

**Atlanta Public Schools**  
**Petition Cover Sheet for 2011-2012**

Name of Proposed Charter School: Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School

Proposed School Address: 688 Grant Street, Atlanta, GA 30315 (Grades K-5) and 820 Essie Ave, Atlanta, GA 30316 (Grades 6-8)

City NPU: NPU-W Zip Code: 30315 and 30316

Name of Group/Organization Applying for the Charter: Neighborhood Charter School, Inc.

Contact Person: Phil Andrews Relationship to Group: Consultant

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*Recommendations for approval to the Atlanta Board of Education for start-up charter schools will not exceed five (5) year terms.*

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Yr 1	60	60	60	60	60	60	72	72	72					576
Yr 2	60	60	60	60	60	60	72	72	72					576
Yr 3	60	60	60	60	60	60	72	72	72					576
Yr 4	60	60	60	60	60	60	72	72	72					576
Yr 5	60	60	60	60	60	60	72	72	72					576

Projected School Opening Date in 2011: August 8

Length of School Year: 180 Days / Length of School Day: 8:00 a.m. to 2:25 p.m. for the elementary campus and 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. for the middle school campus

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

**Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School**  
***Petition Application***

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**Atlanta Public Schools  
Petitioner Checklist for 2011-2012**

**Atlanta Public Schools Required Language for a Charter School Petition Submitted by a Private Individual, Private Organization, or State or Local Public Entity**

*Start-up charter petitions must contain the following language. Applicants must fill in the page number(s) on which the charter petition includes the required language. Additional language may be required in the response, but the language below must be included as part of the response.*

**ACADEMIC DESIGN**

1. Page   23   The Charter School shall:

- Establish a Student Support Team (SST) in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies as explained in the manual.
- Use APS forms for SST.
- Establish a Section 504 team in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies.
- Use APS forms for Section 504.
- Handle all discipline issues regarding Section 504 students in accordance with federal regulations, state guidelines, and local school board policies.
- Participate in workshops, in-service and/or trainings offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as SST/Section 504 chairpersons.
- Comply with Section 504 by providing the appropriate accommodations and equipment.
- Immediately notify the APS Coordinator of Charter Schools upon receipt of a complaint made by a parent/guardian or student concerning Section 504, furnish a copy of such complaint and cooperate fully in the investigation, defense and resolution of such complaint.

2. Page   23   Atlanta Public Schools shall:

- Provide professional development training for SST.
- Provide professional development training for the Section 504 team.
- Provide technical/consultative assistance to charter schools if requested by the charter school.

3. Page   22   The Charter School shall:

- Hire or contract certified special education teachers to provide services to eligible students.
- Develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for each student identified as needing special education services, with the full participation of the APS Program for Exceptional Children staff.
- Employ substitute teachers as required by state guidelines until certified teachers are hired if the charter school does not have certified staff.
- Submit and verify documentation quarterly on certified staff to the Director, Program for Exceptional Children in APS.
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for special education staff.
- Use APS forms for special education.

- Handle discipline issues regarding special education students in accordance with federal guidelines, state rules and APS policy, and with the full participation of APS Program for Exceptional Children staff.
- Immediately notify the APS Coordinator of Charter Schools upon receipt of a complaint made by a parent/guardian or student concerning the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, furnish a copy of such complaint and cooperate fully in the investigation, defense and resolution
- of such complaint.

4. Page 22-23 Atlanta Public Schools shall:

- Retain Federal IDEA funds and apply them toward the cost of identified services where warranted.
- Provide itinerant services to students identified and eligible for speech language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and all other related/supportive services as required by an IEP or by Section 504.
- Assign a Program Assistant and Special Education Coordinator to serve the charter school.
- Conduct Compliance Reviews of all charter schools to ensure that students with disabilities are provided a free appropriate public education.
- Approve and assign all administrative student placements for students that cannot be served appropriately in their charter schools.
- Retain Medicaid billings (fee for service) generated by the provision of special education and related services.

### **SUPPORT FOR LEARNING**

5. Page 25 The Charter School shall:

- Hire or contract with a licensed school counselor to provide services to students in accordance with state guidelines and APS policy.
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as school counselors.
- Use APS forms for counseling services.

6. Page 24-25 The Charter School shall:

- Hire or contract with a licensed certified school psychologist or a licensed clinical psychologist.
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as psychologists.
- Use APS forms for psychological services.

7. Page 25 Atlanta Public Schools shall:

- Provide consultations from the APS Crisis Intervention Team as needed.

8. Page 25 The Charter School shall:

- Hire or contract with a licensed school social worker to provide services to students in accordance with state guidelines and APS policy.
- Report all allegations of child abuse and/or neglect to the charter school social worker and to the persons required to receive such reports pursuant to state law.
- Use APS forms for social services.
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as social workers.

9. Page 39 Atlanta Public Schools shall:

- Monitor social services provided by the charter school.

10. Page 25 The Charter School shall:

- Hire or contract with a licensed school nurse to provide services to students in accordance with state guidelines and APS policy.
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as nurses.
- Use APS forms for health services.

11. Page 25,39 Atlanta Public Schools shall:

- Provide consultation services on an “as-needed” basis.

12. Page 25-26,39 The Charter School will adhere to the following documentation guidelines:

- Georgia Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) must be on file.
- Affidavit affirming that immunization requirements conflicting with parents’ religious beliefs will be allowed.
- Each student must have a Certificate of Ear, Eye, Dental Examination (Form 3300).
- Students must present an updated certificate within 30 days after the date of expiration.
- Students out of compliance must be excluded.
- Children entering grades K-12 for the first time must show proof of vaccination or immunity to varicella and proof of a second dose of the vaccine that includes measles (usually in the form of MMR).
- Hepatitis B Vaccine is required for all new students enrolling in school at any age.

### **STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM**

13. Page 43 The school will integrate the Infinite Campus system and the school’s operational technology plan will fully comply with district expectations. All data, including discipline, grades, schedules, and other student data will be maintained in compliance with the standards set forth by Atlanta Public Schools and will be transmitted to the district in accordance with district and/or state guidelines. All costs associated with use of the required student information system and the cost of interfacing with Atlanta Public Schools will be the charter school’s responsibility.

14. Page 43 The charter school will report its progress in meeting goals and objectives by October 1 of each year, in accordance with the Charter School Act of 1998 and the Atlanta Public Schools Board of Education policy. The annual report will document whether or not annual stated goals and objectives have been met as required for continuation of the charter.

15. Page\_43-44\_ For all students enrolled in the charter school who were previously enrolled in APS schools, the charter school shall provide the full names, birth dates, student identification number, name of last APS school attended, grade last enrolled, and date withdrawn from last APS school to the APS Records Center. If known, students with Individualized Education Program (IEP) shall be identified. Parent signatures and authorizations to release records must be included. The Board shall provide the students' educational records within twenty (20) business days of receipt of the past student enrollment information and IEPs within ten (10) business days.

16. Page\_\_44\_ The charter school shall maintain all student records in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, regulations, rules and policies. The charter school shall maintain all student records on behalf of the Board during each student's enrollment in the charter school. Upon a student's withdrawal or other matriculation from the charter school, the student's educational records shall be returned within ten (10) business days to the Board's student Records Center for retention. The charter school shall maintain and ensure the privacy and confidentiality of each student's educational record in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g, and shall not disclose to any unauthorized third party any personally identifiable information concerning any student enrolled in the charter school without first obtaining prior written parental permission.

17. Page\_44\_ The charter school shall maintain accurate enrollment data and daily records of student attendance and shall provide verifiable student enrollment by the first business day of each month. Enrollment data shall include the name, address, home telephone number, birth date, gender, and ethnicity of each student; identify special education, and LEP status; and each grade level and class/teacher. Student enrollment information shall be submitted electronically by the first business day of the month to the APS Executive Director for Research, Planning, and Accountability, or the Executive Director's designee. All data shall be submitted in a format compatible with existing APS attendance formats, which shall be provided to the charter school no later than August 15 of each year.

18. Page\_44\_ The charter school shall participate in collecting Federal Impact Aid Questionnaires and all other documents required to secure or retain federal funds and shall submit completed forms by the stated deadline of each year to the APS Executive Director for Research, Planning, and Accountability, or his or her designee.

19. Page\_\_44\_ To determine the annual Full Time Equivalent (FTE) required by the State Board of Education, no later than September 15, November 15 (special education students only), and February 15 of each school year, the Charter School shall submit student information. This data shall be submitted in a format compatible with existing APS data formats, which shall be provided to the Charter School no later than August 15 of each year unless delayed or changed by the Georgia Department of Education notification to local districts.

20. Page\_\_44\_ The Charter School shall submit electronic data for the state Student Data Record report according to the schedule provided by the state. The Charter School shall submit the

Student Data Record to APS twenty (20) calendar days prior to the state deadline for the initial transmission. The data elements and format will be provided to the Charter School no later than February 1 unless delayed by the Georgia Department of Education notification to local districts.

21. Page 44-45 On years it is due and the Charter School has been designated by the federal office to participate, the Charter School shall complete and submit the biennial Office of Civil Rights Report two weeks prior to the due date in a format as specified by the Office of Civil Rights to the APS Executive Director for Research, Planning, and Accountability, or his or her designee. All data shall be submitted to the APS Executive Director for Research, Planning, and Accountability, or his or her designee. The Charter School is responsible for taking such steps as needed to electronically transmit to APS in secure encrypted fashion all data required for official APS reporting requirements in accordance with specifications to be provided.

22. Page 45 For the purpose of completing the Certified/Classified Personnel Information Data Collection Report (CPI) required by the Georgia Department of Education, no later than September 15, and February 15 of each school year, the Charter School shall submit personnel information to APS. If there are personnel changes between the date the Charter School submits this information and the date of the Board's initial transmission to the state (*i.e.*, October 1 and May 1), the Charter School shall provide updated information no later than three (3) business days prior to the initial transmission date. The Charter School shall provide the Board with definitions of Training and Experience categories for the State Salary Schedules. This data shall be submitted in a secure format compatible with existing APS data formats, which shall be provided to the Charter School no later than August 15 of each year, unless delayed or changed by the Georgia Department of Education. All CPI data formats shall be provided by and submitted to the Executive Director of Human Resources, or the Executive Director's designee.

#### **FACILITY**

23. Page 72 The school will comply with the Uniform Building Code Inspection and the Standard Building Code, Standard Plumbing Code, Standard Mechanical Gas Code, federal Americans with Disabilities (ADA) access requirements and other applicable fire, health and structural safety requirements, local state, and federal laws.

24. Page 72-73 The charter school will meet all applicable codes for sanitation, fire, construction, stability, temperature, ventilation, and suitability of physical space. The charter school will maintain a certificate of occupancy from the required government agency. The charter school will grant access to local health and fire department officials for inspection of the premises or operations of the school for purposes of ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of students and employees pursuant to Georgia Statutes and National Fire Protection Association Life Safety Code, N.F.P.A. 101.

25. Page 72 The charter school is subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of physical health



and safety of school students, employees and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct.

## **FINANCE**

26. Page 75 In the event that the charter is not renewed or is terminated, any balance of public funds will revert back to Atlanta Public Schools.

27. Page 75 In the event that the charter is not renewed or is terminated, the charter school shall submit a financial audit for the final year of operation, prepared by an independent Georgia-licensed certified public accountant. This audit shall include a detailed inventory of all assets.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

28. Page 89 All personnel will be in compliance with the Drug Free Public Work Force Act of 1990.

29. Page 88-89 The faculty, instructional staff and all other personnel necessary for the operation of the Charter School shall be employees of the Charter School. Charter School instructors of core subjects shall be certified in those subjects by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission as defined in Section 1119 of the No Child Left Behind Act, unless a waiver of this requirement is requested. If this requirement is waived, teachers will hold a bachelor's degree from a GAPSC-accepted accredited institution of higher education and will have evidence of specialized training in the subjects they teach, such as an academic major or the equivalent of a major in the subjects and a passing score on the content assessment for the area/subjects they teach. Paraprofessionals with instructional support duties will meet guidelines of Section 1119 of the No Child Left Behind Act and ESEA.

## **INSURANCE/RISK MANAGEMENT**

30. Page 92 The charter school will meet the minimum requirements set forth by Atlanta Public Schools including but not limited to workers compensation in compliance with state law, employer's liability covering bodily injury by accident and bodily injury by disease, comprehensive general liability insurance in the following forms:

1. Comprehensive Form
2. Contractual Insurance
3. Personal Injury
4. Broad Form Property Damage
5. Premise Operations
6. Completed Operations

The insurance will also cover the use of all equipment, hoists and vehicles on the premises not covered by automobile liability. The Atlanta Board of Education must be included as additional insured on all policies. Evidence of insurance coverage must be submitted annually along with the annual report.

31. Page 92 Each and every agent shall warrant when signing the Certificate of Insurance that he or she is acting as an authorized representative on behalf of the companies affording

insurance coverage and that he or she is licensed by the State of Georgia and is currently in good standing with the Commissioner of Insurance for the State of Georgia. Any and all companies providing insurance will meet the minimum financial security requirements. The rating for each company will be indicated on the Certificate of Insurance. Companies providing insurance under this Agreement will have a current Best's Rating not less than "A" and Best's Financial Size Category no less than Class VII.



## Part II. Assurances and Signatures

1. This charter petition was approved by the Atlanta  
Board of Education on \_\_\_\_\_.  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Local Board of Education Date

2. If a Charter is granted, all Petitioners assure that the proposed charter school programs, services, and activities will operate in accordance with the terms of the Charter and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Charter Petitioner Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Charter Petitioner Date

## Part III. Executive Summary

The executive summary should not exceed **2 pages** for new charter school petitions and **4 pages** for renewal petitions and should include the following information:

### Basic Information

**Charter School Name** Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School

**Type** Start Up (Start-up, LEA Start-up, State Chartered Special School, Career Academy, Jointly Authorized, Virtual)

**Approved by the** Atlanta Board of Education on \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade Levels Served** K - 8

**Ages Served** 5 - 14

**Proposed Opening/Renewal Date** Aug. 8, 2011

**Proposed Charter Term** 7-1-11 through 6-30-16 (If the petition seeks a term greater than 5 years, explain the rationale for the requested term length.)

For each year of the proposed charter term, please indicate the number of pupils the charter school plans to serve.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Yr 1	60	60	60	60	60	60	72	72	72					576
Yr 2	60	60	60	60	60	60	72	72	72					576
Yr 3	60	60	60	60	60	60	72	72	72					576
Yr 4	60	60	60	60	60	60	72	72	72					576
Yr 5	60	60	60	60	60	60	72	72	72					576
Yr 6														
Yr 7														
Yr 8														
Yr 9														
Yr 10														

## **Executive Summary**

This petition requests a charter to create Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School (ANCS), through the merger of two successful charter schools that have been operating in the Grant Park/Ormewood Park neighborhoods during the past decade. Neighborhood Charter School (NCS) opened in 2001 and now serves kindergarten through fifth grade students. Atlanta Charter Middle School (ACMS) opened in 2005 and now serves sixth through eighth grade students. Both schools, which were recently awarded renewal charters, are centers of community education excellence in southeast Atlanta. The merger, designed through a three-year process of expert research, planning and community engagement, establishes a framework for sharing resources between the former ACMS and NCS, while we jointly pursue a common goal of continued excellence in providing small-school, constructivist alternative choices within the Atlanta Public Schools that actively involve families from diverse nearby neighborhoods in Atlanta.

It is important to underscore that while this petition is technically for a "start-up" charter school, it is in reality nothing of the sort. This is a merger of two highly successful, long established charter schools that were founded by the same community organization and have operated in close collaboration. The two schools shared the same building and executive director in the first years of the operation of ACMS. The schools have shared resources, leadership and inspiration throughout the existence of each. The current chair of the ACMS board is the founding chair the NCS board, and many many families in the community served by the two schools have children attending both campuses. The schools serve essentially the same community base, and the majority of all NCS 5<sup>th</sup> graders have matriculated to ACMS in every year of operation. In almost every regard, this petition should be evaluated as a de facto renewal petition. It is an unprecedented situation in Georgia and one which is unlikely to present itself again.

Our reasons for the merger are straightforward: given all factors--including APS policies and practices, the results of our previous efforts over many years to coordinate school operations, and the mismatched timelines of the two existing charter petitions--a full combination of these schools under a technically "new" charter is unquestionably the best route for our schools to maximize student achievement and success to the greatest degree possible. We are confident that the merger of the two schools will result in substantial benefits, both operationally and more importantly, in the educational program for students.

The decision to merge was made at the end of an extensive strategic planning process in 2008 and 2009, during which hundreds of parents, faculty, students and community members were engaged in a process designed to create a detailed five-year plan for growth and achievement and to create a foundation ensuring the strength and viability of our schools far into the future. The boards of the two schools endorsed this process two years ago. We retained an independent strategic planning consultant to guide us that process and ensure full community participation and outside expertise in the best practices locally and nationally for charters and all independent public schools. Our constituents overwhelmingly embraced the concept of creating a single K-8 school with two campuses. And through our self-study, examining multiple options for creating a K-8 program, it became clear that a merger of the existing operations would produce much greater benefits than any other scenario.

Months of consultation with the administration of Atlanta Public Schools followed, in which APS unconditionally endorsed this merger as the best and most viable means of creating an integrated K-8 school. Once our strategic plan was adopted in 2009, and with the express support of the merger from APS, we retained a leading national education consultant, who led the final critical decisions process and guided the drafting of this charter petition.

Both precursor schools (NCS and ACMS), have lived out the mission of creating small, focused, and diverse schools that nurture the whole child through strong parental and community involvement and challenging academics. They have both increased student achievement through academic and organizational innovation, the key intent of charter school law in the state of Georgia. Building on this successful history, ANCS will, as the new merged school, fully embrace and commit itself to continuing this growth in student achievement for Atlanta's students.

ANCS will be a member of the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES or Coalition), a national network of schools focused on creating schools that are intellectually challenging, personalized, and democratic. CES schools are brought together by a shared commitment to 10 Common Principles that guide teaching, learning, and decision-making at each school. Numerous studies have shown that students in CES schools demonstrate a high level of progress academically and personally. Both NCS and ACMS are members of CES, and their involvement in the Coalition will be strengthened by their merger.

The CES common principles are reflected in the innovative design of the ANCS educational program. The development of curriculum and the teaching practices at the school place students at the center of their learning in a hands-on way, actively engaged in exploring questions and coached by their teachers towards the demonstration of mastery of higher-order concepts and skills. The curriculum at ANCS will not rely on textbooks; rather, it is driven by rich and interesting projects and learning experiences that help students to show understanding. Teachers develop the curriculum to reflect both the Georgia Performance Standards for each grade level and the standards of national discipline-specific organizations and use Understanding by Design as a framework. Student mastery of skills will be assessed through a unique portfolio assessment system designed to personalize the educational experience. In addition, experiences that take students away from the school on field trips to support their learning occur on a regular basis. The full flexibility waiver and the small school size sought in this charter petition will help to support these innovations in structure and educational program implementation.

For the past several years, both of ANCS's precursor schools have maintained waiting lists of interested applicants at all but two of their nine grade levels, evidence of the demand for a school that offers a small, personalized, and democratic learning community. ANCS will be racially and economically diverse, serving a student population that is representative of the city of Atlanta. Families from around the community have been actively involved in planning for the merger of the precursor schools and will be involved in the governance of the merged school from the start, and their commitment to the school is reflected in this petition.

ANCS's precursor schools have experienced success in all measurable objectives of the charter, including academic goals, family involvement goals, and financial and organizational stability goals.

The request for a charter that replaces the two precursor schools with a single unified K-8 charter school will assure the long-term academic, organizational, and financial viability necessary for the continued student achievement gains by Atlanta students attending Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School.

The merger will provide Atlanta students with the educational benefits of a K-8 school (as opposed to a stand-alone elementary school and a stand-alone middle school). Students and teachers can build more lasting relationships. Teachers from the elementary and middle grades can work more closely to articulate a rich and engaging educational program across the grade levels that reflect the common principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools since teachers will know from where students are coming and to where they are going.

In addition to the educational benefits, parent involvement will increase as families make an investment of time and energy into a school for nine years rather than for three years (at a middle school) or six years (at an elementary school). There will also be organizational benefits, since a K-8 school enhances everyone's work over time, especially since ANCS will be a charter school. Governance will also be strengthened since ANCS will be able to cultivate leadership over a longer period of time. Finally, the management of the school and its financial position becomes more robust by sharing resources smartly and effectively.



## **Part IV. Start-Up Charter School Petition Requirements**

*Address the following requirements and insert the appropriate page number(s) of the petition.*

### DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

1. Page 10-15 Describe the focus of the curriculum.
2. Page 1-5,15-16 Describe the instructional methods to be used in the charter school, including any distinctive or unique instructional techniques or educational programs.
3. Page 16 Describe the anticipated teacher-to-student ratio and the rationale for maintaining this ratio.
4. Page 23 Describe how the charter school will meet the needs of students identified as gifted and talented.
5. Page 23-24 Describe any extracurricular or other auxiliary educational activities the charter school may offer, including the description of any partnerships between the charter school and local school system or other agency addressing these activities.
6. Page N/A If this is a charter high school, describe how the charter high school will determine that a student has satisfied the requirements for high school graduation, including the credits or units to be earned and the completion credentials to be awarded.

### STATE AND FEDERALLY MANDATED SERVICES

7. Page 21-23 For students with disabilities, describe how the charter school will provide state and federally mandated services.
8. Page 24-25 For English Language Learners (ESOL), describe how the charter school will provide state and federally mandated services.
9. Page 18 Describe how the charter school will provide supplemental educational services in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03 and NCLB.
10. Page 17-18 Describe how the charter school will provide remediation in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01 and NCLB.

### DESCRIPTION OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

11. Page 26 Describe the charter school's assessment plan to obtain student performance data for each student, including the students' baseline achievement data, which will be used in connection with the academic performance-based goals and measurable objectives stated in the petition.
12. Page 28,36 Explain how the charter school will work with the local school system to participate in all state-mandated assessments.
13. Page 30-36 Describe how the charter school's assessment plan will measure student improvement and over what period of time.
14. Page 30-36 Describe how the charter school will use this assessment data to monitor and improve achievement for students.

## PERFORMANCE-BASED GOALS AND MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

15. Page 30-35 Describe the academic performance-based goals and related measurable objectives for the charter school. Academic goals must be related to state and federal assessment standards. For each goal, provide measurable objectives that address each grade and content area for each year of the charter term. Academic goals should be rigorous, yet realistic and attainable, and to the extent possible, should be developed in connection with the students' baseline achievement levels. Describe how these academic goals and measurable objectives will comply with the Single Statewide Accountability System.
16. Page 35-36 Describe the organizational and management performance-based goals and measurable objectives for the charter school. Organizational and management goals and measurable objectives should describe and measure the effectiveness, viability and competency of the organization, which may include, for example, financial management and performance, operational management, and satisfaction of a range of stakeholders.

## WAIVERS

17. Page 96-97 State whether the charter school will utilize the broad flexibility from law, rule, and regulation permitted by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(a), and if so, include illustrative examples of how the charter school will implement the flexibility to meet or exceed the performance-based goals and to increase student achievement.
18. Page N/A If the school will not utilize this flexibility, list the specific waivers requested and the rationale for each. Describe further how each waiver will help the school meet or exceed the performance-based goals and to increase student achievement.

## DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS

19. Page 81-83 Describe the attendance zone for the charter school.
20. Page 81-83 Describe the rules and procedures that will govern the admission of students to the charter school.
21. Page 80-82 Describe whether the charter school will use any enrollment priorities pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1).
22. Page 79-81 Describe the steps that will be taken to reach students representative of the racial and socioeconomic diversity in the school system.
23. Page 81 Describe the charter school's plan for recruiting students and for maintaining/increasing enrollment.
24. Page 37-38 Describe the rules and procedures concerning student discipline and student dismissal (including code of conduct and student due process procedures).
25. Page 52,66-67 Describe the rules and procedures concerning how the school will address grievances and complaints from students, parents, and teachers, including the role the governing board will play in resolving such grievances and complaints.
26. Page 84-87 Generally describe the charter school's employment procedures and policies.

27. Page 48,52 Describe how and by whom the principal's performance will be appraised.
28. Page 89 State whether certification by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission will be required, and if not, describe the training and experience that will be required and the procedure for determining whether a teacher has demonstrated competency in the subject area(s) in which he/she will teach as required by NCLB.
29. Page 90-91 Describe whether the charter school will use the state salary schedule, and if another schedule will be used, provide that schedule.
30. Page 47,88 Describe the charter school's procedures to ensure that staff members are subject to fingerprinting and background checks.
31. Page 92-93 Describe the charter school's insurance coverage, including the terms and conditions and coverage amounts thereof.
32. Page 93-94 Describe whether transportation services will be provided and, if so, briefly describe the transportation program for the school. If transportation services are not provided, describe how this will not be a barrier to eligible students to attend school.
33. Page 94-95 Describe whether the charter school will provide food services (including participation in federal school meals programs), and if so, briefly describe the proposed food services programs.
34. Page 88 State whether the charter school will elect to participate in the State Health Benefit Plan as provided pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-880 and § 20-2-910.

#### PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

35. Page 40-42 Describe how parents, community members, and other interested parties were involved in developing the petition and will be involved in the school, including involvement with the governing body of the school.

#### DEMONSTRATION OF FISCAL FEASIBILITY AND CONTROLS

36. Page 73-74 Describe the level of autonomy the charter school will have over budgets and expenditures.
37. Page 75 Describe the plans for ensuring that the charter school will be subject to an annual financial audit by an independent Georgia-licensed certified public accountant.
38. Page 74; App.H Identify the school's chief financial officer and describe how that person's credentials comply with the Guidance for State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.04.
39. Page 77; App. I,J Provide a proposed timeline as to when the charter school will begin to receive state and local funding from the local board in order to begin operations.
40. Page 78-79 Describe the charter school's plans for securing other sources of funding, including funding from corporations, individuals, foundations, philanthropic groups, or any other source.

#### DESCRIPTION OF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

41. Page 62-63 Describe how the governing board will be subject to the control and management of the local board and subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-1 *et seq.* and 50-18-70 *et seq.*

42. Page 48;63-64 Describe the governing board's function, duties, and role, including the board's role as it relates to the charter school's mission.
43. Page 48-49 Describe the composition of the governing board, how and when governing board members will be selected, how long each governing board member will serve, and how governing board members may be removed from office.
44. Page 61-62; App.D List any proposed business arrangements or partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, or nonprofit organizations and disclose any potential conflicts of interest.
45. Page App.D Disclose any potential conflicts of interest of the founding board members.
46. Page 50 Describe how the governing board will ensure that current and future board members avoid conflicts of interest.
47. Page 52-53 Describe how the governing board will ensure effective organizational planning and financial stability.
48. Page 67-68 Describe the method that the local board and the charter school plan to utilize for resolving conflicts.
49. Page 62 State if the charter school intends to contract, or has contracted for, the services of a for-profit entity or any other educational management agency. If so, describe how the contract will be in the best educational and financial interests of the charter school.

#### FACILITIES

50. Page 70 Describe the school facility that the charter school will use and its location. State whether the school facility is new or existing.
51. Page 72 Describe any modifications necessary for utilizing the space for educational purposes.
52. Page 71 Provide documentation of ownership or a copy of the lease of the facility. If ownership documentation or a lease is unavailable, provide a timeline for obtaining such facilities or providing such documentation.
53. Page 72-73 Provide a Certificate of Occupancy, or a timeline for obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy, prior to students occupying the proposed facility.
54. Page 73 Provide the school's emergency safety plan, or a timeline for preparing a safety plan in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 and submitting it to the Georgia Emergency Management Agency.

#### JOINTLY AUTHORIZED CHARTER SCHOOLS - Required if two or more local boards will jointly authorize the charter school.

55. Page N/A State which local board will be the fiscal agent for the jointly authorized charter school.
56. Page N/A Describe how each local board will contribute local revenue to support the charter school.
57. Page N/A Attach an agreement detailing the investment and responsibility of each local board regarding the jointly authorized charter school.

VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOLS – Complete and attach the “Addendum for Virtual Charter Schools” checklist, located at [http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/pea\\_charter.aspx](http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/pea_charter.aspx).

### REQUIRED APPENDICES

- App. F Attach an official copy of the certificate of incorporation for the required Georgia nonprofit corporation from the Georgia Secretary of State (LEA start-ups and state and local public entities are not subject to this requirement pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(b)(4)).
- App. See pp 46-58 Attach a copy of the by-laws for the nonprofit corporation (LEA start-ups and state and local public entities are not subject to this requirement pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(b)(4)).
- App. N Attach a copy of any admissions application the charter school proposes to use.
- App. C Attach the charter school’s proposed annual calendar and a draft of the charter school’s daily school schedule.
- App. I Attach a monthly cash flow projection detailing revenues and expenditures for the charter school’s first two (2) years of operation.
- App. O Attach alternative monthly cash flow spreadsheets projecting revenues and expenditures that assume one-half (1/2) of the projected student enrollment for the first two (2) years of operation.
- App. J Attach spreadsheets projecting cash flow, revenue estimates, budgets, and expenditures on an annual basis for the first five (5) years of the charter term.
- App. N/A Attach documentation of any sources of revenue appearing in the spreadsheets that are anticipated to come from private sources.
- App. N/A Attach a copy of any agreements with other local schools for the charter school students’ participation in extracurricular activities such as interscholastic sports and clubs.
- App. N/A Attach a copy of any intended contracts for the provision of educational management services or the provision of supplemental educational services and remediation. Such contracts shall describe the specific services for which the contracting organization is responsible. In the case of a management organization, such contracts shall clearly delineate the respective roles and responsibilities of the management organization and the governing board in the management and operation of the charter school.

# I. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

## A. Mission

1. *Describe the vision for your proposed charter school. Provide a clear statement that defines the purposes and nature of the school. Your mission statement should (in one or two sentences) indicate what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree. (State Rule, Page 7)*

Our mission is to create a community of deeply engaged families and educators working to foster extraordinary levels of student achievement in an inclusive, constructivist learning environment that values every individual and prepares students to be effective global citizens in a diverse global society.

We envision a vibrant, dynamic and unique learning experience that uses the Common Principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools to engage every student, stimulate intellectual curiosity, and facilitate academic excellence and achievement. Accomplishing our mission means the following details of our vision will be accomplished:

- The school’s educational philosophy stems from the value that every learner is a teacher and every teacher is a learner, and each individual’s perspective and voice are important. K-8 curriculum and instruction should be meaningful, individualized, connected, relevant and student-centered.
- Through “real-life” projects and activities, students not only embrace traditional concepts, but also hone their ability to think critically and creatively, to solve problems and to work together. Students learn how to succeed not only in the classroom, but also in the real world.
- Students, faculty and staff are supported by visionary leaders who have deep connections and partnerships in the local, state, national and global communities.
- The key constituents – students, parents and families, faculty, staff and administrators; the Board of Trustees; the community; and local partners – share a spirit of appreciation, valuing and encouraging diversity and inclusion, and building social cohesiveness within the neighborhood and beyond.
- The facilities and grounds are modern, “green,” safe, welcoming and encourage the learning process for each student.
- There are sufficient resources – human and financial – that ensure operations are functioning at the highest level.
- A visit to the school leaves the impression that you have experienced education at its best and learning at its deepest.

2. *Identify how the school will accomplish its purpose and what makes it uniquely suited to do so.*
3. *Describe how the charter school will support the Georgia legislative intent for charter schools to “increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation.” (State Rule, Page 6)*

ANCS will focus on essential 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, including math, science, literacy, communications, technology, and media, and use data-driven instruction to provide individualized instruction for students based on their particular needs. Using a constructivist approach, which allows students to develop and master essential skills and habits (in essence, “learning how to learn”) that will equip them with the tools needed for success in school and in life, students will learn the elements of leadership and the importance of community involvement and good citizenship through community-based learning.

By bringing together the Neighborhood Charter School and the Atlanta Charter Middle School, ANCS will be a member of the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES or Coalition), a national network of schools focused on creating schools that are intellectually challenging, personalized, and democratic. CES schools are brought together by a shared commitment to 10 Common Principles that guide teaching, learning, and decision-making at each school. Numerous studies have shown that students in CES schools demonstrate a high level of progress academically and personally. In the state of Georgia, ANCS would be one of only three CES affiliate schools. In fact, the other two CES schools—the Ben Franklin Academy in Atlanta and the Counterpane School in Fayetteville—are private schools, which would leave ANCS as the only public CES affiliate school in the entire state. Therefore, the educational experience offered by ANCS would be truly innovative and unique.

**About the Coalition of Essential Schools (from the CES website [www.essentialschools.org](http://www.essentialschools.org))**

For 25 years, CES has been at the forefront of creating and sustaining personalized, equitable, and intellectually challenging schools. Essential Schools are places of powerful student learning where all students have the chance to reach their fullest potential.

*The CES Network and Essential Schools*

The CES Network includes hundreds of schools and more than two dozen Affiliate Centers. Diverse in size, population, and programmatic emphasis, Essential Schools serve students from pre-kindergarten through high school in urban, suburban, and rural communities, and they are characterized by personalization, democracy and equity, and intellectual vitality and excellence.

CES practice is exemplified by small, personalized learning communities where teachers and students know each other well in a climate of trust, decency and high expectations for all. Modeling democratic practices with a strong commitment to equity, Essential Schools work to create academic success for every student by sharing decision-making with all those affected by the schools and deliberately and explicitly confronting all forms of inequity. And, Essential Schools focus on helping all students use their minds well through standards-aligned interdisciplinary studies, community-based "real-world" learning and performance-based assessment.

*The CES Common Principles*

The Coalition sees school reform as an inescapably local phenomenon, the outcome of groups of people working together, building a shared vision, and drawing on the community's strengths, history and values. Yet while no two Essential Schools are alike, all Essential Schools share a

commitment to the CES Common Principles, a set of beliefs about the purpose and practice of schooling. As they develop their own programs, the Common Principles guide schools to examine their priorities and design structures and instructional practices that support:

- Personalized instruction to address individual needs and interests;
- Small schools and classrooms, where teachers and students know each other well and work in an atmosphere of trust and high expectations;
- Multiple assessments based on performance of authentic tasks;
- Democratic and equitable school policies and practice;
- Close community partnerships.

