-school access (Privileges)
<b>Tier 2</b>	Community Development needed for Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soft skill mastery</li> <li>• Evolved social skills</li> <li>• Co-created norms/expectations</li> </ul>	Average monthly points calculation	In-school & out-of-school access (privileges)
<b>Tier 3</b>	Full Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are self-governed by societal norms</li> </ul>	No calculations	Open Campus

BTSLA's LUS will be governed by a student tribunal and restorative justice practices. In the event that expectations are not met, logical consequences similar to those in the real world will be given. For example, if a student is constantly disruptive in class, they will be expected to learn independently until they are ready to respect the classroom environment. In addition, if a student is never disruptive in the classroom, then they can earn the autonomy to choose their preferred work style (*with music, with a group, independently in flex space, etc.*). The goal is that all students ultimately meet expectations. The goal is that milestones phase out by the end of 10th grade. Below you will find a full breakdown of the tiered system and the privileges at each level that a student achieves.

Level Up Status	Privileges to Unlock
<b>BELIEVER in Training</b> <i>Period 5 Weeks</i>  <i>All Freshmen and new to BELIEVE students start the year as a Believer in Training.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cell Phone at Lunch &amp; <i>Transitions</i></li> </ul>

<p>Period: (Week 2- Week 7)</p>	
<p><b>Believer</b></p> <p><b>Agency:</b> Earn Employability Standards</p> <p><b>Autonomy:</b> No More Than 6 Points in Current Period</p> <p><b>Acceleration:</b> Not Failing any Classes and Completed All Diagnostic Testing</p> <p>Period: (Week 8 - Week 13) Week 8 Friday Level Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Above privileges</b></li> <li>● Listen to Music on ChromeBook (Acceleration Block and CTE)</li> <li>● Lit Lunch Friday VS Friday Acceleration Block for BELIEVER in Training (Academic Support)-1 Hour</li> </ul>
<p><b>Associate Believer (Gray Lanyard)</b></p> <p><b>Agency:</b> Earn Employability Standards</p> <p><b>Autonomy:</b> No More Than 5 Points in Current Period</p> <p><b>Acceleration:</b> 2.3 GPA</p> <p>Period: (Week 14 - Week 20) Week 14 Friday Level Up Day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>All above privileges</b></li> <li>● Lunch in Lounge/Outside/Rotunda/Foyers</li> <li>● Gray Believe T-Shirt</li> <li>● Sony Headphones</li> <li>● First Friday (Food Truck &amp; Jean Day w/Believe Gear)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lead Believer (Black Lanyard)</b></p> <p><b>Agency:</b> Earn Employability Standards</p> <p><b>Autonomy:</b> No More Than 4 Points in Current Period</p> <p><b>Acceleration:</b> 2.5 GPA</p> <p>Period: (Week 21 - Week 26) Week 21 Friday Level Up Day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>All above privileges</b></li> <li>● Rotunda During Acceleration Block (C's and above)</li> <li>● AirPods or Personal Headphones</li> <li>● Couch for Flex Seating</li> <li>● Bi-Weekly Jean Day w/Believe Gear (Friday)</li> <li>● Homework Pass for 1 Class</li> </ul>
<p><b>Executive Believer (Purple Lanyard)</b></p> <p><b>Agency:</b> Earn Employability Standards</p> <p><b>Autonomy:</b> No More Than 2 Points in Current Period</p> <p><b>Acceleration:</b> (TBD )2.75 GPA &amp; Enrolled in Dual Enrollment or Dual Certification Program</p> <p>Period: (Week 27 - Week 32) Week 27 Friday Level Up Day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>All above privileges</b></li> <li>● Jeans w/ BELIEVE Top (Friday)</li> <li>● Open Campus (Lunch Only)</li> <li>● Open Acceleration Block-Rotunda, Foyer, Gym</li> <li>● Grubhub/DoorDash/ClusterTruck/UberEats</li> <li>● Vacation Day (one Homework Pass per class given at the beginning of each quarter)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Senior Executive Believer in Training-Freshmen only and Transfer (Gold Lanyard)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>All above privileges</b></li> <li>● Student Lounge or Other Flex Spaces During Independent Work Time</li> </ul>

<p><b>Agency:</b> Earn Employability Standards</p> <p><b>Autonomy:</b> No Points</p> <p><b>Acceleration:</b> TBD 3.0 GPA</p> <p>Period: (Week 33 - Week 38) Week 33 Friday Level Up End of 9th Grade First 5 Weeks of 10th Grade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Campus <b>for Dual Enrollment students</b></li> <li>• Senior Executive Outings (Top Golf, Dave &amp; Busters etc) once per quarter</li> <li>• No Uniform (Friday)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Senior Executive Believer (Gold Lanyard)</b></p> <p><b>Agency:</b> Earn Employability Standards</p> <p><b>Autonomy:</b> No Points</p> <p><b>Acceleration:</b> TBD 3.0 GPA</p> <p>Period: (Week 33 - Week 38) Week 33 Friday Level Up End of 9th Grade First 5 Weeks of 10th Grade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All above privileges</b></li> <li>• Student Lounge or Other Flex Spaces During Independent Work Time</li> <li>• Open Campus</li> <li>• Senior Executive Outings (Top Golf, Dave &amp; Busters etc)</li> <li>• No Uniform</li> </ul>

### Upperclassmen Grade Status

Students should have more privileges as they enter the 10th Grade. These privileges include Open Campus, Dress Code Vs. Uniform, and the expectations of a Young Professional. **Any 10th Grader or above that earns 20 Points or more at any time during the first semester, goes back to BELIEVER in Training.**

<b>First 7 Weeks W/ No Points</b>	Full Uniform 10th Graders with no points can have free bottoms (no leggings or biker shorts).
<b>Level Up 1x</b>	Uniform Shirt Only with Dress Code Compliant Bottoms
<b>Level Up 2x</b>	No official uniform (Must be compliant with school dress code in Student Handbook) On Friday's all students must be in school issued polo with Dress Code compliant bottoms.

### When A Student Struggles with Culture System

BELIEVE recognizes that every system does not meet the needs of all children. This can be attributed to the lack of expectations from a previous school or at home. Additionally, it could be tied to an IEP or ILP. Whatever the case may be, the Level Up System is designed not to permanently penalize students. The goal is for them to acknowledge their mistakes or poor choices and find a better way to cope, manage, or react next time. This process takes time. There is no one size fits all for all students. At BELIEVE Circle City High School, we've gotten super creative with ways to help students understand there are real-life consequences for actions without sending them home or suspending them every time they break the Code of Ethics.

## Character Academy

If a student is violating the Code of Ethics, teachers or adults may award them points. Once a student earns 10 points, or performs an egregious action, a Character Academy is assigned. Similar to detention, the student has to give up their lunch block. Instead of just spending this time scrolling on their phone or doing nothing at all— the student is provided a topic (that usually aligns with the overarching issues the student is struggling with) by the Dean of Culture. The student is then required to do research and write an essay or report on the topic. For example, if a student is found vaping in the bathroom, they will have to research the side effects of vape and the impacts on your body. They then have to tie this to their own health history or family history.

## Student Tribunal

At the end of each 5 weeks after level up, students have the opportunity to appeal points they were given that may have inhibited them from leveling up. The student tribunal is made up of a diverse, randomly-selected group of students (who don't typically have a history of egregious behaviors), who sit on a panel and hear from the student attempting to revoke points or their Level Up Status. After the student gives their argument the Student Tribunal may ask questions for clarification. They then are given time to deliberate and will provide final suggestions to the Principal. The goal of this system is to mirror the Judicial System so students have an understanding of how your actions and brand can be decided by others when something goes wrong.

## Town Hall

One of the weekly engagements with students that are key to our culture model is Town Hall. Town Hall is a weekly whole school initiative that occurs during B Lunch every Wednesday. The format varies depending on the week. This time serves as an opportunity for Leadership Team members and participating teachers to lead sessions with students in whole school formats, by grade level, or student-identified gender on important topics like social justice, healthy relationships, managing emotions, responsible decision making, college and career planning, advocacy, newsworthy topics, and more. BELIEVE has created its own model and framework for these which can be viewed below. A sample of Semester I can be found below.

	Week #1	Week #2	Week #3	Week #4
<b>August</b>		BELIEVE Culture Systems, Code of Ethics,& More	All About Agency	All About Autonomy
<b>September</b>	All About Autonomy	In The News: Discuss Current Topics	Social Justice: What is it?	How to Advocate
<b>October</b>	Healthy Relationship: Friendships	Healthy Relationship: Let's Talk Love	Healthy Relationship: Family	Healthy Relationship Reflection

<b>November</b>	Mindfulness: How to Practice Mindfulness	Dealing with Stress	Thanksgiving Break	Whole School Yoga
<b>December</b>	In The News: Discuss Current Topics	Whole School Meditation: Finals Prep	Winter Break	Winter Break

- **Lightning Lunch:** Lightning Lunch is a more intimate version of Town Hall where students are separated by grade level. Topics may differ depending on the time of the year or trends happening in the school.
- **Gender-Specific:** Students are sometimes broken into gender specific groups for important conversations that might be uncomfortable or awkward in a whole school format. As an inclusive environment, BELIEVE allows students to select the group that they identify with.

## Engagement with Stakeholders

As outlined in our Core Values, BELIEVE engages with all stakeholders frequently to ensure we are inclusive of our entire school community and are embodying the voice and thoughts of all. Through our partnership with [Kelvin](#) and [POSSIP](#), BELIEVE engages with parents, students, and staff frequently throughout the year. These surveys are reviewed in detail by the leadership team for feedback and implementation where necessary.

### Students

"Safe Space" is one of BELIEVE's Code of Ethics. Students must feel safe at school.

["Students who feel safe at school tend to have better emotional health and are less likely to engage in risky behaviors."](#)<sup>28</sup> That sense of safety contributes to an overall feeling of connection." At BELIEVE, we proactively implement strategies and initiatives for students to feel safe, supported, and loved. We offer after school office hours and built in acceleration blocks so students have time for peer-tutoring or opportunity for extra support from a teacher. All students have access to free, on-site or virtual, therapy and counseling services and life coaching. At BELIEVE Circle City Indianapolis, we have a partnership with a local licensed therapy and counseling organization that commits 4-5 licensed individuals to provide services to our students. We will offer the same programming at BELIEVE STL Academy through an external partner. At BELIEVE Circle City Indianapolis, 49% of our students are enrolled in counseling and therapy services. We have normalized the idea of therapy and are fighting to end the anti-therapy stigma that our community faces—especially our young black men. Additionally, we offer life-coaching for all students via [OpenSeat](#). This is a virtual Life Coach that students meet with weekly to

<sup>28</sup> The Importance of Feeling Safe and Connected at School." KidsData, 2021. KidsData, <https://www.kidsdata.org/blog/?p=10021#:~:text=Students%20who%20feel%20safe%20at,an%20overall%20feeling%20of%20con> nection

discuss goals, current issues they are facing, and more.

## **Faculty & Staff**

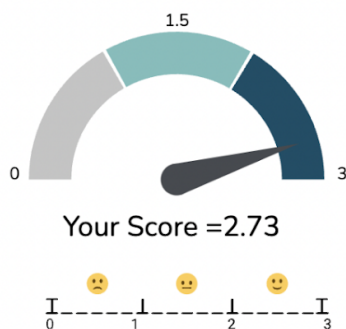
In order to have a strong school culture, it starts with the adults. If adults don't feel valued or supported then they are likely not to pour those same investments into their students. To provide a safe and supportive environment for our staff, staff have access to weekly professional development as all staff, grade level teams, and one-on-one coaching. The same way we expect our teachers to pour into students—we do for them. Additionally, similar to our students, our staff members have access to free counseling and therapy services at BELIEVE Circle City High School in Indianapolis. We're able to offer these services through our same partner who services our students. Again, this is a service that we will offer at BELIEVE STL Academy. 75% of our staff receive free, mental health-counseling services via BELIEVE. By offering this, our staff feels more supported and has an outlet to discuss their own anxieties, concerns, and personal matters. As mentioned, we partner with [POSSIP](#) to provide monthly staff surveys which are sent via text message. This allows staff to share feedback, requests, and concerns anonymously. Leadership team members review responses monthly.

## **Parents & Guardians**

We BELIEVE that a students' success and future is made possible and responsible through a joint partnership with the school, student, and family. To stay connected with families, BELIEVE uses a number of platforms and avenues. Weekly Parent Emails are blasted to all families via Mailchimp and also shared via text through Remind. As families enroll, their email and phone numbers are uploaded into the platform. It's imperative families receive all communication in case of an emergency situation and for general news and school updates. Additionally, families receive monthly [POSSIP](#) surveys where they have the opportunity to provide personal feedback for all areas of the school—academic, leadership, and operations. We're happy to report that at BELIEVE Circle City High School, parents rated the school at a 2.73/3. Some sample messaging and responses from families can be viewed below.

### Sentiment Score™

Your Sentiment Score™ is based off of a 3 point system. For every yes response we add 3 points, mostly we add 2 points, and no, we add 1.



"I like the smaller class rooms, parent and teacher/staff communication, the extra instructional and emotional support given to my scholar and the all around collaboration to help the scholars succeed. "

Theresa Bonner | 317-469-8346 | Grade: 9th | Child Name: Nevaeh Price Edmonson | Student ID: 25401368 | School Name: Believe Circle City High School

Email Copy

"HIGHLIGHT QUOTE: "I enjoy the fact that the school always shares things that are going on "

Email Copy

"HIGHLIGHT QUOTE: "I like the smaller class rooms, parent and teacher/staff communication, the extra instructional and emotional support given to my scholar and the all around collaboration to help the scholars succeed. "

Email Copy

"HIGHLIGHT QUOTE: "The communication skills from the school are fantastic "

"HIGHLIGHT QUOTE: "que alludan mucho a los estudiantes lo Mas que me gusta es que si mi hija ba mal en una materia siempre me tienen AL tanto para asi poder alludarla"

— They help students a lot. What I like the most is that if my daughter does poorly in a subject, they always keep me informed so that I can help her.

Email Copy

## Student with Special Needs: Our Approach to School Culture

All BELIEVE students are treated with the same level of respect, love, and care. Children with special needs will receive the support they are required to have through their IEP, but also additional layers of support through our therapy and counseling partners. Students with special needs will not feel devalued or made to feel excluded by anyone in the BELIEVE Community. Students with special needs are held to the same standard for expectations and BELIEVE's Code of Ethics. When necessary, customized goals around mastering BELIEVE's Code of Ethics will be included in a scholar's behavior plan or IEP.

## Board

BELIEVE is intentional on board selection and chooses individuals who have deep connection, care, and love for the BELIEVE model and community. As members of the BELIEVE Community, Board members are involved in key decision making that live out our values and code of ethics. Board members will meet monthly to hear updates and news regarding the school. They help provide direction, support, and connections to the Executive Director. Additionally, the Board Chair and ED meet twice per month for more pressing and frequent matters. As mentioned, BELIEVE will continue to work with Board on Track to manage board resources, meetings, implement trainings, and house board evaluations and rubrics for scoring.

## Vendors

BELIEVE works with a wide variety of partners and vendors, many of which feel like they have a personal connection to BELIEVE. It's important that they feel that same level of communication and support that BELIEVE staff feel. BELIEVE teams who work with external vendors are required to have weekly, monthly, or quarterly meetings with the respected groups to ensure they have adequate support and information.



## **Disciplinary Legal Compliance**

BELIEVE complies with all state and federal laws and statutes pertaining to school safety. This includes all items within [RSMO 160.261, the Missouri Safe Schools Act](#).

## **Suspension & Expulsion**

At BELIEVE, suspensions are ultimately determined by the Principal and expulsion decisions are made in partnership between the Principal and Executive Director. Expulsion reports are then provided to the Board of Directors prior to board meetings. While suspensions and expulsions are measures of last resort, they are sometimes the reality if the school has exhausted all other measures as part of our Culture Systems. Policies for disciplinary actions will be developed and shared with the Commission prior to opening and publicizing in the Family Handbook.

## **Mandatory Reporting**

As mandated reporters, all staff members and teachers are required to report child abuse, truancy, and educational neglect to Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline of the Missouri Department of Social Services as required by [RSMo210.115](#). This hotline is made available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. BELIEVE staff and teachers are required to consult with an administrator for support during this process especially if they have never made a report previously. If the child is in imminent danger or a life threatening situation, they are directed to call 911 and then call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline of the Missouri Department of Social Services.

Additionally, teachers and staff will be trained on all mandated reporter policies in the case that a minor or student reports any abuse, life threatening situations, or chronic absenteeism that they deem threatening for the child based on other known information.