The common principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools will guide teaching:

- Learning to use one's mind well
- Less is more—depth over coverage
- Goals apply to all students
- Personalization
- Student-as-worker, teacher-as-coach
- Demonstration of mastery
- tone of decency and trust
- Commitment to the entire school
- Resources dedicated to teaching and learning
- Democracy and Equity

### *CES Results*

The Coalition of Essential Schools has found that students who attend Essential Schools across the country are making striking academic and personal progress, documented by studies conducted by CES National staff, various Affiliate Centers, and outside researchers.[\[1\]](#)

The ANCS mission/vision and academic and organizational innovations -- including, for example, performance-based portfolio assessment, interdisciplinary teaching, comprehensive sustainability initiatives, an advisory program in the upper school, daily community meetings in the lower school, and extensive support for teachers' professional development -- articulated in greater detail throughout this petition reflect the CES Common Principles. They clearly show how these innovations benefit students academically and socially during the critical years that begin in kindergarten and extend through middle school.

### **B. Educational Need for this School**

1. *Explain the need for this particular school in the immediate community it will serve. Who is the target student population to be served, student ages, and grade levels? (State Rule, Page 7)*

ANCS's precursor schools (NCS and ACMS) consistently have waiting lists for all but two of the nine grades they serve (K-5 and 6-8, respectively). This high demand is the best indicator of the need for the ANCS K-8 school for students aged 5-13.



ANCS will serve the entire city of Atlanta, with priority in the enrollment process given to students in southeast Atlanta. Building on the commitment of its precursor schools to provide an educational alternative to residents of communities in southeast Atlanta, ANCS seeks to serve this diverse population of students.

2. *Describe the areas of concentration on which this school intends to focus. (State Rule, Page 7)*

The school will focus on essential 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, including math, science, literacy, communications, technology and media, and use data-driven instruction to provide individualized instruction for students based on their particular needs. Using a constructivist approach, which allows students to develop and master essential skills and habits (in essence, “learning how to learn”) that will equip them with the tools needed for success in school and in life, students will learn the elements of leadership and the importance of community involvement and good citizenship through community-based learning.

Below are the CES Common Principles in their entirety:

1. The school should focus on helping young people learn to use their minds well. Schools should not be comprehensive if such a claim is made at the expense of the school's central intellectual purpose.
2. The school's goals should be simple: that each student masters a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge. While these skills and areas will, to varying degrees, reflect the traditional academic disciplines, the program's design should be shaped by the intellectual and imaginative powers and competencies that the students need, rather than by "subjects" as conventionally defined. The aphorism "less is more" should dominate: curricular decisions should be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than by an effort to merely cover content.
3. The school's goals should apply to all students, while the means to these goals will vary as those students themselves vary. School practice should be tailor-made to meet the needs of every group or class of students.
4. Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible extent. Efforts should be directed toward a goal that no teacher have direct responsibility for more than 80 students in the high school and middle school and no more than 20 in the elementary school. To capitalize on this personalization, decisions about the details of the course of study, the use of students' and teachers' time and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be unreservedly placed in the hands of the principal and staff.
5. The governing practical metaphor of the school should be student-as-worker, rather than the more familiar metaphor of teacher-as-deliverer-of-instructional-services. Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching, to provoke students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves.

6. Teaching and learning should be documented and assessed with tools based on student performance of real tasks. Students not yet at appropriate levels of competence should be provided intensive support and resources to assist them quickly to meet those standards.

Multiple forms of evidence, ranging from ongoing observation of the learner to completion of specific projects, should be used to better understand the learner's strengths and needs, and to plan for further assistance. Students should have opportunities to exhibit their expertise before family and community. The diploma should be awarded upon a successful final demonstration of mastery for graduation - an "Exhibition." As the diploma is awarded when earned, the school's program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of credits earned" by "time spent" in class. The emphasis is on the students' demonstration that they can do important things.

7. The tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of unanxious expectation ("I won't threaten you but I expect much of you"), of trust (until abused) and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school's particular students and teachers should be emphasized. Parents should be key collaborators and vital members of the school community.

8. The principal and teachers should perceive themselves as generalists first (teachers and scholars in general education) and specialists second (experts in but one particular discipline). Staff should expect multiple obligations (teacher-counselor-manager) and a sense of commitment to the entire school.

9. Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include, in addition to total student loads per teacher of 80 or fewer pupils on the high school and middle school levels and 20 or fewer on the elementary level, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff, and an ultimate per pupil cost not to exceed that at traditional schools by more than 10 percent. To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided students in many traditional schools.

10. The school should demonstrate non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strength of its communities, deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity.

### **C. Accountability**

1. *Summarize five to seven important school specific goals and associated measures in relation to educational performance and organizational viability to be used as a measure of success. (State Rule, Page 6)*

#### Academic Performance Goals

The academic performance goals outlined below reflect the school's commitment to compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act and its provisions for meeting annual performance targets set by the state each year in order to achieve "Adequate Yearly Progress". As such, these goals are

in the public interest and shall result in improvement of student achievement and shall comply with the Single Statewide Accountability System in Accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2063.

Also of note in the academic performance goals is that the performance indicators for them are varied in their number and type. Achievement of the ANCS's academic performance goals should be measured by a range of instruments, not just standardized tests. As the Iowa Testing Programs, developer of the well-regarded Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), argues, using the results of a standardized test as the sole measure of the effectiveness of an entire school program is an inappropriate use of such tests:

A school's curriculum is made up of many subject-matter components. Achievement in some of them can be measured by standardized achievement batteries, but in others, achievement may never be assessed on a building or district-wide basis. For example, speaking skills, computer literacy, music and art knowledge and ability, second-language learning, and lab skills are not measured by achievement batteries but are regarded by most educators as important components of the academic curriculum. No assessment method or instrument can supply the full range of information required to evaluate the entire school program, or even the complete academic curriculum. Since batteries like the ITBS can assess achievement in only a limited part of the total curriculum, scores from them must be supplemented by results from other forms of assessment if the relative success of the entire program is to be judged. Standardized test scores alone should not be used for this purpose because achievement batteries are not designed to cover the full range of objectives that make up the typical school curriculum.[\[2\]](#)

Finally, the academic performance goals reflect the 2<sup>nd</sup> CES common principle, which emphasizes that “each student master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge” and that “curricular decisions...be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than by an effort to merely cover content.” To that end, particularly in the social sciences, the performance indicators for these academic goals rely on assessment instruments that stress the ability of students to use important intellectual skills as opposed to those instruments that assess students' memorization of a wide range of discrete topics.

*Goal #1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of essential academic skills and understanding of essential domains of knowledge by meeting or exceeding the standards set by the state and federal government for making AYP under the No Child Left Behind Act (or whatever standards may be established when the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is re-authorized).*

Performance Indicators for Goal #1:

ANCS will open at full capacity as a K-8 charter school. The first year of the merged school will be the 2011-12 school year. That year Georgia will require that at least 86.7 percent of students in grades three through eight meet or exceed standard on the CRCT for Reading and Language Arts and that at least 83.3 percent of students meet or exceed standard on the CRCT in Math. Those targets increase to 93.3 percent in R/ELA and 91.7 percent in Math for year two and again to 100 percent in all three subjects in ANCS' third year, 2013-14. Since most of the students attending ANCS in its first year will come from the two merging schools (NCS and ACMS), we will use a combination of the AYP requirement and the prior year (2010-11) test scores from the two merging schools to set baseline data. Our target for meeting or exceeding the standard in year one will be at least equal to the 2011-12 AYP requirement for all three AYP subjects. In the

case of any grade level and subject where the merging schools already exceeded the 2011-12 AYP requirement ANCS students will at least remain within the same 5% range the 2010-11 levels in year one. For example, if greater than 95% of NCS third graders meet or exceed standard in reading on the 2011 CRCT, the percentage of ANCS third graders who meet or exceed standard on the 2012 reading CRCT will also be at least 95%.

*Goal #2: Students who enroll at ANCS and remain enrolled will show growth relative to national norms and state standards each year they are enrolled at the school.*

In addition to measuring grade by grade increases as described in goal number 1 above, ANCS will measure the success of cohorts of students over time. Each class will have more students meeting or exceeding expectations each year as they advance through each campus of the Charter School. As groups of students progress through the grades offered at ANCS their progress toward meeting or exceeding expectations on the State mandated criterion referenced test will improve each year in Reading, ELA and Math, their NCE growth in Reading and Math on a national norm referenced test (such as the ITBS) will improve from third grade to eighth grade, and the percentage of students performing below target on the state writing assessment will decrease from fifth grade to eighth grade.

During the term of this charter, if less than 75% of students in a cohort group did not participate in the previous year's CRCT administration or if the retention rate of students from a cohort group from one grade level to the next falls below 75%, ANCS will work with APS to establish appropriate baseline standards of achievement and/or appropriate achievement goals for that cohort group.

Performance indicators for Goal #2:

1. The percentage of students not meeting expectations on each subject of the CRCT in each cohort group will decrease by twenty percent (20%) each year. In addition, the percentage of students exceeding standard in each cohort group will increase by ten percent (10%) each year. For example, let's assume a group of 72 sixth graders enters the ANCS middle school campus in year one and on the CRCT at the end of the year 20 of those students (28%) do not meet standard in math, 32 students (44%) meet standard, and 20 students (28%) exceed standard. Our goal for that cohort of students would be for the percentage not meeting standard to decrease by at least 20% and the percentage exceeding standard to increase by 10%. Thus 28 (the percent non meeting standard) times .8 (a decrease of 20%) would mean in 7<sup>th</sup> grade no more than 22 percent of that cohort would not meet the standard in math. The following year that 22 percent would decrease to 18 percent ( $22 * .8 = 17.6$ ). At the same time the percent exceeding standard would increase to at least 31 in 7<sup>th</sup> grade ( $28 * 1.1$ ) and to at least 34 percent ( $31 * 1.1$ ) in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The reason we use percentages rather than real numbers of students is that the number of students in the cohort group is likely to shrink each year due to normal attrition. Thus to use real numbers would lead to artificially high decreases in those not meeting standard and/or artificially low increases in the number of students exceeding standard. These goals would be the same for each lower school (established in the first grade) and middle school cohort (established in the sixth grade) in each of the subjects tested on the CRCT in the baseline grade. The reason for resetting the

cohorts in 6<sup>th</sup> grade is to prevent an eight year depletion of the cohort groups and to account for the fact that the number of students per grade increases in middle school. We want to include as many of the students in the school as possible in this value added assessment. In order to truly measure the value added over time by attending ANCS, only students who are enrolled in the first grade at ANCS lower school or in the sixth grade at ANCS middle school prior to January of their respective baseline years will be included in the longitudinal cohorts. However all students who otherwise qualify to be included in the year to year grade level assessments will be included in those accountability measures as described above for goal number 1.

2. On the ITBS, the cohorts will be formed in third grade and will remain intact through the eighth grade because the ITBS is not administered to every grade. Each cohort of third graders will get ten percent (10%) closer to a NCE of 99 by the time they take the ITBS in the eighth grade. For example if a third grade cohort has an average NCE of 58 in reading, that same cohort will have an NCE of at least 62 in reading in the eighth grade. [An NCE of 58 is 41 points short of 99. Thus closing the gap by 10% will result in an NCE of at least 62 (58 + 4).] If a particular third grade cohort does better or worse than another, their expected gain would automatically be adjusted accordingly. So if one third grade cohort had a math NCE of 42 they would be expected to increase that average by at least 6 points (99 – 42 = 57 and 10% of 57 rounds up to 6). If another third grade cohort had an average math NCE of 79, they would only be expected to increase that score by 2 points to 81 by the eighth grade since their baseline score was already very high. In addition to reporting the third grade (baseline) scores and eighth grade (target) scores for each cohort, we will report the scores for each cohort on the fifth grade ITBS along with an assessment of their progress toward their eighth grade target.
3. Cohorts for the state writing assessment will be formed in the fifth grade. The goal for each cohort of students will be for the percentage of students performing below standard on the fifth grade writing assessment to decrease by at least twenty percent (20%) by the time that cohort takes the eighth grade writing assessment. This will be measured and reported by multiplying the percentage performing below standard in fifth grade by .8 in order to determine the goal for that cohort in the eighth grade.

*Goal #3: The ANCS Portfolio Assessment System will demonstrate student learning and progress across a variety of learning activities as derived from the requirements for the portfolio for each grade level.*

Performance Indicators for Goal #3:

- In annual surveys, families and students will indicate that the ANCS Portfolio Assessment System is an effective measure of student learning, with a goal of at least 80% of families and students responding affirmatively.
- ANCS will engage in a program audit to review the Portfolio Assessment System and ensure that its use in evaluating student learning is reliable and meets or exceeds learning standards as measured by other instruments. ANCS will report the results of this audit to all stakeholders.

## **Nonacademic Performance Goals**

Each of the following “nonacademic” performance goals reflects the mission of the school.

*Goal #4: The school’s Governing Board will effectively promote the school’s mission.*

### Performance Indicators for Goal #4

- The Board will update the strategic plan annually
  - Each summer, following the annual update of the strategic plan (based on the accomplishments of the previous academic year and adjusted as needed in anticipation of the upcoming year), the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the strategic plan was updated and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE
- The Board will adopt a balanced annual budget aligned with the strategic plan and ensure that it is fully funded
  - Each spring, following the adoption of ANCS’s annual budget for the upcoming fiscal year, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the budget is in balance and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE
  - Each fall, following the completion of ANCS’s annual audit, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the budget for the previous fiscal year was in balance and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE
- Board will conduct a formal review of the Executive Director quarterly to hold the school leader accountable for successful implementation of the strategic plan and for staying within budget
  - Each quarter, following the completion of the Board’s formal review of the Executive Director, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the review was completed and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE
- The Board will survey parents, students, employees, and community annually to assess satisfaction with their input into governance decisions
  - Each summer, following the completion of the annual satisfaction surveys, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the survey was completed and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE

*Goal #5: Sound fiscal and management practices will sustain the school’s mission and commitment to its academic performance goals.*

### Performance Indicator for Goal #5:

- The school’s independent annual audit will demonstrate sound financial practices and have no major adverse findings
  - Each fall, following the completion of the annual audit, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the audit was completed without major adverse findings and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE
- The school will consistently attract, enroll, and retain students
  - Each fall, following the start of the school year, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that ANCS is at or near full enrollment and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE

## Reporting of Progress and Improvement Plan

ANCS will submit an annual report to APS and the state Department of Education providing a detailed update on the school's progress towards its accountability provisions per the school's charter agreement. This report will be made available to families and will be presented to the school's Governing Board.

If the performance goals outlined above are not being met, the Principals/Executive Director and appropriate school staff would work with the school's Governing Board to develop a targeted improvement plan with specific strategies to address areas of need. The Governing Board would approve the improvement plan and measure progress based on the plan. If necessary to the implementation of the improvement plan, the school would submit an amendment to the charter agreement for approval.

## II. ACADEMIC DESIGN

### A. Academic Standards and Curriculum

1. *Provide a general description of the curriculum that will be used by the school including the objectives, content, and skills to be taught in the main subject areas at each grade level in your school. What will be the focus of the curriculum? Explain how the curriculum is aligned with Georgia Performance Standards. (State Rule, Page 7)*

*As part of this response, please provide the following (these may be included in the appendices): a week-long sample lesson plan for one teacher, a year-long scope and sequence for one subject, for one grade.*

The development of curriculum and the teaching practices at ANCS will be guided by the common principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) that place students at the center of their learning in a hands-on way, actively engaged in exploring questions and coached by their teachers towards the demonstration of mastery of higher-order concepts and skills. The curriculum at ANCS will not rely on textbooks; rather, it will be driven by rich and interesting projects and learning experiences that help students to show understanding and develop meaningful skills. Teachers will develop the curriculum to reflect both the Georgia Performance Standards for each grade level and the standards of national discipline-specific organizations, and will use Understanding by Design as a planning framework. In addition, experiences that take students away from the school on field trips to support their learning will occur on a regular basis.

### Curriculum

The following sections provide a general overview of the curriculum philosophy, pedagogical framework, and scope by grade level. Please note that the structure of the academic program may change from time to time based on student/community needs when approved by the ANCS Governing Board.

### Lower Grades (K-5)

In addition to embracing The Common Principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools, the ANCS lower grades will align closely to constructivist teaching practice. Constructivism is a theoretical model stemming from the areas of philosophy, philosophy of science, psychology, anthropology, and sociology. Constructivism has its roots in the field of educational philosophy in a number of paradigms, including those of Piaget, Dewey, Vygotsky, and Montessori. According to Black and Ammon (1992), Constructivism in the educational area is "more concerned with understandings achieved through relevant experience than with accumulated facts received from others." Landmark research by Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing (3M Corporation) found that people remember 10% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 70% of what they see and hear, and 90% of what they do. ANCS students will learn by doing. Instructional activities will be relevant and varied, encouraging active participation. Creating units of study based on the Constructivist philosophy requires a lot of planning and reflection. Teachers will serve primarily as facilitators during the Explore stage of learning, and conduct questioning sessions to elicit student responses and probe for deeper understanding during the Explain phase. Teachers will continuously troubleshoot for confusion and plan activities and lessons that will allow students to construct their own deep understanding of content. To do this effectively, teachers are required to maintain a depth of knowledge in the content areas being taught. Well-trained and dedicated professionals with on-going access to professional learning will facilitate student learning at ANCS. Dedication, experience, and commitment are essential qualities of all ANCS Teachers.

The overarching themes for grades K –2 will be CARING AND SHARING. Throughout these grade years, children will experience firsthand the plants and animals of their world. The overarching theme for grades 3 – 5 is EXPLORATIONS. Once children have begun to build basic understandings and relationships with their world, they can then participate in more detailed and in-depth explorations of it.

The curriculum in the Lower Grades will use basic scientific concepts as its focus. Each grade level will have a year-long theme which serves as an organizing concept for the skills and knowledge expected for each year. Both the Georgia Performance Standards and national professional standards were considered and will be maintained in the creation of the curriculum maps. Listed below are the themes (with thematic content summaries) for each grade level in the Lower Grades:

#### Kindergarten – Me, My Role and Responsibility

- Place (backyard, home, state)
- Community
- Self
- Family

#### 1st Grade – A Year in Our Backyard

- Survival
- American Traditions
- Weather



- Cycles
- Patterns

#### 2nd Grade – Exploring the Changes in Our World

- Cultural and Historical Change
- Changes in the Natural World
- Adapting and Creating Changes

#### 3rd Grade – Connections: How Do We Connect our Background Knowledge to our New Learning?

- Conservation
- Government
- Earth, Physical, and Life Science
- Economics

#### 4th Grade – How Do Populations Survive and Adapt To Change?

- Solar System
- Physical Features of the United States
- Populations Through History – How do underlying concepts (geography, politics, flora/fauna, economic, technology, culture, etc.) affect populations?
- Historical Periods – Native Americans, Colonization, Beginning of a Nation, Inventions, Westward Expansion, Civil War, Outer Space

#### 5th Grade – Truth: How Does the Evidence We Gather Impact Various Perspectives of the Truth?

- Systems - What are the underlying components of all systems?
- Responsibility - What is our responsibility to self, community, society and the world?
- What are the issues that arise from different perspectives throughout history?

#### *Language Arts*

Language Arts standards are imbedded throughout the curriculum and will continue to be so in the term of the Agreement. In order for these skills to be truly integrated into the science curriculum, a Language Arts program that uses content driven materials for reading and writing instruction will be utilized.

In the ANCS Lower Grades, a comprehensive language and literacy framework that serves as a conceptual tool for organizing instruction will be utilized. To offer authentic reading and writing experiences for our children, we will organize literacy standards using a balanced literacy framework. While there has been much academic debate in recent years regarding two theories of how best to teach children to read and write: heavy phonics and word study or, contrarily, a “whole” language approach focusing solely on the developmental nature of the reading process, ANCS will continue to implement elements of both methods – careful attention to words and word study combined with natural experiences with print and oral language. This balanced approach includes the following components: reading aloud, shared reading, guided reading, or reading workshop, shared writing, interactive writing, guided writing or writing workshop, independent writing and letter and word study. Research validation for the ANCS strategy and

approach include, but are not limited to: Fountas, I.C. & Pinell, G.S. (1996). *Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for all Children*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Additional resources that guide instruction include: Pinnell, G.S. & Fountas, I.C. (2003). *Phonics lessons*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; Calkins, L M. (1994). *The Art of Teaching Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; Fountas, I.C., & Pinell, G.S. (2001). *Guiding Readers and Writers Grades 3-6: Teaching Comprehension, Genre and Content Literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. In addition to these teaching resources, the school will house an extensive leveled library of book sets for classroom instruction.

### *Mathematics*

The ANCS Mathematics approach will follow a program that embodies the vision of the rigorous national standards for mathematics developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). Teachers will create and adhere to math curriculum maps that provide a scope and sequence for math instruction for the year, essential questions, and assessment measures. Additionally, these maps articulate areas of the program that require supplementation to ensure the GPS have been addressed in the course of a year. It will follow a constructivist approach to learning by emphasizing the understanding of mathematical concepts through student articulated theories and strategies, by focusing on the myriad of ways to solve problems and not solely on one right answer, and by students actively engaging mathematics through manipulative materials and games. Students develop flexibility and confidence when approaching a variety of complex problems, proficiency in using mathematical skills and tools, and fluency with facts, computation, and other areas of mathematics such as geometry, data and algebraic thinking.

### *Arts, Physical Education, & Spanish*

In the lower grades, ANCS will offer several related arts classes in addition to the above described academics. Each week, children will receive 90 minutes of Physical Education instruction, 60 minutes of Spanish instruction, 45 minutes of visual arts instruction and 45 minutes of music instruction. Teachers will follow the Georgia curriculum guidelines for their specified content area when planning and assessing learning. Related Arts and classroom teachers regularly collaborate to provide integrated lessons/units and to support classroom instruction and student learning.

### *Upper Grades (6-8)*

Following the advisory session that begins each day, students in the upper grades at ANCS will have a daily schedule that rotates through three different blocks of approximately 2 hours each: one block of math/science/technology, one block of humanities (language arts and social studies), and one block of visual or performing arts, Spanish, and/or Fit for Life. Additionally, there is a daily reading and work time for students. Classes in the upper grades at ANCS will be heterogeneously grouped, with students of the same grade level in classes together.

Students will practice and develop their strength in different essential skills over the course of their time in the upper grades at ANCS in math/science/technology, humanities, Spanish, Fit for Life, and arts classes. The focus for each of the classes is described below by grade level:

### *Humanities*

Students in the humanities develop skills in Reading, English/Language Arts and Social Studies. Students develop their skills comprehending, analyzing, and producing in a variety of different genres (persuasive, analytical, creative, narrative, poetry) while exploring different regions of the world. In the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, the content focuses on the culture, literature, and history of the western hemisphere: the Americas, Europe, and Oceania. In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the content focuses on Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, while in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade the emphasis is on Georgia history in the context of the history and literature of the United States.

### *Performing & Visual Arts*

Classes in the arts are designed to provide students with skills and ideas in a variety of artistic media and an appreciation for different styles of artistic expression. Students in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade have performing arts as their artistic concentration. Performing arts classes introduce students to basic theatre concepts and immerse students in different types of acting (monologue, plays, improvisation) as well as to various aspects of stage production. In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students have a visual arts concentration. These classes introduce students to techniques in drawing, collage, and other forms of expression.

Eighth grade students choose between different elective course options in the arts each term (if they do not elect to take a yearlong course in Spanish). These classes build upon the foundational skills developed in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades by giving students the opportunity to explore more sophisticated concepts and techniques. In visual arts, this includes two- and three-dimensional art making methods and mixed media. The performing arts classes range in focus from scene study to play production.

### *Math, Science & Technology*

The integrated math, science, and technology curriculum centers on essential skills and concepts to bridge students from the basic numeracy of elementary school to the more advanced thinking and problem solving necessary for success in high school. The content strands focus on foundations in algebra and geometry, number sense, probability, data analysis and measurement in math across all grade levels. In science, the earth sciences (oceanography, astronomy, geology, and ecology) are the focus in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, while in 7<sup>th</sup> grade students explore content in the life sciences with an emphasis on biology, and in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, science content focuses on physical science, with strands in the nature of matter, laws of energy, matter, motion and forces, and energy transformation. Throughout their time at ANCS students use technology as a tool to explore math and science with a focus on developing foundational computing skills and greater ease with different types of technology and their use, including web design and animation.

### *Spanish*

Sixth and seventh grade students have Spanish class for one hour twice a week for the entire school year. In this class, Spanish language and grammar are taught through the context of cultural units to strengthen students' skills in speaking, listening, writing, and reading the language with a progression from basic to more intermediate and advanced Spanish. Eighth grade students can opt either to take a yearlong course in Spanish, or they may choose between different elective course options in the arts each term.

### *Fit for Life*

In Fit for Life, students develop their physical, mental, and social-emotional wellness. The curriculum—focused on sports and interpersonal communication activities, health and adolescent development, social-emotional skills, and other mind-body connections—uses a holistic approach to empower students to take responsibility for making healthy personal decisions.

### *Advisory*

In addition to the classes described above, students in the Upper Grades at ANCS will also be a part of an advisory group. Each teacher at the school will also play the role of an advisor to a small group of 10-13 students to help meet the developmental and academic needs of middle school-aged students.

Advisory will meet daily, and once a month there is an extended advisory time. The central purposes of the advisory program in the upper grades will be:

- a. To learn to understand and appreciate people who are different from us.
  - b. To participate in activities that build group spirit and cohesiveness.
  - c. To support and be supported by other advisory members in discussing and facing academic, social, and community issues.
  - d. To work together on common projects which benefit others through service to the community.
2. *Include a description of instructional methods to be used for each subject offered. (State Rule, Page 7)*
  3. *Describe what is unique or distinctive about the proposed instructional methods and materials that will be used to provide high quality instruction and educational programs. (State Rule, Page 7)*
  4. *Explain how this distinctive element or unique program is research based and standards driven. Explain the research that demonstrates that this approach will work with your anticipated student population.*

Effective instruction begins with planning on the part of teachers that is focused on responsiveness and relevance to students. Teachers at ANCS will not rely on textbooks or pre-packaged programs to guide the course of study; instead, teachers will use the principles of Understanding by Design (UbD) to develop an instructional program that starts with students and their current level of skill and understanding and determines the best methods for students to learn and apply new skills and content. Teachers will meet in grade level and/or content area teams to use the UbD Framework of “backwards planning”: determining desired results, developing appropriate assessments, and then creating the instructional plan to get there. Guided by the Georgia Performance Standards, national discipline-specific standards, and their own knowledge of students, ANCS teachers will spend a significant amount of time and energy to find the best ways to engage students in content that is focused on interesting and meaningful essential questions that allow for multiple access points for different types of learners. A great deal of research supports the UbD method of teaching and learning, much of it captured in a study by the National Research Council in 2000 titled *How People Learn: Brain, Mind,*

Experience, and School.[3] (Please see Appendix A for an example of the UbD Planning Template.)

Rather than experience classes separated by subject in disconnected chunks of time, students at ANCS will study in the major academic areas in longer blocks of time that integrate interrelated disciplines. Teaching these subjects in close association with each other allows for the sort of rich and interesting projects that draw on a variety of skills that are the hallmark of constructivist learning.

In the classroom, the CES concept of “student as worker, teacher as coach” will be visible. Rather than simply “delivering” instruction in the hopes that it will be taken in, understood, and memorized by students, ANCS teachers will put students at the center of activity, asking them to grapple with questions and ideas through interesting projects. Teachers will make use of a variety of strategies in their work with students in order to maintain the sort of flexibility to differentiate teaching. By making creative use of time, space, tasks, and groupings, teachers can provide the level of academic support and/or challenge individual students appropriately. The utilization of this approach to teaching will provide for the sort of differentiated instruction that is challenging to students in heterogeneous classrooms such as those found at ANCS.[4]

Finally, students at ANCS will demonstrate their mastery of essential skills and exhibit this competency in a portfolio used to assess their progress through the academic program. The portfolio assessment system will be yet another unique element of the ANCS educational experience and one that is grounded in evidence about what works for students.[5]

*5. What is the anticipated teacher to student ratio and the rationale for maintaining this ratio? What are the plans for class size? (State Rule, Page 7)*

In the Lower Grades (K-5) class size will not exceed 15 students in Kindergarten and 20 students in grades 1-5. The teacher to student ratio will be two adults to 15 and 20 students by grade level. Each classroom will have one lead teacher and one associate teacher. In addition, all grade levels will have regularly scheduled Related Arts instruction in the areas of Physical Education, Art, Music and Spanish each week. On frequent occasions the related arts teachers will work with classroom teachers to design and support integrated learning units of study.

In most Upper Grades classes, ANCS anticipates maintaining a teacher to student ratio of 1 to 12. Classes such as humanities and math/science/technology would have approximately 24 students taught by a teacher and an associate teacher. Performing arts, visual arts, and Spanish classes would consist of one teacher with approximately 12 students. Certain classes (Fit for Life, elective arts classes) could have a somewhat higher teacher to student ratio.

In order to keep with the CES principle that “teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum extent feasible”, ANCS aims to maintain a relatively low teacher to student ratio. The nature of the educational program and its desired outcomes necessitates structures that allow teachers to get to know the strengths and needs of each student well.

6. *Discuss how your school will address the needs of those students who do not perform at grade level either upon enrollment or shortly after enrolling in the proposed school. What actions, after school hours and during the regular school day, will the school take to help students make the kinds of progress that will enable them to achieve at grade level or higher? What long-range interventions will be established to address these needs?*
7. *Describe how the school shall provide for supplemental educational services, pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03 and remediation in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03 and 160-4-5-.03. (State Rule, Page 7)*

During orientation and the first weeks of school, teachers will administer a number of diagnostic assessments (Universal Screeners) to all students to gather baseline evidence of each student's knowledge and skills. Additionally, a range of other criteria will be used to determine whether and what type of support is needed. These criteria include: teacher observations, student work samples, results of internal and external assessment measures, student attendance, prior referral to Student Support Team, parent/guardian and/or student feedback. Those students who exhibit need in certain areas of the curriculum will be identified, and academic support will be provided to these students in and out of the classroom by the academic assistance program, classroom teachers and by student support services staff. Students will continue to receive this instructional support until teachers, parents/guardians, and the student determine it is no longer required. In addition, information from monthly progress reports and end of term reports and data gleaned from the sources listed above will be used to determine when the continuation of additional support services is necessary.

A number of structures and practices at ANCS will be used to provide the appropriate level of academic support and/or remediation to students in need so that they make progress towards meeting standards:

- Daily support block: To create flexibility in the schedule that better assists students in their learning, each day a block of time will be available for academic support and enrichment. This block of time is available for individual conferencing or tutoring, student work time, reading instruction, and other focused activities.
- Response to Intervention (RTI): a multi-tiered approach to help struggling learners. Students are identified by Universal Screeners that are administered 2-3 times a year. Once a student has been identified as struggling, their progress is closely monitored at each stage of the intervention to guide future instruction. RTI works in conjunction with our general education classrooms, academic assistance, SST, and special education. There are a series of notebooks per grade level to assist classroom teachers in identifying appropriate interventions, and collecting and graphing data.
- Academic Assistance: Academic Assistance teachers play a key role in identifying, assessing, developing and implementing effective, targeted and supportive academic programming for students in Tier II and III of the RTI process. They design and administer directed learning interventions that target the under-achieving student population (10-15% of the student body) in mathematics, writing and reading as recommended by staff and testing data. They also assist classroom teachers in enhancing

differentiated instruction activities for identified students and identifying students exhibiting potential behavior challenges.

- Small group instruction: Students who exhibit struggles, particularly in reading and math, will receive smaller group instruction from teachers and/or support services staff.
- Before and/or after school tutoring: Each ANCS teacher will offer at least one tutorial session for students in his/her classes each week, before or after school. In addition, the school will maintain relationships with several local tutors and after-school programs to provide support to students.
- Saturday School: A Saturday morning program from 8:00-10:00 AM will support students who continue to have difficulty meeting grade level instructional benchmarks. Classes will be taught by ANCS teachers in 8-10 week cycles as needed.
- Instructional technology: A number of software and web-based computer programs will be used to offer remediation of basic skills and track students' academic growth.
- All students will meet the ANCS grade level portfolio requirements prior to being promoted to the next grade level.
- Benchmark, item-level information will be collected and analyzed two times each year (Fall and Winter) to better understand instructional needs at the student-, classroom-, and grade-levels. These needs will be identified in a timely manner and allow for instructional staff to supplement and/or reteach in preparation for CRCT administration.
- Three year statistical analysis of trend data by teacher will be conducted and appropriate professional learning and reflective dialogue implemented within and across grade levels.
- Develop a dashboard of strategic goals, objectives, measures, and status statements undertaken to address annual instructional needs identified by CRCTs and other assessment measures
- School-wide assessment practices will be supported and enhanced through strategic visioning using an abbreviated version of the Balanced Scorecard (BSC)

When students meet the eligibility requirements for remedial education, ANCS will use the augmented model, which is an approved program model or a model developed and approved by the school's Governing Board. If required by the Federal No Child Left Behind Law, ANCS will offer Supplemental Educational Services to eligible students in accordance with Georgia Board of Education regulations. To the extent ANCS is required to provide supplemental educational services pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03 and related legislation ANCS staff will work with Atlanta Public Schools to ensure that all required notices are provided to the eligible students and their families and that all necessary information is transmitted to the appropriate local or state agencies.

8. *Address instructional technology issues including ensuring that all students are prepared to use technology as a tool for learning and as a critical component of today's society.*

Throughout the ANCS educational program, technology will be used not only as a means to explore various topics but also as a skill to be practiced and mastered in and of itself to meet the International Society of Technology in Education (ISTE) technology standards for students (listed below). By integrating technology into the curriculum, students at ANCS will, by the time they reach the 8th grade, demonstrate that they know and are able to do the following:

### 1. Creativity and Innovation

Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:

- a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
- b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
- c. use models and simulations to explore complex systems and issues.
- d. identify trends and forecast possibilities.

### 2. Communication and Collaboration

Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

Students:

- a. interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others employing a variety of digital environments and media.
- b. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.
- c. develop cultural understanding and global awareness by engaging with learners of other cultures.
- d. contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems.