## **Confinement and Restraint**

As defined by [DESE Rule 160-5-1-.35](#), no teacher or staff member, should seclude or confine students, in any circumstance, except in an emergency situation while awaiting law enforcement or EMS. BELIEVE staff only physically restrains students in emergency situations where they pose immediate danger to themselves or others, and they do not respond to behavioral interventions, verbal directives, and other de-escalation techniques. As defined by DESE Rule 160-5-1-.35, restraint does not include chemical, mechanical, or prone restraint under any circumstance. Guardians are notified of any physical restraint within 12 hours. The following members of the BELIEVE staff will receive [Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® With Advanced Physical Skills](#) training and certification: Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Culture, and Lead Special Education Instructor. Only staff members trained and certified in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® With Advanced Physical Skills will be authorized to engage in physical restraints.

## **Threats of Violence**



As outlined in the Staff Handbook, employees will inform the Principal regarding acts of violence. These can include suicidal and homicidal actions. The student at threat will not be left unattended or alone. The Principal will investigate and pull in the School Social Worker to assist. A trained professional (whether that be the Principal or Social Worker) will conduct a risk evaluation and determine next steps. Based on the results of the risk evaluation, the Principal will respond according to the policy. If the EMS or law enforcement must be contacted, the Principal or Social Worker will contact the family of the student immediately.

## **Employees**

During mandatory professional development, employees receive BELIEVE's Staff Handbook and policies and practices related to school discipline are reviewed by all staff. These include but are not limited to the following measures: disciplining students with disabilities, acts of school violence, and instruction for maintaining confidentiality. Staff members also receive annual Mandated Reporter training for suspected child abuse. Under no circumstance will BELIEVE employ an individual with a suspended or revoked license, or federal or state offense on a background check, per [RSMo 160.405.1.\(4\)](#)

## **Corporal Punishment**

BELIEVE does not permit corporal punishment of any kind. No teacher, staff member, or administrator should ever administer physical punishment to any student or minor for the purpose of discipline or control.

## **Notification of Criminal Conduct**

As required by [RSMo 168.071](#), BELIEVE will notify parties of criminal conduct and will report all crimes that occur on school grounds to law enforcement as outlined in [RSMo 160.261](#).

- First or second-degree murder under [RSMo 565.020, 565.021](#).
- Voluntary or involuntary manslaughter in the first or second degree under [RSMo 565.023, 565.024, 565.027](#).
- Kidnapping in the first or second degree under [RSMo 565.110](#), [.120 RSMo](#).
- First-, second- or third-degree assault under [RSMo 565.050, 565.052](#).
- Sexual assault or deviate sexual assault under [RSMo 566.031, 566.061](#).
- Forcible rape or sodomy under [RSMo 566.030, 566.060](#).
- Burglary in the first or second degree under [RSMo 569.160, 569.170](#).
- Robbery in the first degree under [RSMo 570.023](#).
- Manufacture of a controlled substance under section [RSMo 579.055](#).
- Delivery of a controlled substance under section [RSMo 579.020](#).
- Possession of a weapon under chapter [571](#).
- Arson in the first degree under [RSMo 569.040](#).
- Property damage in the first degree under [RSMo 569.100](#).
- Child molestation in the first, second, or third degree pursuant to [RSMo 566.067, 566.068, 566.069](#).
- Sexual misconduct involving a child pursuant to [RSMo 566.083](#).

- Sexual abuse pursuant to [RSMo 566.100](#).
- Harassment in the first degree under [RSMo 565.090](#).
- Stalking in the first degree under [RSMo 565.225](#).

## Records

The Dean of Operations ensures all records are maintained safely and securely. The school keeps both digital and physical files of students. Additionally, any act of violence or violent behavior, any offense that takes place on school property, school provided transportation, or any school related activity which is reported to law enforcement and any offense that results in out-of-school suspension for more than ten school days.

## B.1 - Missouri Non-Profit

BELIEVE Schools, Inc (BELIEVE STL Academy) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization incorporated and filed for registration with the state of Missouri (see Appendix B.1.1). BELIEVE was created to provide students with access to early college and career programming to prepare them for future independence, success, and wealth-building. BELIEVE Schools, Inc's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are consistent with [RSMo Chapter 355](#), Missouri Nonprofit Corporation Act, and can be found in Appendix B.1.2 & B.1.3. BELIEVE has received tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service. See documentation in Appendix B.1.4.

BELIEVE STL Academy is applying for sponsorship from the Missouri Charter Public Schools Commission (MCPSC) pursuant to [RSMo 160.403](#). BELIEVE's MCPSC application will be available online at [www.believeschools.org](http://www.believeschools.org). Upon approval from the Missouri State Board of Education, the MCPSC will be the entity that holds the charter and is responsible for the governance of the school and ensuring the terms of the legal charter agreement and performance contract are met.

BELIEVE will ensure financial sustainability in accordance with Missouri statute, along with developing and executing the schools' strategic priorities and policies. BELIEVE expects MCPSC to provide public oversight and accountability per [RSMo 161.092](#) and [RSMo 160.400-160.425](#). BELIEVE also expects MCPSC to adhere to roles and responsibilities outlined as best practices by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers' (NACSA) [Quality standards](#). The contract between BELIEVE Schools and MCPSC will be a five year-term, beginning upon approval of this application by the Missouri State Board of Education. With approval from its sponsor, The BELIEVE Schools Board may vote to amend its charter contract. MCPSC will conduct annual evaluations of BELIEVE to ensure they are conducting themselves in accordance with performance goals and other measures established in the charter performance contract and this applicant.

As a condition of service, all BELIEVE board members must complete and pass a St. Louis

- Sexual abuse pursuant to [RSMo 566.100](#).
- Harassment in the first degree under [RSMo 565.090](#).
- Stalking in the first degree under [RSMo 565.225](#).

## Records

The Dean of Operations ensures all records are maintained safely and securely. The school keeps both digital and physical files of students. Additionally, any act of violence or violent behavior, any offense that takes place on school property, school provided transportation, or any school related activity which is reported to law enforcement and any offense that results in out-of-school suspension for more than ten school days.

## B.1 - Missouri Non-Profit

BELIEVE Schools, Inc (BELIEVE STL Academy) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization incorporated and filed for registration with the state of Missouri (see Appendix B.1.1). BELIEVE was created to provide students with access to early college and career programming to prepare them for future independence, success, and wealth-building. BELIEVE Schools, Inc's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are consistent with [RSMo Chapter 355](#), Missouri Nonprofit Corporation Act, and can be found in Appendix B.1.2 & B.1.3. BELIEVE has received tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service. See documentation in Appendix B.1.4.

BELIEVE STL Academy is applying for sponsorship from the Missouri Charter Public Schools Commission (MCPSC) pursuant to [RSMo 160.403](#). BELIEVE's MCPSC application will be available online at [www.believeschools.org](http://www.believeschools.org). Upon approval from the Missouri State Board of Education, the MCPSC will be the entity that holds the charter and is responsible for the governance of the school and ensuring the terms of the legal charter agreement and performance contract are met.

BELIEVE will ensure financial sustainability in accordance with Missouri statute, along with developing and executing the schools' strategic priorities and policies. BELIEVE expects MCPSC to provide public oversight and accountability per [RSMo 161.092](#) and [RSMo 160.400-160.425](#). BELIEVE also expects MCPSC to adhere to roles and responsibilities outlined as best practices by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers' (NACSA) [Quality standards](#). The contract between BELIEVE Schools and MCPSC will be a five year-term, beginning upon approval of this application by the Missouri State Board of Education. With approval from its sponsor, The BELIEVE Schools Board may vote to amend its charter contract. MCPSC will conduct annual evaluations of BELIEVE to ensure they are conducting themselves in accordance with performance goals and other measures established in the charter performance contract and this applicant.

As a condition of service, all BELIEVE board members must complete and pass a St. Louis

City/County criminal background check and a family-care safety check, as required by [RSMo 160.400.14](#). BELIEVE founding board members have begun this process (see documentation in Appendix B.1.6.). Nominees convicted of a felony or Class A misdemeanor are automatically disqualified; Class B/C misdemeanors and infractions trigger a Board review and are evaluated case by case. Background checks are publicly available and furnished upon request.

As public trustees, board members are responsible for BELIEVE's academic, operational, and financial performance. BELIEVE's charter, board meeting minutes, attendance rosters, and most recent annual report card will be maintained and kept for the purpose of public record (with closed meetings and records allowed in limited circumstances) in accordance with [RSMo 160.522](#).

As part of its fiduciary oversight, the Board of Directors will ensure school officials submit to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education all data and reports that are required by law and/or by regulations of the Missouri State Board of Education. The Annual Report will be completed and submitted in accordance with department regulations; it will also be available to all patrons of BELIEVE and to each member of the General Assembly representing a legislative LEA that contains a portion of the attendance area of the school.

## **Board Responsibilities**

Members of the BELIEVE Schools' Board of Directors will operate in alignment with the mission and vision of our organization, as outlined in A.1- Mission, Vision, Philosophy, & Goals, as they work to fulfill the obligations and responsibilities described below. The Board of Directors comprises experts in various areas pertaining to the build out and operation of BELIEVE STL Academy. Board members have committed a minimum of 5 hours per month for oversight responsibilities, public engagement, monthly board meetings, and as needed, ad hoc meetings. Board members understand their role and responsibilities as decision-making public servants and stewards of public funds and will adopt exemplary governance policies from the Missouri Charter Public School Association (MCPSA) pursuant to [CSR 20-100-260.\(2\)\(E\)](#). In addition, Board Members shall annually report conflicts of interest, and must sign a conflict of interest statement (see Appendix B.1.5) obligated by [RSMo 105.450](#), [RSMo 160.415.7\(3\)](#), and the Missouri Ethics Commission. Board members will not hold any office or employment from the board or BELIEVE Schools, pursuant to [RSMo 160.400.15](#).

Lastly, as public trustees, BELIEVE board members are responsible for the academic, financial, and operational performance. The Board adheres to the [Sunshine Law](#) and state ethics when conducting board and committee meetings. All board meeting records,

minutes, and resources will be public record in accordance with [RSMo 160.522](#). The Sunshine Law manual will be shared with board members upon joining the board. This manual can be found in Appendix B.1.7.

Upon approval and authorization by the Missouri State Board of Education, BELIEVE will act as a Local Education Agency (LEA) while operating underneath BELIEVE Schools, Inc discretion.

As part of a charter network, BELIEVE will be exempt from laws and rules regulating other Missouri public school districts except those articulated in [RSMo 160.400 -420](#). Despite those exemptions, BELIEVE will still be subject to regulations regarding public government bodies pursuant to [RSMo 610.010-30](#). These include giving adequate public notice, providing public accessibility, recording minutes and voting records, making minutes available to the public, allowing attendees to record meetings, keeping records of closed meetings, and following rules regarding electronic transmission of messages relating to public business.

Since the BELIEVE Board is subject to the same liability for acts in office as if they were duly elected school board or any other public school district in the state, the Board will secure approved liability insurance (see Appendix B.1.7).

While day-to-day management of BELIEVE will be delegated to the school's administration and network team, the Board maintains authority over and accountability for BELIEVE's financial, organizational, and academic health. The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Planning and advising, including:
  - Developing BELIEVE STL Academy strategic plan in conjunction with the ED and network team;
  - Ensuring that BELIEVE has strong, clear, measurable annual goals;
  - Ensuring that BELIEVE has a way to monitor and track the goals;
  - Advise and counseling the ED and,
  - Monitor and provide oversight of student recruitment efforts and marketing.
- Monitoring and evaluating, including:
  - Progress toward BELIEVE's academic goals through visits, monthly reports from the ED;
  - Board effectiveness each year through a Board self-assessment process, setting goals for improvement, and monitoring progress towards those goals and;
  - School leaders and holding them accountable by recruiting, hiring, evaluating, and when necessary, terminating BELIEVE's ED.
- Compliance, including:
  - The Board will develop and execute academic and organizational policies according to the organization's mission;

- The Board will ensure that BELIEVE abides by its charter, governing documents, and relevant federal, state, or local laws and regulations;
- Conduct relevant work with the state charter sponsor.
- Finances, including:
  - The Board will provide oversight of all financial aspects of BELIEVE, including budget development, approval, monitoring, and fiscal controls;
  - Ensuring that audits of the schools' finances are conducted as required by law;
  - The Board will publish annual financial reports aligned with Missouri law and requirements;
  - Oversee fundraising activities (private donations from foundations, corporations, and individuals).
- Hearings, including:
  - The Board will hear grievances filed by parents in accordance with BELIEVE Student and Family Handbook;
  - The Board will hear complaints filed pursuant to relevant charter school regulations; and,
  - Hear appeals by parents on matters of student discipline, including student expulsions.
- Further involvement by:
  - Attending at least one fundraising event per year (enrollment event, council meetings etc).
  - Enhance organizations public reputation by serving as an ambassador for the school

### **About BELIEVE Schools, Inc**

BELIEVE STL Academy is part of the BELIEVE Schools, Inc CMO suite. BELIEVE Schools, Inc launched its first site in 2020 in Indianapolis, BELIEVE Circle City High School. BCCHS launched with roughly 60 students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Now in its third year, BELIEVE has 215 students serving grades 9-12. Our first graduating class will be this Spring with a small cohort of 6 students. BELIEVE ended up taking a small cohort of 10th graders during 2020 due to low enrollment city-wide because of the pandemic. BELIEVE STL Academy is seeking sponsorship for the Fall 2024 with 9th grade. BELIEVE STL Academy will follow a similar model and programming but work with partners local to the city of St. Louis.

BELIEVE STL Academy and BELIEVE Schools, Inc will be connected via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This can be found in Appendix B.1.9. New schools to the network must operate with the MOU in place. However, similar to our model with students, the MOU is structured to provide agency to school leaders while sticking true to the core principles of a BELIEVE campus.

## B.2 – Governing Board Composition

BELIEVE STL Academy will be governed by seven to eleven Board of Directors in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws (see Appendix B.1.3), which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter. BELIEVE has secured board members who have experience in one or more following areas: legal/law, business, finance/accounting, education, marketing/public relations, college readiness, and career programming. BELIEVE shall not prohibit interested candidates from serving on the Board if otherwise qualified.

BELIEVE currently has seven secured Board Members who have varying expertise, and are able to offer advice, direction, and guidance to the school's leadership and representative bodies. Board experience includes individuals who have served at successful organizations and managed the implementation of the organization's program appropriately. All current board members live in St. Louis or the state of Missouri and are committed to BELIEVE's vision, mission, and code of ethics. The board will be responsible for submitting the charter, including a description of grades served, as well as policies and procedures to (sponsors) pursuant to [RSMo 160.405.1\(5\)](#) and [160.405.2\(1\)](#). A financial plan for the length of the initial charter approval will also be submitted, pursuant with [RSMo 160.405.1\(3\)](#) and MCPSC. The initial charter term will be five years, in accordance with [RSMo 160.405.1\(9\)](#).

Upon approval, BELIEVE will be a member of the Missouri Charter Public School Association and Board members are required to participate in their training for board development growth. Board members have a clear understanding and vision of their roles, the importance of the role and have personal responsibility for the school. Board members will be made aware of their duties as public servants in accordance with [RSMo 105.450](#).

### Founding Board of Directors

Board member's resumes can be found in Appendix B.2.1. Background check and family care safety registration can be found in Appendix B.1.6. The Survey of Prospective Charter School Board Members and Conflict of Interest Disclosures are in Appendix B.1.5.

The chart below highlights each Board Members' area of skill and focus as part of the BELIEVE STL Academy Board. Additionally, BELIEVE has reserved one seat for a parent so that parent and family voice is heard at all times.

Name	Title	Relevant Experience
Dr. Alexandra Boyd	Executive Director of Public Charter School Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CEO of the ASK Academy</li><li>• Director of Program Evaluation -</li></ul>

		Arkansas Department of Education
Jesse Dixon	Partner, The Opportunity Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VP of Career Development</li> <li>• Education Consultant - SLPS</li> <li>• ED, SIUE St. Louis Center</li> </ul>
Taijuana Wells	Licensed Counselor, Business Owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed counselor and therapist</li> <li>• Business owner</li> </ul>
Madeline Hantak	Program Coordinator, Member Engagement & Events- The Catholic Health Association of the US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events Manager</li> <li>• STL Native; attended Rosati-Kain HS</li> </ul>
Kacey Martin-Johnson	Corporate Senior EHS Manager for Curium Pharma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial Hygienist</li> <li>• STL Native</li> <li>• Corporate Senior EHS Manager</li> </ul>
Geferi Zasaretti	Athlete Agent & Director of Basketball Operations, Alliance Management Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Athlete Agent &amp; Director of Basketball Operations</li> <li>• Regional Development Manager, Tech Mahindra</li> <li>• Mortgage Banker</li> </ul>
Thomas Boroughs	Dean, SLU College for Public Health and Social Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean</li> <li>• Professor</li> <li>• ED of SLU Center for Outcomes and Research</li> </ul>
Seat for Parent		

## Preparation

In addition to training by MCPA and/or Charter Board Partners, and [Board on Track](#), new board members are required to attend orientation detailing the state of the school, current challenges, and opportunities. All board members receive access to Board on Track where they can easily access the school's charter, bylaws, articles of incorporation, legal documentation, charter laws, and other important documents. Additionally, EdOps will provide training and oversight to the Board to instruct on reading financial statements and charter school financials.

## Structure

Board members convene once per month. Committees meet on a monthly basis as well. Committees include: Governance, Finance, Development, and Academics.

The following positions are part of the Board of Directors:

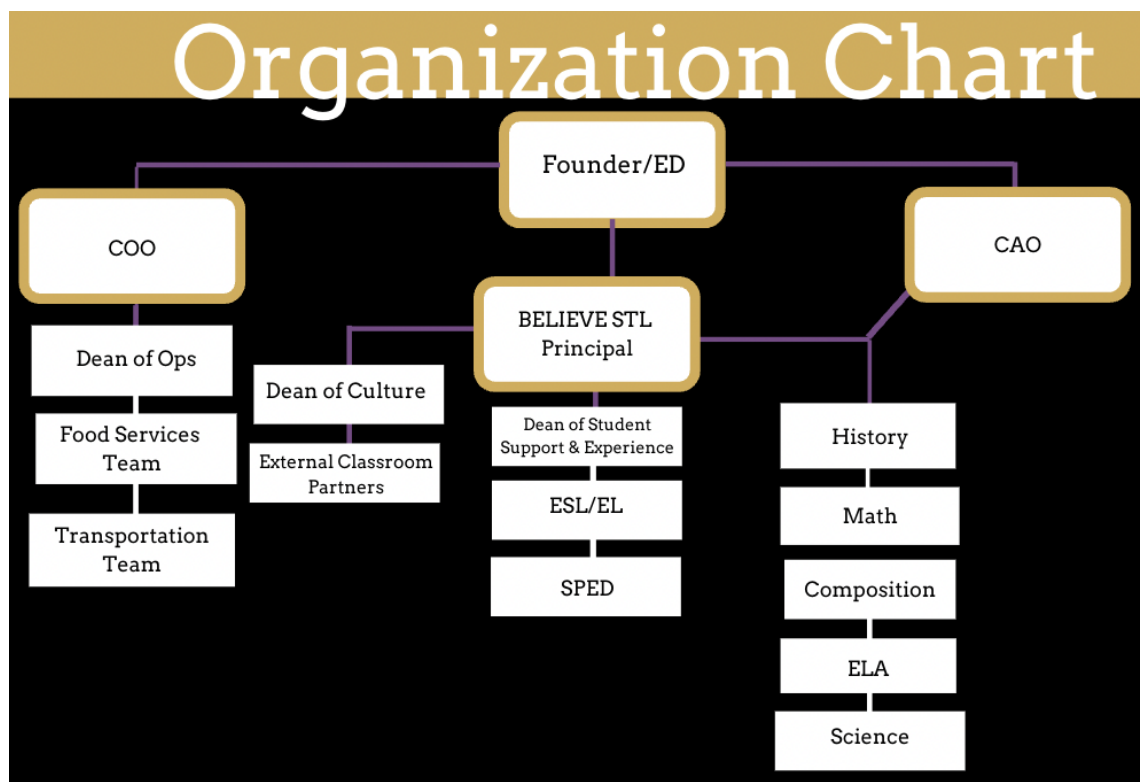
- President: Provides oversight and leadership for the board. Leads board meetings, sets agendas, and ensures the board is in compliance.
- Secretary: Publishes board meeting minutes and takes meeting minutes.



- Treasurer: Leads Board’s financial activities; monitors the budget against actuals and provides reports to the full Board; oversees financial transactions; and chairs the budget and finance committee.

The board will share responsibilities for new board member recruitment. Once a board member has identified a potential new member, the Board will notify the board chair for an interview. Following this interview, the candidate will interview with the ED. The candidate will then go in-front of the full board for vote at the following month’s board meeting.

## B.3 - Management and Operations



For the first two years of operation, some team members will “wear multiple hats” and might serve in dual-roles. However, enrollment will help guide hiring practices and final hiring numbers. The organization chart above outlines the structure for Year 1 and Year 2. The organizational chart illustrates how personnel will be managed and provides an overview of the organizational structure.

The table below breaks down team members’ “Big Rocks” or their major responsibilities as part of their role. Descriptions of the organizational leadership/network team and school

site leadership can be found below.

Organizational Leadership		
Executive Director	Chief Academic Officer	Chief Operations Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundraising</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Operations</li> <li>• Public Relations + Community Engagement</li> <li>• Board Management</li> <li>• Compliance</li> <li>• Manage Principles</li> <li>• Growth &amp; Expansion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage Academic Department</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Data</li> <li>• Curriculum</li> <li>• Gradebooks &amp; Grading Practices</li> <li>• Instructional Leadership Development</li> <li>• Teacher Support &amp; Retention</li> <li>• Instruction</li> <li>• Teacher Development               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Teacher Performance Expectations</li> <li>b. Professional Development</li> <li>c. Teacher Coaching</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing/Advertising/Digital</li> <li>• Compliance/State Reporting</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Grants</li> <li>• Food Services Compliance</li> <li>• Growth</li> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Food Services</li> <li>• IT</li> <li>• HR</li> <li>• Enrollment</li> </ul>

School Based Leadership			
Principal	Dean of Student Support & Experience	Dean of Operations	Dean of Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Development</li> <li>• Coaching</li> <li>• Teacher Evaluations</li> <li>• Assessment Coordinator</li> <li>• Learning Walks</li> <li>• Academic Team</li> <li>• Data Meetings</li> <li>• Parent Engagement</li> <li>• Dean Coaching</li> <li>• Talent</li> <li>• External partnerships</li> <li>• Staff Culture/ Accountability</li> <li>• RTI Interventions</li> <li>• Liaison with IP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dual Enrollment</li> <li>• Course Scheduling</li> <li>• Co-Lead Grading</li> <li>• Coaching/Curriculum (Science/SPED)</li> <li>• ELL compliance</li> <li>• Course Offerings               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Dual Enrollment</li> <li>b. CTE</li> <li>c. Online Courseware</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controller-Financial</li> <li>• Food Service and Records</li> <li>• Student Records</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Enrollment</li> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Scholar Trips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture System</li> <li>• Character Academy</li> <li>• SchoolRunner</li> <li>• Student Culture</li> <li>• BELIEVER Status system</li> <li>• Lead Arts Programming</li> <li>• Purpose Pathways</li> <li>• Communication Logs</li> <li>• Extra Curricular/Clubs</li> <li>• Athletic Director</li> <li>• Village: Employability Tracker (Employ Indy)</li> </ul>

In Year 3, BELIEVE will hire a Dean of Instruction, Social Worker, and Dean of College and Career. The Dean of Instruction will support the Principal in coaching of teachers, classroom observations and feedback, and curriculum development. The Social Worker will support the Dean of Student Supports & Experience and will oversee external partners who support counseling and therapy services. Additionally, this person will serve over the

McKinney-Vento Liaison and assist with Title grants. The Dean of College and Career will oversee course scheduling and the dual enrollment programs with external partners.

The Executive Director, Chief Academic Officer, and Chief Operations Officer are identified and will be supporting in the launch and development of the school. The Principal has also been identified at BELIEVE STL Academy. Upon sponsorship, BELIEVE will begin hiring for the remaining leadership positions.

As included in our 5-year budget projections with Afton Group, Inc, BELIEVE has outlined the Staffing Schedule as part of the budget which can be referenced in C.1-Budget. BELIEVE is intentional about hiring based on need and enrollment. We will not overhire in the case we do not meet enrollment. If we do meet requirements, then we will hire additional teachers and team members. The staffing schedule below provides adequate coverage for core content classes, village leader roles, and necessary support staff members. BELIEVE partners with community partners and experts locally to provide elective courses like arts programming. Additionally, our staffing plans along with the course schedule, allows our teachers to have two planning periods per day. The staffing plan below outlines Year 1 through Year 5 as enrollment increases.

As required in [RSMo 160. 420.2](#) and [RSMo 168.133](#), employees will not be hired until they pass a criminal background check and family care safety registry check. Prospective hires convicted of a felony or Class A misdemeanor are automatically disqualified; Class B/C misdemeanors and infractions trigger a review by the Executive Director and Board and are evaluated case by case. No more than 20% of full time equivalent instructional staff will be filled by non-certified personnel.

## B.4 - Staff Recruitment, Retention, Replacement and Training

The hiring chart below displays BELIEVE's master hiring schedule as it relates to student enrollment. This table gives an overview of the hiring schedule Year 1 through Year 6. BELIEVE's hiring schedule has a direct correlation to enrollment. If BELIEVE is seeing an influx of English language learners, we may shift a role or two to support these students specifically.

FTE								
School Leadership	-	-	-	1.0	3.0	5.0	8.0	
Operations	-	-	1.0	2.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	
Teachers	-	-	-	-	6.0	12.0	18.0	
Social Work	-	-	-	-	1.0	1.0	1.0	
Food Server	-	-	-	-	1.0	2.0	2.0	
Transportation	-	-	-	-	1.0	3.0	3.0	
Network Leadership	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Finance Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Academics Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Total FTE</b>	-	-	<b>1.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>37.0</b>	

## **Staffing Plan**

BELIEVE is hyper-focused on student to teacher ratios. As we did with our first site, it's important to launch with a small student to teacher ratio of 15:1. Not only does it allow for smaller class sizes, but it allows for more one-on-one support and has helped create a strong culture in the school. This allows teachers to adapt to our systems and expectations.

## **Executive Leadership Team**

The Executive Director will continue to serve in the role as the organization navigates through expansion and growth. The ED has identified two founding team members that have joined the network team– the Chief Academic Officer and Chief Operations Officer. These two roles are imperative as the network continues to expand. The resumes of founding Executive Leadership Team members can be found in Appendix B.4.1.

Over the first year, the Executive Director will continue to support the Founding Principal, with hiring, recruitment, and general oversight and coaching of the new campus.

## **Instructional Staff**

BELIEVE will serve roughly 100-125 students in Year 1 and will grow to 400-430 at scale. Class sizes will be no larger than 20 in Year 1 and at scale, no larger than 30. In Year one, we will have at minimum (4) full time teachers hired, with Deans teaching a course, and the additional external partners that we contract with. External partners may teach Fine and Practical Arts Courses, Personal Finance, Health & Physical Education, or other elective based courses.

## **Specialized Experts**

BELIEVE recognizes that there will be a number of students who are below grade level, classified as English Learners (EL), or who require Special Education services. Our model provides students small group instruction throughout the school day. In addition to instructional staff, we will hire a Special Education Teacher and—as needed—an English Language Learner teacher. Depending on the number of students we serve who are multilingual learners, we may not hire an English Language Learner teacher; instead, we may opt to rely on our BELIEVE's network-level academic team to provide training to teachers on how to best meet the needs of multilingual learners as needed. These roles will report to the Dean of Students. By year three, we will have expanded Dean roles allowing for our Dean of Student Support and Experience to focus on these two areas while giving some of their previous responsibilities to other new team members—social worker and school counselor. Depending on enrollment, these numbers might increase to accommodate accordingly.

## **Student Support Staff**

The role of social and emotional learning and development for students is imperative for

their future success. With that, we will have a Dean of Culture in Year 1 that will oversee and manage external partners who provide support services for students. By Year 3, we will have a full time social worker to help support and provide services to students directly.

### Operations Staff

The Dean of Operations with support from Chief Operations Lead will work with the Office Coordinator, who will be responsible for maintaining day-to-day operations. By Year 3, the operations team should be built out with Office Coordinator, Bus Drivers, and Food Service staff.

### Professional Development Plan

BELIEVE sets high expectations for students. This all begins with effective, focused, and intentionally-planned professional development for teachers and staff. During the summer, all staff report to school three weeks before the first day of school. The table below outlines the activities and topics discussed during professional development. At the end of the three weeks and before students start, all staff goes on a mandatory one night camping trip at a nearby campground. This is an opportunity for staff to bond, engage, and deepen relationships with one another. We've found this to be a key part of creating a community and culture among staff. When staff are aligned on vision and expectations, this carries over to students when they start. Professional Development plans are shared pursuant to [RSMo 160.405.1\(4\)](#).

During the school year, teachers engage in weekly professional development. An outline of professional development opportunities can be found below.

Topic	Activities	Frequency	Lead By
<b>BELIEVE Teacher Intensive - Summer PD</b>  Three week orientation that covers onboarding, HR, BELIEVE programs and expectations, school safety, and school culture development.	Teacher/School Handbook	Summer Orientation	Principal & Dean of Operations
	Culture & School Expectations	Summer Orientation	Principal and Dean of Culture
	Instruction	Summer Orientation	Principal and CAO
<b>Data Review &amp; Systems</b>  A focus on data driven instruction and how data is an integral part of the school, decision-making, and student outcomes.	Assessments (EOC/Benchmark)	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and CAO
	IEP/Accommodations	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and CAO
	Culture as it Correlates to Student Success	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and Dean of Culture

	Surveys: Student, Family, and Staff	Summer Orientation	Principal and CAO
<b>School Safety, Culture, and Systems</b>  Welcoming staff to an inclusive, family-like environment where everyone feels prepared, safe, and understands the school's systems.	Digital Systems: SIS, SchoolRunner, and more.	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal & Dean of Operations
	Building and Classroom Safety	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal & Dean of Operations
	Our Approach to School Culture and Discipline	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and Dean of Culture
	Social Emotional Learning	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal & Dean of Students
<b>Academics &amp; Instruction</b>  Focusing on student and teacher engagement, teacher strategies, and how to improve outcomes for students.	Lesson Planning 101	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and CAO
	Co-Teaching	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and CAO
	Grading and Analyzing Student Work	Summer Orientation & Ongoing PD	Principal and CAO

### Our Approach to Hiring

At BELIEVE, we have a heavy emphasis on hiring individuals who are mission aligned, driven, and are dedicated to student success and outcomes. Additionally, our network is focused on ensuring our staff, at all levels, heavily reflects the students we serve. Our goal is to maintain a staff of 75% people of color. Currently at BELIEVE Circle City High School, our staff can be racially broken down in the following ways:

- 62% Black, or African American
- 14% Latinx, or Hispanic
- 7.3% White
- 11% Asian
- 3.7% Mixed Race

As reported by the [National School Boards Association](#), when students have teachers of color that look and reflect them, they perform better academically, improve levels of graduation, and are more likely to attend college.

In addition to teacher diversity, BELIEVE places a heavy emphasis on teacher competency and ability. BELIEVE evaluates teachers on the criteria below. The description of personnel qualifications is provided in pursuance of [RSMo 160.405.1\(4\)](#).

Competency	Indicators
Commitment to Students, Equity, and Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Displays a strong commitment to the community and demographic of students we serve.</li> <li>Understands and demonstrates inclusiveness, cultural awareness, and strong emotional intelligence.</li> </ul>
Autonomy and Personal Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BELIEVE requires all staff be certified, or enrolled in a certification program. If a candidate is not enrolled in a program, BELIEVE will commit to helping the staff member secure a program.</li> <li>Shows high levels of personal accountability; understands that the way they show up has a direct correlation on students.</li> <li>Ability to reflect on areas of growth and successes.</li> </ul>
Commitment to Student Outcomes and Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Displays and understands the importance of innovation. We are educators and innovative thinkers. We don't always make decisions following the status quo.</li> <li>Always makes decisions in the best interest of our scholars.</li> </ul>
Teacher Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes content and lesson plans that are culturally relevant to students.</li> <li>Addresses and understands the various needs of students in the classroom.</li> <li>Sets and maintains high expectations for students and peers.</li> </ul>
Classroom Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates the ability to create a strong classroom culture.</li> <li>Handles difficult conversations and interactions with students professionally and empathetically.</li> <li>Able to consider others' experiences, backgrounds, cultures and how that can show up in the classroom space and behavior.</li> <li>Holds every student to high expectations.</li> </ul>

### Staff and Personnel Recruitment

As listed, BELIEVE is dedicated to hiring a diverse staff that align with our mission and vision. It's important that all staff members are committed to their personal growth and how their work shows up for students and student outcomes.

There is a nation-wide shortage of teachers. However, St. Louis remains a competitive market for attracting teachers and retaining ones that are highly effective and qualified. During hiring season, BELIEVE is intentional on ensuring candidates receive a speedy, yet comprehensive interview process. Due to the current demands in the job market, it's important that candidates feel like their time is valued and not being wasted. Additionally,

during the hiring process, BELIEVE wants to ensure that all staff have a thorough understanding of the expectations and requirements as a BELIEVE staff member. From the first phone screen, to the final interview, BELIEVE is clear and forthright with expectations. During the hiring process, BELIEVE pulls in existing teachers who can help speak to their experience at BELIEVE and answer questions that a candidate might have from experience. We've found this to be a value add not only to new staff members, but existing teachers as well as they feel like their opinions and perspective matters in regards to new hires.