### 3. Research and Information Fluency

Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Students:

- a. plan strategies to guide inquiry.
- b. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.
- c. evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks.
- d. process data and report results.

### 4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making

Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources. Students:

- a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
- b. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.
- c. collect and analyze data to identify solutions and/or make informed decisions.
- d. use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions.

### 5. Digital Citizenship

Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students:

- a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.
- b. exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity.
- c. demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning.
- d. exhibit leadership for digital citizenship.



## 6. Technology Operations and Concepts

Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations.

Students:

- a. understand and use technology systems.
- b. select and use applications effectively and productively.
- c. troubleshoot systems and applications.
- d. transfer current knowledge to learning of new technologies.

An Instructional Technology specialist will work with teachers in the lower and upper grades of ANCS to find appropriate and effective ways to bring technology to their instruction, not as a frivolous “add-on” but as a useful tool for learning. Desktop and/or laptop computers, interactive whiteboards, and digital projectors are among the technological tools teachers may use in their classes, and students will also have an opportunity to use these tools.

The ANCS program in instructional technology complements the school’s comprehensive library media center program. Policies of the library media center will be part of the ANCS policy manual, as approved by the governing board of ANCS. The library media center program follows the standards and guidelines of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) as included in *Standards for the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Learner in Action* and *Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs*, available at <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/guidelinesandstandards/learningstandards/standards.cfm>.

The library media program is integrated into the instructional program, making students, teachers, the library media specialist, and other staff partners in learning. The library media program is an extension of the classroom. Information skills are taught and learned within the context of classroom curricula and encourage learning through active participation.

The library media program provides a setting in which students build skills they need throughout their years of formal education and into adulthood. These skills include locating, analyzing, evaluating, interpreting, and communicating information and ideas. Through the library media center, students learn critical thinking and problem-solving skills, the rights and responsibilities of the generation and flow of information and ideas, and an appreciation for the value of literature in an educated society. These skills rely on access to adequate library media facilities, appropriate resources, and qualified personnel.

The library media center collection includes a diversity of materials that represent various points of view on current and historical issues, as well as a wide variety of resources in areas of interest to all students. Staff and parents, as well as students, have access to the library media center collection and its facilities and personnel.

9. *Describe the school’s approach to educating children with special needs. Describe with specificity how the school will identify children with special needs, develop plans for their education, and monitor their progress. (State Rule, Page 7)*
10. *Pursuant to federal and state special education regulations (including LRE and FAPE), describe how the charter school will provide the continuum of special education services*

*(including related services) to eligible students. Please describe where this continuum will begin and end for students. Explain who will carry out these responsibilities- the school's staff or outside providers. (State Rule, Page 7)*

*The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) mandates local school systems to ensure that students with disabilities enrolled in charter schools are served in the "same manner" as are students with disabilities (SWD) in non-charter local schools within the local educational agency (LEA).*

*The Atlanta Public Schools (APS) Office of Student Programs and Services (OSPS) has developed guidelines for charter schools outline specific responsibilities for both charter school administration and staff, and Atlanta Public Schools. These guidelines are incorporated into the checklist and your plan for compliance with these guidelines must be incorporated into your application. Atlanta Public Schools will monitor the special education services provided by the charter schools.*

For students with identified learning disabilities, the special education program at ANCS will work with students and families to meet students' individual needs by accommodating and/or modifying the curriculum. A Special Education Coordinator will be responsible for managing the case files of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). ANCS will comply with all requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). As much as is appropriate, students with identified disabilities will be included in classes with their peers, and the Special Education Coordinator will work with teachers and students to insure student learning needs are being met. A broad spectrum of special education services will be made available to support the specific learning needs of students with IEPs; however, due to the ANCS's inclusion philosophy, staffing and programming limitations, LRE and FAPE may be best met at either the child's zoned school or at an APS school with programs designed to meet the needs of students with certain types of disabilities.

When students that already have an IEP enroll at ANCS, the school will set up a meeting with the child's parents or guardians to review the IEP and determine the best course of action. To the extent specialists are required beyond the ANCS full and part time staff, ANCS will work with the Atlanta Public Schools to provide services per the terms of the "Wrap-Around Services Agreement" and/or contract those services with appropriate and licensed service providers.

Accommodations within the regular classroom, as well as modification of the curriculum when appropriate (usually modifying the criteria required for promotion and expanding the range of forms that work may take in order to demonstrate mastery, and not the modification of the standards themselves), will allow students with identified disabilities to be successful.

Each year, the Special Education Coordinator will provide professional development during some of the school's professional planning days. The topics to be addressed will be developed through needs assessment and consultation with liaisons, review of evidence-based practice in the field of special education, and staff review of student needs. Consultants may be brought in as appropriate. Topics could include: meeting the needs of students with nonverbal learning

disabilities, meeting the needs of students with executive function problems, meeting the needs of students who are depressed, and meeting the needs of students through accommodation and modification of performance based requirements.

The Special Education Coordinator will also provide consultation as requested to teachers working together during shared planning time and for individual teachers who are providing instructional support and accommodations to regular education students as well as to students who are receiving special education services. Consultation may also be provided to classroom teachers to support students as they develop an increasing awareness about their own learning.

In addition to the practices described above, ANCS will provide a number of supports to students with exhibited learning needs who may not have an IEP, including using a Student Support Team (SST) to identify struggling learners and assess the effectiveness of various instructional interventions for students. Students with 504 plans are a part of the SST program. In addition, teachers or parents may refer a student to SST, and the team will work in consultation with parents, guardians, and/or caregivers to develop individual plans for students.

With regard to Special Education, ANCS shall:

- Hire or contract certified special education teachers to provide services to eligible students
- Develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for each student identified as needing special education services, with the full participation of the APS Program for Exceptional Children staff
- Employ substitute teachers as required by state guidelines until certified teachers are hired if the charter school does not have certified staff
- Submit and verify documentation quarterly on certified staff to the Director, Program for Exceptional Children in APS
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for special education staff
- Use APS forms for special education
- Handle discipline issues regarding special education students in accordance with federal guidelines, state rules and APS policy, and with the full participation of APS Program for Exceptional Children staff
- Immediately notify the APS Coordinator of Charter Schools upon receipt of a complaint made by a parent/guardian or student concerning the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, furnish a copy of such complaint and cooperate fully in the investigation, defense and resolution of such complaint
- Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, furnish a copy of such complaint and cooperate fully in the investigation, defense and resolution of such complaint

With regard to Special Education, Atlanta Public Schools shall:

- Retain Federal IDEA funds and apply them toward the cost of identified services where warranted
- Provide itinerant services to students identified and eligible for speech language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and all other related/supportive services as required by an IEP or by Section 504

- Assign a Program Assistant and Special Education Coordinator to serve the charter school
- Conduct Compliance Reviews of all charter schools to ensure that students with disabilities are provided a free appropriate public education
- Approve and assign all administrative student placements for students that cannot be served appropriately in their charter schools
- Retain Medicaid billings (fee for service) generated by the provision of special education and related services

With regard to Student Support Team (SST), ANCS shall:

- Establish a Student Support Team (SST) in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies as explained in the manual
- Use APS forms for SST
- Establish a Section 504 team in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies
- Use APS forms for Section 504
- Handle all discipline issues regarding Section 504 students in accordance with federal regulations, state guidelines, and local school board policies
- Participate in workshops, in-service and/or trainings offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as SST/Section 504 chairpersons
- Comply with Section 504 by providing the appropriate accommodations and equipment
- Immediately notify the APS Coordinator of Charter Schools upon receipt of a complaint made by a parent/guardian or student concerning Section 504, furnish a copy of such complaint and cooperate fully in the investigation, defense and resolution of such complaint

With regard to Student Support Team (SST), Atlanta Public Schools shall:

- Provide professional development training for SST
- Provide professional development training for the Section 504 team
- Provide technical/consultative assistance to charter schools if requested by the charter school

#### Gifted and Talented

ANCS will not offer a separate gifted and talented program. Classes are heterogeneously grouped, in large part because of the significant amount of research that suggests that ability grouping by classes has a negative impact on all students.[6] Instead, the differentiation of instruction and assessment within the classroom will provide opportunities for students who have demonstrated mastery of a particular skill to take on assignments that are more intellectually challenging to them, while still receiving appropriate support in skills in which they may not be as advanced.

Multiple opportunities for all students to experience enrichment activities will be made available to all ANCS students. The school will offer enrichment classes for Lower Grades' students after dismissal and for Upper Grades' students during the weekly enrichment block. Teachers at the school and/or outside staff will lead these enrichment classes. Examples of enrichment

opportunities offered may include: tennis, Tai Kwan Do, advanced Spanish, voice, drumming, Track Club, dance, piano, gymnastics, improv, illustration, voice, guitar, band and stepping.

*11. Describe how the school's educational program will provide state and federally mandated services to students with limited English proficiency/ English Language Learners. (State Rule, Page 7)*

ANCS will comply with all federal and state mandated requirements. The federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* defined important educational rights for English language learners and their parents. NCBS Titles I and III, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 and the ELP standards aligned with Georgia's Performance Standards (GPS) will be held in compliance throughout the ELL process and frame ELL assessment and instruction at ANCS.

A variety of specific instruments and procedures will be employed to identify and access English Language Learners. The school will adhere to the WIDA English Language Proficiency standards adopted by the State of Georgia and the identification and assessment process at ANCS will include:

1. Home language surveys (HLS), which parents and guardians will complete as part of the new student registration process. The HLS will be completed only when a parent indicates that a second or non-English language is spoken in the home.
2. Incoming student records will be reviewed to determine if ELL services have been provided in any previous educational setting/school. Student records will be scrutinized for indicators of limited English language proficiency.
3. All students who have recently arrived in the United States and/or ANCS with school record indicators or what appear to be potential English Language Learner needs will be provided access to ELL screening.
4. As determined in a review of records and/or application data, English language proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening will be assessed using language proficiency assessment tools recommended by the Department of Education's Office of Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (OLAAA). The assessments to be used will include those required by the State of Georgia (a), but may include additional assessments (b) as necessary.

a The ACCESS instrument for ELLS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State for English Language Learners), the official assessment instrument for schools in Georgia in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. This official screening instrument is required in Georgia. WIDA-ACCESS Proficiency Test, adopted by Georgia in 2007, will be the primary assessment tool employed by ANCS. Atlantic Public Schools have, to date, been willing to provide an ACCESS trained evaluator to assist with ELL identification at the Neighborhood Charter School and we will request that this practice continue with ANCS.

b. Oral language proficiency tests (OLPT) as needed, such as the Language Assessment Scales (LAS-O), the Language Assessment Scales, Reading and Writing (LAS-R/W), and the Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey.

5. Once an assessment of English language proficiency (ACCESS) is completed in the four language domains students will receive individualized placement in an ELL instructional setting. The ELL instructional setting will be clearly defined and if a faculty member of ANCS possesses a valid ELL/ESOL endorsement, they will provide services. If there is not an ELL certified teacher on staff, a Georgia certified ELL/ESOL instructor trained in current best ELL practices will be hired to provide services. This has been done in the past when ELL support was required and ANCS is committed to continuing this practice. ANCS will be mindful and intentional in being sure that ELL services needs align appropriately with special education services should a student qualify for the latter.

6. Developmentally appropriate content area instruction will be provided to identified ELL students and a spectrum of teaching strategies and instructional practices may be used in delivering instruction. All instruction and materials will be relevant and include current best practice such as: scaffolding, shelter instruction, Total Physical Response (TPR), reciprocal teaching, critical thinking questions and tasks, hands-on experiences and simplification and integration of instruction that connects to the ELL's native culture. Additionally the use of graphic organizers, controlled language, labeling, and vocabulary and word banks will be employed.

7. In addition to ongoing assessment related to the ELL's individual plan, all ELL students will be re-evaluated annually to measure performance success and whether there continues to be a for ELL program support and services. The ELL services will focus on developing an individual plan for each student identified through assessments.

*12. Describe accommodations that will be made to provide ancillary services such as diagnostic and psychological testing and health-related support to students.*

ANCS will use the services of a licensed certified school psychologist when diagnostic and/or psychological testing is needed to support a student. If additional testing and/or services are needed outside the scope of what the psychologist can provide, the school will work with the student's family, outside providers, and/or the Atlanta Public Schools to arrange for services in accordance with all state and federal requirements.

With regard to psychological services, ANCS shall:

- Hire or contract with a licensed certified school psychologist or a licensed clinical psychologist
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPA for persons serving as psychologists
- Use APS forms for psychological services

Atlanta Public Schools shall:

- Provide consultations from the APS Crisis Intervention Team as needed

ANCS will utilize the services of a school counselor to work with students both in one-on-one and group settings to address social and emotional issues. In instances where the school cannot provide the most appropriate services, referrals will be made in accordance with all state and federal requirements.

With regard to support for the physical and emotional wellness of students, ANCS shall:

- Hire or contract with a licensed school counselor to provide services to students in accordance with state guidelines and APS policy
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as school counselors
- Use APS forms for counseling services
- Hire or contract with a licensed school social worker to provide services to students in accordance with state guidelines and APS policy
- Report all allegations of child abuse and/or neglect to the charter school social worker and to the persons required to receive such reports pursuant to state law
- Use APS forms for social services
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as social workers
- Hire or contract with a licensed school nurse to provide services to students in accordance with state guidelines and APS policy
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as nurses
- Use APS forms for health services

With regard to support for the physical and emotional wellness of students, Atlanta Public Schools shall:

- Provide consultation services on an “as-needed” basis

ANCS will adhere to the following health documentation guidelines:

- Georgia Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) must be on file
- Affidavit affirming that immunization requirements conflicting with parents’ religious beliefs will be allowed
- Each student must have a Certificate of Ear, Eye, Dental Examination (Form 3300)
- Students must present an updated certificate within 30 days after the date of expiration
- Students out of compliance must be excluded
- Children entering grades K-12 for the first time must show proof of vaccination or immunity to varicella and proof of a second dose of the vaccine that includes measles (usually in the form of MMR)
- Hepatitis B Vaccine is required for all new students enrolling in school at any age

## **B. Student Assessment**

*Charter schools are mandated by Georgia statute to participate in the administration of state assessments. Materials for these assessments are provided by the state. The Charter School, as part of the local education agency, will administer all state assessments during the APS system-testing window. Charter Schools, at their expense, may implement additional assessments.*

- 1. Describe the schools plan to obtain student performance data for each student, which shall include how the baseline standard of achievement shall be determined in order to meet the goals and objectives of the petition. For the charter school's first year, initial baseline student achievement data shall be collected within three months of the first day of school. This data is not limited to, but may include, standardized assessment results from previous school years. Describe what baseline data will be submitted to APS no later than November 15 of the first year. (State Rule, Page 7)*

Since any single assessment instrument can only provide a limited amount and type of information about student performance, ANCS will use a variety of assessment tools in order to gain a complete picture of student achievement. This range of assessments includes (but is not limited to) diagnostic assessments in the first weeks of school; informal and formal assessments from class (including unit-ending performance tasks); student work portfolios; and standardized tests, such as the Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) and Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS).

ANCS will measure the academic achievement of individual students and cohort groups of students longitudinally. For certain goals and objectives of the charter related to student academic achievement the following data points will be used to determine baseline standards of achievement:

- 3rd Grade Scores on the CRCT in Reading, English/Language Arts and Mathematics
- 5th Grade Scores on the Georgia Writing Assessment
- 3rd Grade Scores on the ITBS (or another national standardized test of achievement used by APS) in Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics.

- 2. Describe plans to diagnose educational strengths and needs of students and plans to use data for instructional planning. What are your planned processes for data management? How will data drive instruction? What is the school's plan for using assessment data to monitor and improve achievement for all students? (State Rule, Page 7)*

See pages 29-34.

- 3. Describe plans to formally and informally assess student performance in the core academic areas and other areas of interest to the community. (State Rule, Page 7)*

See pages 29-34.

- 4. Provide a statement detailing how the charter school shall comply with the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. §20-14-30 through §20-14-41 and federal accountability*



*requirements. Describe how students will, at a minimum, participate in statewide assessment programs. (State Rule, Page 7)*

ANCS will comply with the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. §20-14-30 through §20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements. ANCS's precursor schools have participated in, and ANCS will continue to participate in, all state mandated assessment tests for students in accordance with State and Federal law. ANCS precursor schools have administered, and ANCS will continue to administer, these tests within the testing window specified annually by the Atlanta Public Schools.

- 5. If students will participate in charter-initiated assessment programs, describe the assessments, when testing will occur, how data will be collected and managed, and how data will be used to drive instruction.*

As outlined above, ANCS precursor schools have made , and ANCS will continue to make, use of a variety of tools to assess student academic performance including: diagnostic assessments in the first weeks of school; informal and formal assessments from class (including unit-ending performance tasks); universal screeners; APS Benchmark Assessments; student work portfolios; and standardized tests, such as the Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT) and Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). Additionally, the school will consider adopting alternatives to the ITBS such as Scantron's Performance Series or NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) to provide additional information to drive instruction.

The data generated from these multiple forms of assessments provides a comprehensive picture of each student, and this data is and will be used in several different ways to inform instructional programmatic decisions at the student, classroom, content team, grade, and school levels:

- There are multiple days of curriculum planning when students are not at school. The faculty planning schedule will include time before school starts as well as over the course of the school year. In these sessions, teachers will spend time in content area and/or grade level teams using structured protocols to examine student performance data of students they taught in the previous year, and will be teaching in the current year, to identify trends and areas of strength and weakness in various skills and content. Out of these meetings, content area and grade level teams will set a small number of measurable, discrete goals in their work with students based on what was identified during the data-inquiry sessions. Additionally, teachers will use this data to collaboratively develop the major curricular themes, topics, and strands for the year and create specific and detailed plans that guide each unit of study.
- Within the regular school schedule, teachers will have between five to seven hours per week of planning time, much of it with teachers from the same grade level and/or academic subject area team. Teachers will use student performance data to work collaboratively to develop and refine both the academic program and their instructional and assessment practices to better meet the needs of students.
- In addition to common planning time, teachers will engage in frequent Professional Development sessions. These sessions comprise a rotation of full faculty and Critical Friends Group meetings. Critical Friends Groups are comprised of 8-12 faculty members,

and are coached by an experienced teacher-facilitator trained by the National School Reform Faculty ([www.nsrffharmony.org](http://www.nsrffharmony.org)). Groups meet monthly to examine student work, teacher plans, and instructional dilemmas in a sustained professional learning community in order to make effective changes in their practice and enhance student learning.

- Regular (2-4 per month) faculty meetings will provide opportunities for teachers to use student performance data in considering programmatic issues (give one another feedback about curriculum; consider the academic progression of the school's curriculum through grades, vertical planning, exit skills, and promotion). Teachers will also confer in teaching teams, across subject areas and grade levels, to identify students at risk and to develop instructional strategies for these students. Teachers will examine data concerning student achievement and use that data to make decisions about the academic program.
- In addition to teacher use of student academic performance data, several reporting structures will exist at ANCS to afford students and families frequent opportunity to reflect upon this data in order to improve student achievement. These structures include:
  - Weekly Communication Folders (K-5<sup>th</sup>): Each week a communication folder will be sent home to parents containing updates on student performance and classroom initiatives. Often additional home enrichment materials are included, as well as suggestions on how parents can collaborate with teachers in supporting their child.
  - Monthly Progress Reports (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>): Once a month, students and families will receive a progress report. These reports give feedback on a student's development of his/her habits of learning and provide a current class average so that support and attention may be enhanced, maintained, or altered to help the student achieve maximum growth and learning moving forward.
  - End of Term Reports: Three times a year, students and families in all grades will receive end of term reports. Like monthly progress reports, the end of term report provides academic and related information on a student so that support and attention may be enhanced, maintained, or altered to help the student achieve maximum growth and learning. End of term reports differ, however, from progress reports in that they give a more detailed picture of a student's performance in each class by featuring a narrative that describes the student's skills and habits relative to the standards for the course.
  - Conferences: A meeting of teacher and family and, where appropriate, student, following the distribution of end-of-term reports in November and March will provide a place for further discussion of student progress.
  - Portfolio Presentations: Students will present and reflect upon their learning through a public exhibition of their work at various points throughout the school year.
  - Standardized Test Score Reports: Student assessment score reports on tests such as the CRCT and ITBS will be mailed home to families following their arrival to the school. The score reports are accompanied by a cover letter that further explains the tests, a guide to interpreting the score reports, and a series of questions designed to help students reflect upon their performance.

### *ANCS Portfolio Assessment System*

As a way to gather a wider array of information about student performance throughout the school year, ANCS will use a student portfolio-based assessment system through which students demonstrate their competency in essential skills in each of the major academic domains. The criteria for each of these skills are designed to align with the Georgia Performance Standards, as well as standards from national discipline-specific organizations, such as the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE).

Students will present work from their portfolios to the ANCS and larger communities at various points throughout the year, and each student has a portfolio exhibition near the end of the school year. Public exhibition of student work is intended not only to give each student a goal to reach for during the school year, it is also a way to engage the wider community in the learning process at ANCS. Public exhibition is a way to build awareness of the value of each student's efforts and the critical thinking skills that guided the student's work.

One portfolio will be maintained for student use at the close of the school year, while the second served as a "Pass Along" assessment tool from grade to grade. The ANCS portfolio assessment system will draw on research documenting the importance of a coherent internal system of assessment and accountability to student achievement (as opposed to relying solely on external instruments, like the standardized tests)[7]. The Portfolio Assessment System will be tailored appropriately to match developmental and academic performance expectations at each grade level.

6. *For charter schools containing high school grades, describe the method for determining that a student has satisfied the requirements for graduation required by the State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.47. (State Rule, Page 8)*

Not applicable since ANCS is a K-8 school.

### **C. School Achievement Goals and Nonacademic Performance Goals**

*In defining goals for your school, please list student academic goals separately. Include nonacademic performance goals, management effectiveness goals, and goals related to the school's unique mission. All goals must specific and measurable.*

1. *Provide a discussion of the proposed school's academic goals – those objectives you expect individual students and the school to achieve if the school succeeds, and how the goals you have set for the school will be used as a basis for measuring performance and progress. (State Rule, Page 6)*
2. *Provide a statement about how the school's performance-based goals and objectives are in the public interest and shall result in improvement of student achievement and shall comply with the Single Statewide Accountability System in Accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2063. (State Rule, Page 6)*

3. *For each goal listed, list and discuss the performance indicators you propose to use to determine how well the students and the school have performed.*
4. *Describe your goals for the school during the school year, at each year-end, and at the end of your charter, including compliance with No Child Left Behind. Include your understanding of Adequate Yearly Progress and your plans to meet and/or exceed the state's target for performance levels on state assessments.*
5. *How will your school evaluate its progress towards these goals over time and what procedures will be utilized for taking corrective actions in the event that your school is not achieving its goals?*
6. *Describe the process and timetable through which performance and progress will be reported to parents and the community.*

### **Academic Performance Goals**

The academic performance goals outlined below reflect the school's compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act and its provisions for meeting annual performance targets set by the state each year in order to achieve "Adequate Yearly Progress". As such, these goals are in the public interest, shall result in improvement of student achievement, and shall comply with the Single Statewide Accountability System in Accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2063.

Also of note in the academic performance goals is that the performance indicators for them are varied in their number and type. Achievement of the ANCS's academic performance goals should be measured by a range of instruments, not just standardized tests. As the Iowa Testing Programs, developer of the well-regarded Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), argues, using the results of a standardized test as the sole measure of the effectiveness of an entire school program is an inappropriate use of such tests:

A school's curriculum is made up of many subject-matter components. Achievement in some of them can be measured by standardized achievement batteries, but in others, achievement may never be assessed on a building or district-wide basis. For example, speaking skills, computer literacy, music and art knowledge and ability, second-language learning, and lab skills are not measured by achievement batteries but are regarded by most educators as important components of the academic curriculum. No assessment method or instrument can supply the full range of information required to evaluate the entire school program, or even the complete academic curriculum. Since batteries like the ITBS can assess achievement in only a limited part of the total curriculum, scores from them must be supplemented by results from other forms of assessment if the relative success of the entire program is to be judged. Standardized test scores alone should not be used for this purpose because achievement batteries are not designed to cover the full range of objectives that make up the typical school curriculum.[\[2\]](#)

Finally, the academic performance goals reflect the 2<sup>nd</sup> CES common principle, which emphasizes that "each student master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge" and that "curricular decisions...be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than by an effort to merely cover content." To that end, particularly in the social science, the performance indicators for these academic goals rely on assessment

instruments that stress the ability of students to use important intellectual skills as opposed to those instruments that assess students' memorization of a wide range of discrete topics.

*Goal #1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of essential academic skills and understanding of essential domains of knowledge by meeting or exceeding the standards set by the state and federal government for making AYP under the No Child Left Behind Act (or whatever standards may be established when the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is re-authorized).*

Performance Indicators for Goal #1:

ANCS will open at full capacity as a K-8 charter school. The first year of the merged school will be the 2011-12 school year. That year Georgia will require that at least 86.7 percent of students in grades three through eight meet or exceed standard on the CRCT for Reading and Language Arts and that at least 83.3 percent of students meet or exceed standard on the CRCT in Math. Those targets increase to 93.3 percent in R/ELA and 91.7 percent in Math for year two and again to 100 percent in all three subjects in ANCS' third year, 2013-14. Since most of the students attending ANCS in its first year will come from the two merging schools (NCS and ACMS), we will use a combination of the AYP requirement and the prior year (2010-11) test scores from the two merging schools to set baseline data. Our target for meeting or exceeding the standard in year one will be at least equal to the 2011-12 AYP requirement for all three AYP subjects. In the case of any grade level and subject where the merging schools already exceeded the 2011-12 AYP requirement ANCS students will at least remain within the same 5% range the 2010-11 levels in year one. For example, if greater than 95% of NCS third graders meet or exceed standard in reading on the 2011 CRCT, the percentage of ANCS third graders who meet or exceed standard on the 2012 reading CRCT will also be at least 95%.

A chart showing the minimum progress needed to meet the current NCLB minimum standards (i.e. getting to 100% meeting or exceeding over the course of the first three years of operation can be found in below under the first performance indicator for goal number 2. Goals for grades and subjects where NCS and ACMS students already exceed the NCLB requirements are not yet capable of charting because the baseline data will not be available until the summer of 2011.

*Goal #2: Students who enroll at ANCS and remain enrolled will show growth relative to national norms and state standards each year they are enrolled at the school.*

In addition to measuring grade by grade increases as described in goal number 1 above, ANCS will measure the success of cohorts of students over time. Each class will have more students meeting or exceeding expectations each year as they advance through each campus of the Charter School. As groups of students progress through the grades offered at ANCS their progress toward meeting or exceeding expectations on the State mandated criterion referenced test will improve each year in Reading, ELA and Math, their NCE growth in Reading and Math on a national norm referenced test (such as the ITBS) will improve from third grade to eighth grade, and the percentage of students performing below target on the state writing assessment will decrease from fifth grade to eighth grade.

During the term of this charter, if less than 75% of students in a cohort group did not participate in the previous year's CRCT administration or if the retention rate of students from a cohort group from one grade level to the next falls below 75%, ANCS will work with APS to establish appropriate baseline standards of achievement and/or appropriate achievement goals for that cohort group.

Performance indicators for Goal #2:

- The percentage of students not meeting expectations on each subject of the CRCT in each cohort group will decrease by twenty percent (20%) each year. In addition, the percentage of students exceeding standard in each cohort group will increase by ten percent (10%) each year. For example, let's assume a group of 72 sixth graders enters the ANCS middle school campus in year one and on the CRCT at the end of the year 20 of those students (28%) do not meet standard in math, 32 students (44%) meet standard, and 20 students (28%) exceed standard. Our goal for that cohort of students would be for the percentage not meeting standard to decrease by at least 20% and the percentage exceeding standard to increase by 10%. Thus 28 (the percent non meeting standard) times .8 (a decrease of 20%) would mean in 7<sup>th</sup> grade no more than 22 percent of that cohort would not meet the standard in math. The following year that 22 percent would decrease to 18 percent ( $22 * .8 = 17.6$ ). At the same time the percent exceeding standard would increase to at least 31 in 7<sup>th</sup> grade ( $28 * 1.1$ ) and to at least 34 percent ( $31 * 1.1$ ) in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The reason we use percentages rather than real numbers of students is that the number of students in the cohort group is likely to shrink each year due to normal attrition. Thus to use real numbers would lead to artificially high decreases in those not meeting standard and/or artificially low increases in the number of students exceeding standard. These goals would be the same for each lower school (established in the first grade) and middle school cohort (established in the sixth grade) in each of the subjects tested on the CRCT in the baseline grade. The reason for resetting the cohorts in 6<sup>th</sup> grade is to prevent an eight year depletion of the cohort groups and to account for the fact that the number of students per grade increases in middle school. We want to include as many of the students in the school as possible in this value added assessment. In order to truly measure the value added over time by attending ANCS, only students who are enrolled in the first grade at ANCS lower school or in the sixth grade at ANCS middle school prior to January of their respective baseline years will be included in the longitudinal cohorts. However all students who otherwise qualify to be included in the year to year grade level assessments will be included in those accountability measures as described above for goal number 1.

The academic achievement growth measured by this indicator is represented in the charts below using a combination of the composite 2010 CRCT performance of the two merging schools and the target AYP requirements as the baseline performance level for each grade level for the merged school's first year of 2011-12:

**CRCT – Mathematics**

School Year	Not Meeting/Exceeding	Meeting	Exceeding
2011-12	16%	49%	35%
2012-13	8%	53%	39%
2013-14	0%	58%	42%
2014-15	0%	53%	47%
2015-16	0%	49%	51%

**CRCT – Reading/ELA**

School Year	Not Meeting/Exceeding	Meeting	Exceeding
2011-12	13%	51%	36%
2012-13	6%	54%	40%
2013-14	0%	56%	44%
2014-15	0%	52%	48%
2015-16	0%	47%	53%

- On the ITBS, the cohorts will be formed in third grade and will remain intact through the eighth grade because the ITBS is not administered to every grade. The performance on the third grade administration of the ITBS will set the baseline performance level for each cohort. Each cohort of third graders will get ten percent (10%) closer to a NCE of 99 by the time they take the ITBS in the eighth grade. For example if a third grade cohort has an average NCE of 58 in reading, that same cohort will have an NCE of at least 62 in reading in the eighth grade. [An NCE of 58 is 41 points short of 99. Thus closing the gap by 10% will result in an NCE of at least 62 (58 + 4).] If a particular third grade cohort does better or worse than another, their expected gain would automatically be adjusted accordingly. So if one third grade cohort had a math NCE of 42 they would be expected to increase that average by at least 6 points (99 – 42 = 57 and 10% of 57 rounds up to 6). If another third grade cohort had an average math NCE of 79, they would only be expected to increase that score by 2 points to 81 by the eighth grade since their baseline score was already very high. In addition to reporting the third grade (baseline) scores and eighth grade (target) scores for each cohort, we will report the scores for each cohort on the fifth grade ITBS along with an assessment of their progress toward their eighth grade target. An example of what this cohort group performance growth could look like is indicated in the chart below:

**Hypothetical ITBS Cohort Performance Growth**

School Year	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade – Reading NCE	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade – Target Reading NCE	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade – Math NCE	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade – Target Math NCE
2011-12	58	62	79	81

- Cohorts for the state writing assessment will be formed in the fifth grade and performance on the fifth grade writing assessment will set the baseline performance level for each cohort. The goal for each cohort of students will be for the percentage of students performing below standard on the fifth grade writing assessment to decrease by at least twenty percent (20%) by the time that cohort takes the eighth grade writing assessment. This will be measured and reported by multiplying the percentage

performing below standard in fifth grade by .8 in order to determine the goal for that cohort in the eighth grade. An example of what this cohort group performance growth could look like is indicated in the chart below:

***Hypothetical Writing Assessment Cohort Performance Growth***

School Year	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Writing – Percentage of Students Not Meeting Standards	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Writing – Target Maximum Percentage of Students Not Meeting Standards
2011-12	11%	8%

*Goal #3: The ANCS Portfolio Assessment System will demonstrate student learning and progress across a variety of learning activities as derived from the requirements for the portfolio for each grade level.*

Performance Indicators for Goal #3:

- In annual surveys, families and students will indicate whether the ANCS Portfolio Assessment System is an effective measure of student learning, with a goal of at least 80% of families and students responding affirmatively.
- ANCS will engage in a program audit to review the Portfolio Assessment System and ensure that its use in evaluating student learning is reliable and meets or exceeds learning standards as measured by other instruments. ANCS will report the results of this audit to all stakeholders.

**Nonacademic Performance Goals**

Each of the following “nonacademic” performance goals reflects the mission of the school.

*Goal #4: The school’s Governing Board will effectively promote the school’s mission.*

Performance Indicators for Goal #4

- The Board will update the strategic plan annually
  - Each summer, following the annual update of the strategic plan (based on the accomplishments of the previous academic year and adjusted as needed in anticipation of the upcoming year), the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the strategic plan was updated and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE
- The Board will adopt a balanced annual budget aligned with the strategic plan and ensure that it is fully funded
  - Each spring, following the adoption of ANCS’s annual budget for the upcoming
  - fiscal year, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the budget is in balance and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE
  - Each fall, following the completion of ANCS’s annual audit, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the budget for the previous fiscal year was in balance and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE



- Board will conduct a formal review of the Executive Director quarterly to hold leader accountable for successful implementation of the strategic plan and for staying within budget
  - Each quarter, following the completion of the Board’s formal review of the Executive Director, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the review was completed and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE
- The Board will survey parents, students, employees, and community annually to assess satisfaction with their input into governance decisions
  - Each summer, following the completion of the annual satisfaction surveys, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the survey was completed and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE

*Goal #5: Sound fiscal and management practices will sustain the school’s mission and commitment to its academic performance goals.*

Performance Indicator for Goal #5:

- The school’s independent annual audit will demonstrate sound financial practices and have no major adverse findings
  - Each fall, following the completion of the annual audit, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that the audit was completed without major adverse findings and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE
- The school will consistently attract, enroll, and retain students
  - Each fall, following the start of the school year, the Board will pass a resolution certifying that ANCS is at or near full enrollment and convey that resolution to APS and GaDOE

#### Reporting of Progress and Improvement Plan

ANCS will submit an annual report to APS and the state Department of Education providing a detailed update on the school’s progress towards its accountability provisions per the school’s charter agreement. This report will be made available to families and will be presented to the school’s Governing Board.