BELIEVE engages with a variety of organizations to attract high quality candidates, like Teach for America. At BELIEVE Circle City High School, year over year, approximately 25%-60% of teachers came from TFA. While we recognize, STL does not have a TFA that produces teachers anymore, we will work with TFA to tap into their alumni network that will come from other regions. In addition to TFA, we work with local universities to recruit teachers. At BELIEVE Circle City High School, we participated in the Teacher Residency Program with Marian University. 100% of the teachers placed with us sought and accepted full-time roles with us following their residency program. We hope to do the same through our partnership with St. Louis University's School of Education. Building a strong pipeline and relationship with organizations will help the city retain high-quality teachers furthering the development of the city. BELIEVE is also seeking partnerships with Harris-Stowe University, University of Missouri- St. Louis (UMSL), St. Louis Teacher Residency, and Washington University to build teacher pipeline programs.

Upon sponsorship, BELIEVE will seek credentials to the MOREAP, Missouri's teacher hiring platform to find and source quality candidates. Additionally, BELIEVE has begun early conversations with Black and Brown Teaching Trust to find potential personnel.

## **Legal Compliance**

BELIEVE complies with all state, federal, and local laws regarding employment, hiring, and staff grievances. Upon sponsorship, BELIEVE will adopt the Missouri Charter Public School Association's Human Resources Policies. BELIEVE intends to hire teacher candidates who hold a valid Missouri teaching certificate. However, per [RSMo 160.420.2](#), may employ non-certified instructional personnel, provided that no more than 20% of the full-time staff positions are filled by non-certified staff. This also aligns to Title I Guidelines, which requires that schools receiving federal funding meet applicable certifications and licensure requirements.

When interviewing non-certified candidates, BELIEVE considers experiences, program enrollment, trainings, and relevant skills similar to:

- Education: Undergraduate and Master's degree in related fields
- Teaching certifications issued by other states or prior teaching experiences
- Certification by National Standards Board
- Evidence of technical training
- Road to Licensure: Currently seeking placement in a program to earn credentials



As listed in all employee contracts, BELIEVE staff members are at-will employees. BELIEVE will not employ an individual who has a teaching license that has been suspended or revoked by Missouri State of Education in accordance with [RSMo 168.071](#). No candidate will be hired that does not pass a criminal background check and complete the Family Care Safety Registry.

BELIEVE's ED and Principal will work with our Human Resources Partner, HCC to manage payroll and HR related items. As indicated in [RSMo 160.420.3](#), personnel will be enrolled in the Public School Retirement System of the City of St. Louis.

BELIEVE STL Academy will adopt the BELIEVE Schools, Inc Staff Handbook. Upon sponsorship, BELIEVE will work with HCC to ensure it is in compliance with all state, local, and federal laws regarding employment and hiring.

### **Salary and Benefits**

BELIEVE will continue to provide competitive salary and benefits packages for all staff. The median starting salary for a first year teacher in St. Louis is \$32,970. BELIEVE Schools, Inc will establish a pay scale for the local market that will be similar to the BELIEVE Circle City High School pay scale below. The pay scale below (and in Appendix B.4.2) shows the average term for teacher salaries across Indiana and Indianapolis. The Compensation Program below is for the Indianapolis region. Upon sponsorship, BELIEVE will replicate this format and provide a compensation program for the St. Louis region.

Average district wide salaries from the St. Louis region can also be found below.

**BELIEVE SCHOOLS, INC  
COMPENSATION PROGRAM**

YEARS	BA	MA	Non-Certified
0	\$50,000	\$54,000	\$46,500
1	\$52,000	\$56,000	\$48,500
2	\$54,000	\$58,000	\$50,500
3	\$56,000	\$60,000	\$50,500
4	\$58,000	\$62,000	\$50,500
5	\$60,000	\$64,000	\$50,500
6	\$62,000	\$66,000	\$50,500
7	\$64,000	\$68,000	\$50,500
8	\$66,000	\$70,000	\$50,500
9	\$68,000	\$72,000	\$50,500
10	\$60,000	\$74,000	\$50,500

**BENEFITS**

- Highly competitive medical, dental, vision, life insurance packages
- Free financial planning & advising
- Competitive 403(b) packages
- Free mental health and counseling services offered

**CULTURE**

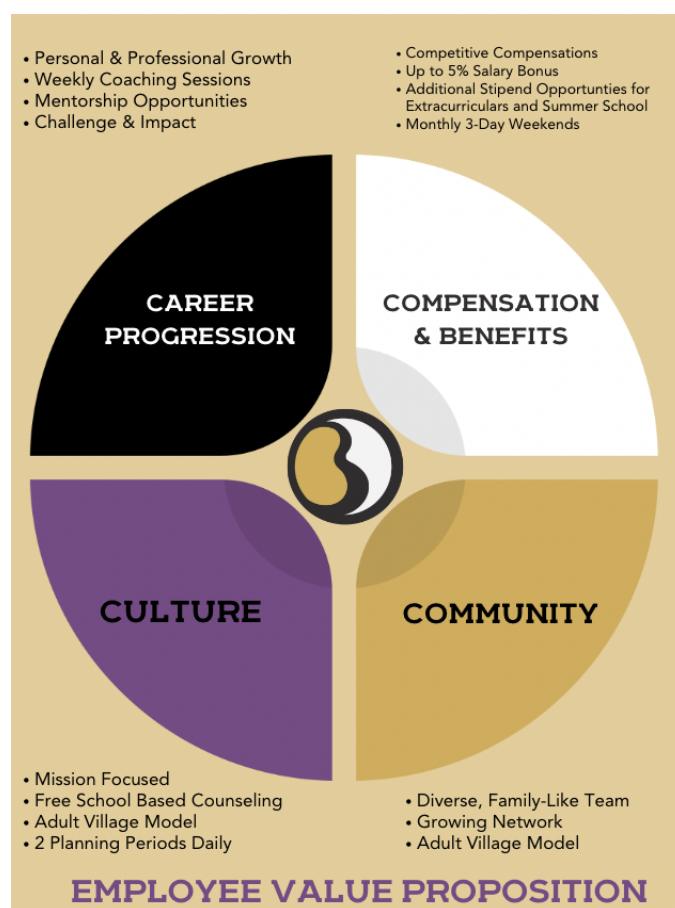
- 2 planning periods per day
- Monthly 3-day weeks & strategic vacations
- Adult Village program
- Diverse Team
- Growing Network

**BONUS**

- Opportunity for competitive bonus system based on performance
- Coaching, tutoring, and other stipends available to eligible employees

**\$1k increase annually after 10 years**

Apply at [believeschools.org](http://believeschools.org)



Average Teacher Salaries - State of Missouri <sup>29</sup> *indicates school in St. Louis City	
Missouri Statewide Average	\$32,970
St. Louis City	\$40,576
St. Louis Public School District*	\$40,575 (pay scale Appendix B.4.2)
KIPP St. Louis Public Schools*	\$42,700 (\$36,295 non certified)

BELIEVE offers a competitive benefits package that requires little to no cost to the employee. A breakdown of benefits can be found in the graphic below. Additionally provided, is a screen capture of our Employee Value Proposition. This includes not only competitive salary and benefit details, but other supportive services and programs that

<sup>29</sup>Data sourced from <https://missouri.teach.org/salary-benefits-missouri>

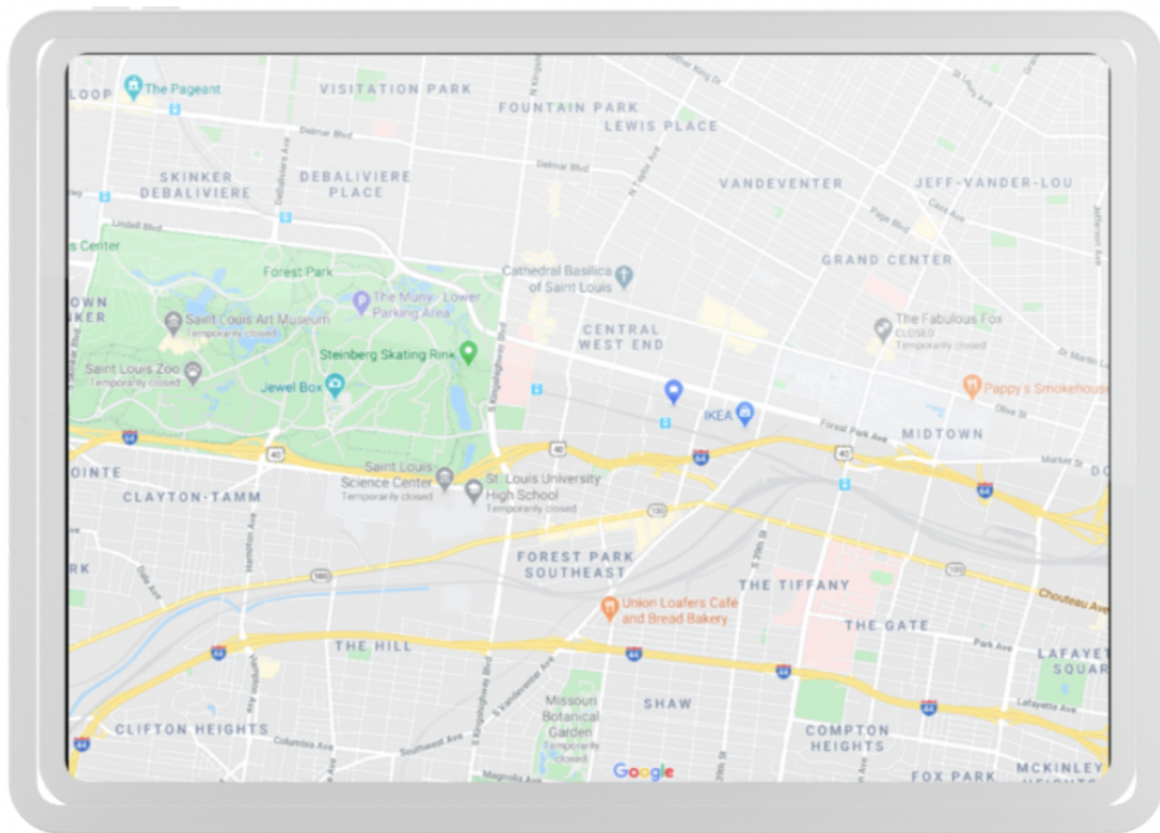
BELIEVE offers to all staff members.

Some of the most noteworthy programs part of our EVP include:

- Strategic Vacations: Every month, staff has (at a minimum) a 3-day weekend or some kind of extended break. This schedule provides teachers the opportunity to maintain work life balance and the opportunity to travel, schedule appointments, or practice self-care.
- Early Release: One Friday a month, teachers leave at 2PM with students. Typically, teachers have professional development from 2PM-4PM every Friday.
- Core Content Schedule: Teachers only teach core content classes Monday-Thursday. Fridays they engage in professional development while students are in arts programming that are led by external partners. They also spend time with their villages and attend field trips or whole school or whole class activities.
- Balanced Schedule: Teachers are guaranteed two planning periods Monday-Thursday.
- Counseling and Mental Health Supports: BELIEVE offers free on-site and virtual therapy and counseling support for all staff. Staff are able to sign-up during summer PD.

## **B.5 - Student Recruitment and Enrollment**

BELIEVE STL Academy aims to be an institution that is centrally located, diverse, and meets the needs of students and families in the community. BELIEVE's recruitment and enrollment strategy are directly connected to our target demographic and the neighborhoods that surround it. BELIEVE will serve St. Louis' Central Corridor with an emphasis on zip codes: 63110, 63108, and 63112. This area encompasses five-seven neighborhoods. In order to properly serve the communities in need, BELIEVE's lottery policy gives preferences to students in 63110, 63108, and 63112.



Although BELIEVE will target students in the priority zip codes, we will also recruit and accept students in the neighboring areas such as: Compton Heights, Tower Grove East, Tower Grove South, Lafayette Square, Fountain Park, and Southwest Garden. These neighborhoods are diverse both racially and socio-economically and are experiencing population growth. The BELIEVE Founding Team understands that the school's location will aid in student recruitment efforts. As we continue to navigate and finalize the exact location of our site, we will ensure that it is easily accessible for families and is centrally located, which will be beneficial for our families.

The table below shows public school options throughout our desired area; specifically looking at the high school options in the 63110, 63108, and 63112 zip codes. The table highlights the grades served at each school, total enrollment, and EOC proficiency rates.

<a href="#">KIPP St. Louis High School</a>				
	Average ACT Composite: 16.3	Math	ELA	Science
<b>Below Basic</b>		59.9%	39.0%	43.5%
<b>Basic</b>		27.8%	44.6%	42.3%
<b>Proficient</b>		9.7%	13.3%	12.2%
<b>Advanced</b>		2.7%	3.1%	2.0%

<a href="#">Gateway Science Academy</a>				
	Average ACT Composite: 19.6	Math	ELA	Science
<b>Below Basic</b>		30%	17.6%	28.7%
<b>Basic</b>		30.7%	37.6%	38%
<b>Proficient</b>		20.0%	27.3%	19.0%
<b>Advanced</b>		19.3%	17.5%	14.3%

## Student Recruitment

As practiced at BELIEVE Circle City, BELIEVE STL is working to ensure that there is a methodical and inclusive approach to student recruitment. BELIEVE aims to be a socioeconomically and racially diverse space. BELIEVE aims to serve a student population that is approximately 85%-95% FRL. Recruitment efforts will be tracked tightly to ensure we achieve these expected outcomes, and so that families stay engaged throughout the enrollment process. The application process will be tracked daily by the Community Engagement Manager. This position is a contracted person during the pre-launch phase. This position will transfer to another role as we open Year 1.

## Student Enrollment & Recruitment Targets

All students who reside within the St. Louis Public School District boundaries will be eligible to enroll in BELIEVE STL Academy. The enrollment process is in full compliance with [RSMo160.410](#) which covers school admissions. In Year 1, BELIEVE aims to enroll

100-125 9th grade students. Each year following, BELIEVE will grow by one grade level and enroll an additional 75-125 students. BELIEVE will be fully grown by year 4 with approximately 400-430 students. The chart below displays student projections:

<b>BELIEVE Enrollment Projections</b>						
<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>
<b>9</b>	125	125	125	125	150	150
<b>10</b>		100	100	100	100	120
<b>11</b>			80	80	80	80
<b>12</b>				75	75	75
<b>Total</b>	125	225	305	380	405	405

### **Student Attrition and Transience**

The Founding Team at BELIEVE aims to create an environment where students enjoy coming to school, feel safe, secure, and happy. With a large emphasis on school culture and creating a different kind of environment, it's important that all students feel a true sense of belonging and that each student's individual needs are met. Pursuant to [RSMo 1604.405.1.\(13\)](#), BELIEVE will maintain a system for families to file formal complaints or grievances regarding the school, programming, or situation that occurred between students or staff. During summer orientation and ongoing orientations, BELIEVE's Leadership Team will discuss the process of how to access the form which will live on the school's website. The Front Office Manager (FOM) will also have access to share the complaint form with families. The FOM will not have access to the results or responses from the survey.

BELIEVE Schools, Inc looks at retention data as a leading indicator of success. That is why it's one of our goals. Each year, for the first four years, 80% of students enrolled at BELIEVE STL Academy will return for the following school year.

BELIEVE anticipates a low rate of student attrition, 20% annually for the following reasons:

1. BELIEVE campuses are a joyful, happy, and safe environment.
2. BELIEVE will be a rigorous, high quality school that meets the academic and social-emotional needs of all students.
3. If a student leaves the limits of St. Louis city, they don't need to leave BELIEVE. They have the ability to remain in school. BELIEVE will help families navigate transportation options.
4. Families have "bought in" to our systems-culture, operations (transportation), and academics. They have proactive information regarding our school and know what to

expect.

5. Data matters. BELIEVE surveys families, students, and staff frequently to ensure we are meeting the needs of those we serve.
6. BELIEVE follows all federal and state laws ensuring students receive the adequate support they need to be successful. This includes following special education guidance, and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

BELIEVE will backfill at 9th and 10th grade in order to serve as many students as possible. The table below illustrates BELIEVE recruitment targets each year which will account for incoming and re-enrolled students. The table below indicated recruitment targets. BELIEVE does not backfill at grades 11th and 12th due to the inability to uphold our model and programming.

BELIEVE Recruitment Targets						
Grade Level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
9	125	125	125	125	150	150
10		25	45	45	45	45
11			BELIEVE will not backfill at 11th and 12th grade. It does not allow us to uphold our model and programming.			
12						
Total	125	150	170	170	195	195

## Lottery Policy

BELIEVE will be a nonsectarian school, meaning we will not charge tuition nor discriminate, for admission on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, gender, income level, or proficiency in the English language per [RSMo 160.405.4.\(1\)](#) and [RSMo 160.415.11](#). BELIEVE will limit admission based on age, but does not have specific admissions requirements. BELIEVE does require all students to complete entrance testing but does not require a particular score in order to enroll. BELIEVE requires all student records to be received from the previous school before the student begins. This includes test scores, grade reports, transcripts, discipline records, medical records, etc. This is to ensure the child is set up for success, enrolled in the correct classes, and the school is prepared for emergencies if they arise. Additionally, families must complete the entire registration packet and attend an orientation before their student attends.

BELIEVE STL Academy aims to be an institutional asset to the neighborhoods closest to our school, so our lottery policy gives preference to students in our target zip codes. Seats



remaining after the lotteries are open to students in St. Louis City on a first-come, first-serve. Pursuant to [RSMo 160.410](#), the enrollment process at BELIEVE STL Academy will be open to:

- all students who reside within the boundaries of the St. Louis Public School District
- non-resident students who transfer from an unaccredited district
- those eligible under the terms of judicial settlements or through urban voluntary transfer programs as defined by [RSMO 167.131](#)

If the number of applicants exceeds capacity, a lottery will be held. BELIEVE will hold two lotteries to enroll students, one in Session 3 on the second Friday in December and one on the second Friday of March, during session 4. If the number of applicants for either lottery exceeds capacity, BELIEVE will enroll students randomly, with preference for eligible new student given in the following order:

1. Children of faculty, staff, and board members
2. Siblings of students currently enrolled as of the lottery data
3. Students who reside in priority zip codes
4. Students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, and
5. Other student applicants

Should a lottery be required, all completed and accepted applications submitted during the enrollment period will be publicly drawn in random order until the capacity is reached. Lotteries will be randomized by a computer and certified by a third-party public official or outside firm to attest to the lottery's fairness. Additional applicants after the lottery will be added to a "waiting list", which will rank applications that were submitted during the enrollment period. Applications received after the enrollment period will be added to the bottom of the waiting list. These applications will be identified by number and by grade. Additional seat capacity after the second lottery will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis to eligible students. In order to have the most accurate student counts and data regarding special education needs, BELIEVE will request information and records pertaining to the students services to ensure the school is adequately prepared to service the student.

BELIEVE will accept applications through the Missouri Charter Public School Association's Central Application System. Through this system families can sign up to receive news and updates via computer or mobile phone. The school will have access to the portal as well. The Front Office Manager and Dean of Operations will have access to the application through the MCPSA's website. When applications are received, the Front Office Manager will follow up with the family to greet them, and explain the enrollment process and timeline. Applications must include release of records and supporting documentation (proof of residency, immunizations).

In order to prepare for special education students immediately, BELIEVE will request information about special education services on the enrollment form (not on the



application). Within 72 hours, BELIEVE will request student records from the receiving school (as required by [RSMo 160.261](#)) from any school the student has attended within the past 12 months. To determine the number of students who might be categorized as “at-risk” students, BELIEVE will keep direct certification forms in the front office for parents to complete to determine eligibility for free and reduced lunch. All enrolled families will be invited to BELIEVE’s Juneteenth celebration which is an opportunity for families to meet the teachers and staff, coordinate transportation logistics, tour the school, and meet other incoming students.

If the school is not able to reach a family with two weeks of enrollment and not able to secure their seat, then BELIEVE may open the spot up to another student on the waitlist. When a family is contacted on the waitlist, they have 72 hours to get back with the school before offering the spot to another family. BELIEVE staff always leaves a voicemail and sends a text when attempting to reach a family. All of these attempts will be logged into the HubSpot CRM system to ensure there is a record in the case of any issues or concerns.

## **Community Demand**

As part of final submission, BELIEVE will submit 15-20 letters of support from families and community organizations in St. Louis City. See Appendix B.5.1.

*Prospective Families:* BELIEVE will have a database of at least 75 families by final submission who are prospective BELIEVE families.

*Summer Program:* BELIEVE will operate a summer program beginning in Summer 2023 for incoming 8th and 9th grade students. This will allow families to experience BELIEVE as we are in the beginning stages of launching.

*Marketing/Social Media:* BELIEVE Schools has over 1k followers on Facebook and over 400 followers on Instagram. BELIEVE regularly communicates updates on this channel. To maintain brand standards, BELIEVE STL Academy will have its own social media accounts and presence that speak to the city of St. Louis and families. Additionally, BELIEVE works with an organization called [Clix Marketing](#), who supports digital advertising and marketing.

*Recruitment Initiatives:* BELIEVE Circle City utilized a variety of additional recruitment strategies to build brand and community awareness, collect family data, and enroll students. The following methods were deemed successful and will be implemented in St. Louis accordingly:

- *Lunch & Learns @ Middle Schools:* We will begin outreach to potential feeder schools

or middle schools partners to host lunch & learns during their lunch or free block during the day. During this time, our Founding Principal or another team member will do a brief presentation to talk and share about what kids would experience at BELIEVE: A Day in the Life! We will utilize various forms of engagement to draw students in: swag/giveaways, showcase students from BELIEVE Circle City, show video content, and provide opportunity for Q&A with staff and students.

- *Lunch & Learns @ BELIEVE*: Once we have an established site, we will work with the same partners to conduct the same activities but do them at our site where students can tour and see the building.
- *Open House*: Once a site is selected, BELIEVE will host Open Houses on the campus for community members, potential teachers and staff, potential students and families to see the school and tour. During these events, guests will have the opportunity to meet teachers, staff members, or other partners and learn more about the programming, model, sports and extracurricular activities, academics, and more.
- *Community Meet-Ups*: Until we determine and secure a facility, we will host Community Meet-Ups at various locations across the city. These locations could include one of our partners' schools, office spaces, or a local ice cream shop or something similar. BELIEVE will get pre-approval and signed contracts prior to advertising the event. BELIEVE's insurance will provide coverage for these events when not on our campus.

## **B.6 - Parent/Guardian, Community, Higher Education & Employee Involvement**

### **Family Engagement**

BELIEVE values the voice of its families. We strive to create a community where all voices are heard and feel supported to have choice and direction in their child's education. In order to engage and interact with families as much as possible, BELIEVE has the following standard touchpoints with families. These are in addition to any other sporting events or extracurricular activities that parents have the ability to participate in.

#### **Purpose Pathway Meetings**

These meetings happen four times a year. It's a time for the student, parents, and village leaders to meet to discuss the student's progress, grade reports, behavior, and set goals. During the meeting, parents have the opportunity to provide feedback for the school through an online tool on [Formstack](#).

## POSSIP

POSSIP surveys will go out to families monthly to collect feedback and ratings from the school. Leadership team members review the feedback and follow up with families as needed.

## Sharing Information with Families at BELIEVE

Accurate and timely information sharing is essential to BELIEVE staff and families. This ensures families are on the same page as staff and have all information they need at all times. BELIEVE uses a variety of channels to communicate directly with families. The table below outlines the various channels of communication that families have access to.

Parent Communication Channels		
SIS/SchoolRunner	Direct to Family	Digital
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Weekly Grade Reports</li><li>• Discipline Logs</li><li>• Tracks Communications</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remind</li><li>• Phone Calls</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Website</li><li>• Social Media</li></ul>

### SIS/SchoolRunner

The channel serves as the parents' real-time portal for weekly grade reports, discipline log, and tracks communication with teachers. At any time, parents and families can login to view their students' data and reach out to their teacher or village leader. BELIEVE is exploring using Alma or Lumen for an SIS system. On both systems, BELIEVE will have the ability to do robocalls in the case of emergency or last minute news or updates for families.

### Direct to Family

These channels are the direct means of reaching the family. During orientation, families will enroll in Remind so they receive text message updates from the schools. Remind is used to send mass updates. Examples of times when Remind is used include but are not limited to: School Delays and Closures, Emergency Situations, Links to Weekly Family Newsletter, and updates around sports and games as they impact school-wide.

### Digital

BELIEVE will encourage all families to follow us on social media during orientation. In addition to Remind, all updates, news, and scheduling related items will be posted and shared on social media and posted on the website. School calendars, sports schedules, and more will always be available on the website for parent and family download.

## **Policies**

### **Complaints and Grievances**

Pursuant to [RSMo 160.405.13](#) students and parents have the right to express school-related issues or concerns to the faculty and leadership team. BELIEVE assures students and parents the opportunity for time to review concerns. Staff members make an honest and forthright effort to resolve concerns as quickly as possible. If a parent is not satisfied with the way a concern was addressed, the parent can write a letter to the Board Chair via the Front Office Manager. The complaint should include the complainantees' name and students' names, contact information, description of the complaint, and detailed information regarding the school's action upon the initial raising of the complaint. The Board will render all decisions regarding the complaints.

If the parent is not satisfied with the Board's decision, the parent may present their complaint to the Missouri Charter Public School Commission (MCPSC). The MCPSC may choose to investigate and respond. The parent can get the contact information for the authorizer from the school's front desk. The Office Manager will put the information regarding the complaint into the student's file and will log it in the student's digital file in the SIS.

If the parent is still not satisfied with the MCPSC response, the parent may present their complaint to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), which may choose to investigate and respond. DESE has the power and the duty to take remedial action. The Office Manager will store any information from DESE in the student's file and will log in the student's digital file within the SIS.

## **Community & Higher Education Engagement**

### **Partners that Provide Student Programming & Enrichment**

As described throughout the application, BELIEVE operates on a traditional academic schedule Monday-Thursday. Friday's are called Freedom Friday's at BELIEVE. This is a time where a student's day is broken into three blocks. Activities and programming can be viewed below.

#### **A Block**

Arts Block. Students participate in fine and practical arts courses during their freshman

year for two hours every Friday. After they've earned their arts credits, they may take physical education, health, personal finance, or another state required elective course.

### **B Block**

BELIEVE Block. Students spend time in the village for an hour every Friday where they participate in activities like: portfolio creation, team building activities, self-identity and self-exploration projects, or social justice projects.

### **C Block**

College, Community, and Career Block. Students are exposed to colleges through research projects, and college tours, participate in community service projects, and attend job shadows, career fairs, or observe career panels. The goal is to expose students to as many post-high school opportunities as possible while also finding passions within their community to give back and support.

BELIEVE works with external partners heavily on Freedom Fridays. We partner with organizations and experts in said fields to run the programming. This allows our students to have exposure to activities that they traditionally wouldn't have access to or learn from someone who has been in the field for most of their career. During A Block, teachers are able to participate in professional development while students are with other instructors. This alleviates the need to have half days or hold teachers after school hours for professional development. Over the next several months, BELIEVE is meeting with a wide variety of organizations and individuals to determine partnership opportunities for Freedom Fridays. The table below outlines some of our existing partners and others that we are seeking partnership with. MOUS or Letters of Support can be viewed in Appendix B.5.1.

<b>Potential Community Partners</b>	
<b>Partner Name</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Regional Arts Council	For Fine & Practical Arts Programming
ECO Act	For Environmental Science Programming
St. Patrick Center	For community service projects
St. Louis Area Foodbank	For community service projects
Forest Park Forever	For community service projects
MusicLink Foundation	For Fine & Practical Arts Programming

Mission: St. Louis	For community service projects; resource for some families
--------------------	---

In addition to Freedom Fridays, BELIEVE offers club and extracurriculars (outside of athletics and sports) one day a week during 7th period. At BELIEVE Circle City High School, we noticed the number of students participating in clubs and afterschool activities was low due to transportation issues or needing to support at home with younger siblings. We then implemented 7th Period Clubs every Thursday. This provides students' an outlet once per week to participate in a club or activity they are passionate about or enjoy. BELIEVE Clubs will include but are not limited to: Anime Club, Business & Entrepreneurship Club, Gardening Club, Cosmetology Club, Cooking Club, Yearbook & Photography Club, and Student Council. Students are able to start any club they want as long as they have two other interested students and a staff sponsor.

### Early College & Career Partnerships

As an integral part of our model, BELIEVE aims to have a large variety of college and career partners offering diverse program offerings. The table below outlines the college and career partners we are working to secure over the coming months (prior to sponsorship). Partners with a solidified partnership are (\*) and have a Letter of Support included in Appendix B.5.1.

Partner Name	College/Career	Pathway Details
St. Louis University	College	Education; Bachelor's Degree; Health Science Focused Students
St. Louis Community College	College	Core42, Associate's Degree, Career Certification
SIU	College	Pre-Med; Health Science Focused Students
Harris-Stowe	College	Core42
CSPA Program	Career	Enterprise Software Program; IT
Ranken	College/Career	Technical Program
Launch Code	Career	Coding and IT
Bell Brown Medical Institute	Career	Medical
Merit America	Career	Technology
NPower	Career	Partnered with STLCC; free technical programming and

		development
Building Union Diversity Program	Career	Construction Apprenticeship Program

## C.1 - Budget

BELIEVE Schools, Inc financial strategy is centered around our academic model and programming. The projected 5-year budget model that is included in Appendix C.1.1 demonstrates BELIEVE's ability to set and achieve priorities while in the midst of growth. BELIEVE Schools, Inc partnered with [Afton](#) to craft the 5-year projections. Afton prepared additional supporting documentation that include recommendations which can be found in Appendix C.1.1. As represented in the budget model and first-year cash flow, BELIEVE's fiscal year begins July 1st and ends June 30th.

BELIEVE utilized resources provided by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Jorge Munoz of Afton Group, and presented early projections to future partner, Paul Greenwood at EdOps.

### Budget Model

BELIEVE'S budget shows our capacity to scale instructional and support staff, building and executive administration, and facilities and service costs for Years 1-5. We relied on conservative budgetary estimates to ensure continued financial solvency. For example, although we expect to receive additional grants and donations, our budget only includes grants that have been committed to BELIEVE in writing for use during operational years. Further, we do not assume any increases in per-ADA federal, state, or local revenue.

BELIEVE'S annual student enrollment totals drive both revenues and costs. As discussed in B.5 - Student Recruitment & Enrollment, BELIEVE will enroll 100-125 students in Year 1, and an additional 78 students in each class thereafter. Ultimately, BELIEVE will enroll 500-550 students by the 2026-2027 school year. The budget maintains an average reserve fund of 10% per annum (minimum 6.77% in Year 1, maximum 16.47% in Year 5).

### Revenues

State aid has been conservatively projected using a foundation formula funding of \$9,250 per WADA (including classroom trust fund dollars for Year 2-5 and before our 1.5% sponsor

		development
Building Union Diversity Program	Career	Construction Apprenticeship Program

## C.1 - Budget

BELIEVE Schools, Inc financial strategy is centered around our academic model and programming. The projected 5-year budget model that is included in Appendix C.1.1 demonstrates BELIEVE’s ability to set and achieve priorities while in the midst of growth. BELIEVE Schools, Inc partnered with [Afton](#) to craft the 5-year projections. Afton prepared additional supporting documentation that include recommendations which can be found in Appendix C.1.1. As represented in the budget model and first-year cash flow, BELIEVE’s fiscal year begins July 1st and ends June 30th.

BELIEVE utilized resources provided by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Jorge Munoz of Afton Group, and presented early projections to future partner, Paul Greenwood at EdOps.

### Budget Model

BELIEVE’S budget shows our capacity to scale instructional and support staff, building and executive administration, and facilities and service costs for Years 1-5. We relied on conservative budgetary estimates to ensure continued financial solvency. For example, although we expect to receive additional grants and donations, our budget only includes grants that have been committed to BELIEVE in writing for use during operational years. Further, we do not assume any increases in per-ADA federal, state, or local revenue.

BELIEVE’S annual student enrollment totals drive both revenues and costs. As discussed in B.5 - Student Recruitment & Enrollment , BELIEVE will enroll 100-125 students in Year 1, and an additional 78 students in each class thereafter. Ultimately, BELIEVE will enroll 500-550 students by the 2026-2027 school year. The budget maintains an average reserve fund of 10% per annum (minimum 6.77% in Year 1, maximum 16.47% in Year 5).

### Revenues

State aid has been conservatively projected using a foundation formula funding of \$9,250 per WADA (including classroom trust fund dollars for Year 2-5 and before our 1.5% sponsor



fee per [RSMo160.400.11](#)), which is lower than current per WADA payment amounts to other St. Louis charter schools in FY20. BELIEVE projects to serve a large population of Latinx and English Language Learners based on our recruitment targeting and location. Although we have included special education staffing and outsourced services in our budget model, we have not modeled receiving WADA weight for students with disabilities. Beginning Year 2, projections include revenues from Proposition C funding at \$1,000 per prior year WADA. Outside of already committed funds, the budget includes no private donations.

BELIEVE STL Academy is a tuition-free school and students and families do not have to pay to attend, [RSMo 160.415.11](#).

Federal funding for IDEA Part B, Title I, and Title II were calculated using a weighted average of peer and near-school per-pupil funding. The National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program were calculated on the most recent reimbursement rates, and food service was expensed at 5% above projected revenues.