If the performance goals outlined above are not being met, the Principals/Executive Director and appropriate school staff would work with the school’s Governing Board to develop a targeted improvement plan with specific strategies to address areas of need. The Governing Board would approve the improvement plan and measure progress based on the plan. If necessary to the implementation of the improvement plan, the school would submit an amendment to the charter agreement for approval.

#### **D. Support for Learning**

1. *Describe the type of culture the school aims to develop. Explain the strategies the school will employ to develop a positive culture that is supportive of students, faculty, and families.*

2. *Discuss procedures for establishing a student code of conduct, disciplinary actions, if necessary, and an appeals process. Summarize the school's discipline policy or code of conduct for the general student population and special needs students. (State Rule, Page 8)*

The common principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools emphasize that “the tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of unanxious expectation (“I won't threaten you but I expect much of you”), of trust (until abused) and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity and tolerance)”, and these values govern the relationships we expect among all members of our school community. At the same time, the common principles also state that “staff should expect...a sense of commitment to the entire school.” Therefore, all staff will take responsibility to help all students make good choices at ANCS, not simply those whom they teach.

The following pages outline the school's practices and procedures to promote a learning environment that is positive and safe. This information will be distributed annually to students and families in the school's family handbook.

### **Rules & Norms**

Each year students in the lower grades will develop guiding words and phrases to follow for the school year. In the upper grades, the following guiding principles will be used as a way to guide the way in which we work both individually and together at our school and serve as the overall basis for expectations in all areas of the school:

- We respect each other, our surroundings and ourselves.
- We come to school prepared to learn and do our best.
- We work to resolve conflicts in a peaceful, thoughtful, meaningful way.
- We take responsibility for our actions and learning.
- We celebrate our individual and collective successes.

At ANCS we will operate on the belief that all children have dignity and worth. Our goal is to develop young people who make good choices, respect themselves, and show respect for others, and the ANCS Guiding Principles help to do just that. All school personnel will help students to follow the guiding principles, and students are expected to observe these principles in class and outside of school when they are representing ANCS. Additionally, each teacher will help students to follow the expectations established for his/her classroom.

When a student does not follow the ANCS Guiding Principles, a series of interventions will be used to support the student and parents/guardians in better understanding the expectations for a safe and positive learning environment at ANCS. The following interventions will commonly be used individually or in combination at the discretion of school staff depending upon the nature of the incident (note: incidents that jeopardize the safety, security, or well being of our students and school, may require acceleration of the intervention process at any time):

- Official Warning by Teacher/Staff Member
- Parent/Guardian Notification

- Restricted Lunch and/or Recess
- Loss of School Privileges
- Referral to Principal and/or Counselor
- Student/Parent/Principal and/or Dean of Students Conference
- In or Out of School Suspension
- Recommendation for Expulsion

In implementing consequences for student behavior, ANCS will hold a due process hearing when a long-term suspension (more than 10 days) or expulsion is recommended. In addition, students and families may appeal a long-term suspension or expulsion to the school's Governing Board. ANCS will follow the guidelines of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act in implementing its discipline policies.

Because a student's behavior has a great effect on the full development of his/her potential for learning and the development of positive relationships with other members of the school community, the ANCS Code of Conduct will support the development of positive student behavior. Generally that code of conduct will ensure that students comply with the school's Guiding Principles.

*3. Describe provisions for providing students with counseling services and health services.*

ANCS will utilize the services of a school counselor to work with students both in one-on-one and group settings to address social and emotional issues. In instances where the school cannot provide the most appropriate services, referrals will be made in accordance with all state and federal requirements.

With regard to support for the physical and emotional wellness of students, ANCS shall:

- Hire or contract with a licensed school counselor to provide services to students in accordance with state guidelines and APS policy
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as school counselors
- Use APS forms for counseling services
- Hire or contract with a licensed school social worker to provide services to students in accordance with state guidelines and APS policy
- Report all allegations of child abuse and/or neglect to the charter school social worker and to the persons required to receive such reports pursuant to state law
- Use APS forms for social services
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as social workers
- Hire or contract with a licensed school nurse to provide services to students in accordance with state guidelines and APS policy
- Participate in workshops, in-services and/or training offered by APS OSPS for persons serving as nurses
- Use APS forms for health services

With regard to support for the physical and emotional wellness of students, Atlanta Public Schools shall:

- Monitor social services provided by the charter school
- Provide consultation services on an “as-needed” basis

ANCS will adhere to the following health documentation guidelines:

- Georgia Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) must be on file
- Affidavit affirming that immunization requirements conflicting with parents’ religious beliefs will be allowed
- Each student must have a Certificate of Ear, Eye, Dental Examination (Form 3300)
- Students must present an updated certificate within 30 days after the date of expiration
- Students out of compliance must be excluded
- Children entering grades K-12 for the first time must show proof of vaccination or immunity to varicella and proof of a second dose of the vaccine that includes measles (usually in the form of MMR)
- Hepatitis B Vaccine is required for all new students enrolling in school at any age

4. *Describe plans for providing extracurricular activities, supplemental educational activities, and any interscholastic competitions. (State Rule, Page 7)*

Students at ANCS will be presented with numerous opportunities to grow outside of the classroom. Some of these academic, artistic, and athletic outlets may include:

An After School Enrichment Program is currently offered to grades K-5 throughout the school year at the precursor elementary school (NCS). Programs are offered three times per year for 6-10 weeks based on the program. Band, Drumming, Voice, Puppetry, Creative Movement, Track, Cheerleading, American Sign Language, Illustration, French Cooking and many more programs are offered.

- The ANCS Wolves (grades 6-8) will participate in the LUKE Sports League in flag football, cheerleading, basketball, and soccer
- The drama club will mount, as well as attend, theatrical performances and take part in competitions
- A math team will travel around the state matching their problem-solving abilities against other schools
- A yearbook staff will create and publish a colorful hardcover annual
- The “Everyday Leaders” service learning club will be committed to improving the world beyond the walls of ANCS

In addition, experiences which take students away from the school to support their learning will occur on a regular basis, such as exploring Georgia’s coastal biology on Jekyll Island, comparing different artistic movements at the High Museum of Art, and getting to know more about our national history by visiting Washington, D.C. for a week.

## **E. Community Partnerships**

1. *Provide a list of organizations that have committed to partner with your school and explain the potential nature of the partnerships. Include letters of support from the partners, if any. Describe the steps you have taken to develop any partnerships and your plans to further develop additional community partnerships. (State Rule, Page 6)*

ANCS will establish a partnership with the *Hands on Atlanta* (HOA) organization as both NCS and ANCS have frequently partnered with HOA on volunteer programs to improve our physical facilities and provide support during the school day. From playground construction, building classroom lofts and sealing classroom brick, HOA will remain an important service contributor to ANCS.

Zoo Atlanta, located only two blocks from the ANCS lower grades building, annually provides a strong school partnership. K-5 faculty and students routinely walk to the Zoo for special programs and research initiatives. Zoo Atlanta frequently comes to the lower grades building for classroom and school wide programs. Teacher in-service is another important resource realized from Zoo Atlanta.

Finally, ANCS will have representation on its Board of Visitors from local organizations to provide knowledge, experience, and ideas from the local community.

2. *Describe how parents, members of the community and other interested parties were directly and substantially involved in developing the petition. (State Rule, Page 6)*

A series of meetings were held to discuss critical issues included in the petition. Meetings were led by a consultant retained by the Boards of both Neighborhood Charter School (NCS) and the Atlanta Charter Middle School (ACMS), and the Board chairs of NCS and ACMS attended most of those meetings. Individual conversations were also held. Meeting participants included ACMS parents; ACMS Parent, Teacher, Community Association (PTCA) leaders; ACMS Diversity Committee; ACMS faculty, staff, and leadership team members; and ACMS Board members – and NCS parents; NCS’s PTCA leaders; NCS faculty, staff, and leadership team members; and NCS Board members – as well as NCS and ACMS budget and finance committee and staff members, and East Atlanta Community Association (EACA), Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA), and South Atlantans for Neighborhood Development (SAND) representatives.

The meetings focused on a list of 21 “decision issues” for which parent, community, and faculty input was desired by the Boards. These issues included such critical items as the Vision Statement and Mission Statement, the size and make-up of the governing Board, the name of the school, educational performance and organizational viability goals and associated performance measures, the areas of concentration on which the school intends to focus, components of the academic design and practices to ensure that AYP is met by all grades, and parent, faculty and community input into governance decisions once the schools are merged.

3. *Describe how parents, members of the community and other interested parties will be involved in the school. (State Rule, Page 6)*

The parents who founded ANCS intend it to be more than a place of academics. ANCS actively seeks the involvement and input of family members to provide the best possible environment academically and socially for our children. Research has shown that children who see their parents engaged in their school perform better in school. This is why parent involvement is a critical element of ANCS.

Upon enrolling a child at ANCS, each family will sign a Family Contract. This contract outlines the responsibilities of parents/guardians at ANCS, details specifics about volunteering at school and signifies an understanding of the commitment made as a family. A sample copy of the Family Contract is included in Appendix B (the middle school version).

Outlined below are some of the many ways parents/guardians can be involved:

- Involvement in classrooms, including volunteering to share knowledge and expertise on topics being taught in class, help organize and chaperone field trips, and serve as a student tutor
- Involvement outside the classroom, including volunteering in the office and the Media Center, helping publicize the school during registration or for other events, taking classroom projects home, Building and Grounds workdays, assisting with childcare for workdays and school events, coaching a school athletic team, assisting with After School clubs and School and PTCA Fundraisers, and serving on task forces or other short term needs (like grant writing and event planning), as well as assisting with cleanup after school events, community service programs, and helping with advisory service projects
- Involvement in the Parent, Teacher, Community Association (PTCA) – which plans, funds and provides enrichment opportunities – including PTCA committees
  - The rich environment that ANCS will provide for our children is due in part to its many active, engaged families and community members. Our precursor schools PTCA is the primary way families and community members can become involved and support our school community. It is expected that all families will join the PTCA. It is the PTCA and its members who plan, fund and provide the enrichment opportunities so critical to the school’s instructional program. The PTCA meets monthly during school sessions; these meetings include curriculum showcases, informational speakers, the annual board election, plus numerous social events throughout the year.
  - ANCS parents, guardians, and caregivers are encouraged to visit the parent and family resource area in the school’s main office which has a host of information on supporting students, parenting advice, high school transition information, and more. In addition, parents, guardians, and caregivers consult the PTCA news section of each week’s Courier newsletter for important news, information, and advice.
  - The PTCA will work closely with the Board to ensure that all families, students, staff and teachers, and community members have a role and a voice within the ANCS community.
- Membership on Board committees

- Service on the Board
- Board of Visitors, composed of local (EACA, GPNA, and SAND presidents or their designees), state, and national leaders who meet at the school twice per year to review the school's annual plans and performance

## **F. School Characteristics**

1. *Outline the planned annual school calendar and the daily hours of operation in compliance with Georgia attendance requirements. Please provide a sample annual calendar. (State Rule, Page 7)*

*If the proposal is for a school calendar that is different in hours per day or year length than the 180-day Atlanta Public Schools calendar; include purpose and acknowledgement of potential additional expenses.*

2. *Provide typical daily plans that illustrate hours of instruction, independent study, and other activities for the school. Include a draft daily and/or weekly school schedule. (State Rule, Page 7)*

ANCS will follow the Atlanta Public Schools annual calendar, with the exception of a one-day new student and family orientation prior to the first day of classes and optional summer programming for academic support and enrichment. The daily hours of operation for students in the lower grades will be 8:00 a.m. to 2:25 p.m., and in the upper grades are 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. every day except Wednesdays. On Wednesdays, students in the upper grades would be dismissed at 2:15 for increased faculty planning. Optional support and enrichment activities would be held at the school following this earlier dismissal each week. ANCS will meet state requirements for daily and yearly hours of instruction.

Please see Appendix C for the ANCS annual calendar and a sample lower and upper grade student weekly schedule

## **G. Grade Structure**

1. *Outline the basic grade configuration the school will contain over what period of time. (Applicant: Consider copying chart from petitioner cover page) (State Rule, Page 7)*

ANCS will serve students in kindergarten through 8th grade.

2. *If you are proposing a school to contain a grade configuration other than the Atlanta Public Schools model of Elementary K-5, Middle 6-8, or High 9-12, provide the rationale.*

ANCS will have two campuses, one will be Elementary K-5 and the other will be Middle 6-8.

3. *Describe which accreditation(s), if any, your school will seek, and provide timelines.*

4. *If you are proposing a school that will not offer a high school diploma, describe how or where the students will matriculate next towards graduation with a high school diploma.*

The schools are in the Maynard Jackson High School (MJHS) catchment areas and we expect those students from NPU-W that do not attend private high schools to attend MJHS.

## **H. Student Information System**

*Each charter school is required to use the same student information system as used by APS. In order to provide APS with necessary data for state reporting and enrollment monitoring, the charter school must agree to use the APS student information system in accordance with school system specifications. APS will provide the charter school the minimum necessary hardware and software to utilize the district student information system. Current requirements for software, hardware, networks, and technical support are available. The student information system is subject to change, as are the requirements.*

1. *Describe plans to comply with local requirements to collect and submit electronic data to APS as required by the state and federal government related to student information.*
2. *Describe methods that will be used to maintain accurate enrollment and attendance records required for local and state reports. Who will be responsible for data input for attendance, discipline, grades, student/teacher schedules, and other student data?*

ANCS will comply with all local requirements to collect and submit electronic data to APS as required by the state and federal government related to student information. Designated ANCS staff members will be charged with the task of inputting and tracking the submission of this information. This staff member or staff members will participate in appropriate training for the student information system used and the staff member or staff members will work with other school staff to insure accurate record keeping and data collection.

The school will integrate the Infinite Campus system and the school's operational technology plan will fully comply with district expectations. All data, including discipline, grades, schedules, and other student data will be maintained in compliance with the standards set forth by Atlanta Public Schools and will be transmitted to the district in accordance with district and/or state guidelines. All costs associated with use of the required student information system and the cost of interfacing with Atlanta Public Schools will be the charter school's responsibility.

The charter school will report its progress in meeting goals and objectives by October 1 of each year, in accordance with the Charter School Act of 1998 and the Atlanta Public Schools Board of Education policy. The annual report will document whether or not annual stated goals and objectives have been met as required for continuation of the charter.

For all students enrolled in the charter school who were previously enrolled in APS schools, the charter school shall provide the full names, birth dates, student identification number, name of last APS school attended, grade last enrolled, and date withdrawn from last APS school to the APS Records Center. If known, students with Individualized Education Plan (IEP) shall be



identified. Parent signatures and authorizations to release records must be included. The Board shall provide the students' educational records within twenty (20) business days of receipt of the past student enrollment information and IEPs within ten (10) business days.

The charter school shall maintain all student records in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, regulations, rules and policies. The charter school shall maintain all student records on behalf of the Board during each student's enrollment in the charter school. Upon a student's withdrawal or other matriculation from the charter school, the student's educational records shall be returned within ten (10) business days to the Board's student Records Center for retention. The charter school shall maintain and ensure the privacy and confidentiality of each student's educational record in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g, and shall not disclose to any unauthorized third party any personally identifiable information concerning any student enrolled in the charter school without first obtaining prior written parental permission.

The charter school shall maintain accurate enrollment data and daily records of student attendance and shall provide verifiable student enrollment by the first business day of each month. Enrollment data shall include the name, address, home telephone number, birth date, gender, and ethnicity of each student; identify special education and LEP status; and identify each grade level and class/teacher. Student enrollment information shall be submitted electronically by the first business day of the month to the APS Executive Director for Research, Planning, and Accountability, or the Executive Director's designee. All data shall be submitted in a format compatible with existing APS attendance formats, which shall be provided to the charter school no later than August 15 of each year.

The charter school shall participate in collecting Federal Impact Aid Questionnaires and all other documents required to secure or retain federal funds and shall submit completed forms by the stated deadline of each year to the APS Executive Director for Research, Planning, and Accountability, or his or her designee.

To determine the annual Full Time Equivalent (FTE) required by the State Board of Education, no later than September 15, November 15 (special education students only), and February 15 of each school year, the Charter School shall submit student information. This data shall be submitted in a format compatible with existing APS data formats, which shall be provided to the Charter School no later than August 15 of each year unless delayed or changed by the Georgia Department of Education notification to local districts.

The Charter School shall submit electronic data for the state Student Data Record report according to the schedule provided by the state. The Charter School shall submit the Student Data Record to APS twenty (20) calendar days prior to the state deadline for the initial transmission. The data elements and format will be provided to the Charter School no later than February 1 unless delayed by the Georgia Department of Education notification to local districts.

In years it is due and the Charter School has been designated by the federal office to participate, the Charter School shall complete and submit the biennial Office of Civil Rights Report two

weeks prior to the due date in a format as specified by the Office of Civil Rights to the APS Executive Director for Research, Planning, and Accountability, or his or her designee. All data shall be submitted to the APS Executive Director for Research, Planning, and Accountability, or his or her designee. The Charter School is responsible for taking such steps as needed to electronically transmit to APS in secure encrypted fashion all data required for official APS reporting requirements in accordance with specifications to be provided.

For the purpose of completing the Certified/Classified Personnel Information Data Collection Report (CPI) required by the Georgia Department of Education, no later than September 15, and February 15 of each school year, the Charter School shall submit personnel information to APS. If there are personnel changes between the date the Charter School submits this information and the date of the Board's initial transmission to the state (i.e., October 1 and May 1), the Charter School shall provide updated information no later than three (3) business days prior to the initial transmission date. The Charter School shall provide the Board with definitions of Training and Experience categories for the State Salary Schedules. This data shall be submitted in a secure format compatible with existing APS data formats, which shall be provided to the Charter School no later than August 15 of each year, unless delayed or changed by the Georgia Department of Education. All CPI data formats shall be provided by and submitted to the Executive Director of Human Resources, or the Executive Director's designee.

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[1] The Coalition of Essential Schools (2006). *Measuring Up: Demonstrating the Effectiveness of the Coalition of Essential Schools*.

[2] [http://www.education.uiowa.edu/itp/itbs/itbs\\_about\\_9-14\\_prp.aspx](http://www.education.uiowa.edu/itp/itbs/itbs_about_9-14_prp.aspx). Accessed June 11, 2009.

[3] Bransford, J., Brown, A.L., Cocking, R.R., & National Research Council (US), Committee on Developments in the Science of Learning. (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school (expanded edition)*. Washington, DC.

[4] Tomlinson, C., et. Al. (2004) Differentiating instruction in response to student readiness, interest, and learning profile in academically diverse classrooms: A review of literature. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 27, 119-145.

[5] US Department of Education (Spring 1996). *What the research says about student assessment. Improving America's School: A Newsletter on Issues in School Reform*.

[6] Oakes, Jeannie (2005). *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality (2nd ed.)*. New Haven, CT: Yale University

[7] Elmore, R.F. (2004). *School reform from the inside out: Policy, practice, and performance*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Education Press.

[8] [http://www.education.uiowa.edu/itp/itbs/itbs\\_about\\_9-14\\_prp.aspx](http://www.education.uiowa.edu/itp/itbs/itbs_about_9-14_prp.aspx). Accessed June 11, 2009.

### **III. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

*A Georgia not-for-profit corporation must be created prior to the petition submission and continue to exist for the sole purpose of operating the charter school which is the subject of this petition.*

## **A. Profile of Governing Board and/or Initial Incorporators**

- 1. Explain your collective qualifications for founding a high quality charter school in the City of Atlanta and taking stewardship of public funds. Include in your description evidence of the found group's ties to and knowledge of the community. Summarize each person's experience, qualifications, and relevant affiliations, and explain why he or she was chosen to participate in the founding group. Explain what role each individual will play. Provide two references for each founder.*

The ANCS Governing Board of Directors will be composed of parents and community members presently serving on the Boards of the two schools that are merging – Neighborhood Charter School and Atlanta Charter Middle School. Their past service on the Boards of those two high quality charter schools in the City of Atlanta, and their successful stewardship of public funds, qualifies them to do to same for ANCS. In addition, their current ties and deep connection to the community yields the critical knowledge of the community needed to succeed as members of the new ANCS Board. Board members include the following:

- Michelle Blackmon - Michelle has been involved with the start up of both ACMS and NCS. She served as NCS's founding board chair and helped steer the school through its tragic fire. Her background is in Health Policy and Administration and as such, she brings management and non-profit experience to the board. She has children at both schools.
- Mimi Herrera-Pease - Mimi has been involved with both schools since their beginnings. She has served as the PTCA president of ACMS this past year and as such has significantly increased PTCA membership and parent participation within the school. Her effective communication skills are helping to bridge the transition between lower and upper grades for many families.
- Kari Lovell - Kari has been involved with both schools for several years, having children at both. Her background is in finance and she demands detailed attention to school finances of the board.
- Kelly Simons - Kelly is an immigration attorney. She brings legal expertise to the board and also has children at both schools.
- Bibbi Ransom - Bibbi has served as the Development Chair at ACMS this past year. As such she has already more than doubled financial contributions to the school from last year.
- John D. Wright- John has been involved with the start up of NCS and served as Finance Chair on the initial board. His background is environmental consulting and management which is the experience he brings to the board. He has two children at the school.
- Elizabeth Carr – Elizabeth has been involved with NCS for about four years. She has served as the parent representative on the NCS board and was just elected as the PTCA president this past year. Her energy and organizational skills will

continue the success of the PTCA in attracting and raising parent participation for the school.

- Keith Rouse - Keith has been involved with the start up of NCS, and has served as the finance chair for the past two years. He has two children at NCS. His background is in finance and he demands detailed attention to school finances of the board.
- Beth Wells - Beth is a death row attorney. She has served as the personnel chair for the past two years and brings additional legal expertise and reasoning to the board. She also four children at NCS.

2. *Describe any plans for further recruitment of founders or organizers of the school.*

There is no plan for further recruitment of founders or organizers for ANCS at this time.

3. *Include leadership information (attach resumes) for the proposed governing board members. If known/selected, include resumes for the school's leader(s) and business manager.*

Appendix D includes a completed conflict of interest form for each board member. Resumes of the school leaders and business manager are included in Appendix E. All Board members, school leaders, business manager, and all staff will be subject to fingerprinting and a background check immediately upon being hired or appointed. Once ANCS is fully approved, we will contact the GBI to apply for an Originating Agency Identifier from the FBI/National Crime Information Center. Using the fingerprint cards issued by the FBI, ANCS will require all new employees to be fingerprinted and will send all fingerprints to the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) for a background check. ANCS will keep a current copy of the GCIC Rules and the CJIS Policy Manual in the main office and will ensure that the person charged with overseeing the fingerprinting and background check process is familiar with those rules and policies. These policies may be modified from time to time during the term of the charter only if necessary to remain in compliance with applicable laws. Background checks clearance reports will be kept on file and made available to APS if requested.

## **B. Relationship of Founders to Charter Governing Board and Management**

1. *Include in the appendices the completed or signed Conflict of Interest Form, page 6, for each founding and/or governing board member.*

Completed and signed Conflict of Interest Forms for each founding/governing board member are included in Appendix D.

2. *List the directors of the corporation and its officers (attach resumes). Describe the role and purpose of the directors and officers. (State Rule, Page 10)*

Brief bios of the directors of the corporation and its officers are included on page 44 of this application. The responsibilities of the ANCS Governing Board of Directors are primarily to:

- Adopt a strategic plan to accomplish the goals of the charter

- Adopt a budget to implement the strategic plan – and ensure that it is fully funded
  - Hire a leader to implement the strategic plan
  - Adopt an accountability system that establishes performance measures to monitor outcomes and hold the leader accountable for successful implementation of the strategic plan, and for staying within budget
  - Ensure parent, student, employee, and community input into – and communication with each stakeholder group about – governance decisions
3. *Describe how the corporation is structured. Submit a copy of the Georgia certificate of incorporation, articles of incorporation for the non-profit organization, and by-laws. The by-laws must specify duties of governing board members as outlined in state Guidance. (State Rule, Page 10)*

ANCS will be organized and operated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the state of Georgia. Please see Appendix F for the school’s incorporation papers. The by-laws follow:

**BY-LAWS OF ATLANTA NEIGHBORHOOD CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.**

**ARTICLE I. OFFICES**

The principal office of the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as the "corporation" or "ANCS") shall be located in the State of Georgia.

**ARTICLE II. GENERAL PURPOSE**

The mission of ANCS is to create a small, focused and diverse K-8 school that nurtures the whole child through strong parental /community involvement and challenging academics. The school will operate under a charter contract to be negotiated between the Board and the Atlanta Board of Education.

**ARTICLE III. GOVERNING BOARD**

Section 1. General Powers. The business and affairs of ANCS shall be managed under the direction of the Governing Board. The members shall in all cases act as a board, and they may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of their meetings and the management of the corporation as they may deem proper, not inconsistent with ANCS' Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws, and the laws of this State.

Section 2. Number, Tenure, Vacancies, and Qualifications. The Governing Board shall consist of nine (9) members, which number shall be fixed from time to time by the Governing Board. Members shall be natural persons who are 18 years of age or older and must be residents of the State of Georgia.

Section 3. Election of Members. Initial Governing Board members will be appointed by the presidents of the NCS and ACMS Boards to one-, two-, and three-year terms but Board members will serve three-year terms after the initial terms are served, as follows:

There will be three (3) classes of board member, composed of one-third of the board.

- Class A: first term is one year (2010-11), followed by three-year terms,
- Class B: first term is two years (2011-12), followed by three-year terms, and
- Class C: first term is three years (2012-13), followed by three-year terms.

After the initial appointment of Board members by the presidents of the NCS and ACMS Boards, members shall be elected by the ANCS Board of Directors from nominations made by the ANCS Board's Nominating Committee. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Directors shall be required for election.

Governing Board member terms begin July 1 of the year in which they were appointed.

A member appointed to fill a vacancy shall be appointed for the unexpired term of her predecessor in office.

The Governing Board must have a quorum of five (5) voting members present in order to conduct business.

Section 4. Voting Rights. Each member shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members.

Section 5. Termination of Membership. The Board of Directors, by affirmative vote of two-thirds of all of the members of the Board, may suspend or expel a member for cause after an appropriate hearing, and may, by a majority vote of those present at any regularly constituted meeting, terminate the membership of any member who becomes ineligible for membership.

Section 6. Structure of the Governing Board. The Governing Board will include nine (9) voting members and three *ex officio* (non-voting) members (the Executive Director and School Principals of ANCS's elementary and middle school campuses – the principals of the ANCS precursor schools, Neighborhood Charter School and Atlanta Charter Middle School, prior to the establishment of ANCS).

The membership of the Board will include at least five (5) parent or guardians of students, including at least one (1) parent/guardian of an elementary student and one (1) parent/guardian of a middle school student

The Governing Board shall be subject to the provisions of Open Meetings Law, O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1, and Inspection of Public Records Law. O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70.

Section 4. Annual Meeting. An annual meeting of the members shall be held every June (the date, time, and place to be fixed by the Governing Board and notice given to all members, at least three weeks in advance), for the purpose of electing board members and officers, and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting.

Section 5. Resignation. A member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair, Chair-Elect, or Recorder of ANCS. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof by the officers, and the acceptance of the

resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

A member who resigns may postpone the effectiveness of his resignation to a future date or to the occurrence of a future event specified in a written tender of resignation. A vacancy shall be deemed to exist at the time of such tender; and the Governing Board may then or thereafter elect or appoint a successor to take office when the resignation, by its terms, becomes effective.

Section 6. Conflict of Interest. Members shall comply with ethics and conflict of interest provisions applicable to members of the Atlanta Board of Education. Governing Board members shall not participate in discussions or votes related to any ANCS business transactions or affairs which would cause an actual, or would give an appearance of, a conflict of interest.

Section 7. Order of Business. The order of business at all meetings shall be set by the Board Chair.

Section 8. Attendance. Board members are not allowed to miss more than two board meetings per year. If they miss more than two meetings, the Board Chair will meet with them to discuss their participation. If they are unable to fulfill their responsibilities, they will be asked to resign from the Board.

#### ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

Section 1. Number and Qualifications. The officers of ANCS shall consist of a Chair, a Chair-Elect, a Recorder, and such other officers and assistant officers as may be deemed necessary, each of whom shall be elected by the Governing Board. The same individual may simultaneously hold more than one office of the corporation except that the Chair may not simultaneously hold another office.

Section 2. Election and Term of Office. The officers of ANCS shall be elected by the Governing Board at the annual meeting held each June, except for the office of Chair-Elect, which shall be elected at the January meeting. Each officer shall hold office for a term of one year or until his successor has been duly elected and has qualified or until his earlier death, resignation or removal from office as hereinafter provided. The Chair-Elect shall hold office until the July meeting.

Section 3. Resignation, Removal and Vacancies. In the event that any one of the officers shall resign, such officer shall immediately cease to be an officer. Any such resignation shall be in writing and shall be delivered to the Chair, Chair-Elect, or Recorder. Any officer or agent may be removed by the Governing Board whenever in its judgment the best interests of the Corporation will be served thereby, but such removal shall be without prejudice to the contract rights, if any, of the person so removed. A two-thirds majority vote of the Board shall be required to remove any officer or agent. Election or appointment of an officer or agent shall not of itself create contract rights. Any vacancy in any office for whatever reason may be filled, for the unexpired portion of the term, by the Governing Board.

Section 4. Chair. The Chair shall be the principal executive officer of ANCS and,

subject to the general direction of the Governing Board, shall supervise and control the business and affairs of the corporation. The Chair shall, when present, preside at all meetings of the Governing Board. The Chair or Chair-Elect or both may sign with any other proper officer of the Corporation thereunto authorized by the Governing Board, deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which the Governing Board has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof is expressly delegated by the Governing Board or by these Bylaws to some other officer or agent of the corporation, or is required by law to be otherwise signed or executed; and in general shall perform all duties incident to the office of Chair and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Governing Board from time to time. The Chair shall have authority to institute or defend legal proceedings when the members are deadlocked. An individual may serve as chair for two consecutive one-year terms, provided they are duly re-elected by the Board. An individual may serve as Chair again after either their one-year term or two consecutive terms, as long as they are off the Board for a minimum of two years before serving again.

Section 5. Chair-Elect. The Chair-Elect shall: (a) assume duties of Chair in his/her absence; (b) assist Chair in planning meetings; (c) plan the annual meeting and/or board retreat; (d) serve as the Chair of the Governing Board Nominating Committee. The Chair-Elect should be selected from among the Governing Board members who are not in the last year of their term on the Governing Board.

Section 6. The Recorder. The Recorder shall: (a) keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Governing Board in one or more books provided for that purpose; (b) see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or as required by law; (c) keep a register of the mailing address of each member which shall be furnished to the Recorder by such member; (d) in general perform all duties incident to the office of Recorder and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the Chair or by the Governing Board and;(e) ensure that all board minutes are prepared for board review at each subsequent board meeting and therefore made available to the school community.

Section 7. Executive Director. The Executive Director shall: (a) hire the Principals with the advice and consent of the Board; (b) supervise the Principals and otherwise meet all criteria outlined in the Executive Director's written job description; (c) ensure that the charter contract goals are being meet; (d) report quarterly to the Board on charter compliance and progress toward meeting goals; (e) assist the Board Chair with scheduling and setting agendas for meetings; (f) facilitate and implement Governing Board decisions; (g) act as liaison between the school and the district office; (h) provide knowledge of federal, state, and district policies/regulations; (i) encourage bottom-up decision-making and participation by all; (j) facilitate and implement school's vision and goals; (k) report to the Governing Board.

Section 7. School Principals. The School Principals shall: (a) manage daily operations of school; (b) direct hiring and supervision of all school teaching and support staff and otherwise meet all criteria outlined in the School Principal's written job description; (c) ensure that the charter contract goals are being meet; (d) report quarterly to the Board on charter compliance and progress toward meeting goals; (e) act as liaison between school and district office; (f) provide knowledge of federal, state, and district policies/regulations; (g) encourage bottom-up decision-making and participation by all; (h) facilitate and implement school's vision and goals;



(i) report to the Governing Board through the Executive Director.

Section 8. Duties of all Governing Board Members. The Board shall be charged with the management of the affairs of the Corporation, and shall pursue such policies and principles as shall be in accordance with law, the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, these By-Laws, and any written charter entered into by the Board. The Board shall be considered as having the powers of a Board of Directors and shall be deemed to be acting as the Board of Directors for all purposes of the Nonprofit Corporation Law. By way of elucidation, and not in limitation, the Board shall be responsible to carry out the following duties and obligations:

- a. The Board shall uphold the school's mission and vision and ensure effective organizational planning on the part of the school through an annual strategic planning and review process that will review and update the school's short-term, mid-term, and long-range goals, and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the school's mission and plans;
- b. The Board shall either directly or through a personnel committee provide for the annual appraisal of the principal's performance;
- c. The Board ensure the financial stability of the Corporation through regular monthly review of financial statements and reports, an annual independent audit, and direct oversight of major financial commitments and decisions;
- d. The Board shall take an active role, either directly or through a Board committee, in resolving grievances and conflicts which may arise within the school community involving, students, parents, staff, administration, and Board members.

To the extent permitted by law, the Board may, by general resolution, delegate to officers of the Corporation or to committees of the Board such powers as it deems necessary or appropriate to carry out its duties and obligations.

Section 9. Role of the Immediate Past Chair. After a new Governing Board Chair is elected each year, the Immediate Past Chair shall continue to perform a vital role for the school. The Immediate Past Chair shall serve as an advisor to the Governing Board. The Immediate Past Chair shall be an *ex officio* member of the Governing Board during such time unless they are still a voting member of the Governing Board in which case, in addition to any other role they may accept on the Board, they shall also assist and advise the new Chair until the new Chair-Elect is elected.

## ARTICLE V. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Governing Board Committees. The committees of the Governing Board are each chaired by a member of the Governing Board; the Chair is not permitted to chair committees.

The committees and their respective responsibilities are as follows:

**Accountability and Compliance.** Review Executive Director-prepared reports, and present such reports at each Board meeting, on one or more compliance items from the charter; district, state or federal law, policy or regulation; or any other source – including any annual accountability and compliance reports required by the district or state, and a

monthly academic performance report. Conduct, and report to the Board on, an annual performance review of the Executive Director and the Principals.