## **Expenses**

### **Personnel**

To recruit exceptional faculty, BELIEVE offers leading opportunities for professional growth and compensation. Our median starting salary for teachers will be approximately \$41,000, and no new faculty member earns less than \$45,000 per year. Health benefit premiums have been modeled at \$400/staff/member. Salaries increases of 2% annually have been modeled. By Year 5, our median staff salary is \$56,000+. At St. Louis Public Schools, by comparison, the base starting salary is \$39,015 and the median faculty salary is \$43,152. More information can be viewed in Appendix C.1.1.

### **Facilities**

While BELIEVE has not selected a site yet, the team is working with our facilities group to ensure the lease of the building is aligned and within budget. A Facilities acquisition timeline will be available in late Spring 2023. BELIEVE will share this with the Missouri Public Charter School Commission at that time.

### **Capital Improvements**

BELIEVE is planning for minor cosmetic upgrades to the site. BELIEVE will not invest in a property that requires significant infrastructure changes and development.

## **Contingency Plans**

To prevent any financial shortfalls, the Board and school management work diligently to ensure state and national policies are met and monitor enrollment fluctuations. Each month, EdOps prepares a financial report alongside the ED which will be shared and presented to the Board monthly. Priority always aligns with the network's mission and

support students. As such, all contingencies scale spending to maintain approximately the same ratio of spending in instruction and technology.

To guard against serious shifts in anticipated revenues or expenditures, the Chief Operations Officer monitors the budget daily, and if necessary, advises the ED on swift corrective actions. These actions may include:

- Renegotiating contracted services or seeking new providers;
- Modifying our facilities plans to save on long-term costs;
- Adjusting school staffing in accordance with the below; and
- Seeking a line of credit with our banking institution to cover temporary cash-flow shortfalls (currently bank with Chase).

As done at BELIEVE Circle City, BELIEVE STL has provided a hiring schedule contingent on student enrollment for each school year. BELIEVE makes hiring decisions after a requisite number of students enroll. In Year 1, BELIEVE plans to hire and enroll roughly 100 students and 10 teachers/staff members. Should enrollment numbers be lower than anticipated, BELIEVE commits to maintaining a student-staff ratio of 10:1, as well as one SPED-certified faculty member and English Language Learner faculty member. [RSMo 160.405.4\(1\)](#). BELIEVE is nonsectarian in its employment practices, pursuant to RSMo

By April 25th 2023, BELIEVE will have a board approved budget for pre-opening and opening year per [RSMo 160.405.1](#). This date is strategically set so the board has several months to convene and learn systems and programs while the BELIEVE team finalizes the budget with existing partner, Bookkeeping Plus, out of Indianapolis. Upon approval of the budget, BELIEVE will work with the board and EdOps to implement as we seek sponsorship with DESE.

To remain conservative, BELIEVE has only included confirmed fundraising in the 5-year budget. However, BELIEVE continues to seek support from current, past, and new funders to safeguard the long-term financial health of the organization.

If the board deems the organization is under financial stress or hardship, per [MSo 161.520](#), the Board Chair alongside the CEO will report these findings and predictions to the Missouri Public Charter School Commission and DESE.

## **Pre-Operational Finances**

BELIEVE Schools, Inc has spent the last 4 years laying the foundation for strong private fundraising campaigns. Since BELIEVE Circle City High School's launch in 2020, BELIEVE

has maintained strong relationships with initial funders and has continued to secure funding due to strong performance and outcomes. Funders are in support of BELIEVE's expansion and growth.

**NewSchools Venture Fund (\$215,000):** BELIEVE Schools, Inc has been awarded \$215,000 through NSVF previously. BELIEVE has applied for another \$215,000 for replication funds through NewSchools Venture Fund. BELIEVE will find out if funds are awarded in late spring 2023.

**Charter School Growth Fund (\$250,000-\$600,000):** The Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF) invests in new, innovative personalized learning schools as part of its Next Generation Schools Portfolio. BELIEVE Schools, Inc has previously been awarded over \$600,000 through CSGF. BELIEVE has a strong relationship and partnership with the organization and Grantors. BELIEVE is in the process of applying for replication funding with the organization.

**The Opportunity Trust (\$125,000):** Pre-launch funding has been approved for the 2022-23 school year from the Opportunity Trust. With approval of the charter application, additional funding streams will be released. A Commitment Letter from the Opportunity Trust is in Appendix C.1.2.

**Federal Charter School Program Grant (up to \$1,500,000):** Although not included in the budget, BELIEVE Schools, Inc applied for Federal CSP funds. If not awarded, BELIEVE will reapply next year with implemented feedback from the response. BELIEVE will apply for any available CSP grants during pre-operation.

## C.2 - Financial Management

BELIEVE is registered as a Missouri nonprofit, see Appendix B.1.1, and operating with regulation in [RSMO 355.001](#) , [RSMo 160.405.4\(4\)](#) and [RSMo 160.405.1\(10\)](#) To continue to maintain strong fiscal practices, BELIEVE Schools, Inc will follow Missouri Charter Public School Association's financial management policies which align with state and federal requirements. To ensure fiscal health, BELIEVE will contract with [EdOps](#) (see statement of work in Appendix C.2.3) beginning April 2023.

In order to be in compliance with Missouri Charter Public School Commission, BSTLA will ensure policies are created for the following procedures:

- Audit and Financial Statements
- Bank Procedures
- Board Resolution Adoption
- Cash Management
- Conflict of Interest Questionnaire
- Capital Assets Accounting
- Designation of Financial Institution
- School Accounting System

- Payroll Policy
- Federal Fiscal Compliance
- State Tax Sources
- State and Federal Projects
- Borrowed Funds
- Bonded Indebtedness
- Enrollment Tracking
- Attendance Eligibility
- Eligibility for FRL
- Special Education and English Proficient Enrollment

The BELIEVE STL Board will review policies and procedures annually to ensure the school is in compliance and meets the standards of BELIEVE Schools, Inc fiscal practices. The Executive Director is responsible for setting the vision of the school in all areas—academic, financial, operational, and cultural. The ED ensures the organization is led into a positive light toward the organization’s ultimate mission. Budget development, strategy, priority and goal setting, compliance, and instructional and academic practices are overseen by the ED. The ED is solely responsible for the organization's financial and operational performance. The Chief Operations Officer is responsible for day-to-day financial oversight, employee payroll, managing employee benefits, and disbursing payments to service partners.

As mentioned, BELIEVE STL Academy is seeking to partner with EdOps. Through this partnership, EdOps will support accounting policies and procedures, aid in the annual audit, help prepare the budget, provide monthly financials, and develop the school’s Operations team in finance and accounting practices – specifically for the state of Missouri. Day-to-day the EdOps team will work closely with the Chief Operations Officer and BELIEVE STL Academy with bi-monthly meetings with the Director of Strategy and Growth and monthly meetings with the Executive Director.

If approved, BELIEVE will contract with EdOps immediately to begin assembling financial packages, refining the budget, and begin to plan for pre-launch and year 1.

## **Budget**

BELIEVE STL Academy will operate as an independent, local LEA with a fiscal year ending June 30th. The Executive Director is responsible for developing, managing, and overseeing the budget. During the budget process, the ED works with the Chief Operations Officer and requests specific pieces of the budget from school-based personnel, like the Principal. Additionally, EdOps will help support during the budget design process. By March 1st of each school year, the ED submits a draft of the annual budget and statement of cash to the Finance Chair Committee for review which will then be shared with the overall board. The Finance Chair will work with the rest of the Finance Committee to review the budget for accuracy and will present an overview to the Board of Directors. The entire board must review the budget per [RSMo 160.405.1](#) and vote for approval. By May 31st of each year, the budget should be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors. The Board Secretary will record this approval in meeting minutes which will ultimately be reviewed during the audit process. Per [RSMo 160.405.5\(4\)](#), BELIEVE will source an independent audit firm to

provide annual audit services.

During the preoperational year, the ED and the Chief Operations Officer begin drafting a prospective budget with EdOps. The budget will go up for approval during the January board meeting so key personnel decisions and purchases can begin. This is imperative for key hires during recruiting season. Once funding is confirmed by DESE, EdOps will help guide budget revisions with the Chief Operations Officer and ED. The ED, Chief Operations Officer, with the support of EdOps, ensures that BELIEVE's budget follows a budgeting process consistent with Federal and Missouri statutes, State Board of Education Rules and Regulations, and State Accounting Codes as outlined by the [Missouri Financial Accounting Manual](#). Each month, financial statements will be generated by EdOps which will be submitted to the Board Finance Committee for review. Financial statements will include: Cash Flow, Balance Sheets, Statements of Activity, Grant Reports, and Check transaction statements. The Finance Committee chair will then present a summary of the financial reports to the full Board.

The Board will adopt a procurement policy that complies with federal guidelines relating to public schools. No purchase shall be made unless the goods/services purchased are reflected in the budget or otherwise approved by the ED. If necessary, significant (*value of \$20,000 or more*) purchases arise beyond the budget, the ED and the Chief Operations Officer will review the budget and make a recommendation to the Finance Committee regarding the best course of action. Upon committee review and approval, modifications to the budget must be approved by the Board of Directors. The Finance Committee will develop a policy for handling emergency situations and determine a dollar amount for an emergency fund with the ED.

## **Policies, Systems, and Procedures**

BELIEVE Schools, Inc ,in partnership with the existing financial partner, Bookkeeping Plus, in Indiana, have crafted and refined a system of internal controls that align with the state of Missouri. Network wide Internal Controls can be found in Appendix C.2.1.

### **Internal Controls**

**Document Control:** Accounting system documents are signed and dated upon recording.

**Financial Data Security:** Accounting software is accessible only to the ED, Chief Operations Officer, and EdOps. Each individual will have their own username and password. User access will vary depending on their role within the organization.

**Processing Controls:** Controls identify errors before they are posted to the general ledger.

Common processing controls include source document matching, clerical accuracy of documents, and general ledger account code checking.

**Reconciliation Controls:** Controls identify errors after transactions have been posted and the general ledger has been run. The process involves reconciling selected general ledger control accounts to subsidiary ledgers.

**Restricted Access:** Only authorized personnel have access to valuable and moveable assets. This includes: Executive Director, Chief Operations Officer, and EdOps. Users' access will vary depending on role.

**Records Retention:** All records are maintained as long as the IRS regulations require, federal grant requirements, audit requirements, and other legalities as needed.

**Grants and Federal Programs:** The Chief Operations Officer will work with EdOps to ensure all Federal Programs and Grants are allocated, tracked, monitored, and expensed according to federal or grant guidelines. Once a CFO is hired, they will also support in this work.

## Cash Flow

**Deposits:** All cash transactions are recorded in writing, signed, and dated by the ED or DOO on behalf of BELIEVE STL Academy. The DOO is responsible for depositing cash in BELIEVE STL's bank account. Deposits are made within 72 hours of a cash receipt. Undeposited cash is kept on school premises in a secure location with limited access. Cash would be kept in this safe location for purposes of school events or extracurricular activities like a basketball game. The school will never keep more than \$500 on-site at any time. A copy of the validated deposit slip is returned to BELIEVE STL Academy's DOO within 24 hours of the deposit. Checks received are endorsed for "for deposit only", and deposits are made weekly by someone other than the person who prepared the deposit (*ED or Principal*). Similar to cash, undeposited checks are kept in the safe in the DOO office. The only individuals with access to the safe are the ED, DOO, and Principal.

**Expenditures:** As a network wide rule, cash is not used to make purchases except for small outlays from petty cash. In no circumstance, will a check be made payable to "Cash". The only individuals who have the ability to sign checks are: Board President, Board Treasurer, Executive Director, Chief Operations Officer, and School Principal. All invoicing processing (physical and online), payments, and payroll with EdOps minimizes check and credit card expenses. All expenditures are documented and accounted for by daily receipts. Any authorized check or credit card receipt over \$5,000 drafted on BELIEVE Schools, Inc bank account must be pre-approved and signed by the ED. Any purchase over \$20,000 must be approved by the Board Chair. EdOps will set up the school's online accounts payable platform designed to maximize efficiency around invoice processing and archiving. EdOps

will lead the setup and implementation of the financial system, provide training to staff, and update the system with new vendors as they are chosen.

**Petty Cash:** Petty cash is maintained in a safe in the Dean of Operations office. The amount within the safe shall never exceed \$500. Any payments made from petty cash are documented digitally in the Petty Cash Spreadsheet. This spreadsheet indicates the date, amount, person(s) involved, and reason for payment. Receipts from purchases will be stored with petty cash and will be given to the DOO within 48 hours of the transaction. Petty cash is not used to cash checks.

## External Checks

**Audit:** As required by the State of Missouri, BELIEVE will be audited annually by an independent certified public accountant in conformance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The Board, along with the Executive Director, will select the auditing firm. The Audit is made public pursuant to [RSMo 165.121](#) and included in the Annual Secretary of the Board Report (ASBR), as required by [RSMo 162.821](#). The ASBR is submitted to the State Board of Education, The Missouri Charter Public School Commission, and can be accessed by the general public. Additionally, BELIEVE Schools, Inc files all necessary federal and state tax returns.

**Conflict of Interest:** Every year, BELIEVE's Executive Leadership Team and Board of Directors complete a conflict-of-interest survey to determine any potential areas of concern or conflicts as defined by Missouri law. Included in BELIEVE Schools, Inc Bylaws, a conflict of interest policy must be adopted by the Board. There shall be no transaction or purchase which constitutes a legal conflict of interest. EdOps will provide management and oversight around RFP when contracting with external vendors and individuals to ensure vendor contracts do not create a conflict of interest. This includes but is not limited to: food services, insurance, janitorial, food service, technology, and technology systems.

**Designation of Financial Institution:** BELIEVE Schools, Inc currently utilizes JP Morgan Chase Bank for its designation of funds. BELIEVE Schools, Inc has already created a separate account for BELIEVE STL Academy. The Board will adopt a resolution as part of the bylaws that includes this information. The ED must receive authorization from the Board prior to opening any future accounts for business operations or to hold assets.

## Record Keeping

**Student Information System:** The Chief Operations Officer will be responsible for selecting a Student Information System. BELIEVE Circle City High School in Indianapolis currently utilizes Alma which has proven effective and keeps the school in compliance regarding



student files. Currently, The Chief Operations Officer is exploring [Lumen Touch's Bright Student](#), to explore the Missouri based electronic SIS system. The Lumen system is comprehensive and has the following capabilities: student enrollment, registration, attendance, discipline, scheduling, assessments, transcripts, transportation, food service, special education status, and English proficiency. As required by FERPA, all student records will be kept confidential. The Chief Operations Officer is responsible for reporting data to the state and federal authorities. Both Alma and Lumen have the ability to track and store data from multiple years to ensure compliance with the state.

**Payroll:** The Chief Operations Officer will work with Human Capital Concepts (HCC) to ensure employees are paid accurately and on-time in accordance with Fair Labor and Statistics and other local, state, and federal laws. BELIEVE Schools, Inc currently contracts with HCC at BELIEVE Circle City High School in Indianapolis. They ensure that payroll is processed accurately and on-time, maintain employee files, handle HR issues if they arise, and work alongside finance teams to ensure grants are effectively utilized and tracked if necessary.

**School Accounting:** In partnership with EdOps, BELIEVE will adhere to the guidelines of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. EdOps will provide accounting functions while working alongside BELIEVE's Dean of Operations to maintain records and source application of funds. EdOps also provides supporting tracking accounts payable and receivables, closing monthly accounts, providing financial information for Form 990, analysis of monthly financial statements, preparation of finance presentations, attendance at monthly Board and/or Finance committee meetings, management of federal and state grants, and assisting with the budgeting and auditing process. All records must contain information relating to grant or subgrant awards, assets, income, outlays or expenditure, liabilities, off balance sheet obligations, and more. All incomes (including grants, awards, donations, and program funds) will be administered according to state and federal guidelines, including Code of Federal Regulations, Uniform Grant Guidance (OMNI), ESSA (pursuant to [RSMo 160.405.4\(4\)](#)), and the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). Audit records will be public record and made available for parents and community members to review on the school's website.

## Insurance

The BELIEVE Network team is currently working with its existing insurance provider, [The Hartford Group](#) through [Selective Insurance](#), to acquire a comprehensive insurance coverage to indemnify the school, board, staff, and faculty against tort claims. Liability Coverage will be secured from Selective Insurance which is an A+ rated insurance provider. Members of the board will review the coverage annually as required by [RSMo 160.405.\(4\)](#). Learn more about The Hartford Group and Selective Insurance in Appendix C.2.2.