**Development.** Raise funds through an Annual Campaign to supplement the per-pupil funding received from Atlanta Public Schools. Ensure that all fundraising at school is vetted through the development committee.

**Finance.** Review and recommend annual budget for Board approval. Monitor budget compliance, all financial expenditures and revenues and other financial issues throughout the year. Recommend financial policies to the Board. Work with the Development Committee, Executive Director, and other staff to establish financial goals and policies. Work to secure funding and grants to support ANCS. Finance chair will, in collaboration with the Executive Director, prepare and present a report on current financial performance at each Board meeting.

**Nominating.** Announce openings, accept nominations for, review candidates, and make recommendation(s) to the full Boards candidates for open Board positions. Obtain school community input on nominations prior to selecting and recommending Board members for election by the Board.

**Operations.** Executive Director-prepared reports, and present such reports at each Board meeting, on any open or upcoming operations (non-academic) issues, including facilities, real estate, and business operations.

**Personnel.** Establish hiring, grievance, transfer, evaluation, and other personnel procedures. Provide support for the Executive Director in the implementation of these policies.

At its discretion each year, the Board may vote to create an Executive Committee, which will include at a minimum the Chair, Chair-Elect (when such an officer is in place), Finance Chair, Recorder and Executive Director with the authority to handle urgent or routine issues during the period between regular monthly Board meetings. All meetings and decisions of the Executive Committee must be reported to the Board at the regular meeting and any actions taken may be overruled by simple majority vote of the full Board.

Section 2. Parent Teacher Community Association (PTCA) and Faculty Council reports to the Board. The Monthly Meeting Agenda shall include a separate report from the PTCA and from the Faculty Council that summarizes the work of PTCA and of the Faculty Council, respectively, and that presents parent and faculty interests, opinions, and input on any important issue that comes before the Board – or is deemed important by the parents or the faculty.

The Board will share with the PTCA and the Faculty Council its annual calendar of topics to be covered and major issues to be voted on at upcoming Board meetings to allow the PTCA and the Faculty Council sufficient time to aggregate parent and faculty interests, opinions, and input as part of their normal monthly meetings.

The Board will take PTCA and Faculty Council input into account in making decisions on major issues.

Section 3. Parent Teacher Community Association (PTCA). The PTCA coordinates parent, teacher, and community involvement within the school.

In general, the following duties are assigned to the PTCA:

- Gather and share with the Board at its monthly meetings parent interests, opinions, and input on any important issue that comes before the Board or is deemed important by parents
- Host all school meetings (curriculum night, back to school night, student orientation, etc.) Hosting includes promotion, providing refreshments, assisting with sign-in sheets, etc. PTCA is not responsible for content development unless it is specifically a PTCA event.
- Coordinate advisory class parents
- Coordinate two committee chair meetings each year
- Coordinate all teacher appreciation activities
- Coordinate all PTCA fundraising (box-tops, etc.)
- Coordinate the summer ice-cream social
- Coordinate Grandparents and Special Friends Day
- Develop the school calendar in conjunction with the Principals and Executive Director
- Develop and meet the PTCA budget

The PTCA will define any other specific goals and operating procedures each year and present them to the Governing Board for approval.

Section 4. Faculty Council. The Faculty Council is composed of all ANCS faculty and staff and coordinates their involvement within the school.

The Faculty Council's main responsibility is to gather and share with the Board at its monthly meetings faculty and staff interests, opinions, and input on any important issue that comes before the Board or is deemed important by the faculty and staff

The Faculty Council will define any other specific goals and operating procedures each year and present them to the Governing Board for approval.

During the first year of implementation, the Board and Faculty Council shall review quarterly the effectiveness of the Faculty Council at representing the faculty and its interests, opinions, and input to the Board. Improvements based on reasonable requests by the Board and/or the Faculty Council shall be made quarterly in the first year to ensure the effectiveness of the Faculty Council at giving the faculty a voice in the Board's decisionmaking.

Section 5. Schoolwide Subcommittees. The following subcommittees are filled primarily by non-Governing Board members and will report regularly to the Governing Board. School staff, parents/guardians or family, community members, and Governing Board members are encouraged to serve on a committee.

Responsibilities of the standing subcommittees may be reduced or expanded by the Governing Board or upon recommendation of the particular subcommittee concerned and after discussion/approval by the Governing Board. Other committees may be established as the need arises. All subcommittees shall report to the Governing Board.

All subcommittees will set their meeting schedule and dates at the beginning of the school year. Each subcommittee will select a subcommittee leader each year. These leaders serve as the groups' representative to the Governing Board.

The subcommittees are as follows:

**Building and Grounds Committee:**

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, maintaining the school building and grounds and sustainability.

**Health and Safety Committee**

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Examining health, safety and environmental issues within the ANCS community;
- Planning programming and special events related to health, safety and environmental issues; and
- Making recommendations to the staff and governing board that aim to promote a safer and healthier school community.

**Diversity Awareness & Initiatives**

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Gathering information and input about school-wide diversity;
- Recommending programs, initiatives or methods to recognize and celebrate and respond to the diversity in the school and community;
- Recommending processes, programs, and plans to improve culturally responsive practices within the school;
- Developing strategies to ensure that all community members receive constant and consistent information on school happenings in a culturally appropriate manner;
- Providing feedback to the entire school population concerning the results of subcommittee meetings;
- Establishing task forces related to this subcommittee as needed.

**Discipline**

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Developing a staff training plan for a school discipline program;
- Receiving feedback from faculty and staff on effectiveness of program;
- Training and reviewing yearly faculty and staff on adopted discipline program;
- Providing feedback to entire school population concerning results of subcommittee meetings;
- Establishing task forces related to this subcommittee as needed.

### **Related Arts**

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Developing and implementing an arts, music, physical education and Spanish program within the school;
- Leading effort to integrate art and music from cultures represented within the school for recognition, exploration and celebration;
- Providing feedback to entire school population concerning results of subcommittee meetings;
- Establishing task forces related to this subcommittee as needed.

## ARTICLE VI. CONTRACTS, LOANS, CHECKS AND DEPOSITS

Section 1. Contracts. The Governing Board may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of ANCS, and such authority may be general or may be confined to specific instances.

Section 2. Loans. No loans shall be contracted on behalf of ANCS, and no evidence of indebtedness shall be issued in its name, unless authorized by a resolution of the Governing Board. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

Section 3. Checks, Drafts, Etc. All checks, drafts or other orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of ANCS shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents of the corporation and in such manner as shall be determined from time to time by resolution of the Governing Board.

Section 4. Deposits. All funds of ANCS not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Governing Board may select.

## ARTICLE VII. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of ANCS shall end on the 30<sup>th</sup> (thirtieth) day of June of each year, in keeping with the APS fiscal year.

## ARTICLE VIII. CORPORATE SEAL

The Governing Board shall provide a corporate seal which shall be circular in form and have inscribed thereon the name of ANCS, the state of incorporation, the words "Not For Profit," and the words "Corporate Seal." The seal of the corporation may be affixed to any document executed by ANCS, but the absence of the seal shall not impair the validity of the document or any action taken in pursuance thereof or in reliance thereon.

## ARTICLE IX. WAIVER OF NOTICE

Whenever any notice is required to be given to any member of ANCS under the provisions of these Bylaws or under the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or under the provisions of

the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code, a waiver thereof may be made, whether before or after the times stated therein, in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice and delivered to the corporation for inclusion in the minutes or corporate records. Such written waiver shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

#### ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Power to Amend Bylaws. The Governing Board shall have the power to alter, amend or repeal these Bylaws or adopt new bylaws, but any bylaws adopted by the Governing Board must be consistent with the Articles of Incorporation of ANCS and the laws of the State of Georgia.

Section 2. Conditions. Action by the Governing Board with respect to bylaws shall be taken by an affirmative vote of a majority of all members then holding office.

#### ARTICLE XI. EMERGENCY BYLAWS

The Emergency Bylaws provided in this Article XI shall be operative during any emergency in the conduct of the operations and affairs of ANCS resulting from any catastrophic event because of which a quorum of the corporation's members cannot be readily assembled, notwithstanding any different provision in the preceding Articles of these Bylaws or in the Articles of Incorporation of ANCS or in the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code. To the extent not inconsistent with the provisions of this Article, the Bylaws provided in the preceding Articles shall remain in effect during such emergency and upon its termination the Emergency Bylaws shall cease to be operative. During any such emergency:

(a) A meeting of the Governing Board may be called by any officer or member of ANCS. Notice of the place, date and hour of the meeting shall be given by the person calling the meeting to such of the members as it may be feasible to reach by any available means of communication. Such notice shall be given at such time in advance of the meeting as circumstances permit in the judgment of the person calling the meeting.

(b) At any such meeting of the Governing Board a quorum shall consist of one member and any other members available.

(c) Either before or during any such emergency, the Governing Board may provide and from time to time modify lines of succession in the event that during such an emergency any or all officers or agents of the corporation shall for any reason be rendered incapable of discharging their duties.

These Emergency Bylaws shall be subject to repeal or change by further action of the Governing Board, but no officer, member, or employee acting in accordance with these Emergency Bylaws shall be liable for any corporate action taken in good faith. Any amendment of these Emergency Bylaws may make any further or different provision that may be practical and necessary for the circumstances of the emergency.

#### ARTICLE XII. INDEMNIFICATION

Section 1. Actions Against Officers and Members. Pursuant to the provisions set forth in Sections 3 and 4 of this Article, ANCS shall indemnify and hold harmless any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative (other than an action by or in the right of the corporation) by reason of the fact that he is or was a member, officer, employee or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of ANCS, as a member, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against reasonable expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit or proceeding if he acted in a manner he reasonably believed in good faith to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful; provided, however, that the corporation shall not indemnify a member, officer, employee or agent for any liability incurred in a proceeding in which the person is adjudged liable to the corporation or is subjected to injunctive relief in favor of the corporation: (a) for any appropriation, in violation of his duties, of any business opportunity of the corporation; (b) for acts or omissions which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law; (c) for the types of liability set forth in Section 14-2-831 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated; or (d) for any transaction from which he received an improper personal benefit. The termination of any action, suit or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not in itself create a presumption that the person did not act in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the nonprofit corporation, nor, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, that the person did not have reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was lawful.

Section 2. Actions By Or In The Right Of The Corporation. Pursuant to the provisions set forth in Sections 3 and 4 of this Article, ANCS shall indemnify and hold harmless any person who was or is a party, or is threatened to be made a party, to any threatened, pending or completed action or suit, by or in the right of the corporation to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact that he is or was a member, officer, employee or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of ANCS, as a member, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against expenses (including attorneys' fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the defense or settlement of such action or suit, if he acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation; provided, however, that the corporation shall not indemnify a member, officer, employee or agent for any liability incurred in a proceeding in which the person is adjudged liable to the corporation or is subjected to injunctive relief in favor of the corporation: (a) for any appropriation, in violation of his duties, of any business opportunity of the corporation; (b) for acts or omissions which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law; (c) for the types of liability set forth in Section 14-2-831 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated; or (d) for any transaction from which he received an improper personal benefit.

Section 3. Expenses. To the extent that a member, officer, employee or agent of ANCS has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit or proceeding referred to in Sections 1 and 2 of this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue or matter therein, he shall be indemnified against expenses (including attorneys' fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him in

connection therewith.

Section 4. Determination And Authorization. Except as provided in Section 3 of this Article, and except as may be ordered by a court, any indemnification under Sections 1 and 2 of this Article shall be made by ANCS only as authorized in the specific case upon a determination that indemnification of the member, officer, employee or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Sections 1 and 2. Such determination shall be made (1) by the Governing Board by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of members who were not parties to such action, suit or proceeding, or (2) if such a quorum is not obtainable, by majority vote of a committee duly designated by the Governing Board, consisting solely of two or more members not at the time parties to the action, suit or proceeding, or (3) by special legal counsel employed by the corporation for that purpose. Authorization of indemnification or an obligation to indemnify, and evaluation as to reasonableness of expenses, shall be made in the same manner as the determination that indemnification is permissible.

Section 5. Prepayment. Expenses incurred in defending or prosecuting a civil or criminal action, suit or proceeding may be paid by ANCS in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding as authorized by the Governing Board if: (a) the member, officer, employee or agent furnishes the corporation a written affirmation of his good faith belief that his conduct merits indemnification under Section 1 or Section 2 of this Article; and (b) the member, officer, employee or agent furnishes the corporation a written undertaking, executed personally on his behalf, to repay advances if it is ultimately determined that he is not entitled to indemnification pursuant to the laws of this State.

Section 6. Rights. The indemnification provided by this Article shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights, with respect to indemnification or otherwise, to which those seeking indemnification may be entitled under any bylaw or resolution adopted or approved by a majority of the full Governing Board, both as to an action by a member, officer, employee or agent in his official capacity, and as to an action in another capacity while holding such office or position, and shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a member, officer, employee or agent and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such a person.

Section 7. Insurance. ANCS may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a member, officer, employee or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of ANCS as a member, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against any liability asserted against him or incurred by him in that capacity, or arising from his status as such, whether or not the corporation would have the power to indemnify him against such liability under the provisions of this Article.

Section 8. Mergers/Consolidations. For purposes of Sections 1 and 2 of this Article, reference to "the corporation" or "ANCS" shall include, in addition to the surviving or new corporation, any merging or consolidating corporation (including any merging or consolidating corporation of a merging or consolidating corporation) which is merged or consolidated with ANCS so that any person who is or was a member, officer, employee or agent of such merging or consolidating corporation, or is or was serving at the request of such merging or consolidating



corporation as a member, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, shall stand in the same position under the provision of Sections 1 and 2 of this Article with respect to the corporation as he would if he had served the corporation in the same capacity. However, no indemnification under Sections 1 and 2 of this Article shall be mandatory without the approval of such indemnification by the Governing Board of ANCS in the manner provided in Section 4 of this Article.

**ARTICLE XIII. PAYMENTS TO MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

No part of the net income or profit of ANCS, if any, shall be distributed to the members or officers.

- 4. *Describe how the persons who control the corporation will operate the business or the school on a day-to-day basis (e.g. who has authority to make decisions, etc.).*

The Executive Director and Principals will operate the business of the school on a day-to-day basis and have authority to make decisions granted to them by the Board. The following chart provides an overview of the decision-making process at ANCS.

<b>Decision Making Body</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Governing Board	State and federal law, the Charter, hiring, core program issues	Sets policies aimed at making sure school is compliance with laws and charter; approval of budget and staff hires; major changes to charter
Principal	Day-to-day “nitty gritty”, immediate discipline, state mandates, things that just need to get done	Oversight of staff, teaching/learning, and safety
Staff	Elements of the educational program that require professional design and affect the whole school	Creation of skill criteria for portfolios; academic norms and practices (e.g., revisions, late work); organization of advisory program
Grade levels or content teams	Elements of the educational program that require professional design but do not have substantial impact on other grade levels or content teams	What “meeting standards” in a skill looks like; curriculum development

School community referendum (including students)	Big issues that affect core aspects of school life or school program—needs whole school community consensus	Changes to length of school day/year; classes offered; dress code
Representative body (could include students)	Whole school issues regarding norm setting—not big, core issues	Norms for morning meeting, lunch/recess
Committee with power (could include students)	Involves design after whole group instructions have been given	8 <sup>th</sup> grade celebration committee; Student gov't

**How a Proposal Becomes a Decision:**

1. Anyone in the community raises an issue in the form of a written proposal or simply a description of the problem. This written proposal is then given to the Principal.
2. The Principal, Governing Board Chair, and/or student government determines to which decision-making body or bodies the proposal should go.
3. The selected decision-making body discusses and decides, or it creates a process for a decision to be made, or it forms a committee to explore the proposal further.
4. If the committee then creates a proposal, it goes back to the Principal (step #2).
5. Whatever decision-making body gets selected, that body has full authority to make the decision unless otherwise specified.

Note: Not all proposals will be approved but we will follow this process for deciding which ones will. Decisions will stand for at least 3 months before changes can be proposed.

**What a Proposal Should Include:**

1. A description of the problem or issue.
2. The specifics of what is proposed to address problem or issue.
3. Possible advantages and disadvantages of the proposal.
4. Suggested decision-making body for the proposal
5. *Discuss any business arrangements or partnerships with educational institutions, businesses, for profit or nonprofit organizations, and a disclosure of potential conflicts of interest. Include a copy of any intended contracts for the provision of any educational management services or supplemental educational services. (State Rule, Page 10)*

Other than the community partnerships mentioned above, ANCS will have no other business arrangements or partnerships with educational institutions, businesses, for profit or nonprofit organizations, and therefore had no potential conflicts of interest to disclose. There are no intended contracts for the provision of any educational management services or supplemental educational services.

6. *If the charter board intends to enter into a contract with an education management*

*organization (EMO), education service provider (ESP), profit or non-profit, or any third party entity to manage the charter school attach a draft of the proposed contract. Offer an explanation of why and how the entity was chosen and what input the founding members have had in the selection process. Provide background information about the entity including a summary of the entity's history, educational philosophy, and a list of schools currently operated by the entity with state-test performance data for each school for the past three years (this may be included with the appendices). (State Rule, Page 10)*

ANCS will not enter into a contract with an education management organization (EMO), education service provider (ESP), profit or non-profit, or any third party entity to manage the charter school.

7. *Describe the governing board's plans to oversee the entity. Identify:*
  - a. *What specific tasks will be assigned to the entity? (Identify in detail and reflect costs in budget). Please provide a detailed list of EMO services provided with their associated costs.*
  - b. *The evidence that you gathered that convinced you that the management organization has the knowledge and experience to do its assigned tasks effectively.*
  - c. *How will the proposed charter school board resolve any conflicts with the entity?*
  - d. *How will the charter school survive if the relationship between the board and the entity is terminated?*

Since ANCS will not enter into a contract with any such entity, these questions are not applicable.

### **C. School Governance**

1. *Describe how the proposed school will be governed and a statement acknowledging that the governing board shall be subject to the control and management of the local board and subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14- 1 et seq. and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq. (State Rule, Page 10)*

ANCS will be governed by a nine-member Board of Directors and shall be subject to the control and management of the Atlanta Public Schools Board of Education in accordance with the Constitution of the State of Georgia. ANCS will annually submit a report of accountability relative to its charter to the Atlanta and Georgia Boards of Education in compliance with all rules and requirements. In addition, ANCS will comply with all provisions of the statutes on Open and Public Meetings and Inspection of Public Records.

2. *Include a description of the governing board's function, duties, and composition. Describe how and when the board of directors will initially be selected, selection in*

*future years, and the length of term directors shall serve. Describe when and under what conditions board members may be removed from office. Include steps to be taken to maintain continuity between the founding organizers' vision and that of the board of directors. Include information on which members of the founding group will continue as members of the governing board, or serve as operating officers once the school is approved and in operation. (State Rule, Page 10 & State Rule Guidance, Page 5)*

ANCS's Board will be composed of nine (9) members willing to take an active governance role in leading the school, who will serve as ambassadors to stakeholder groups (including parents, community, staff, and APS and GDOE Board and Administration), who have influence in the community sufficient to recruit additional leaders and to "get things done", who will take an active and informed interest in financing the school, for whom fundraising plans and progress are a priority (including being ready to participate in fundraising for the school, understanding and believing in the school's fundraising goals, and being bold and confident in requesting funds, and being prepared to express their own fundraising commitments through a "give or get" commitment – by either giving a major gift payable over two years or confirming that such a gift is secured from a company, foundation, or organization the Board member is affiliated with, or from family or friends, including "in-kind" contributions, with a goal of 100% participation regardless of amount), who are able to attend monthly board meetings and at least one committee meeting per month, and who are ready to lead by doing and wanting to take leadership for creating something very special.

In addition to these characteristics, Board members will also have acknowledged expertise and influence in one or more of the following areas: education scholar or manager; community development/civic affairs; business/entrepreneurship; finance/accounting; legal; real estate development/management; and/or philanthropy/fundraising.

ANCS's Executive Director and Principals will serve as *ex officio* members of the Board, but no other employees of the school will serve as a Board member. The Board will strive to have its diversity reflect the diversity of the community served by the school

Board members will ultimately serve three-year terms, but will initially include three classes of board member, composed of one-third of the board as follows:

- Class A: first term is one year (2011-12), followed by three-year terms,
- Class B: first term is two years (2011-13), followed by three-year terms, and
- Class C: first term is three years (2011-14), followed by three-year terms.

There will be six Committees of the Governing Board, including Accountability and Compliance Committee, Development Committee, Finance Committee, Nominating Committee, Operations Committee (include Building and Grounds and Sustainability issues), and Personnel Committee.

The ANCS's Governing Board of Directors By-Laws presented above provide other governance details.

3. *Include a statement describing how the governing board will uphold the school's mission and vision, review and appraise the principal's performance, ensure effective*

*organizational planning, and help ensure financial stability. (State Rule Guidance, Page 5).*

The responsibilities of the ANCS Governing Board of Directors are primarily to:

- Adopt a strategic plan to uphold the school's mission and vision
- Adopt a budget to implement the strategic plan – and ensure that it is fully funded – thus achieving financial stability
- Hire a leader to implement the strategic plan
- Adopt an accountability system that establishes performance measures to monitor outcomes and hold the leader accountable for successful implementation of the strategic plan, and for staying within budget
- Ensure parent, student, employee, and community input into – and communication with each stakeholder group about – governance decisions

4. *Describe anticipated parent involvement in the decision-making process of the school including:*

- a) Input, comment, and/or participation in the school's operations or governance;*
- b) Lines of communication between the school's governing board and parents;*
- c) Methods for resolving disputes between parents and the charter school.*

Parents and guardians at ANCS will be actively involved in the decision-making process of the school primarily through their strong representation on the school's board and board committees. All board meetings are open for parents and guardians to attend and speak during the public comment portion, and the minutes and agenda for board meetings are made available to all parents and guardians.

- Governing Board bylaws will require the appointment of a minimum number of parents to the Board equal to at least one more than a majority of the Board positions (i.e., at least 5 of 9 board members would be parents) – and, to the extent possible, the parent Board members will have children in a mix of grade levels
- Governing Board bylaws will also include a requirement that a separate report from the PTCA (the parent organization) will also be a standing item on the regular monthly Board Meeting Agenda, and that the monthly PTCA report will summarize the work of the PTCA
  - The PTCA will include in its mission the systematic aggregation of parent interests, opinions, and input on any important issue that comes before the Board – or is deemed important by the parents
  - The Board will share with the PTCA its annual calendar of topics to be covered and major issues to be voted on at upcoming Board meetings
- The Board will take PTCA input into account in making decisions on major issues

Lines of communication between the school's governing board and parents will include the following:

- Parents will participate on the Board and on Board Committees

- Board members will respond to all parent calls and emails within 24 hours
- One Board member will attend the Parent, Teacher, Community Association (PTCA) meeting each month; Board members will rotate so all attend a PTCA meeting each year
- The Board will conduct an annual parent satisfaction survey
- Board meeting packets will be made available to parents and the public at least one week prior to Board meetings (in both softcopy and hardcopy)
- Monthly updates on key topics will be provided to all parents via the Courier, email, posting at the school

Methods for resolving disputes between parents and the charter school:

- The parent first meets with the most appropriate staff member in an attempt to resolve the dispute.
- If satisfactory resolution is not reached, the parent then meets with the Principal for a decision.
- If that decision is not satisfactory, then the parent meets with the Executive Director.
- If the dispute is still not resolved, the parent asks the Board chair to set a meeting with either the Board's Personnel Committee (if the dispute is with a school employee) or with the Board's Operations Committee (if the dispute is not personnel related).
- The Board Committee's decision is final

In addition to assuring parental input into governance decisions, ANCS's Board will also take to assure faculty involvement in the decision-making process of the school. This will be accomplished by:

- Establishing a Faculty Council to which teachers will elect members who will gather faculty input into governing Board decisions and share it with the Board.
- Assuring that the Faculty Council includes in its mission the systematic aggregation of faculty interests, opinions, and input on any important issue that comes before the Board – or is deemed important by the faculty
- Assure that Governing Board bylaws include a requirement that a separate report from the Faculty Council will be a standing item on the regular monthly Board Meeting Agenda, and that the monthly Faculty Council report will summarize the work of the Faculty Council
- Require that the Board will share with the Faculty Council its annual calendar of topics to be covered and major issues to be voted on at upcoming Board meetings, and
- Assure that the Board will take Faculty Council input into account in making decisions on major issues.

5. *Describe the plan to ensure that the governing board members receive on-going training on charter school governance in order to properly exercise their duties and responsibilities.*

Each year, members of the ANCS Governing Board will participate in a day-long training retreat to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of the board and members' specific duties and responsibilities. When needed and/or possible, board members will take part in other opportunities to develop the skills of charter school governance.

6. *State how the charter school will comply with the provisions of the state statutes on Open and Public Meetings and Inspection of Public Records. (State Rule, Page 10)*

ANCS will comply with all provisions of the statutes on Open and Public Meetings and Inspection of Public Records, including providing timely public notice of all meetings and planned meeting agendas, publication of meeting minutes, public comment at meetings, and making all public records available.

7. *How often will the board meet? How will parents know when and where?*

The ANCS Governing Board will meet monthly, and the dates, times, and locations of these meetings will be included in the family handbook, posted on the schools' outdoor message boards, and included in the weekly newsletter.

8. *Describe plans of the board of directors to prepare and submit to the Atlanta Board of Education and Georgia State Board of Education an annual report of academic progress by October 1 of each year in compliance with the Charter School Act of 1998 and related rules. (State Rule, Page 10)*

ANCS will annually submit an accountability report, including an annual report of academic progress by October 1 of each year in compliance with the Charter School Act of 1998 and related rules, to its charter to the Atlanta and Georgia Boards of Education in compliance with all rules and requirements.

9. *Provide a description of the governing board's role in resolving grievances and other conflicts.*

- The Board only becomes involved in resolving grievances and other conflicts after the failure of a good faith effort by the Executive Director to resolve the grievant's concern
- An appeal is made to the appropriate Board Committee – Personnel Committee if the grievant is an employee, Operations Committee if the grievant is a community member or vendor – and the Committee conducts a hearing
- The Committee's decision is final unless the Committee or Executive Director failed to properly follow the grievance procedure and the grievant appeals to the full Board on the basis of that procedural failure

- Mediation - At any time in the process, the employee may elect to proceed to mediation through the American Arbitration Association and the time frames specified in this policy will be suspended. If mediation fails to resolve the complaint, the grievance resolution procedure will resume where it left off prior to the mediation.

*10. Provide a proposed method for the local board and the charter school to utilize for resolving conflict. (State Rule, Page 11)*

In an instance where the ANCS Governing Board has a conflict with the Atlanta Board of Education, the following method is proposed to resolve any such conflicts:

Any controversy, claim, or dispute arising out of or relating to the charter agreement or the breach thereof shall be handled first through an informal process in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

1) Any controversy, claim, or dispute arising out of or relating to the charter agreement or the breach thereof must be submitted in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the dispute. The Written Notification may be tendered by personal delivery, by fax, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice, if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by fax, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the United States mail. Written Notifications shall be addressed as follows:

To ANCS:                   Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School  
820 Essie Avenue  
Atlanta, GA 30316  
Attn: Executive Director

To the District:           Atlanta Public Schools  
130 Trinity Avenue  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
Attn: Superintendent

2) A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification. The parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss and resolve the controversy, claim, or dispute at issue (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date the written response is received by the other party. The Written Response may be tendered by personal delivery, by fax, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice, if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by fax, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the United States mail.



3) If the controversy, claim, or dispute cannot be resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, then either party may request that the matter be resolved by mediation. Each party shall bear its own costs and expenses associated with the mediation. The mediator's fees and the administrative fees of the mediation shall be shared equally among the parties. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 120 days from the date of the Issue Conference. The parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator to resolve the controversy, claim, or dispute. The mediator may be selected from the approved list of mediators prepared by the American Arbitration Association. Mediation proceedings must be administered in accordance with the mediation rules or guidelines of the American Arbitration Association.

4) If mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to settle the controversy, claim, or dispute by arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator in accordance with rules of guidelines of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the Georgia State Bar or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of Georgia. Any arbitration award rendered shall be final, binding and legally enforceable upon all parties. Judgment of any arbitration award may be entered in any court having proper jurisdiction. Each party shall bear its own costs and expenses associated with the arbitration. The arbitrator's fees and the administrative fees of the arbitration shall be shared equally among the parties.

5) Any party who fails or refuses to submit to arbitration shall bear all costs and expenses incurred by such other party in compelling arbitration of any controversy, claim, or dispute.

Either party's failure to comply with the prescribed timelines set forth in Paragraphs One and Two of this section shall result in the parties proceeding forward with mediation. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 160 days from the date the written notification was tendered.

#### **D. Charter School Implementation Timetable**

*Recommendations to the Atlanta Board of Education for contracts with start-up charter schools will not exceed five (5) year terms.*

*1. What is the proposed duration of the charter? Describe how the program will be phased in over the initial term. (State Rule, Page 8)*

ANCS is requesting an initial charter of five years from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2016. The program will begin in full force on the first day of the initial term of the charter since the charter is for a merger of two existing schools that are already fully operational.

*2. Present a detailed timetable of the projected steps for implementing the charter from local and state charter approvals to the first day of classes for 2011-2012. Include dates for the execution of each element.*

- District contract approval - June 2010
- State approval of charter – August-December 2010
- Establish Faculty Council

- Amend the Board Bylaws of both ACMS and NCS to reduce the size of each school's Board to five (5) members (plus each school's Principal and PTCA President as *ex officio* members) and to establish the Committee structure described above for the 2010-11 school year
- Elect one joint Board Co-Chair from each of the ACMS and NCS Boards, and one joint Committee Co-Chair from each of the ACMS and NCS Boards (for each Board Committee)
- Conduct ACMS and NCS monthly Board meetings and Committee meetings together, alternating between the two campuses each month, during the 2010-11 school year
- Establish the Board of Visitors (BOV) for the 2010-11 school year and invite all Board members who moved off the Board when its size was reduced to participate in the BOV
- Advertise, Recruit, and Select Executive Director – December 2010
- Begin Zone One Student Enrollment for middle school - January 2011
- Conduct Zone One middle school Lottery - January 2011
- Begin Zone One Student Enrollment for elementary school – February 2011
- Conduct Zone One elementary school Lottery – February 2011
- Begin Zone Two Student Enrollment for middle school - February 2011
- Conduct Zone Two middle school Lottery - February 2011
- Begin Zone Two Student Enrollment for elementary school – March 2011
- Conduct Zone Two elementary school Lottery – March 2011
- Begin Zone Three Student Enrollment for elementary school - April 2011
- Conduct Zone Three elementary school Lottery - April 2011
- Enrollment Notifications Sent - April 2011
- Teacher Professional Development - July 2011
- Parent & Student Orientations - August 2011
- School Opens - August 2011
- Establish and fill new staff positions effective July 1, 2010
- Implement any changes required to ensure AYP is made by all grades K-8 effective July 1, 2010
- During the transition year 2010-11, the Board will contract for an external policy review to create the full spectrum of Board policies needed to ensure the effective operation of the school

#### **IV. FACILITY**

***Atlanta Public Schools and the Atlanta Board of Education require that the petition include the location of a facility to be used for the school. As a rule, applications cannot be recommended to the Atlanta Board that do not include evidence that an existing building is under negotiation for lease, purchase, or evidence that a building site has been obtained. In rare cases, exceptions may be made to this rule depending on the strength of the petition, the depth and breadth of neighborhood support and a detailed start-up plan factoring in sufficient time for site location, acquisition and development.***

## **A. Facility**

1. *Identify the geographic region in which the school plans to locate by the neighborhood, the designated Atlanta City Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU), the street address, and description of neighboring areas. (State Rule, Page 8)*

ANCS will be located in NPU-W. The elementary school will be at 688 Grant Street, Atlanta, GA 30315 (Grades K-5) and the middle school will be at 820 Essie Ave, Atlanta, GA 30316 (Grades 6-8).

2. *Describe the facility to be used and how it meets the required space needed for the proposed school, including number and type of classrooms, administrative offices, any program specific space (science labs, art workshops, etc.), media center, meeting space, and kitchen facility. Is it an existing building or will it be newly built? (State Rule, Page 8-9)*

Since ANCS is the merger of two existing and fully operational charter schools, and it will use the existing facilities of those two schools, the facilities already provide the required space needed for the proposed school, including classrooms, administrative offices, media center, meeting space, and kitchen facilities.

3. *Will the identified site accommodate the school through the initial charter term? At full capacity? If the school will not start at full capacity, describe how the school will accommodate future growth over the initial five-year term of the school.*

The identified sites will accommodate the school through the initial charter term. Since the schools are at or near full capacity now, and growth is not planned beyond the capacity, the identified sites will accommodate the school through the initial charter term.

4. *Describe whether the school will be leased or owned. Describe the financial plans for obtaining the school site, if applicable. (State Rule, Page 8)*

If this petition is granted, Southeast Atlanta Charter Middle School, Inc. and Neighborhood Charter School, Inc. will merge into one entity. Specifically, they will merge into Neighborhood Charter School, Inc. Since NCS, Inc. is already the lessee on the Grant Street property no action will be required with respect to that property. However, pursuant to the terms of the loan agreement between ACMS and Self-Help (the mortgagee on the Essie Avenue property), NCS

will become the successor to ACMS on that mortgage. ACMS lawyer will work with and seek the consent of Self-Help for this change in its legal form.

5. *For the selected facility, provide the following:*

*Evidence the site has been secured (Letter of Intent (LOI) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU));*

***Preferred:*** *Provide a LOI, signed by the building owner, to lease or sell the proposed facility to your organization. The LOI must contain specific terms, including rent or purchase amount and any agreement(s) on building renovation costs; or, if an LOI is not possible.*

***Alternative:*** *Provide an MOU, signed by the owner, that does each of the following:*

- 1. Describes the status of negotiations with your organization regarding the possible lease or purchase of the building should your charter petition be approved;*
- 2. Describes any foreseeable conditions, circumstances, or considerations that may affect the decision to lease or sell the building to your organization;*
- 3. Specifies any decision-making process that may be required before an agreement can be finalized (e.g. a board vote, zoning approval); and*
- 4. Specifies a date by which a decision to lease or sell is likely to be reached; and*
- 5. A description of any rehabilitation work necessary for this site to meet building codes applicable to public schools or to support the proposed school program, including a plan that details how such work will be completed before the start of the school year including:*
- 6. Details the scope of the work to be completed and proposed funding mechanism to cover these costs.*

No LOI or MOU is attached since both properties are already owned by or subject to a long term lease to ACMS and NCS. All information regarding the lease of the Grant Street property and the ownership of the Essie Avenue Property – including state facility codes – are already in the possession of APS and the Georgia DOE. Copies of all documentation can be provided if necessary but it cannot be included in this petition without exceeding the page limits set by APS.