**Coverage will be in compliance with [RSMo 160.405\(4\)](#) which will include:**

- Directors' and Officer' Liability
- Commercial General for Outsourcing Major Operational Tasks
- Comprehensive Liability that expressly covers corporal punishment and athletic participation
- Educators' Legal Liability
- Employment Practices Liability
- Sexual Abuse Liability (either a separate policy or a separate part of general comprehensive insurance with independent limits)
- Workers Compensation Liability
- Excess or Umbrella Liability (i.e., a bundled commercial general liability, directors' and officers' liability, automobile liability, and sexual abuse liability)
- A surety bond pursuant with [RSMo 160.405.14\(1\)](#) for the school's chief financial officer in an amount to be determined based on the cash flow of the school or evidence that school's liability insurance covers employee theft insurance. Until CFO is hired, this will cover the Director of Operations and Dean of Operations. Once a CFO is hired, they will maintain an insurance policy pursuant with [RSMo 160.405.4\(8\)](#).
- Include evidence to support the budget expense assumptions related to insuring the school such as copies of broker or agency estimates

## C.3 - Facility

From experience, the BELIEVE Schools, Inc team understands the importance of finding adequate facility space. As noted by [Charter School Capital](#), facility challenges are one of the biggest barriers charter schools face. BELIEVE Schools, Inc's first site in Indianapolis began as a lease and was ultimately purchased through support of BlueHub Capital. With that, BELIEVE has identified a team of experts to find, select, and score facilities options to make sure the school will have a safe, secure, and financially-sound building.

### Facility Advisory Team

Team Member Name	Area of Expertise
Robert Baldwin	Commercial Real Estate Broker with an extensive history of securing facilities for charter schools. See Bio in Appendix B.2.1.
Jesse Dixon	Partner at The Opportunity Trust and board member.
Jorge Munoz	Financial Advisor at Afton Group.
Lennel Hunter	Associate Partner at The Opportunity Trust, who is

	spearheading a partnership with Levelfield Partners to lead facility search and renovation project completion. St. Louis local who knows the area and needs of BELIEVE; Board Chair at The Leadership School.
Antonio Pacifico	Associate Partner at The Opportunity Trust who is assisting with Facilities searches, community engagement support, and aiding through the application process.

### Criteria for Facility Selection

BELIEVE aims to be located in the 63110, 63108, and 63112 areas. Our goal is to be centrally located so students all across the city can easily access the site. Additionally, our college and career partners are centrally located and it would be necessary for our students to be able to access their campuses.

The BELIEVE STL Academy campus is considering the following as most important in order to select a potential site:

- Centralized location for easy access to families living in the area
- Proximity to college partners
- Proximity to public transportation
- Safety and security of the neighborhood is overall safe
- Requires minimal structural renovations


As outlined in our model, BELIEVE is an early college and career school. Our students will be dually enrolled at one of our college or career partners while attending BELIEVE STL Academy. With that, it's important for our campus to be located near those partners so students and staff have easy access for classes, meetings, and programming. Additionally, the central location is important for our families as we anticipate a majority of our families to live and work in the community we are located in.

The central location will also provide convenience and access to some of St. Louis' most historic organizations and resources like the St. Louis Zoo, Forest Park, Grand Center, The Pulitzer Arts Foundation, and Metro Theatre Company. As outlined, Freedom Fridays are intended to provide exposure for all students to activities, programming, and post-high school opportunities. A central location will allow us to do this with more affordable transportation options and ease of access.

Lastly, facility and building location plays a major role in the enrollment process. Families want to feel a sense of security knowing their child is in a safe neighborhood and can travel to and from school safely. For most of our students, they will access our campus via public transportation. It's important for BELIEVE to be walking distance to a high-traffic Metro stop. In addition to safety, parents and families want to ensure their child is attending a

clean space that will be ready when school starts in August 2024. With that in mind, BELIEVE is working to secure a facility by November 2023–January 2024 to ensure that the building is ready in time for Summer 2024 for parents and families to visit, tour, and meet.

While BELIEVE STL has not yet secured a facility, we are working with a team of local experts who are helping to minimize the risk associated with finding a great facility (see table below). To the extent possible, the BELIEVE team has drafted an evaluation rubric which includes a score sheet. This list details the items that are most important to the school, important infrastructure needs, and a wishlist. This document can be viewed [here](#) and found in Appendix C.3.1.

 <b>BELIEVE</b>	
Facilities Must Have List	
Item	Considerations
<b>Classification</b>	
Consider Current Building Classification	What is the current Class Status? What is level of risk?
Previous Ownership History	Detailed history of previous ownership and occupancy
Previous Usage History	What were the previous uses of the space? Past 5-10 history if possible.
Current Zoning Information	How is the building current zoned? Will any new permits need to be filed?
<b>Location</b>	
Proximity to public transportation	Is the building easily accessible via public transportation?
Proximity to college and career partners	Is the building easily accessible to college and career partners?
Consider overall neighborhood	Access to food, stores, resources etc
Consider neighborhood safety rating	What is the neighborhoods safety rating?
<b>Condition</b>	
Previous Inspections	When was the most recent building inspection?
Prior Deficiencies	Any history of mold, asbestos, or other issues?
HVAC	Age of HVAC system?
Roof	Age of Roof? Any history of damage, repairs, or insurance claims?
Plumbing/Water	Current state of facility wide plumbing and water system. Last date of lead testing?
Fire System	What is the current fire system? Dry or wet system? Last date of inspection?
Electrical System	Prior reports of issues or faulty wiring/lines? Last inspection or testing?
<b>Cost</b>	
Anticipated Rent/Lease Amount	
Potential for Future Purchase	
Potential for Co-Location or shared space	
Average Monthly Utilities Expenses	
<b>Additional Considerations/Must Haves</b>	
Gymnasium	
Cafeteria Space	
Outdoor Field Space (or close proximity to field space)	
Building Security System/PA System	
Full Service Kitchen w/ necessary hook-ups	
Classroom Technology: Are classrooms wired for current tech needs?	

## Space Requirements

The BELIEVE team is committed to finding a facility that requires minimal structural changes and renovations. Our goal is to secure a space that is close to move-in ready with minor cosmetic updates and technological upgrades–like a bell system, classroom technology etc. Our goal is to find a facility that is suitable for long-term usage for up to 7-10

years. **The list below outlines requirements for a permanent facility:**

- ADA Compliant
- Adequate parking space for staff (or close to area that school can provide passes)
- Safe area for student pick-up and drop off
- Less than a quarter mile from major Metro bus Line
- Roughly 17-20 classrooms
- Adequate bathroom facilities for students and staff
- 5-7 rooms that can be used for offices for support staff and administration
- Nurse's office
- Classroom with access to plumbing or can easily be converted (for science courses)
- Outdoor learning space
- Food preparation space configured for commercial kitchen equipment

The table below outlines specifications for the facility from Year 1 to Year 5. This progression allows us to expand and enrich the facility as we grow in enrollment. At full scale, we envision needing access to 50,000-60,000 square feet.

Year	Facility Criteria
<b>Year 1:</b> 2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 7 Classrooms; 3 Office Spaces</li> <li>● Teacher Workroom/Collaboration Space</li> <li>● Food Preparation Space/Kitchen</li> <li>● Bathroom Facilities (<i>Student/staff</i>)</li> <li>● Safe pick-up and drop-off space for students</li> <li>● Parking suitable and cost-effective for staff</li> <li>● Access to public transportation (<i>less than .25 mile</i>)</li> <li>● Large Assembly/Gym Space/Cafeteria Space</li> <li>● Multimedia Space/Library</li> </ul>
<b>Year 2:</b> 2025-2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 14 Classrooms; 4 Office Spaces</li> <li>● Teacher Workroom/Collaboration Space</li> <li>● Food Preparation Space/Kitchen</li> <li>● Bathroom Facilities (<i>Student/staff</i>)</li> <li>● Safe pick-up and drop-off space for students</li> <li>● Parking suitable and cost-effective for staff</li> <li>● Access to public transportation (<i>less than .25 mile</i>)</li> <li>● Classroom with access to plumbing or can easily be converted (for science courses)</li> <li>● Large Assembly/Gym Space/Cafeteria Space</li> </ul>

<b>Year 3:</b> 2026-2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 21 Classrooms; 5 Office Spaces</li> <li>● Teacher Workroom/Collaboration Space</li> <li>● Food Preparation Space/Kitchen</li> <li>● Bathroom Facilities (<i>Student/staff</i>)</li> <li>● Safe pick-up and drop-off space for students</li> <li>● Parking suitable and cost-effective for staff</li> <li>● Access to public transportation (<i>less than .25 mile</i>)</li> <li>● Outdoor Classroom Space</li> <li>● Classroom with access to plumbing or can easily be converted (for science courses)</li> <li>● Designated Nurse's Office</li> <li>● Large Assembly/Gym Space/Cafeteria Space</li> </ul>
<b>Year 4:</b> 2027-2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 27 Classrooms; 6 Office Spaces</li> <li>● Teacher Workroom/Collaboration Space</li> <li>● Food Preparation Space/Kitchen</li> <li>● Bathroom Facilities (<i>Student/staff</i>)</li> <li>● Safe pick-up and drop-off space for students</li> <li>● Parking suitable and cost-effective for staff</li> <li>● Access to public transportation (<i>less than .25 mile</i>)</li> <li>● Outdoor Classroom Space</li> <li>● Classroom with access to plumbing or can easily be converted (for science courses)</li> <li>● Large Assembly/Gym Space/Cafeteria Space</li> </ul>
<b>Year 5:</b> 2028-2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 27 Classrooms; 7 Office Spaces</li> <li>● Teacher Workroom/Collaboration Space</li> <li>● Food Preparation Space/Kitchen</li> <li>● Bathroom Facilities (<i>Student/staff</i>)</li> <li>● Safe pick-up and drop-off space for students</li> <li>● Parking suitable and cost-effective for staff</li> <li>● Access to public transportation (<i>less than .25 mile</i>)</li> <li>● Outdoor Classroom Space</li> <li>● Classroom with access to plumbing or can easily be converted (for science courses)</li> <li>● Large Assembly/Gym Space/Cafeteria Space</li> </ul>

### School Accessibility & ADA

BELIEVE Schools, Inc requires a facility that is ADA compliant and is programmatically accessible to all students who wish to attend. BELIEVE is committed to serving all students in our community and exists to ensure all students should have access to a high-quality education. As such, our Network team ensures that, regardless of mobility limitations, students have access to the entirety of program offerings in a safe space that sets them up for success. Not only will we ensure that all classroom spaces, interior and exterior, are accessible to all of our students and families, we will also ensure that our site visit partners and programming is accessible to all our students regardless of their level of mobility or ability. No child will be excluded from enrollment or the full academic program at BELIEVE.

## **Maintenance and Complying with Regulations**

The security and safety of students, staff, and community members at BELIEVE is the most important priority on behalf of the network. BELIEVE will comply with all applicable laws, regulations, codes, requirements, processes, rules, ordinances and regulations of all local, state, and federal authorities who govern school facilities. BELIEVE's Network Team will submit an annual report on the State of the Facility to the Board of Directors that will outline the facility's compliance with local and state law. Additionally, BELIEVE will comply with applicable health and safety guidelines ensuring that food preparation and servicing space exceeds local Health Department standards and comply with local air quality standards, ventilation systems, temperature controls, and ensure pests/infestations are non-existent and proactive preventative maintenance. As mentioned above, BELIEVE will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure all children with disabilities have access to proper facilities as required by law. As outlined in Ordinance 70796, Fire Code requires that schools provide fire safety and emergency training to staff and students, development of fire evacuation and safety plans, and conduct fire and emergency drills in accordance with all such requirements. Lastly, emergency routes will be mapped and maintained in each classroom or office space. All operations at BELIEVE will comply with state, county and city laws and regulations on health and safety, pursuant to [RSMo 160.405.4\(2\)](#) and [RSMo 167.115-117](#).

## **Financing & Budget Assumptions**

When considering a facility, it's BELIEVE's network team priorities to ensure that the facility makes it financially sound. Best practices in the industry indicate that facilities costs should not exceed 15% of total revenue. In partnership with Afton Group, BELIEVE has made the following allocations in regards to facilities costs for the first six years of operation. These can be found in the budget in Appendix C.1.1.

## **Facilities Options**

As one of BELIEVE STL's largest partners, BELIEVE aims to be in close proximity to St. Louis University within the Midtown neighborhood. BELIEVE is exploring lease or co-location options. BELIEVE does not plan to purchase a facility within the first 6 years. An ideal facility would be co-located with one of our college partners or another small charter school that serves in our desired area. As mentioned, all facilities that BELIEVE will explore will be ADA compliant or will be renovated to ensure compliance. Our facilities advisory team is working diligently to find viable facilities options so that upon sponsorship, BELIEVE is prepared to begin negotiations with building owners.

## **C.4 - Contracted Services (*non CMO*) including but not limited to Insurance, Transportation, Food Service**

As in its founding campus, BELIEVE anticipates providing or procuring a majority of its services through contracted services. These services include, but are not limited to, food service, accounting, student and instructional support, insurance, legal, audit, technology, and transportation. BELIEVE has worked with a variety of nonprofits and organizations to learn about service offerings as we plan for the Fall 2024 launch. It's part of our mission to work with Minority Owned Businesses and Providers as a priority. This has been a focus at our inaugural campus that we will continue in St. Louis.

Our procurement policy remains the same as we replicate and grow:

1. The purchase complies with BELIEVE's documented procedures.
2. The purchase is necessary and supports our model and programming.
3. There is open competition among vendors.
4. A conflict-of-interest policy is in place.
5. Proper documentation for the purchases is maintained
6. Goods or services costing \$50,000 or more require a RFP and Board approval.

BELIEVE will follow procurement procedures and policies pursuant to [RSMo 160. 415.8](#) and [RSMo 160.405.4.\(1\).](#)

### **Accounting**

BELIEVE will set its own policies and procedures for recording employee work hours, and dealing with issues of overtime, absences, leaves, vacation and other adjustments. Currently, BELIEVE has an active Employee Handbook pursuant to [RSMo 160.405.11](#) that all staff must review and sign at the beginning of the year. Our HR partner manages the implementation and oversight of this. We are currently working with EdOps who will be directly managed by the Chief Operations Officer. The scope of work and rate from EdOps is included in Appendix C.2.3, which includes services upon sponsorship.

### **Food Service**

BELIEVE conservatively anticipates serving a population in which 80% of students qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) and anticipates this percentage to stay constant through the first five years making the school eligible for the Federal CEP program. BELIEVE has not identified a food service provider for students yet. Missouri Charter Public School Association (MCPSA) recommended American Dining Creations (ADC). They offer on-site dining services and off-site preparation with delivery. Since our facility is not yet confirmed, we will wait until a facility is secured to make a determination. However, ADC

prices their services to match the NSLP Lunch and Breakfast reimbursement rates. BELIEVE adheres to minimum nutritional quality standards for individual food items. ADC prioritized nutrition and has been recognized for their healthy options by the US Surgeon General.

## **Student and Instructional Support**

Believe Schools will use a host of programs and tools to support instructional programming and school operations. Some of the programs and tools are listed below.

**G Suite:** BELIEVE Schools, Inc utilizes G Suite for Education which is free of charge. BELIEVE uses the system already for tools like Google Cloud, Gmail, Google Drive and more. Upon sponsorship, BELIEVE will add a unique url for BELIEVE STL Academy.

**Student Information System:** Currently, BELIEVE Schools, Inc utilizes Alma as its SIS system but is currently exploring other options. The Chief Operations Officer has met with Lumen Touch which has been recommended by others in the St. Louis area. BELIEVE will be comparing the two systems to determine the best solution upon sponsorship.

**Information Technology(IT):** BELIEVE intends to partner with existing partner, RCR Technology to provide technology resources within the building via the cloud, servers, and more. BELIEVE works with a third party E-Rate support group to maintain compliance for the E-Rate program. RCR works alongside the partner to ensure BELIEVE has the proper hardware, software, and network bandwidth to provide high quality technology access to staff and students.

**POSSIP:** BELIEVE Schools, Inc uses POSSIP for monthly Pulse Checks with students, parents, and staff. Once the survey period ends, a report is accessible for all BELIEVE leadership team members.

**Kelvin:** Kelvin surveys are distributed quarterly to all students to collect data on their experience. This survey is more extensive and detailed than POSSIP. Once the survey period ends, BELIEVE leadership team members have the opportunity to review detailed reports and analyze data.

**Substitute Teachers:** At our inaugural site in Indianapolis, we launched our own substitute program where teachers opt-in at the beginning of the year to cover for absences. Teachers are paid \$25/class to cover. They are paid out quarterly. We will launch the same program at BELIEVE STL Academy upon sponsorship. This cost is included in the budget.

**Special Education Services:** BELIEVE will hire one SPED teacher full-time for year one.



BELIEVE has budgeted an additional \$1,500 with anticipated special education requirements. These funds will cover initiatives like: physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech, and/or transportation. For students with IEPs who require transportation, BELIEVE will contract with a transportation service per [RSMo 302.010](#).

**Nursing:** BELIEVE is currently exploring partnership opportunities for nursing services through Saint Louis University or Saint Louis Community College. All BELIEVE staff members are required to be CPR certified and three staff members will be trained to deliver student medication and first aid.

**Insurance:** BELIEVE has obtained quotes for insurance through Chad Miller at Selective Insurance. Selective Insurance maintains an A Rating. See Appendix C.2.2 for quote.

- Directors' and Officers' Liability
- Commercial General Comprehensive Liability
- Educators Legal Liability
- Employment Practices Liability
- Sexual Abuse Liability
- Automobile Liability
- Excess Liability or Umbrella
- Workers Compensation Liability
- Surety bond for the school's CFO in amount to be determined based on cash flow

**Legal:** BELIEVE has been using Keith Kehrer at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner Law. See Appendix C.4.1X for current agreement.

**Audit:** BELIEVE has not identified firms to provide its annual audit yet. To date, BELIEVE has explored using Justin Krachmalnick at Massie, Fudenberg, Goldberg LLC and [Anders](#) for auditing purposes.

## Transportation

BELIEVE STL Academy aims to offer a variety of safe and effective forms of transportation that are compliant with [RSMo 163. 161](#). BELIEVE will partner with Metro to provide all students with free MetroCards for 365 days per year, 7 days a week. As of now, BELIEVE will not operate Morning and Afternoon yellow-bus transportation for students. Due to usage expectations and financial obligation, BELIEVE will not invest in these vehicles. As we do community engagement with parents, families, and schools— we will continue to consider the option of providing transportation to and from school. As we explore options, we will consider partnering with a provider like [First Student](#). We also will consider purchasing our own vehicles and running our own transportation for dual-enrollment and school-based programming. We prioritize utilizing the Metro. However, we recognize that other modes will be necessary. Our model and programming requires mid-day travel and it's imperative

that BELIEVE holds autonomy in order to implement and run transportation with fidelity. BELIEVE will add a minimum purchase of an activity bus and one full-size yellow school bus.

Due to a low number of drivers and high market prices, BELIEVE Circle City launched its own transportation systems in-house during year two. BELIEVE's Network team has experience with school transportation, bus maintenance, and understands the current state of the market. If no alternative options exist, BELIEVE will utilize ride-share services like Uber, Lyft, or a partner with a local ride-share company that will ensure BELIEVE is able to live out its mission and programming.

If a child needs transportation due to an IEP or McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, BELIEVE will arrange for alternative transportation through RideFinders or Metro Call-A-Ride. We are also exploring providing assistance through Zip-Care who focus on student transportation. All transportation options must have a background check and appropriate licensing.

## **D.1 - Pre-Opening Plan**

Prior to opening, BELIEVE schools will follow a robust Pre-Opening Plan. The Pre-Opening Plan outlines required tasks as they relate to facilities, personnel, student recruitment, and other systems and structures required for a successful Day 1 at BSTLA. The Pre-Opening Plan can be viewed in Appendix D.1.1. The pre-opening plan is aligned to the health, safety, and other legal requirements as outlined by [RSMo 160.405.1.\(11\)](#).

## **D.2 Closure Plan**

In the unlikely event that BELIEVE St. Louis Academy needs to close, the following Closure Plan will be followed. Closure plans are in alignment with [RSMo 160.405.1\(15\)](#) and MCPSC closure plan requirements.

### **Immediate Priorities**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Team Member</b>
<b>Establish Transition Team and Assign Roles</b> A team to close down the school's business and smoothly transition students and staff. Team overview (at minimum):	Within 1 week of decision to close	Board President

that BELIEVE holds autonomy in order to implement and run transportation with fidelity. BELIEVE will add a minimum purchase of an activity bus and one full-size yellow school bus.

Due to a low number of drivers and high market prices, BELIEVE Circle City launched its own transportation systems in-house during year two. BELIEVE's Network team has experience with school transportation, bus maintenance, and understands the current state of the market. If no alternative options exist, BELIEVE will utilize ride-share services like Uber, Lyft, or a partner with a local ride-share company that will ensure BELIEVE is able to live out its mission and programming.

If a child needs transportation due to an IEP or McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, BELIEVE will arrange for alternative transportation through RideFinders or Metro Call-A-Ride. We are also exploring providing assistance through Zip-Care who focus on student transportation. All transportation options must have a background check and appropriate licensing.

## **D.1 - Pre-Opening Plan**

Prior to opening, BELIEVE schools will follow a robust Pre-Opening Plan. The Pre-Opening Plan outlines required tasks as they relate to facilities, personnel, student recruitment, and other systems and structures required for a successful Day 1 at BSTLA. The Pre-Opening Plan can be viewed in Appendix D.1.1. The pre-opening plan is aligned to the health, safety, and other legal requirements as outlined by [RSMo 160.405.1.\(11\)](#).

## **D.2 Closure Plan**

In the unlikely event that BELIEVE St. Louis Academy needs to close, the following Closure Plan will be followed. Closure plans are in alignment with [RSMo 160.405.1\(15\)](#) and MCPSC closure plan requirements.

### **Immediate Priorities**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Team Member</b>
<b>Establish Transition Team and Assign Roles</b> A team to close down the school's business and smoothly transition students and staff. Team overview (at minimum):	Within 1 week of decision to close	Board President

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BELIEVE Board President</li> <li>2. BELIEVE Executive Director</li> <li>3. BELIEVE Chief Academic Officer</li> <li>4. BELIEVE Chief Operations Officer</li> <li>5. BELIEVE Principal</li> <li>6. Lead office at spencer</li> </ol>		
<p><b>Assign Transition Team Action Item Responsibilities</b></p> <p>Share contact information of the transition team amongst all members, set calendar for meetings, and assign dates for completion of each charter school closure action item. Then, the transition team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a plan to enroll students in a high-performing school of their choice. The plan will solicit school/family input, establish clear deadlines for key activities, and continue until every student has been enrolled in a new school.</li> <li>• Designate a School Closure Coordinator to give families, staff, and other stakeholders access to a direct line of support through the transition (Principal + Front Office Manager)</li> </ul>	Within 1 week of decision to close	Board President + ED
<p><b>Press Release</b></p> <p>Draft and distribute a press release which includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of the school</li> <li>• Cause(s) for school closure</li> <li>• Expression of support for students, families, and staff</li> <li>• Contact information for the School Closure Coordinator</li> </ul>	Within 1 week of decision to close	BELIEVE Chief Operations Officer
<p><b>Notification Letter: School Community</b></p> <p>Distribute letter to faculty, staff, and parents (pursuant to <a href="#">RSMo 160.405.1(15)</a>) outlining:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reason(s) for closure</li> <li>2. Initial timeline for transition</li> <li>3. Contact information for School Closure Coordinator</li> </ol>	Within 1 week of decision to close	BELIEVE Chief Operations Officer
<p><b>Notification Letter: State &amp; Local Agencies</b></p> <p>Send a letter to local LEA's (informing them for the purpose of enrolling BELIEVE Students) and to the State Board of Education which includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Notification materials distributed to faculty, staff, and parents</li> <li>2. Reason(s) for school closure</li> <li>3. Copy of any termination agreement(s) if applicable</li> </ol>	Within 1 week of decision to close	BELIEVE Chief Operations Officer

## Ongoing Items

Action	Deadline	Team Member
<b>Instruction</b> Continue the current educational program per BELIEVE's charter contract until the end of the school year.	Ongoing	Executive Director + Principal
<b>MAP Testing and EOC Assessments</b> Administer all necessary MAP tests and EOC assessments scheduled for that year in accordance with regulations and policies.	Ongoing	Executive Director + Principal
<b>Board Communication</b> Make conspicuously and publicly available all copies of Board meeting agendas, minutes, financials, and other documents outlined in the checklist (include supporting attachments).	Ongoing	Board President
<b>Maintain Insurance for BELIEVE's Assets and Personnel</b> Pursuant to <a href="#">RSMo 160.405.1(15)</a> , ensure that any assets in the care of the school are protected against theft, misappropriation, and deterioration by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining existing insurance coverage for the facility and other assets until disposal, sale, transfer, or termination of lease.</li> <li>• Negotiating facility insurance with entities that may take possession of the school facility (lenders, mortgagors, bond holders, etc. )</li> <li>• Maintaining existing directors and officers liability insurance until final dissolution of the school.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Chief Operations Officer
<b>Financial Condition Report(s)</b> From the month of the closure decision until the final closure, BELIEVE will prepare the following financial documents for the previous month by the close of the current month: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current month end balance sheet</li> <li>• Current month income statement</li> <li>• Cash flow statement projecting the necessary in and outflows to operate the school year through the closure date and accounting for the disposition of assets</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Chief Operations Officer

## Preparation to Close Tasks

Action	Deadline	Team Member
--------	----------	-------------

<p><b>Establish Reserve Funds</b></p> <p>Reserve and define the acceptable use of funds to support orderly closure of the school. These funds may be used to pay the following entities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and staff</li> <li>• Employment taxes and federal taxes</li> <li>• Audit preparation</li> <li>• Private creditors</li> <li>• Overpayments from DESE</li> </ul>	<p>Within 30 days of decision to close</p>	<p>Executive Director + Chief Operations Officer</p>
<p><b>Transition Letter: Parents/Guardians</b></p> <p>BELIEVE will follow the initial notification with a letter detailing the transition plan. Notification will include but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of the last day of regular instruction</li> <li>• Cancellation of any planned summer programs</li> <li>• Date(s) of any planned events or experiential learning trips</li> <li>• Contact and enrollment information for charter, parochial, public, and private schools in the area</li> <li>• Information on obtaining student records before closure</li> <li>• Date for upcoming family closure meeting</li> <li>• Contact information for School Closure Coordinator</li> </ul>	<p>Within 30 days of decision to close</p>	<p>Principal</p>
<p><b>Employees and Benefits Provider</b></p> <p>BELIEVE will enclose information regarding the termination of employment and/or contracts, including an official termination date, in the Transition Letter for faculty and staff. BELIEVE will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify benefits providers of the pending termination of all employees</li> <li>• Notify payroll processor of the school's pending closure</li> <li>• Notify employees and providers of the termination date for all benefit program contacts</li> <li>• Terminate all benefits programs as the last date of service in accordance with applicable law and regulations</li> </ul>	<p>Within 30 days of decision to close</p>	<p>Chief Operations Officer</p>
<p><b>Transition Letter: Staff/Faculty</b></p> <p>BELIEVE will outline transition plans and timelines for staff in a letter including information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board's commitment to transition staff</li> <li>• The Board's commitment to transition all students into a positive new educational setting</li> <li>• Any anticipated new employment assistance provided by the Board</li> <li>• Timeline for compensation and benefits</li> <li>• Timelines for outstanding professional development issues</li> <li>• COBRA</li> <li>• Processing of year-end tax documents (W-2s,</li> </ul>	<p>Within 30 days of decision to close</p>	<p>Chief Operations Officer</p>

1099s, etc) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pertinent licensure information</li> <li>• Date for upcoming staff/faculty closure meeting</li> <li>• Contact information for School Closure Coordinator</li> </ul>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Faculty/Staff Meeting</b></p> BELIEVE will convene an all staff meeting to discuss the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to continuing the school operations during closure transition</li> <li>• Plan to assist students and staff during the transition</li> <li>• Reason for closure</li> <li>• Timeline for transition details</li> <li>• Compensation and benefits timeline</li> <li>• Contact information for the School Closure Coordinator</li> </ul>	Within 30 days of decision to close	Chief Operations Officer
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Institutional Partners</b></p> BELIEVE will notify the following institutional partners of closure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public School Retirement System or Provider</li> <li>• All other organizational and/or institutions with which the school has partnered</li> </ul>	Within 30 days of decision to close	Chief Operations Officer
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Contractors/Vendors</b></p> BELIEVE will notify all active contractors and vendors about the school closure, cessation of operations, and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INstruct contractors and vendors to remove any property from the school (copy machines, water coolers, and other rented property)</li> <li>• Retain records of past contracts as proof of full payment</li> <li>• Maintain telephone, gas, electric, water, insurance, and Directors and Officers liability insurance long enough to complete all closure procedures.</li> </ul>	Within 30 days of decision to close	Chief Operations Officer
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Creditors/Debtors</b></p> BELIEVE will notify all creditors and debtors and calculate the total for accrued and unpaid for each. BELIEVE will also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicit a final accounting of the schools' accrued and unpaid debt from each creditor; compare the figures provided with the school's calculation of the debt and reconcile; and, where possible, negotiate a settlement of debts consummated with a settlement agreement reflecting satisfaction and release of the existing obligations.</li> <li>• Contact all debtors to demand payment, and if collection efforts are unsuccessful, consider</li> </ul>	Within 30 days of decision to close	Chief Operations Officer

turning the debt over to a commercial collection agency. Records regarding such collection or dispute by debrots will be retained.		
<p><b>Engage Final Audit</b></p> <p>The Board of Directors will choose an independent auditor(subject to DESE approval) to conduct a final audit of school operations. BELIEVE will submit a signed and dated copy of the engagement letter to DESE along with an estimated timelines for the start and completion of the audit.</p>	Within 30 days of decision to close	Board President

## Post-Closure Tasks

Action	Deadline	Team Member
<p><b>Final Report Cards</b></p> <p>BELIEVE will send all families copies of final report cards, notice of where else student records were sent, and contact information for the institution.</p>	Within one week after the last day of instruction	Executive Director
<p><b>Archival and Transfer of Student Records</b></p> <p>BELIEVE will ensure that complete student records (academic, health, behavior, special education etc) are archived and transferred to each student's new school, pursuant to <a href="#">RSMo 160.405.1(15)</a> Record will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final grades</li> <li>• Materials associated with IEP</li> <li>• Immunization Records</li> <li>• Family information</li> <li>• Behavior Records</li> </ul>	Within one week after the last day of instruction	Executive Director
<p><b>Payroll and Employment Verification Reports</b></p> <p>BELIEVE will provide a list of all payroll reports(including taxes, retirement, and contract adjustments) and an employment verification report to each employee (pursuant to <a href="#">RSMo 160.405.1(15)</a>) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A signed dated letter from the payroll provider assuring timely and completed processing of payroll documentation (W-2, 1099s, etc)</li> <li>• An employment verification report including dates of employment, position(s) held, and salary history</li> </ul>	Within one week after the last day of instruction	Chief Operations Officer
<p><b>Itemized Financial Records</b></p> <p>BELIEVE will review, prepare, and make available (pursuant to <a href="#">RSMo 160.405.1(15)</a>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiscal year-end financial statements</li> <li>• Cash Analysis</li> <li>• List of compiled bank statements for the year</li> <li>• List of investments</li> </ul>	Within one week after the last day of instruction	Chief Operations Officer



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of payables (and determination of when a check used to pay the liability will clear the bank)</li> <li>• List of petty cash</li> <li>• List of all payroll reporting including taxes, retirement, or adjustments on employee contracts</li> <li>• List of all accounts, which will be closed once transactions have cleared</li> <li>• List of all unused checks, which will be voided</li> </ul>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Final Reports</b></p> <p>BELIEVE will plan for the disposition and cooperate with any remaining oversight requirements of the sponsor, DESE, or the State Board of Education.</p>	Within one week after the last day of instruction	Executive Director
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Inventory and Plan for Disposition of Assets</b></p> <p>BELIEVE will plan for the disposition of all assets, property, and inventory, segregating assets purchased with Missouri State and Federal Dollars. Within 60 days of the last day of instruction, BELIEVE will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note source codes for funds and price for each purchase</li> <li>• Establish fair market value, initial and amortized for all fixed assets</li> <li>• Ensure that all BELIEVE liabilities and obligations are paid and discharged to the extent possible by the school's assets</li> <li>• Return unobligated Missouri State dollars to DESE</li> <li>• Donate all other assets, pursuant to BELIEVE's incorporating documents.</li> </ul>	Within one week after the last day of instruction	Chief Operations Officer
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Archiving Corporate Records and Operations</b></p> <p>The BELIEVE Board of Directors will maintain all corporate records related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees (background checks, personnel files)</li> <li>• Loans, bonds, mortgages, and other financing</li> <li>• Contracts</li> <li>• Leases</li> <li>• Assets and assets sales</li> <li>• Grants (records relating to federal grants must be kept in accordance with 34 CFR 8042)</li> <li>• Governance (minutes, by-laws, policies)</li> <li>• Accounting/Audit, taxes and tax status</li> <li>• Employee benefit programs and benefits</li> <li>• Any items provided for in the closure action plan</li> </ul>	Within one week after the last day of instruction	Board President
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Submit Final Audit</b></p> <p>BELIEVE will submit a final closeout audit (by independent CPA firm or Missouri State Auditor, as determined by the statute), which documents the disposition of all liabilities.</p>	Within one week after the last day of instruction	Chief Operations Officer