- 6. Describe the steps taken for securing the necessary permits. Building plans must meet, at a minimum, International Building Codes, and shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations, ordinances or codes. Building plans must be approved by the facilities department of the local board. (State Rule, Page 8-9)*

Since ANCS is the merger of two existing and fully operational charter schools, and it will use the existing facilities of those two schools, and no renovations are needed, no permits will be required.

- 7. Discuss how this site would be a suitable facility for the proposed school. If the site is not an existing educational building provide documentation as to how the site would be a suitable facility for the proposed school. If the site is an existing school building, provide documentation of any renovations required. (State Rule, Page 8) Include:*

- a. *Narrative of plans to remodel or renovate the facility in order to comply with all applicable local zoning and building codes and timetable to achieve compliance. Include how these modifications will be financed and the anticipated completion date for each major phase of renovation.*
- b. *Written verification from the appropriate municipality that the zoning and land use regulations for the site will permit the operation of a public school on the premises.*
- c. *Your plans for the site to comply with all applicable building codes and other state requirements.*
- d. *For any proposed facility owned, operated, or to be leased from a religious affiliated entity, include evidence how there would be clear separation of church and state for the operation of a public school.*

Since ANCS is the merger of two existing and fully operational charter schools, and it will use the existing facilities of those two schools, the two sites are already a suitable facility for the proposed school. No renovations are required. The charter school is subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of physical health and safety of school students, employees and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct.

8. *The Certificate of Occupancy (CO) must be obtained prior to student occupancy of the proposed facility. The latest possible date by which the CO shall be obtained must be included in the petition. Failure to obtain the CO by the date stated in the petition shall result in automatic suspension of the petition unless an extension requested by the petitioner is granted by the local board. Include a projected date for submission of the CO to APS. (State Rule, Page 9)*

Since ANCS will use the existing facilities of the two schools to be merged without any renovation, and both schools already have valid COs for the space as currently configured, obtaining new COs will be fairly straightforward. COs will be submitted to APS in July 2011.

The school sites will comply with the Uniform Building Code Inspection and the Standard Building Code, Standard Plumbing Code, Standard Mechanical Gas Code, federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirements and other applicable fire, health and structural safety requirements, local state, and federal laws.

The school will meet all applicable codes for sanitation, fire, construction, stability, temperature, ventilation, and suitability of physical space. The charter school will maintain a certificate of occupancy from the required government agency.

The school will grant access to local health and fire department officials for inspection of the premises or operations of the school for purposes of ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of students and employees pursuant to Georgia Statutes and National Fire Protection Association Life Safety Code, N.F.P.A. 101.

9. *Describe how all local and state policies related to health and safety will be met. Acknowledge that as an independent charter school it will be required to develop and submit a plan in compliance with Georgia §20-2-1185, School Safety Plans to the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) for approval. Evidence of a GEMA approved plan will need to be received by APS prior to school opening. (State Rule, Page 9)*

Both of the schools to be merged into ANCS have developed and submitted a plan in compliance with Georgia §20-2-1185, School Safety Plans, to the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) for approval. Evidence of a GEMA approved plan will be given to APS prior to school opening in 2011.

10. *Describe the plan for maintaining the facility on a day-to-day basis (custodial) and extended basis (facility maintenance). Explain if the school will hire a custodial staff or opt for contracted services. If the facility will be leased, identify what responsibilities the landlord will have for the maintenance and what the school's responsibilities will be for maintenance, custodial services, and annual health and safety inspections.*

The school's buildings and grounds are maintained on a daily basis by a contracted custodial company and on a long-term basis by the school's Buildings & Grounds Committee, which identifies long-term facilities projects and works with contractors to maintain and improve the school's physical plant.

## **V. FINANCE**

### **A. Financial Management**

1. *State whether the school shall utilize the local school board for fiscal management and if so, specify what autonomy the school shall have over budgets and expenditures. (State Rule, Page 9)*

ANCS will utilize its local school board for fiscal management. The governing board shall have complete control over the budget and expenditures as described in more detail below.

2. *Explain who will manage the school's finances. Describe the fiscal controls and financial systems that will be established for daily business operations to manage cash flow, purchasing, payroll and audits. Describe how the school will develop its annual budget. (State Rule, Page 9)*

Appendix G includes a description of the accounts receivable, accounts payable, and payroll processes.

ANCS will develop an annual budget for the following fiscal year and will seek Board approval at the May Board meeting. The annual budget will be created by the Principal, the Business Manager and the Board Finance Chair, with significant input and review from the Finance

Committee. A preliminary budget will be brought to the Board at the April Board meeting. Final approval will be given at the May Board meeting.

- 3. Identify the representatives of the school who will be responsible for the financial management of the charter, and describe plans to procure and maintain during the entire length of the charter a Crime/Fidelity Bond covering all persons receiving or disbursing funds. The APS requires bond amount is \$1 million. (State Rule, Page 9)*

The following representatives will be responsible for the financial management of the charter:

- Finance Chair
- Chief Financial Officer
- Principal
- Business Manager

ANCS will procure and maintain during the entire length of the charter a Crime/Fidelity Bond covering all persons receiving or disbursing funds with a bond amount of \$1 million.

- 4. Each charter school must specify an individual who will serve in the capacity of Chief Financial Officer. Per state Guidance, at a minimum the individual must possess the following qualifications: (a) A baccalaureate or higher degree in business, accounting, or finance from an accredited college or university and a minimum of four years experience in a field related to business or finance; or (b) Documented experience of ten or more years in the field of business and financial management. (State Rule, Page 5)*

The Chief Financial Officer for ANCS will be Susan Knight. She meets all of the minimum requirements of State Education Rule 160-4-9-04. See Appendix H for Ms. Knight's resume.

- 5. Describe the financial management and internal accounting and reporting procedures for the school. What financial documents and statements will the school regularly produce? Who will prepare them? How often? Who will review them and for what purpose?*

At month's end, the school's Business Manager ensures the books are accurately closed. An independent accounting firm will perform the bank reconciliation at the end of each month. The general ledger for the prior month is sent to the Finance Chair to review and ask questions. The Finance Chair compares income and expenses to budget and reports to the Board on a monthly basis. In addition to budget vs. actual information on an annual basis, the Finance Chair will also provide a monthly cash flow analysis. This information is also regularly reviewed by the school's CFO (if the Business Manager is not also serving as the Chief Financial Officer).

ANCS will use detailed budget to actual and summary financial statements. This information is shared with the Atlanta Public Schools who reviews the information. The Finance Chair reviews this information and shares it with the Board. The school's auditors share the summary financial information with the Board and the information will then be shared with our operating bank.

- 6. The Atlanta Board requires an annual audit be conducted by an independent Georgia licensed Certified Public Accountant, approved by the Atlanta Board, and received within 90 days of the fiscal year end. Explain how the charter school will comply and adhere to the state and local October 1 financial audit deadline at the charter school's expense each year. (State Rule, Page 9)*

ANCS two precursor schools (ACMS and NCS) have complied with all financial requirements of the Atlanta Board of Education. ANCS will also comply with these requirements, including procuring a financial audit by an independent Georgia licensed Certified Public Accountant, approved by the Atlanta Board, within 90 days of the fiscal year end at ANCS's expense each year.

- 7. Explain that the annual audit will meet GASB guidelines and will contain a complete asset inventory.*

ANCS's two precursor schools (ACMS and NCS) have complied, and ANCS will comply, with all audit requirements, meet GASB guidelines and complete an asset inventory.

In the event that the charter is not renewed or is terminated, any balance of public funds will revert back to Atlanta Public Schools.

In the event that the charter is not renewed or is terminated, the school shall submit a financial audit for the final year of operation, prepared by an independent Georgia-licensed certified public accountant. This audit shall include a detailed inventory of all assets.

## **B. Budget**

*Applicants: Check the Georgia Department of Education website for any financial templates required for use by charter petitioners.*

- 1. Provide a budget projection that includes revenues and expenses related to early planning and implementation costs that are expected to be incurred between the time the charter is approved and July 1 of the start-up year. Also, provide a cash flow projection for this period. (State Rule, Page 9)*

These budgets are not attached because of the unique circumstances surrounding this charter petition. Since ANCS is being formed by the merger of two existing schools both of which are fully staffed, fully equipped, and fully enrolled already there will be minimal start up costs involved in the creation of the new, merged school. What little costs are expected will be paid out of money that has already been allocated or will be allocated from the reserve funds of the two existing schools.

- 2. Provide a monthly cash-flow projection detailing revenues and expenditures for the charter school's first two (2) years of operation. Also provide an alternative, contingency cash-flow spreadsheet projecting revenues and expenditures that assume one-half (1/2) or the projected student enrollment for the first two (2) years of operation.*



Please see Appendix I for a monthly cash-flow projection detailing revenues and expenditures for the charter school's first two years of operation. An alternative, contingency cash-flow spreadsheet projecting revenues and expenditures that assume one-half (1/2) of the projected student enrollment for the first two years of operation is included as Appendix "O" to this application.

3. *Provide an itemized list of working capital and assets, including cash, bonds and real estate.*

The following information is for ANCS's precursor schools as of December 31, 2009. They are unaudited; they are booked on a cash basis with most adjustments and accruals made by the schools' accountants at fiscal year end.

#### **NCS**

- Working capital = \$889,676
- \$404,420 in two CDs
- \$588,395 in cash equivalent accounts
- No real estate but all other fixed assets are detailed in the attached balance sheet

#### **ACMS**

- Working capital = \$229,677
- \$270,530 in cash accounts and \$88,438 in a restricted debt service reserve account
- The building is on the books for \$1,128,451 net of depreciation
- All other assets are detailed in the attached balance sheet

4. *Provide spreadsheets projecting cash flow, revenue estimates, budgets, and expenditures on an annual basis for the first five (5) years of the charter term. (State Rule, Page 9)*

Please see the Appendix J for a balanced and complete five-year budget projection for the school. These projections are based on historical income and expenses based on student need and enrollment and anticipated student enrollment during this period. These projections are conservative—projecting slightly higher expenses than has historically been the case, and slightly lower income than has historically been the case.

5. *It is critical that you define and give support for assumptions behind revenue and expenditure projections. Detail your contingency plans should you experience a budget shortfall, lower than anticipated student enrollment, higher than expected personnel costs, underestimated costs of technology maintenance, and any other costs that could be potential operational difficulties. Explain how the school will make certain sufficient funds are available to cover any special education costs incurred.*

For the past several years, ANCS's precursor schools have maintained a waiting list of students and anticipate that demand for the school will remain high and enrollment projections will be accurate. However, if enrollment is lower than anticipated or if other unexpected events result in a lower than anticipated level of income or a higher than anticipated level of expense, the school

has begun to amass a reserve of fund for these sorts of situations. Any reserve fund policies are approved by the school's Governing Board. In addition, for the past several years, the school has had a line of credit with its operating bank for emergency use. The school has never had to draw on this line of credit.

ANCS will open and operate as a K-8 school with separate campuses for the elementary and middle grades. The elementary school facility and the middle school facility are currently in use as charter public schools and each has a distinct school code. We believe ANCS meets the requirements for operation as a 'combination school' as those requirements are set forth in Georgia Code section 20-2-186(a)(4) and it is our intention to operate as such. Therefore, the attached budgets include funding for both of the principals who are currently employed at the two merging charter schools.

In addition, ACMS currently meets all of the requirements of a 'middle school program' under Georgia QBE funding formula. The merger of ACMS and NCS into a single school on two campuses will not impact the operations at the middle school level in any way that the ANCS middle school campus should not continue to qualify for the middle school program funding. Therefore the projected revenues for regular education FTEs in grades six through eight are calculated at the middle school level.

*It is critical that you understand the basics of state QBE funding law(s) and charter school funding. It is prudent to be conservative in your assumptions for the amount of funding you expect to receive based on enrollment due to the variables in state program earnings. State QBE earnings data for currently operating APS charters is available on the Georgia Department of Education website.*

*Typically operating charter schools need additional sources of revenue to meet operating expenses.*

*Currently, APS charter school earnings from state and local funding are disbursed to charter schools in ten monthly payments from August to May.*

6. *Acknowledge that APS charter schools begin to receive state and local funding in August of each year only after annual Agreement requirements have been submitted to APS and approved.*

ANCS will meet all annual agreement requirements prior to receiving funding from APS each year. Funding for each fiscal year will begin in August of that year. In the event of a termination of the charter, all assets of a local charter school remaining after liquidation and fulfillment of outstanding liabilities revert to the local board that authorized the school.

7. *State that the charter will comply with federal monitoring required for schools that receive federal funds. (State Rule, Page 10).*

ANCS will comply with all monitoring requirements necessary in receiving federal funds.

### C. Fundraising

1. *What fundraising efforts have occurred and/or are planned to generate capital or to supplement the student earned state and local revenue? Who will be responsible to lead fundraising efforts?*

Each year, ANCS's precursor schools have run an annual campaign aimed at providing support for teaching and learning. The schools Governing Boards, specifically the chair of the Boards' Fund Development Committees, have coordinated these fundraising efforts. This campaign will continue for ANCS. In addition, the Board member profile for ANCS requires the following of Board members:

- Take an active and informed interest in financing the school
- Fundraising plans and progress must be a priority, including:
  - Being ready to participate in fundraising for the school
  - Understanding and believing in the school's fundraising goals, and being bold and confident in requesting funds
  - Being prepared to express their own fundraising commitments through a "give or get" commitment – by either giving a major gift (payable over two years) or confirming that such a gift is secured from a company, foundation, or organization the Board member is affiliated with, or from family or friends – including "in-kind" contributions, with a goal of 100% participation (regardless of amount)

In addition, ANCS will have an Executive Director whose responsibilities will include leadership of all development activities.

2. *Explain any contributions of funds or in-kind donations of goods or services expected to be received by the charter school that will assist in evaluating the financial viability of the school. **In the budget, you should only include those grants or in-kind donations which have already been firmly committed.** If you are planning to pursue certain grants or donations but have not yet received a commitment for these contributions, do not include them in your budget. Instead, provide a description of these potential contributions in your narrative (including the source, estimated amount of contribution, and expected date of receipt if known).*

Though not included in the budget, ANCS anticipates receiving contributions of funds and/or in-kind donations as a result of the work of the school's Fund Development Committee. Over the initial charter terms, the precursor schools have secured well over \$1 million in contributions, including:

- A grant from the Walton Family Foundation
- A large in-kind donation from Hands on Atlanta's "Service Juris" Project
- Several state facilities grants

This record suggests that NCS will continue to experience success in securing funding to

supplement state and local funds.

## **VI. STUDENT BODY**

### **A. Recruiting and Marketing Plan**

*Show the school's enrollment projections for the first five years in a chart modeled on the following:*

Grade	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
K	60	60	60	60	60
1	60	60	60	60	60
2	60	60	60	60	60
3	60	60	60	60	60
4	60	60	60	60	60
5	60	60	60	60	60
6	72	72	72	72	72
7	72	72	72	72	72
8	72	72	72	72	72
Total	576	576	576	576	576

These totals should match projections on the Petitioner's Cover Sheet. The school's annual total projected enrollment will be considered the total requested enrollment for funding per year.

- 1. Explain in detail your rationale for selecting this particular school size.*

The school's ability to effectively implement the principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools—to insure that students are known well, to create learning experiences that ask students to grapple with meaningful questions through engaging projects—depends heavily upon maintaining a school size that is small. Additionally, research suggests the benefits of small schools and learning communities, a fact that the Atlanta Public School system has fully embraced. ANCS seeks to continue the commitment of its precursor schools to operate as a small school in keeping with the spirit of reform within the district.

- 2. Describe the target student population. Provide an overview of the anticipated student population demographics including poverty rate as measured by free/reduced lunch status, and ethnicity.*

ANCS's precursor schools have been among the most diverse schools in the city of Atlanta, both in its student population and teaching staff. This stems in large part from the recruitment practices of the school. During the application and enrollment period each year, members of the

school community post flyers around the city and attend neighborhood organization meetings to publicize the school, and the school offers multiple information sessions and visitation days at various times to insure that there are no barriers to families and students attending. For its teaching staff, the school recruits nationally and as a result has been able to assemble a staff that reflects the diversity of its students and is professionally skilled.

During the 2009-2010 school year, 26% of the students now attending ANCS's precursor schools (NCS and ACMS) qualified for the free and reduced meal program. The racial makeup of ANCS's precursor schools for 2009-10 is African-American - 32%, White (Non-Hispanic) - 55%, Multiracial - 10%, Hispanic - 2%, and Asian American - 1%.

As mentioned in previous sections, the precursor schools continue to maintain a waiting list of interested students at all but two of their nine grade levels, an indication of strong and continued community support for ANCS.

- 3. Describe plans to publicize the school to attract a sufficient pool of applicants and staff. Describe how you will recruit a diverse population of students and faculty.*

Given the merger of two existing schools that are fully staffed and have students on their waiting lists, the normal avenues for recruitment described above will continue to be used. Attention will be paid to efforts that yield continued diversity of students and faculty.

- 4. Describe steps that will be taken to reach students representative of the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diverse community in the target school zone, including typically "harder to reach" families.*

Given the merger of two existing schools that are fully staffed and have students on their waiting lists, the normal avenues for recruitment described above will continue to be used. Attention will be paid to efforts that yield continued diversity of students and faculty.

- 5. What areas of the city will be used for student recruitment?*

ANCS will use the areas of the city its precursor schools now use for student recruitment – Grant Park and Ormewood Park, NPU-W, and the remainder of the city of Atlanta.

- 6. Provide evidence that there is sufficient interest in your school to meet your requested maximum enrollment. Convey clearly and concretely the scope of community backing for the proposed charter school and its founding board. Document this community support among teachers, parents of potential students, students, community members, institutional leaders, and others through the use of letters of support, surveys, and other tangible means. (Attach letters in Appendices)*

The fact that ANCS's precursor schools are fully enrolled and have students on their waiting lists is the best evidence that there is sufficient interest in your school to meet the school's requested maximum enrollment. Appendix K includes letters of support for the merger from community organizations.

7. *Provide a description of the method used to recruit the number of anticipated students and a statement setting forth the school's plan for maintaining and/or increasing attendance. (State Rule, Page 9)*

ANCS's precursor schools maintain regularly updated websites with news and information about the school and enrollment information posted in both English and Spanish. Throughout the year, updates about the schools' news and events are submitted for publication in community newsletters, such as *The Porch Press*, and representatives from the schools' Boards and staff often attend and are available for questions at local community organization meetings. During the late winter/early spring, the schools also enlist the help of their parent and guardian community to post flyers about enrollment at the two schools around the city. ANCS will use the same approach for student recruitment.

## **B. Admissions and Registration Plan**

*The charter school must be open to any student who resides within the City limits of Atlanta. The charter school can only enroll students who reside within the City limits of Atlanta. The only eligible out of district enrollees are children of teachers, staff, and board members of the charter school who do not live in the City limits of Atlanta.*

1. *Provide the calendar to be used for recruiting, registering, and admitting students the initial year, and years following including a plan for an admissions lottery if the number of applicants exceeds the school capacity. (State Rule, Page 8)*

The dates for all pre-enrollment and enrollment periods will be set by the Governing Board each year and posted on the school's website, in flyers posted around the city of Atlanta, and on all application materials. The pre-enrollment and enrollment periods for the following school year will not begin until at least January of the current school year each year.

2. *Describe the policies and procedures that will guide the admission, enrollment and withdrawal of students, including verification of city residency. Indicate any priorities for enrollment. Indicate any specific targeted traditional school attendance zones and/or City Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU). (State Rule, Page 8)*

The admission and enrollment procedures, and attendance zone, of ANCS are the product of extensive consultations with Atlanta Public Schools, parents and the community served by our schools over the past two years. This petition retains the existing enrollment areas for the precursor schools, a plan which has been strongly supported by APS and all constituent groups. The components of this enrollment structure have also been approved by the state Department of Education and the Georgia Board of Education on four occasions, through the initial petitions and renewals of NCS and ACMS.

Preserving the current enrollment areas within a logical attendance zone for ANCS is the most effective means for ANCS to provide our educational services to as large and diverse a population of students as possible, without disrupting the attendance patterns and community

expectations that have developed over our past seven years of operation. For a school at which community engagement is a fundamental aspect of our educational program and success, this issue cannot be overstated. This plan ensures that the social and racial diversity of the precursor schools will be maintained, and the merger will not adversely impact the current statistical probability of admittance for any child in the communities currently served by ACMS and NCS.

Under APS Board of Education rules, the neighborhood association of each neighborhood served by a charter school must vote to approve a charter before its submission. All of those approvals were obtained during 2010 for the “status quo” plan outlined here.

Prior to the initial regular registration in 2011 there will be a pre-enrollment period for returning students of the two precursor schools and their siblings; this will apply in all subsequent years as well (i.e., prior to the initial regular registration there will be a pre-enrollment period for returning students and their siblings). Registration forms and information regarding the cut-off date for pre-enrollment will be sent to the families of all currently enrolled students of the school at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the pre-enrollment period. All eligible returning students and their un-enrolled siblings who submit complete registrations during the pre-enrollment period will be registered for the following school year unless there are not enough spaces available in any particular grade or program. In that case, all returning students who submit complete registrations during the pre-enrollment period will be registered and the un-enrolled siblings will be enrolled based on a lottery to be held in an open forum on the date stated in the pre-enrollment information.

Following the pre-enrollment period, there will be an open registration period each year during which time any interested students may submit an application and supporting materials. The dates and times for this open registration period shall be established by the Governing Board each year and shall end no later than the last day of April for the school year beginning the fall of the same year (i.e., April of 2010 for the 2011-2012 school year).

For ANCS’s elementary school, following the conclusion of the open registration period, all complete applications for students residing in the elementary school’s primary enrollment area (the neighborhoods of Grant Park and Ormewood Park – see maps in Appendix M) that are received during the open registration period will be admitted unless there are more applications than spaces available for one or more grades. In that case, spaces remaining in each such class after the students who were registered during pre-enrollment shall be awarded on the basis of a lottery. All complete applications for those grades from students residing in the primary enrollment area will be placed into the lottery.

For ANCS’s elementary school, following the conclusion of the open registration period and the admittance of any students with complete applications from the elementary school’s primary enrollment area (the neighborhoods of Grant Park and Ormewood Park), all complete applications for students residing in the elementary school’s secondary enrollment area (NPU-W) that are received during the open registration period will be admitted unless there are more applications than spaces available for one or more grades. In that case, spaces remaining in each such class after the students who were registered during pre-enrollment and from the primary enrollment

area shall be awarded on the basis of a lottery. All applications for those grades from students residing in NPU-W will be placed into the lottery.

For ANCS's elementary school, following the conclusion of the open registration period and the admittance of any students with complete applications from the elementary school's primary enrollment area (the neighborhoods of Grant Park and Ormewood Park) and secondary enrollment area (NPU-W), all complete applications for students residing in the city of Atlanta and zoned for an Atlanta Public School that are received during the open registration period will be admitted unless there are more applications than spaces available for one or more grades. In that case, spaces remaining in each such class after the students who were registered during pre-enrollment and from the primary and secondary enrollment areas shall be awarded on the basis of a lottery. All applications for those grades from students residing in the city of Atlanta will also be placed into the lottery.

For ANCS's middle school, following the conclusion of the open registration period, all complete applications for students residing in the attendance zone (Neighborhood Planning Unit-W) that are received during the open registration period will be admitted unless there are more applications than spaces available for one or more grades. In that case, spaces remaining in each such class after the students who were registered during pre-enrollment shall be awarded on the basis of a lottery. All complete applications for those grades from students residing in the attendance zone will be placed into the lottery.

For ANCS's middle school, following the conclusion of the open registration period and the admittance of any students with complete applications from the attendance zone (NPU-W), all complete applications for students residing in the city of Atlanta and zoned for an Atlanta Public School that are received during the open registration period will be admitted unless there are more applications than spaces available for one or more grades. In that case, spaces remaining in each such class after the students who were registered during pre-enrollment and from the attendance zone shall be awarded on the basis of a lottery. All applications for those grades from students residing in the city of Atlanta will be placed into the lottery.

Lottery and waiting list. If a lottery is required after any registration or enrollment period, that lottery will be held in an open forum at the time and place listed in the registration materials and/or flyers. All lotteries will be conducted in a manner that is consistent with Georgia law and that ensures that each eligible student receives an equal chance of being selected. All names will be selected in each lottery, and the students who are not selected for registration will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which their names were selected. Once all grades are filled or once the lottery, if necessary, is complete, any additional students who submit an application shall be placed at the end of the cumulative permanent waiting list on a first come, first served basis.

Following the enrollment process each year, the ANCS Board will review the number of students who applied, were accepted, and were wait-listed in each campus's enrollment areas. For the middle school campus, if there is demand for more sixth-grade seats than are presently available at the school (72) and if ANCS's financial reserves allow the addition of another classroom, the Board will consider adding another class (increasing enrollment to 96 for the sixth grade). If such



an addition is made, students would be drawn from the waiting list in the order assigned during the lottery.

3. *Include a statement to the effect that the charter school will keep records of all out-of-city students attending, if any.*

ANCS will keep records of all out-of-city students attending, if any.

4. *Include a statement to the effect that the school will follow, at a minimum, the district policy and practices for enrollment verification.*

The school will follow, at a minimum, the district policy and practices for enrollment verification.

## **VII. HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **A. School Staff**

1. *Describe the qualifications and attributes of an ideal teacher for the proposed school and how they will support the mission and effective student learning. (State Rule Guidance, Page 4)*

ANCS's precursor schools (ACMS and NCS) have, through an extensive recruitment and hiring process that will also be used by ANCS and is described below, assembled a talented teaching staff for their students. Candidates for teaching positions are screened for their academic and professional credentials, and for their professional attitude, motivation and enthusiasm about Constructivist curriculum. Strong communication skills, reflectiveness, and deep thinking are also essential, along with evidence of initiative and willingness to be a member of an instructional team. Creativity, examples of innovative practice and an open mind are attributes considered during the interview and hiring process. A detailed description of the qualifications and attributes of an ideal teacher are included in Appendix L on Teacher Evaluation Criteria.

2. *Provide a plan for ensuring that recruitment and selection procedures will reinforce these desired qualities in the school's faculty. (State Rule Guidance, Page 4)*

The hiring process used is a rigorous one designed to attract and find skillful teachers. A variety of outlets are used to promote teaching opportunities at the school: job fairs, professional organizations, local colleges of education, and the school's website. Members of the school's leadership team do initial screening of applicants, and an interview process that includes teachers and students is used. Candidates are regularly asked to provide artifacts from their teaching and to teach a model lesson under the observation of ANCS faculty members.

3. *Describe plans for developing and implementing an effective professional development program.*

The depth of the hiring process is also reflected in the level of support and development provided once a teacher is hired. Please see Appendix L for a description of the support process for teachers at the school.

4. *Detail how the evaluation system for teachers and administrators will support the school's mission and educational philosophy.*

Please see Appendix L for a complete description of the evaluation process for teachers at the school.

5. *Indicate the number of teachers and other professional and non-professional school staff, by position, to be hired for each year. If necessary, describe the job position.*

As a charter school, ANCS will utilize its flexibility to staff the school in a way that best meets the needs of its students. The following chart represents the current staffing plan for the precursor schools, though the teaching and support staff will grow slightly in accordance with growth in student enrollment. In addition to the positions presented below for each campus, there will also be an Executive Director (ED) who will report directly to the Board and to whom the two Principals will report. The ED will be responsible for Board support, development and fundraising, and community development including – in the role of “diversity coordinator” – helping the school attract and maintain as diverse a student population, faculty and staff as possible while working with teachers, parents, and the Board to insure we are serving students and families of various backgrounds appropriately and creating an inclusive school.

<u>Elementary School</u>			
<b>Administration</b>	<b>Support Staff</b>	<b>Teachers/Associate Teachers</b>	<b>Other Staff</b>
Principal	Technology Specialist – 1 full-time	Grade K – 4 Lead Teachers, 4 Associate Teachers	Custodial Staff (contracted)
Curriculum and Assessment Specialist 1	Media Specialist – 1 – Full time	Grades 1-5 – 3 Lead Teachers, 3 Associate Teachers	Food Service (contracted)
Business Manager - .5 FTE	Guidance Counselor - .5 FTE	Special Education – 2 Teachers, 1 Associate Teacher	

Executive Assistant – 1	School Psychologist - .4 FTE	Academic Assistance – 2 Teachers (1 Math, 1 ELA)	
Nurse/Receptionist - .4 FTE	SST/504 Coordinator – .4 FTE	Related Arts – 4 FTE Teachers (Art, PE, Music, Spanish), 1 Associate Teacher PE	

<u>Middle School</u>			
<b>Administration</b>	<b>Support Staff</b>	<b>Teachers/Associate Teachers</b>	<b>Other Staff</b>
Principal	Special Education Coordinator	<i>6th Grade: 6 FTE, 3 Associate Teachers</i>	Custodial Staff (contracted)
Dean of Students	Office/Operations Manager	<i>7th Grade &amp; 8th Grades: 6 FTE, 3 Associate Teachers</i>	Food Service (contracted)
Business Manager (part-time)	Instructional Technology Specialist (part-time)	<i>Spanish: 2 FTE</i>	
	Media Specialist (part-time)	<i>Fit for Life Teacher</i>	
	School Counselor (part-time)	<i>Visual Arts Teacher</i>	
		<i>Performing Arts Teacher</i>	

6. *Summarize a day in the life of a typical teacher at your proposed school (include the number of instructional hours, number of classes, number of planning hours, and other responsibilities at the school). Please be as specific as possible.*

Teacher days at ANCS will look like those at its precursor schools. Teachers are contractually obligated to be at school on a typical school day from 7:30 AM until 3:00 PM at ANCS's precursor elementary school (NCS) and from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM at ANCS's precursor middle school (ACMS). During a typical school day, teachers are responsible for approximately five instructional hours with students, which includes class morning meeting time and related arts and, for the middle school, advisory time. Teachers at the elementary school have between 1 and 1.5 hours of planning time each day, allowing them to meet with teachers within their grade level, special services teachers and curriculum and assessment leadership; teachers at the middle schools have two hours of planning time each day, allowing them to meet with teachers within their grade level and within their content area. Any remaining time during the typical school day may be spent attending to professional duties and development. There are certain other duties of the position of teacher at NCS in which teachers are expected to participate and contribute, including PTCA, faculty and school-based team meetings, parent conferences, professional development activities, and curriculum trainings. Teachers enjoy and welcome visiting parents, school volunteers and potential students and families into their classrooms.

7. *Describe the school's plan for staffing special education, and staff for English Language Learners including necessary qualifications.*

ANCS's precursor schools currently employ a full-time Special Education Coordinator to oversee the schools' special education program. The coordinator—along with teachers and associate teachers—works to provide the appropriate accommodations and modifications for students per their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). ANCS will also comply with all necessary requirements of state and federal law for qualifications of special education staff.

At present, ANCS's precursor schools have very few students who are classified as English Language Learners. However, when student enrolled at ANCS who did qualify for ELL services, the school would insure that this student's needs were met in accordance with all state and federal requirements.

8. *Describe the human resource policies governing processes for hiring, dismissal, compensation, and required fingerprinting and criminal record checks. (State Rule Guidance, Page 5)*

All employees at ANCS's precursor schools are – and all ANCS employees will be – required to undergo criminal background checks. See page 45 for more details.

### ***Medical Insurance, Retirement Accounts, and Other Employee Benefits***

To support the financial security and wellness of employees, ANCS's precursor schools offer – and ANCS will also offer – a wide selection of employee benefits. By encouraging healthier

lifestyle choices, education and resources, ANCS is committed to improving the health and welfare of all employees, their families and the community.

The school will contribute toward the total cost of the group health insurance offered through the school. Teachers will be required to participate in the Georgia Teachers Retirement System. The school may also offer additional voluntary benefits. The Office/Operations Manager will coordinate a presentation of information about medical insurance, retirement accounts, and other benefits to staff each year. The school will not participate in the State Health Benefit Plan.

The current benefits offered to ANCS's precursor school employees – and that will be offered to ANCS employees – include:

#### Medical/Disability Management

- Medical (Blue Cross Blue Shield)
- Vision (Blue Cross Blue Shield)
- Dental (Blue Cross Blue Shield)
- Life (Blue Cross Blue Shield)
- Workers' Compensation
- Short-Term Disability (Aflac)
- Cancer Plan (Aflac)
- Hospital Protection (Aflac)
- Specified Health Event Protection (Aflac)
- Personal Accident Indemnity Plan (Aflac)
- Personal Sickness Indemnity Plan (Aflac)
- Life Insurance (Aflac)

#### Retirement Plans

- TRS - Mandatory contributions to cover teachers, administrators, supervisors, administrative assistants, nurses
- Valic – Voluntary supplemental tax-deferred retirement plan (457B or 403B)

#### Resignations, Retirements, & Lay-Offs

Employees of the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School will receive a contract that will usually be one year in length. The employee shall not terminate this contract without the written consent of the employer. In the event that the employee does terminate this contract, whether by formal notice or by willful failure or refusal to continue duties without such written consent, the employer may recommend to the agency designated by state law to investigate complaints of ethics violations by educators and that action be taken against the employee's certificate or application for certification. The employee shall comply with all of the employer's policies, regulations, standards of ethical conduct, and curriculum standards. The employee's violation of such policies, regulations, or standards shall be considered sufficient grounds for termination of this contract. In executing this contract, the employee specifically acknowledges that violation of the employer's sexual harassment policies is considered grounds for termination. The employee shall have the right to a hearing before the employer's Governing Board before this contract is

terminated pursuant to this paragraph. Both employee and employer are required to give the other 30 days notice of any early termination of this contract.

9. *Describe intentions for using highly qualified administrators and teachers. State any plans for students to be taught by individuals other than those certified by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, and describe the training and experience that will be required. (State Rule Guidance, Page 4)*

*For the required state Certified/Classified Personnel Information Data Collection Report (CPI), the charter school must submit personnel information to APS following APS procedures and timelines for each of the state reporting cycles.*

ANCS reserves the right to hire teachers the school feels are the most qualified for a particular position, including non-certified staff and certified instructional staff who meet the requirements of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. The school is seeking the full flexibility permitted by law in order to provide us options in this area. However, at a minimum ANCS will insure that teachers will meet the “highly-qualified” requirements for charter schools as specified by the GAPSC. Paraprofessionals with instructional support duties will meet guidelines of Section 1119 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The qualifications of all teachers are presented each year at the precursor school’s orientation and are also made available on the school’s website; these practices will continue at ANCS.

*Other employee information:*

- All personnel will be in compliance with the Drug Free Public Work Force Act of 1990 and subject to fingerprinting and background checks.
- The faculty, instructional staff and all other personnel necessary for the operation of the Charter School shall be employees of the Charter School. As such, potential employees will be informed that if hired, charter school employees are not eligible for any benefits provided by the Atlanta Board of Education.

10. *Include a description of the compensation package including salary and benefits for all staff members, including whether the charter school will utilize the state salary schedule. If another schedule or plan will be used, it must be provided. (State Rule Guidance, Page 5)*

***Employee Compensation***

The Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School recognizes that to attract and retain qualified individuals to fill openings at all levels and to motivate and provide personal growth and compensation opportunities as indicated by job performance, adequate compensation must be provided to employees.

The Principal is authorized to maintain and administer the compensation plan adopted by the Board and to develop regulations for administering that plan. The compensation plan shall be fair, externally comparable, internally consistent, and within the resources available to ANCS. Salaries of all employees shall be in accordance with Board policy. Salary Credit Certified

employees will be compensated according to their job classification, years of experience and certificates or licenses:

- For Teachers, ANCS will follow the annual Atlanta Public Schools (APS) salary schedule for teachers, which differentiates salary based on education and experience.
- For Associate teachers, ANCS will follow the annual schedule established by the school, which differentiates salary based on education and experience.
- For Dean of Students, ANCS will follow the annual APS salary schedule for Middle School Assistant Principal
- For Office/Operations Manager, ANCS will follow the annual APS salary schedule for the Admin Assistant II position.
- For Business Manager, the ANCS salary schedule will be based on education and experience.
- ANCS will also follows the annual cost of living increase set by APS, as noted on their website. This may vary from year to year, based on economic conditions.
- Schedules and changes will be proposed by the ANCS Personnel Committee to be adopted by the ANCS Board.
- Additional longer-term responsibilities taken on outside of contractual responsibilities may be compensated with a stipend as determined by the Principal and/or Personnel Committee.

### ***Salary for Higher Certificates***

Salary placement for all teachers shall be from the T-4 track until they have a valid certificate higher than a T-4 on file with the office of the principal. Salary for improved certificates received by the office of the principal within one calendar month of the date of issue of the new certificate will be retroactive to the latest of the following:

- The effective date of the certificate,
- September 1 of the current school year, or
- The date of employment.

Salary for improved certificates received by the office of the principal after one calendar month of the date of issue of the new certificate will be effective on the later of the following:

- The first day of the new payroll period following receipt of the certificate or
- The date of employment.

No advancement in salary for improved certificates will be made during periods of time that are not part of the employee's regular work year.

### ***11. Describe how the qualifications of teachers will be presented to parents considering the charter school for their children.***

Teacher qualifications are currently presented to parents considering the precursor charter schools for their children on an information sheet that is handed out at school information sessions along with other information. In addition, during enrollment open houses it is shared that all lead teachers are certified and that many of the related arts and associate teachers are either certified or pursuing degrees and/or certification. Bios on the website are another source of

information on teacher qualification. This approach has been successful and will continue for ANCS.

- 12. Identify the targeted staff size. List anticipated types and numbers of staff positions. Provide a rationale for the planned staffing arrangements. (State Rule, Page 7)*

Please see #5 above (in this section).

- 13. Describe the provisions that will be made for all required staff to participate in the mandatory Teachers Retirement System (TRS) of Georgia.*

All required staff will participate in the mandatory Teachers Retirement System (TRS) of Georgia.

- 14. State whether or not the charter school will elect to participate in the State Health Benefit Plan.*

At present, the school will not participate in the State Health Benefit Plan, though the school reserves the right to enroll at a future date.

- 15. Describe how recruits will be informed that if hired, charter school employees are not eligible employees for any benefits provided by the Atlanta Board of Education.*

Recruits are given a brief outline of benefits that includes a statement that, if hired, they are not eligible for any benefits provided by the Atlanta Board of Education.

## **B. Volunteers**

- 1. If applicable, describe the role of possible volunteers at the school. Include how volunteers will be recruited and trained and how their work will contribute to the school's ability to achieve its goals.*

As described in the earlier section on family involvement, the precursor schools rely on the commitment of parents and guardians to volunteer time to the school each year to assist with classroom projects, building and grounds upkeep, fundraising, and more; ANCS will continue this reliance. Additionally, the precursor schools have relied, and ANCS will continue to rely, upon volunteers from local colleges, Hands on Atlanta, and other service-oriented organizations to support the life of the school and a positive environment for students.

## **VIII. OPERATIONS PLAN**

### **A. Insurance / Risk Management**

*Evidence of all required insurance must be submitted prior to school opening for 2011-2012, no later than July 31, 2011. Applicants should at a minimum address local and state requirements. The following types and levels of coverage are required by the Atlanta*



*Board. Each applicant should investigate their proposed school's insurance needs. Many charter schools purchase higher levels of coverage and additional coverage based on the type of school they propose to establish.*

- 1. Describe all insurance coverage that will be secured including but not limited to workers compensation, general liability insurance, property damage, and motor vehicle. (State Rule Guidance, Page 8)*

*The Atlanta Board requires the charter school, at its own expense, to purchase and maintain insurance covering for all of its operations. Said insurance shall include but not be limited to workers compensation the limits of which shall be in compliance with state law, employers liability insurance to cover bodily injury by accident in the amount of \$100,000 for each accident, bodily injury by disease in the amount of \$100,000 for each employee, comprehensive general liability insurance in the following forms: (1) comprehensive form; (2) contractual insurance; (3) personal injury; (4) broad form property damage; (5) premise – operations; and (6) completed operations. This coverage shall be in the amount not less than \$1,000,000, combined single limit, and shall also cover the use of all equipment, hoists, and vehicles on the premises not covered by automobile liability. The policy coverage must be on an occurrence basis. Automobile liability insurance is required in the following amount: (1) comprehensive insurance in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 for bodily injury and property damage combined single limit; and (2) specific extensions of comprehensive form coverage and coverage for all owned, hired, leased and non-owned vehicles used in the operation of the charter school. The Atlanta Board must be named as the additional insured in the insurance document.*

ANCS will purchase and maintain insurance for the operation of the school that will meet the minimum requirements set forth by the Atlanta Public Schools, including but not limited to: workers compensation in compliance with state law; employers liability insurance to cover bodily injury by accident in the amount of \$100,000 for each accident, bodily injury by disease in the amount of \$100,000 for each employee; general liability insurance (comprehensive form; contractual insurance; personal injury; broad form property damage; premise-operations; and completed operations). This coverage will also cover the use of all equipment, hoists, and vehicles on the premises not covered by automobile liability. The Atlanta Board will also be named as the additional insured in the insurance document.

Each and every agent shall warrant when signing the Certificate of Insurance that he or she is acting as an authorized representative on behalf of the companies affording insurance coverage and that he or she is licensed by the State of Georgia and is currently in good standing with the Commissioner of Insurance for the State of Georgia. Any and all companies providing insurance will meet the minimum financial security requirements. The rating for each company will be indicated on the Certificate of Insurance. Companies providing insurance under this Agreement will have a current Best's Rating not less than "A" and Best's Financial Size Category no less than Class VII.

- 2. Include a statement of acknowledgement that the minimum levels of insurance and bonding described in the petition will remain in effect throughout the term of the charter*

*and failure to do so may result in the termination of the charter. Evidence of coverage must be submitted to APS each July.*

The minimum levels of insurance and bonding described in the petition will remain in effect throughout the term of the charter and failure to do so may result in the termination of the charter. Evidence of coverage will be submitted to APS each July.

## **B. Legal Services**

1. *Describe how the proposed school will ensure compliance with the requirements of law with respect to legal issues.*

ANCS uses the services of a legal counsel to insure compliance with all legal requirements.

2. *Identify the charter board's legal counsel including contact information: name, firm, address, telephone number. If the petitioner does not currently have legal counsel, provide a timeline for obtaining counsel prior to the proposed school's opening.*

Legal counsel for ANCS is Michael T. Nations of Nations, Toman & McKnight LLP, Suite 2050, Promenade II, 1230 Peachtree Street, NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30309. Phone number is 404-266-2366.

## **C. Transportation**

*Atlanta Public Schools is not contracting with charter schools to provide daily transportation service. For local field trips, the charter school is eligible for bus services from APS at the same rate as any APS school is charged and is required to follow reservation procedures. For any special needs students enrolled in the charter school with an IEP requiring special transportation to and from school, the charter school can contract with APS for a fee for transporting any such student.*

1. *Describe plans, if any, for the school to transport students to and from school. Please account for these plans in the budget. (State Rule, Page 8)*
  - a. *Include arrangements made for students who would not have their own means of transportation. While it is understood that you may be unable to provide an exact transportation plan without knowledge of your actual student enrollment, please be as specific as possible.*

Students will arrive at the school via carpool, walking, biking, or public transportation.

2. *Describe policies that will ensure transportation is not a barrier to access for students. If transportation will not be provided, demonstrate how that will not be a barrier for all those who are eligible to attend. (State Rule, Page 8)*

To insure that transportation is not a barrier to access students, the school will continue the precursor school's working with families to find other students in the same neighborhood to

carpool, walk, or bike to school together with. In addition, ANCS will provide student MARTA passes for free or at a reduced cost (depending on the student's Free and Reduced Meals status) to students in need. The school will also participate in the "Safe Routes to School" Program as a way to promote walking and biking to school safely and efficiently.

3. *If transportation shall be provided, the petition must include a statement that the transportation program will comply with applicable law. (State Rule, Page 8)*

Transportation will not be provided.

#### **D. Food Services**

*Atlanta Public Schools is not contracting with charter schools to provide food service.*

1. *Indicate if the school will provide food services and the plans for meeting the nutritional needs of students. Provide a brief description of any proposed food service program. (State Rule Guidance, Page 8)*

It is the intention of the school to continue to offer the school meal program to students enrolled at the precursor schools (ACMS and NCS). All information regarding this program will be provided to the families of all enrolled students prior to the start of each school year. ANCS will contract with an outside vendor to provide all food services to the school.

Any ANCS food service provided will be in compliance with all applicable city, county, and state regulations governing food service equipment, inspections, and licenses.

Federal Eligibility Applications: Each school year the school will be responsible for providing household survey forms for each student to determine free or reduced meal eligibility. ANCS will use the Federal Eligibility Application forms approved by APS and the DOE. ANCS is responsible for dissemination, collection, and submitting eligibility data to APS for the purposes of determining the school's eligibility for Title I funds.

2. *Indicate if the school plans to participate in the National School Lunch Program through the Georgia Department of Education.*

ANCS will participate in the National School Lunch Program. It will meet all required nutritional guidelines as outlined by the Georgia Department of Education and USDA.

*APS charter schools are responsible for providing APS provided household survey forms for each student to determine free or reduced eligibility. The dissemination, collection, and submission of eligibility forms to APS for the purposes of determining the charter school's eligibility for Title I funds, is required even if the charter school does not provide food service.*

## **IX. SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS**

### **A. Applicant's Summary**

In no more than 300 words, summarize why you believe the group will create an excellent charter school that effectively meets the educational needs of students in the community.

*This should be a convincing argument based on a complement of academic program, individual, organizational, and financial strengths. The summary should demonstrate the capacity to create an excellent charter school in the City of Atlanta that not only meets the intent of the charter school law to increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation but meets the needs of resident students and their families, and is in the public interest.*

Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School (ANCS) will be an excellent charter school that effectively meets the educational needs of students in the community. Since it is being formed by the merger of two successful charter schools that have been operating successful academic programs since 2001 (elementary school) and 2005 (middle school) respectively, led by strong organizations composed of strong individuals from the community who have demonstrated the financial strength of the schools, the capacity to create an excellent charter school in the City of Atlanta that not only meets the intent of the charter school law to increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation but meets the needs of resident students and their families, and is in the public interest, has already been demonstrated.

Both schools, which were recently awarded renewal charters, are centers of community education excellence in southeast Atlanta. The merger establishes a framework for sharing resources between the former ACMS and NCS, while we jointly pursue a common goal of continued excellence in providing small-school, constructivist alternative choices within the Atlanta Public Schools that actively involve families from diverse nearby neighborhoods in Atlanta.

For the past several years, both of ANCS's precursor schools have maintained waiting lists of interested applicants at all but two of their nine grade levels, evidence of the demand for a school that offers a small, personalized, and democratic learning community. ANCS will be racially and economically diverse, serving a student population that is representative of the city of Atlanta. Families from around the community have been actively involved in the governance of the school from the start, and their commitment to the school is reflected in this petition.

## **X. WAIVERS**

*Local charter schools are subject to the control and management of the Atlanta Board of Education and are expected to abide by and enforce the general rules and regulations governing all public schools to support the safety, welfare and educational success of all students. As a matter of principle, charter petitions seeking a blanket waiver of all state and local rules, regulations, policies and procedures shall be subject to strict scrutiny and should clearly articulate sound educational rationale that such waiver will support student achievement.*

1. *For petitioners seeking a blanket waiver (O.C.G.A. §20-2-2065), Atlanta Public Schools requires the petitioner to submit an explanation and qualification, demonstrating the*

*educational purpose(s) for supporting a blanket waiver is in the best interests of the students and the community; and should explain how student performance will be improved through the blanket waiver.*

ANCS is seeking the full flexibility available per O.C.G.A. §20-2-2065. The fundamental premise of charter schools is the ability to operate with flexibility and efficiency in order to best meet the needs of students. To best implement the educational and organizational model described in this petition, ANCS feels it would be better served by being exempt from any laws that may prevent us from so doing.

The following examples are illustrative of the ways ANCS will utilize the flexibility to meet our performance goals and increase student performance:

1. ANCS plans to hire the most qualified teachers available in order to help our students achieve to the fullest of their ability. While we anticipate that most, and perhaps all of our teachers will be certified by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, we want to preserve the right to hire the best teachers as long as they meet the “highly qualified” standards for charter schools – even if they are not yet fully certified.
2. The full flexibility will also allow us to utilize text books and other instructional material that might not be available at a traditional public school. This will help us to ensure our curriculum is current and relevant for each of the classes offered at the school. This will allow us to better and more efficiently teach the Georgia grade level and subject matter standards in an environment that is intentionally not dependant on specific, traditional textbooks.
3. We will also utilize the broad flexibility to create and maintain a governing board of community members, parents, and relevant professionals to run the school. This is vital to the success of any charter school because of the unique curriculum and learning that is offered as well as the high level of expectation and accountability at a charter school. ANCS will be governed by a uniquely qualified group of Board members who understand the community in which our students live and learn.
4. Finally, and very importantly, the broad flexibility afforded charter schools though the automatic waivers will allow us to respond more quickly to the changing needs of the students and community. The world of public school regulation is a rapidly changing environment. This is especially true as the use of technology expands and as the Congress prepares to take on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. We will be able to efficiently and effectively adjust to this ever changing landscape if we have the full flexibility provided by the automatic waiver. We realize that any changes made will still need to fall within the scope of our charter and not violate any of the state or federal laws or regulations that cannot be waived. However, we will be able to function much better as a school and to focus our attention more acutely on the needs of our students by having this waiver.

*If the petitioner seeks to utilize this flexibility, a statement must be included that the school agrees to comply with all requirements of the Single Statewide Accountability System and shall meet or exceed the performance based goals included in the charter and approved by the local board, including but not limited to raising student achievement. (State Rule, Page 6)*

ANCS will comply with all requirements of the Single Statewide Accountability System and shall meet or exceed the performance-based goals included in the charter and approved by the local board, including but not limited to raising student achievement.

2. *If a petitioner is not seeking a blanket waiver, the petitioner may choose to enumerate specifically requested waivers in the petition. If so, the petition shall state the rationale for requesting each waiver, including how each waiver shall help the school meet or exceed performance based goals included in the charter and approved by the local board, including but not limited to raising student achievement. (State Rule, Page 6)*
  - a. *Identify any specific waiver that will be requested of the Atlanta Board of Education; and*
  - b. *Identify any specific waiver that will be requested of the Georgia State Board of Education.*

## **XI. APPENDICES AND ATTACHMENTS**

Please attach only materials referenced in your petition, including but not limited to budget forms, articles of incorporation, by-laws, EMO or third party contracts, facilities LOI and/or MOU, resumes, and required signed conflict of interest forms.

Additional information that may support the information presented in the narrative and help to assess better the proposed charter school may be included in the appendices. These examples may include curriculum samples; program descriptions; parent, student, or faculty handbooks; organizational charters; letters of community support for the petition; code of student conduct; etc.

Pages in the Appendices should be numbered, labeled, and included in the Table of Contents.

Labeled tabs/dividers should separate the Appendices.

Appendix A: Understanding by Design

Appendix B: ANCS Family Contract (Middle School Example)

Appendix C: Sample ANCS Yearly Calendar and Student Schedule

Appendix D: ANCS Governing Board Members Signed Conflict of Interest Forms

Appendix E: Resumes of School Leaders

Appendix F: Neighborhood Charter School, Inc. Incorporation Papers

- Appendix G: Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, and Payroll Processes
- Appendix H: Chief Financial Officer Resume and Qualifications
- Appendix I: Cash Flow Projected for the First Two Years of Operations
- Appendix J: Balanced and Complete Five-Year Budget Projection
- Appendix K: Letters of Community Support
- Appendix L: ANCS Teacher Support and Evaluation Process
- Appendix M: Attendance Zone Map
- Appendix N: Sample School Application (current ACMS form)
- Appendix O: Expanded Budget Projection Showing Assumptions and Contingency Plan for One-Half of the Projected FTE in Years One and Two

## Appendix A: Understanding by Design Planning Template

<b>BIG IDEA:</b>	
<b>STAGE ONE: DESIRED RESULTS</b>	
<b>ESTABLISHED GOALS (State and/or National Content Standard (s)):</b>	
<b>UNDERSTANDINGS:</b>	<b>ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS;</b>
<b>KNOWLEDGE:</b>	<b>SKILLS:</b>
<b>ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY:</b>	



<b>STAGE TWO: ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE</b>	
<p><b>PERFORMANCE TASK (S):</b> (STUDENTS WILL DEMONSTRATE STANDARD BY)</p>	<p><b>OTHER EVIDENCE: (FORMATIVE)</b></p>
<p><b>KEY CRITERIA (TO MEET THE STANDARD)</b></p>	

## Appendix B: ANCS Family Contract (Middle School Example)

### 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Family Contract

#### All 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Families Must Complete *Each* of the Following:

- Attend the Parent/Student Orientation prior to the start of school and;
- Attend Back to School Curriculum Night (September 9<sup>th</sup>) and;
- Attend at least two PTCA meetings in addition to Curriculum Night and;
- Work on one school-wide fundraiser (minimum 4 hours) or make a financial contribution to the school through the direct appeal and;
- Attend all meetings as requested by your child's teacher (conferences, etc.) and;
- Pay all financial obligations in full (breakfast/lunch program, library fines, etc).

I agree to complete each of the above requirements: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

#### All 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Families Must Complete *At Least One* of the Following:

- Work a Building and Grounds work day or complete a B&G project or;
- Assist with at least one Fine Arts function or;
- Serve as School Committee Chair or as a Governing Board Representative or;
- Serve as an Advisory Parent Representative or;
- Serve as a Coach for a school sport or;
- Serve as a Parent Sponsor for a school club or;
- Work 4 additional volunteer hours at the school or completing volunteer work outside of school hours (examples – cover phone in office, chaperone field trip, committee member, take home work from the school, etc.)
- Fill a Teacher Wish List Request

I agree to complete at least one of the above requirements: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

#### All 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents are *Encouraged To*:

- Check the teacher blogs at least weekly to ensure that your child is up to date on class assignments and that you as a parent are familiar with your child's education and;
- Read carefully the weekly courier and all other communications emailed and mailed from ANCS and;
- Attend as many school functions as possible (not just the minimum required by this contract) and;
- Be as active and involved in the life of ANCS as possible!!

I understand I am encouraged to complete the above suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

**I understand sign-in sheets are posted at all Building and Grounds Workdays, PTCA Meetings, and other volunteer events and that it is my responsibility to sign in order to receive credit for working these days and attending these meetings. I understand that there is also a volunteer sign-in log in the school office and that it is my responsibility to log all other volunteer activities in order to receive credit for completing them.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Family Contract**

**All 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Families Must Complete *Each* of the Following:**

- Attend the Parent/Student Orientation prior to the start of school (dates) and;
- Attend Back to School Curriculum Night (September 9<sup>th</sup>) and;
- Attend at least two PTCA meetings in addition to Curriculum Night and;
- Work on at least one school-wide fundraiser (minimum 4 hours) or make a financial contribution to the school through the direct appeal and;
- Attend all meetings as requested by your child's teacher (conferences, etc.) and;
- Pay all financial obligations in full (breakfast/lunch program, library fines, etc).

I agree to complete each of the above requirements: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

**All 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents are *Encouraged* To:**

- Work a Building and Grounds work day or complete a B&G project;
- Assist with at least one Fine Arts function;
- Serve as School Committee Chair or as a Governing Board Representative or;
- Serve as an Advisory Parent Representative;
- Serve as a Coach for a school sport;
- Serve as a Parent Sponsor for a school club;
- Volunteer at the school or by completing volunteer work outside of school hours (examples – cover phone in office, chaperone field trip, committee member, etc.);
- Fill a Teacher Wish List Request;
- Check the teacher blogs at least weekly to ensure that your child is up to date on class assignments and that you as a parent are familiar with your child's education;
- Read carefully the weekly courier and all other communications emailed and mailed from ANCS;
- Attend as many school functions as possible (not just the minimum required by this contract);
- Be as active and involved in the life of ANCS as possible!!

I understand I am encouraged to complete the above suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

**I understand sign-in sheets are posted at all Building and Grounds Workdays, PTCA Meetings, and other volunteer events and that it is my responsibility to sign in order to receive credit for working these days and attending these meetings. I understand that there is also a volunteer sign-in log in the school office and that it is my responsibility to log all other volunteer activities in order to receive credit for completing them.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## Appendix C: Sample ANCS Yearly Calendar & Student Schedule

### School Calendar

#### *August*

7<sup>th</sup> – Orientation and Registration Day  
10<sup>th</sup> – First Day of Classes  
20<sup>th</sup> – ANCS Governing Board Meeting  
26<sup>th</sup> – PTCA Meeting 6:30 PM

#### *September*

7<sup>th</sup> – NO SCHOOL/Labor Day  
9<sup>th</sup> – PTCA Meeting (Back to School Curriculum Night) 6:30 PM  
12<sup>th</sup> – ANCS/NCS Low Country Boil  
17<sup>th</sup> – ANCS Governing Board Meeting

#### *October*

7<sup>th</sup> – PTCA Meeting 6:30 PM  
12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> – NO SCHOOL/Fall Break (Teacher Work Days)  
15<sup>th</sup> – ANCS Governing Board Meeting

#### *November*

3<sup>rd</sup> – NO SCHOOL/Teacher Work Day  
5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> – Coalition of Essential Schools Fall Forum “Changing Schools, Changing Lives” in New Orleans  
11<sup>th</sup> – PTCA Meeting 6:30 PM  
19<sup>th</sup> – ANCS Governing Board Meeting  
25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> – NO SCHOOL/Thanksgiving Holiday

#### *December*

9<sup>th</sup> – PTCA Meeting 6:30 PM  
17<sup>th</sup> – ANCS Governing Board Meeting  
21<sup>st</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> – NO SCHOOL/Winter Break

#### *January*

1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> – NO SCHOOL/Winter Break  
6<sup>th</sup> – Classes Resume  
18<sup>th</sup> – NO SCHOOL/Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
21<sup>st</sup> – ANCS Governing Board Meeting

#### *February*

10<sup>th</sup> – PTCA Meeting 6:30 PM  
15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> – NO SCHOOL/Mid-Winter Break  
18<sup>th</sup> – ANCS Governing Board Meeting

#### *March*

10<sup>th</sup> – PTCA Meeting 6:30 PM  
12<sup>th</sup> – NOON DISMISSAL for students  
18<sup>th</sup> – ANCS Governing Board Meeting

*April*

5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> – NO SCHOOL/Spring Break  
15<sup>th</sup> – ANCS Governing Board Meeting

*May*

12<sup>th</sup> – PTCA Meeting 6:30 PM  
21<sup>st</sup> – ANCS Governing Board Meeting  
24<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Celebration  
25<sup>th</sup> – NOON DISMISSAL for students/Last Day of School

Academic Reporting Dates:

*Progress Reports:* Week of September 7<sup>th</sup>, October 5<sup>th</sup>, December 7<sup>th</sup>, January 25<sup>th</sup>, March 22<sup>nd</sup>,  
April 26<sup>th</sup>

*End of Term Reports:* Week of November 9<sup>th</sup>, March 1<sup>st</sup>, May 31<sup>st</sup>

*Teacher Conferences:* TBD (Fall and Spring)

**Sample ANCS Student Daily Schedule**

8:30-8:45 – Advisory

8:50-10:45 – Humanities (Reading/Language Arts & Social Studies)

10:50-11:45 – Fit for Life

11:50-12:50 – Reading/Work Time & Lunch/Recess

12:50-1:45 – Spanish or Arts

1:50-3:45 – Math/Science/Technology

**Appendix D: ANCS Governing Board Members Signed Conflict of Interest Forms (See Hard Copies)**

## Appendix E: Resumes of School Leaders

### Matthew C. Underwood

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664 Kirkwood Avenue

(404) 713-8704

Atlanta, GA 30316

[munderwood@atlantachartermiddle.com](mailto:munderwood@atlantachartermiddle.com)

#### EDUCATION & CERTIFICATION

**Harvard University Graduate School of Education (2004)** – Cambridge, MA

Ed. M., School Leadership – School Development Strand

**Northwestern University (2000)** – Evanston, IL

B.S., Education & Social Policy

#### Certification

8-12 Social Studies

Principal/Assistant Principal

#### SCHOOL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

**Atlanta Charter Middle School** – Atlanta, GA

Summer 2007 – present

*Principal*

**Greater Boston Principal Residency Network** – Boston, MA

Fall 2006 – Summer 2007

*Principal Intern*

Engage in wide-ranging leadership issues in collaboration with mentor principal at the Francis W. Parker Essential School. Develop and facilitate data-driven instructional improvement with teachers. Manage student discipline. Consult with principal on budget, personnel, board of trustees, and community outreach issues. Liaise with student government leaders. Explore school leadership through research and practice in joint program of the Center for Collaborative Education and Northeastern University.

#### Contributions include:

- Assist in planning for and leading of faculty and parent meetings.
- Coach a Critical Friends Group centered on collaborative professional development.
- Coordinate school's civil rights and English language learner program review by Department of Education.
- Directed school's "Back to School" Night program for parents and families.
- Analyzed student and family survey feedback for significant trends and responses.
- Drafted employee handbook with personnel procedures and policies.

**Francis W. Parker Essential School** – Devens, MA

Fall 2005 – Summer 2006

*Co-Leader, Arts and Humanities Domain*

Collaborated in decision-making for Arts and Humanities program.

#### Contributions included:

- Facilitated yearlong peer observation process for teachers focused on essential questions.
- Assisted in the interviewing and hiring of three new teachers and a new domain leader.

**Boston Arts Academy** – Boston, MA

Fall 2003 – Spring 2004

*School Developer Intern*

Collaborated with school administrative team in short and long-term strategic planning.

**Contributions included:**

- Gathered data and presented recommendations about school’s special education inclusion program.
- Led team of teachers in implementing academic after-school program.
- Initiated and oversaw the creation of student honor society.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**Francis W. Parker Essential School** – Devens, MA

Fall 2004 – Spring 2007

*Arts and Humanities Teacher, Advisor, & Girls Softball Coach*

Collaborate with teachers to design and teach middle and high school integrated arts and humanities curriculum using the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools and Understanding by Design. Facilitate a small group advisory around academic, social-emotional issues and community service. Assist curricular planning team to support students with disabilities in role as special education liaison.

**Stephenson High School** – Stone Mountain, GA

Fall 2002 – Summer 2003

*Social Studies Teacher*

**The Beacon School** – New York, NY  
2002

Fall 2001 –Summer

*Humanities Teacher, Advisor, & Girls Softball Coach*

**Walton High School** – Marietta, GA

Fall 2000 – Summer 2001

*Social Studies Teacher & Assistant Cross Country and Track Coach*

**Amundsen High School** – Chicago, IL

Fall 1999

*Student Teaching Intern*

**Niles West High School** – Skokie, IL

Fall 1998

*Student Teaching Intern*



## JILLIAN SCHANZ KAECEHELE

200 Montgomery Ferry Road NE, Suite 30  
Atlanta, GA 30309  
404.567.0296

**[jkaechele@neighborhoodcharter.com](mailto:jkaechele@neighborhoodcharter.com)**

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### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARTER SCHOOL, Atlanta, Georgia

**Executive Director/Principal** ((2008-present)

Neighborhood Charter School (NCS) is a public charter school supported by the Atlanta Public Schools and the community it serves. Founded and supported by concerned parents, community members, and educators the school believes in public education and a constructive approach to learning. NCS serves a diverse community population of students and families, honoring children by acknowledging that they learn best by interacting with materials and people rather than through passive text-based learning. In addition, NCS values partnerships with community partners such as Zoo Atlanta, Hands-on-Atlanta and numerous environmental advocacy groups. Parent volunteers are central to all components of the NCS curriculum.

- As executive director and principal provide leadership expertise in all aspects of school - curriculum, instruction, assessment, public relations, budget development and management, teacher evaluation, facilities oversight and professional development.
- Communication and relationship building with staff, families and Governing Board
- Seeing funding through grants and donated community resources to supplement local allocations
- Assure compliance with all charter program expectations at the local and state level
- Build relationships through visibility and availability to all segments of the school community
- Work collaboratively with parents, staff and Board to implement the school mission and vision
- Provide oversight and leadership to the NCS Strategic Plan and participate in the planning for the proposed NCS/ACMS merger
- Responsible for hiring, evaluating and development of professional staff.
- Oversee all special education, Student Support Team, 504, and Academic Assistance and testing
- Serve as liaison between all constituent and legal entities involved in the NCS charter and ensure complete charter compliance

PARK TUDOR SCHOOL, Indianapolis, Indiana

**Upper School Director** (2006-2008)

Park Tudor School provides an exemplary college preparatory program for average to high ability children. Central to the mission of the school is a commitment to character development and providing a high quality learning environment that values the individual. Great learners and teachers are hallmarks of the school, with significant attention given to global awareness,

service, and maximum opportunities for participation in the arts and athletics. Eighteen Advanced Placement courses and a unique Global Studies Program combining AP classes, 200 hours of service and a major action research presentation offered to upper level students.

- Initiatives have included implementation of an advisory system designed by faculty, revised teacher evaluation model, weekly all-community meetings, research and implementation strategies for a Chinese language and culture program, planning for global travel and studies program and support of curriculum mapping.
- Facilitating all volunteer committees in three key areas: design of alternative culminating assessment models in lieu of semester examinations; a Winterim/January Term program; completion of a revised parent-student handbook.
- Extensive work with Upper School Honor Council in the review of the school Honor Code while exploring disciplinary council models involving peer and faculty participation.
- Coordination of a highly successful Molecular Biology initiative with Smith College. Program brought four highly regarded scientists to campus for one week of cutting edge “wet” laboratory exploration and genome study with freshmen students.
- Act as advisor to freshmen students and facilitate Upper School Administrative and Counseling Services Teams.

SHADY SIDE ACADEMY SENIOR SCHOOL, Fox Chapel, Pennsylvania  
**Head of School (2002-2006)**

Shady Side Academy Senior School offers a challenging college preparatory curriculum for over 500 students and approximately 50 five-day boarding students. Students participate in comprehensive academic, arts, athletic and extra-curricular programs and assume significant roles in all curricular, admissions and disciplinary decisions.

- Responsible for all senior school campus/programs - 500 students, 73 teaching faculty, 8 member administrative team, 15 school buildings, 15 faculty homes, two dormitories and a 140 acre campus.
- Successful campus initiatives include design and implementation of *Teachers as Technology* consultants program, curriculum mapping and FAWEB system, revised faculty evaluation system, comprehensive external peer curriculum audits, health risk evaluation and programming, senior- in-college partnerships.
- Managed the coordination of performing arts center construction project and LEED Gold green renovation of major administrative and academic building.

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN ENGLAND (TASIS), Thorpe, Surrey, England  
**Dean of Students/Mathematics Teacher (2000-2002)**

- Oversaw all aspects of student life programming, including student support and information services, orientation and transition programs, student leadership development, handbook preparation and dissemination, behavior management, and residential staff support.

- Coordinated special needs program support, as well as the emergency and campus health and safety program.
- Provided professional development resources and workshops on curriculum, special needs, differentiating instruction, character education, assessment, best practices, and teacher evaluation.
- Faculty advisor and mathematics instructor.

SCARBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL, Scarborough, Maine  
**Principal** (1995-2000)

- Lead administrator responsible for supervision, management and assessment of high school curriculum, budget, and staff for grades 9-12.
- Embraced full spectrum of administrative responsibility including curriculum development and articulation, staff development and evaluation, strategic planning, public relations and publications.
- Oversaw enrichment and co-curricular programming, behavior management, program of studies development, master schedule design, safety and crisis planning, standards implementation and leadership team development.

GREELY MIDDLE SCHOOL, MSAD #51, Cumberland Center, Maine  
**Principal** (1991-1995)

- Lead administrator with responsibility for staff supervision, budget development and management, evaluation, scheduling, curriculum, strategic planning and community relations.
- Facilitated significant restructuring projects including implementation of middle school tenets, development of a shared vision and core values initiative, outcome-based curriculum planning, authentic assessment programs and a school-based planning team including a community-school advisory.

KENNETT HIGH SCHOOL, Conway, New Hampshire  
**Assistant Principal**

KENNETT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL Conway, New Hampshire  
**Principal**

- Lead administrator for the junior high school complex and programs.
- Responsible for supervision and evaluation of staff, curriculum coordination, scheduling, middle school activities programming, school and community relations, budget preparation, physical plant supervision, attendance officer, staffing, and discipline code management.
- High school administrative responsibilities as requested by district and building supervisors.

KENNETT JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, Conway, New Hampshire  
**Science Department Chair and Teacher**

- Instructed College Preparatory and Advanced Placement Biology, Human Anatomy and Physiology, and Microbiology courses.
- Designed curriculum, integrated computer instruction systems, created district standardized assessment tools, and acted as K-12 science curriculum coordinator.
- Department chair responsibilities included evaluation of staff, development and management of science budget and coordination of scheduling and curriculum.

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, Hanover, New Hampshire

**Visiting Fellow**

- Training director for the *Options Project*, a research and curriculum development project for non-college bound rural women.
- Responsible for supervision and training of curriculum pilot teachers in Vermont and New Hampshire, budget preparation and management, curriculum dissemination, and in-service teacher education workshops throughout Vermont and New Hampshire.
- Position included supervision and evaluation of college undergraduate interns and federal grant writing.

ACCESS Education Center, Moretown, Vermont

**Teacher Center Founder/Director**

- Prepared nationally competitive grant to fund a teacher center.
- Organized the staffing and management of facility including media center, professional library, instructional materials collection, and a recycle center.
- Facilitated supervision and program coordination of paraprofessionals, university interns, and fifth year interns from the University of Vermont.
- Oversaw development, implementation, and evaluation of certification and graduate level in-service for seven area schools.
- Responsible for budget preparation and management, state and federal grant writing, and coordination of Community Education and Community College of Vermont programs. Adjunct - University of Vermont.
- Prepared and received a grant from the United States Office of Education to research, coordinate and publish *A Resource Guide for In-service Teacher Education*.
- Successfully incorporated the use of local teachers in the design and presentation of a comprehensive set of guidelines and activities for teacher focused in-service in rural school settings.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM (COP), University of Vermont/Washington West School District, Burlington/Waterbury, Vermont

**Director**

- Managed a multi-year alternative practicum based teacher education program for low income and disadvantaged adults.

HARWOOD UNION HIGH SCHOOL, Science Department, Duxbury, Vermont, **Teacher**

WARDLAW COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL, Science Department, Plainfield, New Jersey,  
**Teacher**

## EDUCATION

**Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (C.A.G.S.) Educational Administration and Supervision**, University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire

**M.Ed. Educational Foundations**, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont

**Fellowship**, National Science Foundation Institute in Environmental Ecology, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

**A.B. Biology**, Montclair State University, Upper Montclair, New Jersey

\* 40+ non-matriculating graduate credits beyond C.A.G.S. in science, health, mathematics, special education, and educational administration and supervision - Boston University, University of New Hampshire, University of Pennsylvania and University of Southern Maine

## PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

Maine K-12 Professional Certificate - Superintendent of Schools and Principal Endorsement (s)

New Hampshire Experienced Educator Certificate – Superintendent and Principal Endorsement (s) – Inactive

Vermont Professional Educator’s License – Superintendent and Principal Endorsement Levels

**Appendix F: NCS Incorporation Papers (hard copy only)**

# **Appendix G: Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, and Payroll Processes**

## **Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School Cash Disbursements/Accounts Payable Process**

### **Process Owner:**

Business Manager  
Principal  
Finance Chair/Treasurer  
Board Chair

**Number of Personnel Directly Involved in the Process:** Two

### **Related General Ledger Accounts:**

- Accounts Payable
- Expenses

### **Transaction Type:**

- Routine

### **Process (Business) Objective**

The objective for the Accounts Payable / Procurement Process is to ensure the purchasing function operates in an accurate, efficient and effective manner.

### **Process Description:**

All invoices are given to the Business Manager who opens the mail and places them in a “pending bills” folder. Every week, the Business Manager matches these invoices to reimbursement request forms submitted by staff and parents or invoices from vendors and writes the checks. All checks must be reviewed and signed by one of the three authorized check signers. The following are the authorized check signers:

Principal and Executive Director  
Board Chair  
Treasurer

The bank statements are reconciled monthly by an independent accounting firm. The Finance Chair receives a copy of the monthly general ledger and compares it to budget. It is the Finance Chair’s responsibility to identify anything outside the norm, ask questions and review information. The Finance Chair provides a budget update monthly to the Board.

**Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School  
Cash Receipts/ Accounts Receivable Process**

**Process Owner:**

Business Manager

Principal

Finance Chair/Treasurer

Office Manager

Teachers / Staff

**Number of Personnel Directly Involved in the Process:** Three

**Related General Ledger Accounts:**

- Accounts Receivable
- Income

**Transaction Type:**

- Routine

**Process (Business) Objective:**

The objective for the Accounts Receivable / Cash Receipt Process is to ensure the receipt of funds operates in an accurate, efficient and effective manner.

**Process Description:**

The Business Manager opens most of the mail, prepares and makes all deposits. There are four sources of deposits: grants, allocations from the Atlanta Public Schools, donations, and school related activities – field trips, PTCA dues, lunch, etc.

Grants - The Business Manager is in charge of all grants, and is responsible for tracking down grant money that doesn't arrive in a timely fashion. The Business Manager handles all paperwork associated with a grant. The Principal is responsible for reviewing all of the supporting documentation prior to reimbursement requests being submitted and must sign off on all documentation. The Finance Chair reviews information on a monthly basis to determine if funds anticipated have been received and deposited.

Atlanta Public Schools Allocation - The Atlanta Public School (APS) allocation is received monthly beginning in August through May. The payment is made via ACH. The Finance Chair reviews the General Ledger monthly to confirm the payment was deposited.

Annual Campaign Donations - Donations to the school are received via US mail or dropped off at the office. US mail and office drop offs are placed in the Business Manager's mail box. The Business Manager opens the mail, makes copies of checks received valued at \$500 or more. The Business Manager records the donation in a spreadsheet and writes thank you notes for the Principal to sign. The spreadsheet is reviewed periodically by the Principal, Fundraising Chair and other Board members as requested.



Field Trips – Funds are collected by the classroom teachers, totaled and given to the Office Manager. The Office Manager places the endorsement stamp on the checks and places the funds in the Business Manager’s mailbox. The Business Manager recounts the funds and makes the deposit. All deposits are recorded in Quick Books.

PTCA dues – Funds are primarily collected by the PTCA president, recorded on a spreadsheet and placed in the Business Manager’s mailbox. The Business Manager deposits all funds collected. The PTCA President and PTCA Treasurer get together on a regular basis to review the PTCA budget. The Finance Chair reviews all PTCA transactions in the General Ledger on a monthly basis.

Fund Raisers (Fall Fling, Spring Fling, etc.) – The committee created for each fund raising event is responsible for collection of funds. The Business Manager works with each group to create a budget, pay expenses and make deposits. Since each event is organized by different volunteers, the Business Manager’s role differs depending on the Chair persons abilities and needs.

Lunch – Students are requested to pre-pay for all meals. Order forms are completed and returned to the school along with payment. Funds are collected, recorded in Fast Lane (school lunch program) in each student’s account, and deposited at the bank. Invoices are generated monthly and sent home to the parents/guardians. 50%+ of the students are on the Free and Reduced Lunch Program. Monthly, the Office Manager files on-line reports with the Department of Education (DOE) to request reimbursement of funds. The DOE sends an electronic deposit for the requested amount. The Business Manager is responsible for all other deposits.

## **Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School Payroll Process**

**Process Owner:**

Business Manager  
Principal  
Finance Chair/Treasurer  
Office Manager  
Accountants  
Payroll Processor

**Number of Personnel Directly Involved in the Process:** Four

**Related General Ledger Accounts:**

- Accrued Payroll Expense
- Accrued Payroll Taxes

**Transaction Type:**

- Routine

**Process Description:**

A large portion of the salaries at the school are determined by the Atlanta Public School salary scale. This information can be found on the APS website. All payroll is a budgeted expense that is reviewed and approved by the board. Salaries make up over 80% of our total annual expenses. The only deviation between budgeted and actual payroll expense arises when substitutes are required.

Employees are paid twice a month. Substitute information is provided to the accountants by the Office Manager. The payroll function is outsourced to ADP. Changes to payroll are communicated to ADP by the accountants.

Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) – The school is responsible for contributing 9.28% of an employee’s salary to TRS. The employee is responsible for contributing 5%. The Office Manager works with our accountants and our payroll processor to ensure TRS enrollment takes place at the beginning of the school year and the proper funds are deducted for each payroll period. The accountants complete the necessary monthly reporting and provide the Business Manager with the amount owed. The Business Managers initiates an ACH transaction to TRS by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.

VALIC – Is an optional 403b plan. Employees sign up through VALIC. The school is responsible for deducting the proper amount each payroll period. Our accountants and our payroll processor ensure the funds are deducted from the employees pay. The Business Manager updates an on-line system for VALIC with any changes participants of amounts and initiates an ACH twice a month. The ACH transactions take place within 5 days of the pay date.

# Appendix H: Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Qualifications

## SUSAN E. KNIGHT

855 Greenwood Ave  
Atlanta, GA 30306  
(404) 788-8531  
susaneknight@yahoo.com

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### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Aug 2009-  
Current
- NEIGHBORHOOD CHARTER SCHOOL &  
ATLANTA CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL** Atlanta, GA
- Business Manager
- Manage accounts payable process and all vendor relationships.
  - Oversee meal programs including the Free and Reduced Programs and all related state and federal compliance items. Receive and apply meal payments.
  - Develop and maintain banking relationships. Ensure proper cash management and funding in reserve accounts.
  - Responsible for maintaining accurate accounting records in QuickBooks. Currently working on project to restructure QuickBooks data to allow for more efficient reporting and budgeting.
  - Coordinate with accounting and auditing teams to ensure proper financial controls are in place and being utilized. Recommend and implement process improvements.
  - Oversee benefits programs including health insurance, supplemental insurance, and teachers' retirement programs. Responsible for worker's compensation claims.
  - Manage building repairs, coordinate construction projects, and oversee maintenance contracts.
  - Monitor and report annual campaign activity including managing the direct debit program, sending thank you notes, and completing matching donation information.
  - Obtain and maintain proper insurance coverage for the buildings and the schools.
  - Assist in grant applications, monitor funding, and complete all documentation to ensure funds are received and dispersed per the specific grant requirements.
  - Assist the Finance Chairs in preparation of the annual budgets. Monitor said budgets throughout the year, providing school leadership with timely updates and recommendation for spending adjustments where necessary.
  - Coordinate with various fundraising committees to ensure sound fiscal practices are followed, reconcile cash deposits, and manage PayPal payments.
  - Monitor all field trip income and expenses.
  - Create monthly cafeteria invoices and communicate with families regarding overdue balances. Field balance inquires from families and resolve billing disputes.
- Jan 2007-  
Jul 2009
- FREELANCE** Atlanta, GA
- Finance Consultant
- Setup financial reporting and controls systems, identifying key metrics and performance measures.
  - Evaluated banking processes to ensure compliance with legal requirements and risk mitigation.
  - Developed capital budgeting criteria and built models to assist with investment

- decisions.
- Built product-costing model to aid in pricing decisions.
- Analyzed customer profitability and developed guidelines for future contract negotiations.

*Sept 2005 – Dec 2006 completed a full-time MBA program in Madrid, Spain*

May 1999- **UNITED PARCEL SERVICE (UPS)** Atlanta, GA  
 Aug 2005 Finance Supervisor. International Finance & Accounting

- Coordinated a \$5 billion international business plan with support staff around the world.
- Setup cross-functional project teams and designed processes to reduce bottlenecks at critical stages in the business planning cycle.
- Consolidated data from field offices, then allocated expense using an activity-based costing model to generate P&L statements by product and region.
- Analyzed variances to planned results, examined revenue and cost drivers, and identified key trends.
- Built monthly reporting packages and presentations for senior management.
- Performed ad hoc research and analysis in support of special initiatives.

Feb 1998- **SUNTRUST BANK** Atlanta, GA  
 May 1999 Trust Associate. Corporate Trust Department

- Built strong relationships with corporate and government clients to provide excellent customer support and develop future business opportunities.
- Managed the flow of bond proceeds, carried out investment activities, and ensured payments to bondholders were accurate and timely.
- Created internal auditing control systems and won award of achievement for streamlining business processes.

## FORMAL EDUCATION

Sept 2005- **INSTITUTO DE EMPRESA** Madrid, Spain  
 Dec 2006 International MBA: Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> Best International MBA program by Business Week in 2008, Top 10% of class

Aug 1993- **UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE** Knoxville, TN  
 Dec 1995 Bachelor of Science in Business Administration  
 Major: Finance, Graduated Summa Cum Laude

## SOFTWARE

Highly proficient in Access, Excel, PowerPoint, Word, SQL, Oracle, QuickBooks and Khalix.

## OTHER INFORMATION

Involved in volunteer activities for Habitat for Humanity and the Community Food Bank

**Appendix I: Cash Flow Projected for First Two Years of Operations  
(See Separate Attachment)**

**Appendix J: Balanced and Complete Five-Year Budget Projection**  
(see separate attachment)

## Appendix K: Letters of Community Support



On Tuesday March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 the monthly membership meeting took place. A formal motion was taken to support the merger of ACMS and NCS. The motion passed unanimously. We feel that this merger is a benefit to our neighborhood and look forward to a long lasting relationship.

Regards,  
Russell Baggett  
2010 GPNA President

[A copy of the letter of support from South Atlantans for Neighborhood Development is included in the hard copy]



CARLA SMITH  
COUNCILMEMBER  
DISTRICT 1

## ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL

55 TRINITY AVENUE SW,  
SUITE 2900, SOUTH BLDG.  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303  
OFFICE 404-330-6039

March 17, 2010

To the Members of Atlanta Board of Education,

The Atlanta Charter Middle School (ACMS) and the Neighborhood Charter School (NCS) are both located within Atlanta City Council District One. As the Councilmember for the community and its surrounding neighborhoods I am in agreement and totally support the merger of the ACMS and the NCS.

The benefits of this K-8 merger are multiple from student achievement to governance and funding advantages. Over the last several years our neighborhoods have enjoyed the benefits of choice and have seen how it has encouraged residents to support all of our neighborhood schools. I thank you for the continued support and I urge you to support this merger.

Sincerely,

Councilmember  
District One



## **Appendix L: Teacher Support, Evaluation, and Professional Growth**

As an expression of the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School's commitment to democratic practices and sustaining professional collaboration, faculty members at our school serve a variety of roles beyond that of classroom teacher. This policy defines these roles and also acknowledges that readiness to take on additional roles comes about only through a careful and thoughtful system of support and evaluation that:

- 1) takes into consideration the complexities of teaching and working with students;
- 2) provides multiple levels and types of support for teachers at various stages in their teaching careers as well as opportunities for teacher leadership;
- 3) honors the work of teachers by creating a culture that expects a process of professional review and the demonstration of professional excellence (for additional information about the evaluation process, please refer to the "ANCS Teacher Evaluation Procedures and Criteria").

### **Level 1 Teachers**

Level 1 teachers may be new to teaching or just new to ANCS. Their level of responsibility takes into account their accumulated experience previous to ANCS, but this level is intended to support teachers new to the school and/or to teaching as they acclimate to ANCS and work to establish and demonstrate effective practices.

Level 1 teachers have a focused set of responsibilities centered primarily on their classroom culture, instruction, assessment, and curriculum planning, as described by ANCS's Teacher Evaluation Criteria. It is also expected that teachers in this range develop skill and experience as advisors. Teachers in their first year at the school will participate in a yearlong induction program, which includes mentorship by another faculty member during that year and possibly beyond.

In addition to informal observations of their practice, Level 1 teachers are formally evaluated by the Principal or his designee at least twice each year.

### **Level 2 Teachers**

Level 2 teachers take on an expanded set of responsibilities for sustaining the life of the school beyond their curricular and classroom work. These responsibilities may change from one year to the next depending on the needs of the school and the teacher's goals. Some of these responsibilities may carry with them additional compensation.

The assumption is that classroom instruction (including culture and management), curriculum planning, assessment, and effective collaboration are capably planned and balanced, so that the following qualities can be manifested and developed and the following duties and responsibilities can be assumed in addition to individual classroom needs.

*Qualities of Level 2 Teachers:*

- Have a developed teaching instinct.
- Demonstrate understanding of developmental needs of students and have ability to adapt curriculum and instruction variously to fit those needs.
- Have an ability to know individual students well and know the class well, ensuring balance between individual and group needs.

- Demonstrate comfort and ease with both having a plan and modifying a plan as best suits the needs of kids after a quick assessment of the situation.
- Demonstrate capabilities as an effective adult collaborator within the school
- Able to describe school programs and policies to outside audiences.
- Have an authentic understanding of what the school does and why it is done this way (internalization of teaching and philosophical ideals at ANCS)
- Show capable facilitation of adult and student groups. (e.g. Advisory, taskforces, content or grade level teams)
- Have an ability to problem-solve with a team, diagnose classroom and curricular issues and take appropriate action.
- Be a positive force among the faculty, working in a way that exemplifies enjoyment of the profession and dedication to the school.

*The Expanded Responsibilities of Level 2 Teachers May Include:*

- Be point people for curriculum development, articulating the progression of students' skills for audiences extending beyond the faculty (e.g. parents, community members, other educators)
- Develop and effectively facilitate school committees, events, and/or programs (Critical Friends Group, Curriculum Night, field trips)
- Mentor other teachers, including interns
- Be a strong advocate for students and model/lead in the area of quality communication with parents
- Serving as a member of the school's leadership team

In addition to informal observations of their practice, Level 2 teachers are formally evaluated by the Principal or his designee at least once each year.

\* Note: A teacher may be hired as a level 2 teacher so long as he/she has:

- at least three years of teaching experience or its equivalent
- demonstrated proficiency in the aspects of his/her practice outlined in ANCS's Teacher Evaluation Criteria

## **Movement from Level 1 to Level 2**

*Determining When It's Time to Move from Level 1 to Level 2:*

A teacher may initiate movement from a Level 1 Teacher to a Level 2 Teacher, or it may be prompted by conversation with the Principal or his designee.

*Many kinds of evidence can be gathered to show readiness, including:*

- Observations, both formally planned and spontaneous, and evaluations.
- Reflective work, including Critical Friends Group (CFG) work and journals, and other artifacts of process.
- Conversations and written feedback from colleagues and students.
- A portfolio of work, including: lesson plans; description of/reflection on work; assessed student work; curriculum work; evidence of collaboration.
- Professional development.

- Goal-setting.
- Mentor input/mentoring evidence.

*Eligibility and criteria for advancement to Level 2 Teacher status include:*

- Teachers with at least two years teaching experience at ANCS.
- Teachers who capably demonstrate proficiency in the aspects of their practice outlined in ANCS's Teacher Evaluation Criteria.

*Movement from Level 1 to Level 2 status will generally adhere to the following process:*

- Teacher declares his or her intention to move to Level 2 Teacher status through written proposal and/or conversation with the Principal or his designee. Teacher and Principal (or his designee) confer on past performance, future objectives and areas of growth, and accomplishments and achievements.
- Principal and any designees confer and recommend teacher to pursue Level 2 status. If it is determined Level 2 status for Teacher should be deferred, Principal and/or his designee recommends specific criteria and a revised timeline for movement. This is a time of open conversation and consideration between Principal and Teacher.
- Teacher and Principal (or his designee) engage in sustained conversation and observations. Teacher compiles evidence of readiness for movement to Level 2 status to present to Principal (or his designee).
- Teacher identifies an area of focus in his/her work based on professional goals and, in consultation with Principal (or his designee), Teacher begins to develop one aspect of his/her practice that will stand as evidence of readiness for movement to Level 2 status.
- Teacher presents focused work to Principal (or his designee) and, if desired, invites colleagues, students, and/or parents. The objective of this final step is to make adult teaching and learning visible, and to appropriately celebrate and honor the *rising* teacher.
- Teacher is offered a contract for the coming year that reflects her/his new status, responsibilities, and salary with compensation bonus or additional salary step increase.

## **Supporting Professional Growth**

In addition to the support and evaluation process described above, there are two distinct ways in which ANCS encourages the learning and development of teachers. One of these is the Critical Friends Group, an ongoing professional learning community that regularly meets here at ANCS. The other is the availability of funds for individuals or groups of teachers to use to strengthen their practice by attending conferences, classes, or workshops outside of ANCS. Each of these is described below.

### Critical Friends Group (CFG)

Developed and supported by the National School Reform Faculty, a CFG is a small group of educators who meet at least every 4-6 weeks to improve their practice through collaborative learning. Led by a trained facilitator, the members of a CFG use different protocols to examine issues/dilemmas related to student learning, look closely at student work, debrief peer observations, learn from print and other texts, and reflect upon teacher work. The purposes of CFGs are to:

- Create a professional learning community

- Make teaching practice explicit and public by “talking about teaching”
- Help people involved in schools to work collaboratively in democratic, reflective communities
- Establish a foundation for sustained professional development based on a spirit of inquiry
- Provide a context to understand our work with students, our relationships with peers, and our thoughts, assumptions, and beliefs about teaching and learning
- Help educators help each other turn theories into practice and standards into actual student learning
- Improve teaching and learning

### Individual Professional Development Money

In order to encourage and support professional growth, ANCS has a pool of funds for professional development and learning. These funds may be acquired by submitting a short, written proposal to the Principal or his designee, who will review proposals, keeping in mind school and individual professional goals. When a proposal is approved, the Principal or his designee will notify the applicant and request a written reflection and/or presentation to appropriate staff upon returning from the experience. These reflections and presentations will help share knowledge gained from the experience, as well as allow us to keep a record of our staff development and provide a guide for future use of these funds.

**A proposal** for professional development funds should include:

- Total amount requested
- A brief description of how you hope to further your professional learning by this experience. How do you hope your students will benefit? How does this connect with your professional goals?
- Any documentation needed in order to supply payment to an outside source such as billing name and address, and printed registration fees

**A reflection** on the experience will be collected in a binder as a reference for faculty in the future on ways they can use (or shouldn't use) professional development money. Some prompts to consider for this reflection:

- What drew you to this particular professional development opportunity?
- How have or will your students benefit from this experience?
- Would you recommend this experience to other ANCS faculty? Why or why not?

Professional development monies may be used for the direct expenses related to your endeavor. For example, the cost of your course (conference, course materials, etc.) is covered, but your parking, travel expenses, meals, or childcare costs are not.

Once approved:

- If the activity involves time away from school, you must fill out a planned absence form.

- If the plan involves or requires advance payment of any form, a purchase order must be filled out, with any relevant supporting materials attached. The Principal or his designee will sign these purchase orders in order to release the funds.

- If the professional activity is one that will require reimbursement, a brief description of the event, along with all receipts must be attached to a request for reimbursement form. The Principal or his designee will approve the request for reimbursement.

*Any individual funds left unused at the end of the school year will be reallocated to the school's general professional development fund for the following year.*

### Staff Study Grant

Though not yet in existence, the possibility is being explored of creating a staff study grant program. Given out annually, this grant would be awarded to a staff member who has served at the school at least three years and who wishes to undertake or continue studies to support their own learning and, by extension, the learning of the students at ANCS. Details of such a grant program, including amount and eligibility, will be determined at a future date.

### Teacher Evaluation Procedures and Criteria

The evaluation process at ANCS is one that is ultimately focused on giving clear and actionable feedback to support teachers in the development of their practice as teachers and advisors. The purpose of evaluation is to improve and assess a teacher's professional competency and growth and to inform personnel decisions. In addition to informal observations of their practice, all teachers at ANCS are formally evaluated by the Principal or his designee. Level 1 teachers are involved in an evaluation cycle *at least twice* each year, while Level 2 teachers are involved in an evaluation cycle *at least once* each year.

An **evaluation cycle** consists of:

- a pre-conference
- observation of at least one full class session
- a post-conference to discuss observations and other sources of data
- a written evaluation report with information from observation notes and other sources of data along with commendations and recommendations based on each element of the ANCS Teacher Evaluation Criteria (Planning & Preparation, The Classroom & Advisory Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities)
- an overall rating of "Satisfactory", "Needs Development", or "Unsatisfactory"

All evaluation reports will be kept confidential in the teacher's personnel file. A teacher may submit a written reply to any evaluation report, and the reply will be attached to report and placed in the personnel file.

If a teacher's performance on two consecutive evaluation reports has been rated "Unsatisfactory", the Principal may require that the teacher be placed on an **improvement plan**.

An improvement plan will outline:

- the specific criteria to be met,
- indicators of satisfactory performance,
- support the teacher will receive, when appropriate, in meeting these criteria,
- the time that will be allowed for improvement,
- the date by which another evaluation report will be completed.

The teacher and Principal (or his designee) must review the improvement plan prior to it going into effect.

Once on an improvement plan, if a teacher's performance on the next evaluation report is rated "Unsatisfactory", a meeting will be held with the Principal, at which time the improvement plan will be reviewed and the teacher will receive a written warning that if, following a second evaluation cycle of at least 30 school days, the teacher's performance remains "Unsatisfactory", the Principal may recommend to the Governing Board that the teacher be dismissed.

### Sources of Evaluation Data

In order to provide a more comprehensive picture of teacher performance, multiple sources of data will be used in the process of evaluating teachers at ANCS as well as to target areas for specific professional development and improvement. The following sources of data may be used in relation to the teacher evaluation criteria as part of the support and evaluation process:

#### **Observation**

- Classroom and Advisory Observation
  - *Informal*
  - *Formal*
- Outside of Classroom Observation
  - *Professional meetings*
  - *Parent conferences*
  - *Duties*
  - *Back to School Night and other school-sponsored events*

#### **Conferences**

- *Goal-setting conferences*
- *Pre- and/or post-observation conferences*

#### **Teacher and Student Work Artifacts**

- *Student work samples, including feedback given on work*
- *Student standardized test data*
- *Lesson and unit plans*
- *Assignment/unit overviews and rubrics*
- *Progress and end of term reports*
- *Communications sent home to parents/guardians*
- *Discipline referrals*

#### **Surveys and Reflections**

- *Student survey data*
- *Parent/guardian survey data*
- *Student interviews*
- *Self-evaluations*

#### **Other Sources**

- *Attendance record*
- *Arrival and departure times*
- *Notes and data from other supervisors*

Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School  
**Teacher Evaluation Criteria**  
**Planning and Preparation**

- *Instruction, assessment and other duties as assigned.*
- *Curriculum development, including individual and group planning*

Element	Proficient
Demonstrates Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy	Teacher displays extensive content knowledge, with continuing pursuit of such knowledge.
	Teacher actively builds on knowledge of prerequisite relationships when describing instruction or seeking causes for student misunderstanding
	Teacher displays continuing search for best practice and anticipates student misconceptions
Demonstrates Knowledge of Students	Teacher displays knowledge of typical developmental characteristics of age group, exceptions to the patterns, and the extent to which each student follows pattern.
	Teacher uses, where appropriate, knowledge of students' varied approaches to learning in instructional planning.
	Teacher displays knowledge of students' skills and knowledge of each student, including those with special needs.
Selects Instruction Goals	Goals are valuable in their level of expectation, conceptual understanding and importance of learning. Teacher can clearly articulate how goals established relate to the curriculum and essential skills.
	All the goals are clear, written in the form of student learning and permit viable methods of assessment
	Goals take into account the varying learning needs of individuals and groups
	Goals reflect several different types of learning and opportunities for integration
Designs Coherent Instruction	Learning activities are relevant to student's instructional goals. They progress coherently, producing a unified whole and reflecting recent professional research
	Materials and resources support the instructional goals, and engage students in meaningful learning.
	Instructional groups are varied, as appropriate to the different instructional goals.
	The lesson or unit has a clearly defined structure that activities are organized around. Time allocations are reasonable.
Assesses Student Learning	The proposed approach to assessment is congruent with the instructional goals, both in content and process. Assessment is aligned with the expectations of the school, domain and division.
	Assessment criteria and standards are clear and have been clearly communicated to students
	Teacher uses assessment results to plan for individuals and groups of students



Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School  
***Teacher Evaluation Criteria***  
**The Classroom and Advisory Environment**

- *Instruction, assessment and other duties as assigned.*

Element	Proficient
Teacher Interacts with Students	Teacher-student interactions are friendly and demonstrate general warmth, caring, and respect. Such interactions are appropriate to developmental and cultural norms.
	Student interactions are generally polite and respectful.
Establishes a Culture for Learning	Teacher conveys genuine enthusiasm for the subject, and students demonstrate consistent commitment to its value
	Students accept teacher insistence on work of high quality and demonstrate pride in that work.
	Instructional goals and activities, interactions, and the classroom environment convey high expectations for student achievement.
	Teacher establishes a culture of unanxious expectation where the relationships are characterized by “student as worker, teacher as coach”
Manages Classroom Procedures	Tasks for group work are organized, and groups are managed so most students are engaged at all times. (Students assume some responsibility for efficient operation)
	Transitions occur smoothly, with little loss of instructional time. (Students assume some responsibility for efficient operation)
	Routines for handling materials and supplies occur smoothly with little loss of instructional time. (Students assume some responsibility for efficient operation)
	Routines for collecting, assessing, and returning student work are effective as is the system for maintaining and transferring student portfolios.
Manages Student Behavior	Standards of conduct are clear to all students
	Teacher is alert to student behavior at all times
	Teacher response to misbehavior is appropriate and successful and respects the student’s dignity, or student behavior is generally appropriate.
Organizes Physical Space	The classroom is safe, and the furniture arrangement is a resource for learning activities
	Teacher uses physical resources skillfully, and all learning is equally accessible to all students

Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School  
**Teacher Evaluation Criteria**  
**Instruction**

- *Instruction, assessment and other duties as assigned.*

Element	Proficient
Communicates Clearly and Accurately	Teacher directions and procedures are clear to students and contain an appropriate level of detail
	Teacher's spoken and written language is clear and correct. Vocabulary is appropriate to students' age and interests.
Uses Questions and Discussion Techniques	Teacher questions are high quality, with adequate time for students to respond. Students formulate many questions.
	Classroom interactions represent true discussion, with teacher stepping, when appropriate, to the side.
	Teacher successfully engages all students in the discussion.
Engaging Students in Learning	Representation of content is appropriate and links well with students' knowledge and experience.
	Students are cognitively engaged in the activities and assignments in their exploration of content.
	Instructional groups are productive and appropriate to the students or to the instructional goals of the lesson
	Instruction materials and resources are suitable to the instructional goals and engage students mentally
	The lesson has a clearly defined structure around which the activities are organized. Pacing of the lesson is consistent.
Provide Feedback to Students	Feedback is accurate, substantive, constructive and specific as to support improvements in student learning.
	Feedback provided in a timely manner.
Demonstrates Flexibility and Responsiveness	Teacher successfully adjusts the lesson, and the adjustment occurs smoothly.
	Teacher successfully accommodates students' questions or interests.
	Teacher persists in seeking effective approaches for students who need help, using a repertoire of strategies and soliciting additional resources from school.

Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School  
***Teacher Evaluation Criteria***  
**Professional Responsibilities**

- *Advising*
- *Meetings: faculty and other weekly meetings*
- *Professional Development*
- *Summer Planning*
- *Duties*

Element	Proficient
Reflecting	Teacher makes an accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which it achieved its goals and can cite general references to support the judgment.
	Teacher makes specific suggestions of alternative actions.
Maintains Accurate Records	Teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments is fully effective.
	Teacher's system for maintaining information on student progress is effective.
	Teacher's system for maintaining information on non-instructional activities is effective. (i.e. – attendance)
Communication with Families	Teacher provides information to parents, as appropriate, about the instructional program.
	Teacher communicates with parents about students' progress on a regular basis and is available to respond to parent concerns.
	Teacher's efforts to engage families in the instructional program are frequent and successful
Contributes to the School	Support and cooperation characterize relationships with colleagues
	Teacher volunteers to participate in school events or projects.
	Teacher is proactive in serving students, taking initiative to seek out resources, information and assistance.
Grows and Develops Professionally	Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.
	Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.
Shows Professionalism	Teacher makes an effort to challenge negative attitudes and helps ensure that all students receive a fair opportunity to succeed and are honored in school.
	Teacher maintains an open mind and participates in team decision-making.

**Appendix M: Attendance Zone Maps  
(See hard copy)**



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE INITIAL THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS**

- I understand that this application for enrollment does not guarantee admission and that if there are too many applicants there will be a random lottery to determine enrollment. \_\_\_\_\_
- I understand that if my contact information changes, I must notify Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School offices or I may risk the loss of my student’s placement. \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUIRED PARENT/GUARDIAN RESIDENCY NOTICE**

Residency Notice: to be enrolled in Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School, students must reside full-time in the City of Atlanta with their natural parent(s), legal guardian(s), or legal custodian(s). Students and their parent(s)/guardian(s)/custodian(s) must remain full-time City of Atlanta residents for the entire period of enrollment in Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School. For the purpose of this policy, a resident is defined as an individual who is a full-time occupant of a dwelling located in the City of Atlanta (**and zoned for a City of Atlanta School**) and who, on any given school day, is likely to be at their stated address when not at work or school. A person who owns property in the City of Atlanta, but does not reside in the City of Atlanta, is not considered a resident for the purpose of this policy.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURES**

**I SWEAR or AFFIRM THAT I AM A FULL-TIME RESIDENT OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA OR I AM AN EMPLOYEE OF ATLANTA NEIGHBORHOOD CHARTER SCHOOL AND AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION I HAVE GIVEN IN THIS DOCUMENT IS, TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, TRUE AND CORRECT.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Date Submitted:	Time Submitted:	Location Submitted:	Grade Entering:
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\_\_\_\_\_  
School Official Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Appendix O: Revised and Expanded Budget  
(See hard copy)**